Complete Agenda

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

CABINET

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE	Tuesday, 10th November, 2026
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Cyfarfod Hybrid / Hybrid Meeting - Siambr Hywel Dda, Swyddfeydd y Cyngor, Caernarfon LL55 1SH
CONTACT POINT	Gwen Alaw Roberts cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Nia Wyn Jeffreys	Council Leader
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Environment
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Paul John Rowlinson	Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
Menna Trenholme	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
June Jones	Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy
R Medwyn Hughes	Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Dewi Jones	Cabinet Member for Education
Huw Wyn Jones	Cabinet Member for Finance
Llio Elenid Owen	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Legal and the Welsh Language

AGENDA

	Item	Submitted by	Officer	Page
1	APOLOGIES			
2	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST			
3	URGENT ITEMS			
4	MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY			
5	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER			4 - 15
6	QUARTERLY REPORT - CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD (NOVEMBER 2026)	Cllr Nia Jeffreys	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive	16 - 23
7	HOMES THAT ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAMME BOARD	Cllr Paul Rowlinson Cllr Dilwyn Morgan Cllr Menna Trenholme	Dylan Owen, Corporate Director Social Services	24 - 117
8	CLIMATE AND NATURE EMERGENCY PLAN: ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26	Cllr Craig ab Iago	Bethan Richardson, Climate Change Programme Manager	118 - 153
9	ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT 2025/26	Cllr Nia Jeffreys	Dewi Wyn Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager	154 - 234
10	RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - THE COUNCIL'S	Cllr Nia Jeffreys	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief	235 - 274

	RESPONSE		Executive	
11	COUNCIL TAX: DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS AND/OR RAISE A PREMIUM ON SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY DWELLINGS	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones	Dewi Morgan, Head of Finance	275 - 326
12	SAVINGS OVERVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT ON REALISING SAVINGS SCHEMES	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones	Ffion Madog Evans, Assistant Head of Finance - Accounting and Pensions	327 - 334
13	REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27 - END OF AUGUST 2026 REVIEW	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones	Ffion Madog Evans, Assistant Head of Finance Department - Accountancy and Pensions	335 - 359
14	OUR CULTURE, OUR FUTURE: A PLAN FOR CULTURE IN GWYNEDD	Cllr Medwyn Hughes	Roland Evans, Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department	360 - 440

THE CABINET, TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2026

Present-
Councillors: Nia Jeffreys, Menna Trenholme, R. Medwyn Hughes, Craig ab Iago, Huw Wyn Jones, June Jones, Dilwyn Morgan, Llio Elenid Owen and Paul Rowlinson.

Also present-
Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Nia Grisdale (Legal Services Manager), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education), Miri Siôn (Chair of Arfon Schools Forum), Eleri Jones (Human Resources Advisory Service Manager), Catrin Love (Assistant Head of Corporate Services Department), Delyth Gadlys Williams (Equality Advisor), Gail Warrington (Health, Safety and Well-being Advisory Services Manager), Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department), Rhodri Owen (Planning Policy Team Leader), Ffion Mai Jones (Senior Executive Manager), Ffion Madog Evans (Assistant Head of Finance – Accounting and Pensions).

1. APOLOGIES

Gratitude was expressed to the members and officers who had contributed to the preparation of the submitted reports.

No apologies were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Menna Trenholme declared an interest in relation to Item 11. The member did not consider it to be a prejudicial interest and did not withdraw from the meeting.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent matters.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2026 were accepted as a true record.

6. THE VOICE OF THE CHILD STRATEGY

The report was submitted by Cllr Nia Jeffreys.

DECISION

1. To approve Cyngor Gwynedd's Voice of the Child Strategy (Appendices 1 - 5)
2. To note that a corporate Action Plan will be developed and implemented to support the implementation of the Strategy across the Council's services.

DISCUSSION

The Strategy was presented and the Chair of the Arfon Schools Forum was welcomed to the meeting. It was noted that the presence of the Chair of the Forum reflected the fundamental principle of the Strategy itself, namely that children and young people were partners in the formulation of decisions that affected them. Gratitude was expressed to all the young people who had contributed to the development of this Strategy.

It was explained that this was a corporate Strategy, which highlighted the fact that listening to children and young people was a responsibility across all services. The input of children and young people into the development of the Strategy was detailed, noting that the document was based on seven core pledges, which reflected what mattered to these children and young people. It was stated that reporting on the outcome of children and young people's contributions, as well as ensuring that all children and young people had an equal opportunity to participate, were prominent themes. It was highlighted that the success of the Strategy would depend on the Council's ability to demonstrate how the voice of children and young people had influenced services, policies and decisions within the Council.

The process of formulating the Strategy and the important messages arising from the discussions were discussed. An example of a matter raised as part of the discussions with children and young people, and the way Council officers had addressed the matter, was provided. The similarities between the priorities identified at the Forums and those of the Council were also highlighted.
It was recognised that the inclusion of children's voices in decisions was more challenging in some services, but the importance of engaging with the youth forums to get their views when a decision potentially impacted children and young people was noted. It was explained that the Strategy crossed several fields, with particular reference to including the voice of the child across the Council's Children's Services. It was noted that there was wider representation within the children and young people's voice forums in Gwynedd, and that there was an attempt to reach further cohorts of children as well. It was stated that these children and young people also had a desire for a shadow Cabinet for the children and young people of Gwynedd.

Pride was expressed that children and young people now had the opportunity to be part of discussions and give their views. There was anticipation for further collaboration between the Forum and the Council.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was explained that there was a specific piece of work on how the document would look within the Council's documentation, and the importance of the Strategy going forward was noted. It was stated that foundations were in place, and that work needed to be done within the Council to establish the procedure for including engagement with the Forum in reports.
- In response to a question about ensuring that the seven pledges within the Strategy were implemented, the content of the pledges was detailed and it was explained how the structure of the Forums and the engagement methods would contribute to this. It was added that different forums were operational, which as a result, enabled a variety of people to contribute in a way that was comfortable for them.
- Reference was made to the previous lack of opportunities for young people to contribute to these discussions, and how key it was to ensure that there were opportunities for them to voice their views. Pride was expressed in the 'Journey of the Voice' element of the Strategy, reiterating the importance of reporting back on any action and changes arising from that.
- In relation to the attempt to retain young people in Gwynedd and attract them back to the County, reference was made to the importance of young people's contributions in shaping the County.
- Gratitude was expressed for the passionate presentation of the item, and it was assured that what emerged from the Strategy would permeate through the Council and its services.
- In response to a question about the next steps, it was reported that a baseline questionnaire on the voice of children and young people would soon be shared and it was therefore hoped that this would form the basis of the Action Plan. This was expanded upon by explaining the complexity of the Action Plan in terms of how the different aspects would feed into it, and how they would be implemented within the Council mechanism. It was proposed that it might be an idea to pilot the Scheme and discuss with Council departments to see how this could be fed into services.

7. ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26, STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024-28

The report was submitted by Cllr Llio Elenid Owen.

DECISION

To note the content and approve the 2025-26 Annual Report, Equality Plan 2024-28.

DISCUSSION

Pride was expressed that most of the work earmarked for the year had been completed, and that any further work was being carried out during this year.

It was explained that five objectives had been identified within the Equality Plan, and the work that had been ongoing in relation to these objectives was reported.

In relation to Objective 1, the Staff Equality Forum was mentioned, which had been established to discuss and share views on relevant matters. It was added that a staff member had also set up an Ethnic Minority Employees' Forum. Reference was also made to the revised Whistle-blowing Policy that had been adopted, including Sexual Harassment as a reported basis. When mentioning Objective 2, it was stated that the data dashboard was almost ready to go live. In relation to Objective 3, it was reported that the percentage of individuals who had completed the Equality title since March 2025 had increased from 35.5% to 62.8%. It was added that equality officers had started visiting departmental management teams to present information. Objective 4 was discussed stating that equality officers worked with the Customer Care and Registration Service to ensure accessibility. In addition, details were provided of the work underway within the Museums service and the Housing and Property department. Objective 5 was then discussed, explaining that most of this work had been completed in the first year of the Plan.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Attention was drawn to the fact that the Council had signed an Age-friendly Pledge, and that collaboration was underway to develop in the field of employment for older people.
- The success of the Staff Equality Forum was reported, noting that there was an intention to promote it further. Reference was made to the Ethnic Minority Staff Network explaining that it had been set-up and run by staff. It was noted that the Network extended across Gwynedd, Conwy and Anglesey, and that members of the Network also reported back to the Forum. It was stated that Community Cohesion Officers worked across three counties and reported back on any messages that arose within communities. Reference was made to the Equality Impact Assessment, which was being completed in-house to correspond with strategies and policies as well.
- Pride was expressed in the success of the Women in Leadership Programme, noting that there had been an increase in the number of women in manager-level positions since establishing the Programme.
- It was noticed that no gender-based pay audit had been conducted during the 2025-26 period. In response, it was explained that the contact who usually carried out the audit had withdrawn due to lack of capacity. It was ensured that the service had contacted other councils to try to get a different contact to complete the work. It was intended to extend the audit to include disability and race following a change to the legislation.
- It was stated that work was underway in relation to the voice of the child and it was intended to increase the capacity of the service to assist with this.
- Reference was made to the importance of improving the ALN provision within the field of education, and it was reported that there was a specific objective in the Equality Plan regarding equality in the field of education. Reference was made to the ongoing engagement to obtain the views of

young people from various groups in relation to this objective, and the intention of making further use of the Schools Forums as well.

- It was questioned whether the Council was doing enough in terms of recruiting people with learning disabilities. Reference was made to a recent presentation at the Managers' Network, acknowledging that several departments had subsequently got in touch to try to encourage people with learning disabilities to work within their services. It was believed that more needed to be done, but that this was a step in the right direction.
- The Citizens Panel was mentioned and it was explained that it was a group of people who are committed to participate in engagement. It was elaborated by noting that there was an attempt to ensure that there was a variety of people on the Panel so that there was broad representation of society.

8. ANNUAL REPORT - WORKFORCE

The report was submitted by Cllr Llio Elenid Owen.

DECISION

To approve the annual report for 2025/26.

DISCUSSION

It was emphasised that the Council's workforce had continued to provide high-quality services to the residents of Gwynedd in a period of financial pressure, increasing demand for services and significant change in the labour market.

Although the size of the workforce had decreased over the period of the report, it was highlighted that staff turnover appeared to have stabilised. Attention was drawn to the age profile of the workforce, stating the importance of long-term planning for attracting, developing and retaining talent, and ensuring effective transfer of knowledge and skills. Reference was made to the success of the Council's apprenticeship and trainee schemes in strengthening the foundations of the future workforce, highlighting that there had been a 120% increase in the number of applications for these posts since the previous year.
It was stated that staff well-being and sickness management remained a corporate challenge.
It was mentioned that the Council had continued to show leadership in promoting the Welsh language in the workplace, developing social partnership, strengthening equality and inclusion, and implementing new policies and initiatives to support a positive work culture.

Looking ahead, several key priorities were identified:

- developing long-term workforce planning,
- supporting staff well-being,

- strengthening staff recruitment and retention,
- implementing new systems,
- ensuring that the Council had the right people, skills and culture to meet Gwynedd's future needs.

It was added that this was a high-level report before the Cabinet . It was assured that the trends and challenges set out in the report were not unique to Gwynedd, and that work was underway with partners to address this.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- There was concern that the Council's staff numbers were decreasing, and reference was made to staff turnover and it was enquired what this meant to the Council. In response, it was clarified that the staff turnover rate did not take into account the number of staff in a department, nor did it take into account how many staff were on short-term contracts. Details of the Economy Department's high turnover levels were provided, explaining that many of those jobs were dependent on grants and were therefore not permanent jobs. Attention was drawn to the impact of the Local Government funding approach on staff turnover due to the reliance on grants and the resulting uncertainty for staff, and a call was made for multi-year funding for Councils.
- There was concern about the increasingly high levels of illness and reference was made to the high level of stress-related absences. It was confirmed that illness levels were also increasing across other counties. It was explained that training for managers was essential in encouraging staff to return to work and managing cases effectively through collaboration with the Occupational Health and counselling services. It was stated that a comprehensive review of working conditions was being carried out to see what could be done to be more supportive and inclusive.
- It was asked whether enough was being done in terms of workforce planning and promotion of the apprenticeship and trainee roles. It was confirmed that considerable marketing and engagement work was ongoing. Reference was made to the In-house Careers Group which aimed to put a focus on attracting staff to work and develop a career within the Council.
- In discussing the problems that arose in different departments, it was explained that musculoskeletal problems were common in front-line services, but it varied across the Council. The costs associated with delivery in relation to front-line services were also mentioned. The seasonal patterns seen in the figures were also highlighted, for example that schools were closed in August so sickness absences were lower.
- Reference was made to the new Human Resources system that was being developed, hoping that there would be more data in moving forward as a result.
- It was explained that what was seen in Gwynedd was not unique compared to other councils. It was mentioned that managers received detailed reports on illness within their services, so that action was possible.

- In relation to sickness levels, there was concern about the increasing demand for services, but a reduction in the number of staff within the Council.
- It was noted that it was intended to prepare a Leadership Team paper regarding the matters raised during the discussion.

9. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING ANNUAL REPORT

The report was submitted by Cllr Llio Elenid Owen.

DECISION

This report is submitted to the Cabinet so that members have an essential overview of the main health and safety matters that arose during 2025/26.

DISCUSSION

It was highlighted that there had been significant advances in the way events were reported and managed, with the introduction of a new digital system.
Although there had been an increase in the number of reports submitted, reference was made to the fact that the number of serious incidents had decreased. It was proposed that this implied a stronger reporting culture and better management of risks across the organisation.
The new system was detailed, explaining that it provided better management information, live dashboards and better data to support decisions and help managers monitor health and safety performance. It was reported that there had been a visit by HSE during the year relating to the use of plant protection products, but no matters leading to formal enforcement action had been raised.
It was explained that a high percentage of managers had now completed IOSH Managing Safely training for managers, along with training on the new incident reporting system. It was highlighted that a high number of referrals to the Occupational Health Unit had been received, recognising that mental health and stress were prominent themes. In addition, attention was drawn to the further work underway across the Council to develop lone working and personal safety arrangements.

<u>Observations arising from the discussion:</u>

- The officers were thanked for their work, and for including the graphs within the report that made the information easier to follow.
- It was noted that the number of reports was high in the Education and Adults' departments, and it was asked whether there were any specific reasons for this. In response, it was confirmed that the increase in reporting showed an increasing willingness to report incidents and therefore suggested an improvement in culture. It was highlighted that the number of RIDDOR reports in those departments had decreased over the past year, and that staff in those departments were working on the front-line, therefore, more incidents in such fields were likely.

- Referring to the reduction in the number of RIDDOR incidents, it was stated that there had been investment in training for managers over the last decade so that better management measures were put in place to try and prevent serious incidents. There was anticipation to see the impact of the new reporting system, highlighting that the data and information on accidents was available live to managers through the system, so that it was possible to identify what further control measures were required.
- An enquiry was made about the main health and safety risks facing the Council's workforce and what was being done to monitor. It was noted that tendencies to trip, fall and slip, as well as musculoskeletal matters, were the most prominent fields within the Council and across the country. In terms of specific threats, it was noted that task groups had been set up to examine matters such as lone working, with an emphasis on ensuring risk assessments with strict control measures in place. Reference was made to the ongoing work in relation to lone working, referring to the agreement that was in place with another Council.
- It was emphasised that one of the Council's main responsibilities was to ensure the safety of staff in their work. Reference was made to the increase seen in violent incidents, whether physical or verbal, and the increase in the use of social media to share videos of staff at work. Details of the steps being taken to review lone working arrangements and arrangements in relation to social media related events were provided. It was added that there was also an attempt to drive the conversation around behaviour towards staff on a national level.

10. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025-2026

The report was submitted by Cllr Craig ab Iago.

DECISION

That the Cabinet accepts the Annual Monitoring Report 8 (Appendix 1) and agrees for it to be submitted to the Government by the end of October 2026.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted stating that the Local Development Plan was required to be monitored annually, in accordance with the regulations, and to submit an Annual Monitoring Report to the Welsh Government.

It was explained that the report focused on the Gwynedd planning authority, and that this was the final report for the current Development Plan as its period was coming to an end. It was added that the current Joint Local Development Plan would not have statutory development plan status after the end of this year as a result of the Regulations. As a result, it was noted that Future Wales: The National Plan for Wales, would act as the statutory development plan for planning decisions. Although the Joint Local Development Plan would no longer have the status of a development plan, it was highlighted that its policies would remain

material planning considerations if they were in line with the aims and policies of Future Wales.

An overview of the main conclusions of the report was given, explaining that it reported on performance against a set of 70 indicators that had been specifically identified in the Joint Local Development Plan. The number of indicators that corresponded with the symbols used to monitor the effectiveness of policies and to provide an overview of performance was reported. The action noted against each indicator in the Annual Monitoring Report as part of the analysis was then reported. It was highlighted that 42 indicators suggested that LDP policies were being implemented effectively, 13 indicators suggested that the Policy was not as effective as expected, and 15 indicators where the target had been achieved.

The main conclusions of the Report were mentioned, highlighting the fact that permission had been granted for 215 new residential units during 2025/26, of which 67.4% were affordable housing. It was noted that three applications had been refused in part due to language matters, and eight applications had been granted permission with a planning condition for linguistic mitigation measures. It was stated that the Report had also been submitted to the Planning Policy Working Group.

It was then noted that 55.8% of all units completed since the adoption of the Plan were affordable housing. Members were reminded that the Plan was not for housing only, highlighting that it also facilitated economic and environmental development. It was added that the Plan had also been effective in safeguarding local community facilities.

Residents were called upon to participate in the development of the new Local Development Plan, in whatever way possible.

<u>Observations arising from the discussion:</u>

- Reference was made to the importance of the Plan and the fact that it was ambitious. It was noted that it touched on various aspects and highlighted that it was a vehicle for facilitating the Council's other strategic objectives. When referring to the need to estimate the level of population growth, it was highlighted that the Plan was based on the evidence available at the time including recognised models, evidence from the Welsh Government, and past housebuilding trends for example. It was acknowledged that situations could also change. Attention was drawn to a specific development that was not realised during the term of the Plan, noting that the flexibility of the Plan had enabled the Council to respond to that.
- A question was asked about the fact that the figure of houses completed in the Gwynedd Planning Authority area on sites earmarked for housing was low. In response, the windfall element that occurred was explained, especially considering that it was the last year of the Plan.
- It was highlighted that the correct steps and regulations must be followed in relation to this Plan. It was confirmed that there was evidence that any development was in line with the requirements of the Plan. It was noted that there must be an element of flexibility within the Plan, but that

something was needed to provide guidance to developers as to where they could develop. Frustration was shared about this challenging process, but it was stressed that the Plan was a crucial document.

- Reference was made to the comment regarding the windfall sites, ensuring that they were within the boundaries and therefore compatible with the Plan. It was agreed that the process of establishing local development plans was too long and costly, but it was also reminded that the process was lengthy due to the need to involve the public at all stages and therefore there were valid reasons for the timetable.

11. CAPITAL STRATEGY

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

To approve:
• funding of £1.49m for the funding gap of the North Promenade flood prevention project in Barmouth
• funding of £583k for the funding gap of the Ysgol Bontnewydd project
• the provision of £6.86m for the next phase of the rolling Sustainable Schools programme
• the provision of £4.11m for the next phase of the rolling Sustainable Schools programme and respond to traffic risks on Secondary School sites
• the delegation of the right to agree on the exact division of the £4.11m between secondary schools improvement and traffic risk response, to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, the Head of Education and the Head of Finance after the completion of further work.
• the de-committing of £3.5m from the Council's existing asset plan to be released to contribute to the resources available to fund the above.

The Cabinet is requested to confirm commitments already approved for the cost increases of Ysgol Tryfan (16 December 2025 Cabinet) and the Trawsfynydd innovation centre (10 February 2026).

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the Council had adopted a 10-year Asset Plan, the purpose of which was to commit the Council's core capital to projects that took time to plan and realise, so that forward planning could be done.

It was confirmed that it was a live plan and that the report in question recommended how to allocate the additional capital funding available. It was believed that this would provide assurance to continue with a few schemes prior to a comprehensive review of the Asset Plan, which would extend the scheme for a further ten years for the purpose of forward planning. Attention was drawn to

the fact that an annual amount had been set aside within the Asset Plan for smaller capital projects that arose, and they were handled through the bidding system.

It was highlighted that a sum of £16 million was available through various grants and capital receipts to meet the capital spending needs.
Reference was made to a number of new requirements that had arisen, with plans having developed since the implementation of the current Asset Plan along with an increase in costs.

Details were shared on what had not been possible to meet two years ago when the Council had adopted the 10-year Asset Plan. It was confirmed that maintenance requirements had now been met beyond this system. It was then noted that an amount had been earmarked as part of the application in question to enable the development and application for grants for the next phase of the Sustainable Schools rolling programme.

Attention was drawn to the other matters and strategic challenges within the Education department that needed to be addressed, but funding was insufficient to meet their high-level objective. As further work needed to be undertaken to understand the exact challenges and solutions, it was suggested that an amount should be earmarked for these matters, with the right to agree on the exact allocation of this money to be delegated in line with what was set out in the report.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Reference was made to the recent visit of some Cabinet Members to the new Our Lady's School building in Bangor. The quality of the building was highlighted and that this was needed for all the county's children. The importance of investing in the County's children and young people was emphasised, including making improvements to school sites and estates.
- It was mentioned that the Council was no longer a partner in the development of the Health and Care Hub – Canolfan Lleu, as the scheme now continued on a much smaller scale. It was hoped that it would be possible to be involved in any future projects.

12. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27 – END OF AUGUST REVIEW (31 AUGUST 2026 POSITION)

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

- To accept the report on the end of August review (31 August 2026 position) of the capital programme.
- To approve the following revisions to the Capital Budget that was approved on 5 March 2026 from the programme's financing perspective (as shown in part 3.2.3 of the report), namely:
  - an increase of £846,000 in the use of borrowing
  - an increase of £64,980,000 in the use of grants and contributions

- an increase of £5,000 in the use of capital receipts
- an increase of £673,000 in the use of revenue contributions
- a decrease of £350,000 in the use of the capital reserve
- an increase of £13,329,000 in the use of renewal funds and other reserves.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the Departmental breakdown of the £176 million capital programme for the 3 years 2026/27 - 2028/29 was included in the report. Attention was then drawn to the sources to fund the net increase of £101.5 million since the original budget, of which £22 million had come from re-profiling at the end of the previous year.

The main conclusions were detailed that there were definite plans in place to invest £123.5 million in 2026/27 on capital schemes, of which £72 million (58%) was funded through specific grants.

It was noted that an additional £12 million of proposed expenditure had been re-profiled from 2026/27 to 2027/28 and 2028/29, and reference was made to the main schemes that had slipped since the original budget.

Attention was drawn to the list of additional grants worth £66 million, that the Council had been able to attract since the original budget, which had been included in the report.

<u>Observations arising from the discussion:</u>

- The staff were thanked for the work to bring these grants to life.

The meeting commenced at 1:00pm and concluded at 3:35pm.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet

Item Title:	Quarterly Report – Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board (November 2026)
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Nia Jeffreys, Leader of the Council
Relevant Officer:	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive
Date of meeting:	10 November 2026

1. The Decision Sought:

1.1 The Cabinet is asked to accept the quarterly report from the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board and to agree that future reports be submitted on a seasonal basis (every four months).

2. The reason for the need for a decision:

2.1 A Response Plan was adopted by the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council in January 2025 to coordinate all support, reviews, inspections and other workstreams relating to the response to offences committed by the former Headteacher, Neil Foden.

2.2 Following the publication of the Child Practice Review report (*Our Courage Brought Justice*) in autumn 2025, a revised version of the Response Plan was adopted in March 2026, in line with the recommendations set out.

2.3 There was a commitment to continue to report quarterly to Cabinet Members on the progress of the Response Board's work programme and operation.

2.4 The report is shared by the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board, with the intention of raising awareness of the developments and what has and needs to be achieved by the Response Plan Programme Board.

3. Introduction and rationale

3.1 The Chief Executive was commissioned to put arrangements in place for the implementation of the content of the Response Plan including establishing a dedicated Programme Board and regular reporting on progress to Cabinet.

3.2 Professor Sally Holland was appointed to the role of Independent Chair of the Board in February 2025. Sally is Professor of Social Work at the Children's Social Care Research

and Development Centre (CASCADE) at Cardiff University and a former Children's Commissioner for Wales (2015-2022).

3.3 Since the adoption of the Response Plan, much of the Programme Board's work has focused on establishing governance arrangements, developing actions and driving delivery against specific recommendations. As the programme has matured, the emphasis has increasingly shifted from the completion of individual actions towards implementation, embedding good practice and measuring the impact of change across services.

3.4 In this context, a quarterly reporting cycle can sometimes limit the opportunity to demonstrate meaningful progress and evidence of impact. It is therefore proposed that future reporting arrangements move to a seasonal cycle of three reports per year, aligned with Programme Board meetings. This will provide sufficient time for actions to be embedded, for outcomes and impact to become evident, and for the Board to consider progress before reporting to Cabinet. The revised arrangements will continue to provide regular assurance and transparency whilst enabling more substantive and meaningful updates.

4. Next Steps

4.1 The Board's work continues with the intention of reporting back to Cabinet on progress in 4 months' time (March).

5. Comments of Statutory Officers.

5.1 Chief Finance Officer

The decision sought will not create a new spending commitment and I have no further comments to add.

5.2 Monitoring Officer

The Programme Board has been established by the Cabinet to co-ordinate and ensure progress on the Response Plan which it adopted. It is key to this governance arrangement that the Cabinet receives regular updates on progress in this all-important work. A report by the Independent Chair, Professor Sally Holland is a transparent and robust method of providing that assurance. I welcome this latest report.

QUARTERLY REPORT TO CABINET:
RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD

PROFESSOR SALLY HOLLAND: CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE BOARD

DATE: 10th November 2026

Introduction

Since my last report to Cabinet in July 2026, the Response Plan Programme Board has continued to oversee the Council's response to the recommendations arising from the Child Practice Review, *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, and the wider Response Plan.

This report summarises the key developments and progress made during the last quarter.

Current Position

This quarter marks one year since the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*. During that period, substantial activity has been undertaken across the Response Plan themes, with a continued focus on addressing the recommendations arising from the Child Practice Review.

The Board's work continues to be structured around the seven themes of the Response Plan:

1. Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims
2. Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children
3. Training and Policies
4. School Governance
5. Restrictive Practices
6. Crisis Planning and Crisis Response
7. Supporting Ysgol Friars

Detailed progress reports are presented to the Board by theme leads, highlighting achievements, priorities, risks and challenges, dependencies and resource implications.

Work Programme

A significant proportion of the planned activity has now been completed, with 43 of the 55 actions across the seven themes achieved. Whilst this represents an important milestone, Board members have consistently emphasised that the completion of actions should be viewed as a means to achieving lasting improvement rather than an end in itself. As a result, increasing attention is being given to understanding the impact of changes, how learning is being

embedded, whether organisational culture is evolving, and the extent to which improvements are being experienced in practice by children, young people, staff and wider stakeholders.

Outcome Measures

During the quarter, a detailed presentation on the development of impact measures across the Response Plan was shared. The Board welcomed the work undertaken to move beyond monitoring the completion of actions and towards measuring the impact of changes.

Following discussion, the Board agreed the proposed suite of impact measures across the seven themes of the Response Plan. These measures are intended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of whether improvements are making a meaningful difference in practice, organisational culture and outcomes for children and young people.

The Board was clear that no single measure can provide assurance in isolation. Instead, assurance will be drawn from a range of evidence sources, including:

- questionnaires and surveys of children, young people, staff and governors;
- audit and quality assurance activity;
- focus groups and stakeholder engagement activity;
- analysis of feedback from victims, survivors and service users;
- independent scrutiny findings;
- safeguarding and voice of the child performance information; and
- secondary analysis of School Health Research Network (SHRN) data.

The development of annual Children's Voice surveys, staff confidence measures, governor self-assessment arrangements and a wider range of qualitative and quantitative indicators will help establish a clearer evidence base against which progress can be monitored and evaluated over time.

On the 22nd October 2026 the latest data from the Schools Health Research Network (SHRN) were released, showing secondary school students' responses to a range of health and wellbeing questions in surveys administered in 2025. These are publicly available at a local authority and Wales level, with schools receiving their own confidential report. As far as I am aware, every secondary school in Gwynedd participates.

These latest data provide a snapshot of children and young people's views (years 7-16) and an opportunity for Gwynedd to compare its children's perspectives with the national average. It is one of the measures that may be used to look at the impact of new policies and training, including the Children's Voice strategy and restrictive practices programme of work.

In the 2025 data, Gwynedd pupils report experiences and perceptions around the Welsh average for a range of measures including their trust in teachers and feeling able to talk to them,

and a sense of belonging to their school. They also are around average in some elements of participation in school life. While they report an above average general satisfaction with life, they are also more likely to report having truanted than the Welsh average. They are below the Welsh average for support in school.

There is therefore no particular trend of Cyngor Gwynedd services consistently being experienced by its pupils as more or less supportive than the Welsh average, but some of these results will warrant a closer look by the education directorate and individual school governing bodies alongside their school council. They also set a helpful baseline and trends can be analysed over time, using these biennial datsets.

Children's Voice Strategy

Since the last quarterly report, the Voice of the Child Strategy has been adopted by Cabinet.

It has been encouraging to see children and young people involved throughout the development of this work, helping to shape both the approach and the priorities taken forward. The focus must now be on embedding a culture in which children's voices are routinely sought, listened to and acted upon across all Council services. This includes ensuring that participation is not viewed as a standalone activity, but as a core component of decision-making, service development and continuous improvement.

As Chair, I have consistently sought assurance that the Council is hearing from a broad and representative range of children and young people, particularly those whose voices may not always be captured through established participation mechanisms. I was therefore pleased to note that, following a challenging recruitment process, the Council has now been able to appoint an additional Engagement and Participation Officer. This additional capacity should help strengthen engagement with groups such as young carers, disabled children, care-experienced children and others who may face barriers to participation. It should also help ensure that participation activity is not overly reliant on a relatively small number of young people who are already actively engaged through existing forums and structures.

Restrictive Practices

The Board has also received an update on the progress made under the Restrictive Practices theme, including the findings of the independent review commissioned by the Council. Whilst this work was initially prompted by concerns relating to the use of video recording, it has since developed into a broader programme of work focused on policy, practice, governance and oversight.

I was encouraged to note the strengthened governance arrangements now being put in place. These include a cross-departmental officer group comprising representatives from Additional Learning Needs, Inclusion, Health and Safety and Safeguarding services. This should provide a

more robust mechanism for oversight, enabling trends, concerns and areas requiring additional support to be identified and addressed at an earlier stage.

Alongside revised guidance and reporting arrangements, these developments should help strengthen consistency of practice and provide greater assurance that restrictive practices are being appropriately monitored and scrutinised.

Safeguarding Review / National Developments

A number of developments have continued at both a national and regional level in relation to safeguarding governance, policy and practice. Of particular interest are the developments relating to Part 5 safeguarding arrangements and, more recently, the announcement of new national oversight and scrutiny arrangements.

Whilst details are still emerging, these developments have the potential to strengthen safeguarding assurance and promote greater consistency of approach across Wales. It will be important to understand how local authorities, regional safeguarding boards and existing assurance arrangements interact with these evolving structures, and how learning, challenge and oversight can be shared effectively across the different levels of governance.

There may be valuable opportunities for the Board to learn from, and contribute to, these developments as national arrangements become more established.

Scrutiny and Assurance

Cyngor Gwynedd Scrutiny Committees

During the autumn, progress against the Response Plan was also considered by the Council's scrutiny arrangements, including the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Governance and Audit Committee and the Care Scrutiny Committee. This provided an important opportunity for elected members to review progress, ask questions and provide challenge on behalf of the communities they represent.

Given that this quarter marks one year since the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, it was an opportunity for members to reflect on the progress made to date, the challenges that remain and the priorities for the next phase of the programme.

As the programme increasingly moves from implementation towards assurance and impact, effective internal scrutiny arrangements will become ever more important.

Welsh Government Assurance Group

As previously reported, the Welsh Government established a Ministerial Assurance Group following the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*. At the time of my last report to

Cabinet, there was some uncertainty regarding the future role and arrangements of the Group following the Senedd election. Since then, the Group has met on two occasions, including a hybrid meeting held in Cardiff providing a valuable opportunity to engage directly with Welsh Government officials and Ministers. I am not a member of this group but attended the Cardiff meeitng by invitation and was able to share with the Cabinet minister for Education and officials my reflections on progress made, enablers and challenges.

Discussions have been constructive and have enabled members to reflect on progress made locally, alongside wider national developments relating to safeguarding. The Group has also reviewed and agreed revised Terms of Reference, providing greater clarity regarding its role, remit and future operation.

Welsh Government representatives have continued to provide updates on national safeguarding developments, including reviews of safeguarding governance arrangements and school governance. The Board will continue to monitor these developments and consider any implications for local policy, practice and assurance arrangements.

Reporting Arrangements

Given the maturity of the programme and the increasing emphasis on assurance and impact measurement, the Board has considered its future reporting arrangements. Subject to Cabinet's agreement, this will be the final quarterly report, with future reports being presented on a termly basis.

This will align more closely with the Board's meeting cycle and the timescales required to assess meaningful progress against outcome measures.

Next Steps

As the Board moves into the next quarter, it will:

1. Continue to oversee delivery of the remaining actions within the Response Plan and monitor progress across all seven themes.
2. Review the implementation of the agreed impact measures and consider emerging evidence regarding the effectiveness of changes introduced across the programme.
3. Continue to strengthen assurance arrangements by drawing on a range of evidence sources, including audits, surveys, stakeholder engagement, focus groups and qualitative feedback from children, young people, staff and governors.
4. Consider the implications of emerging national and regional safeguarding developments, including changes relating to Part 5 safeguarding arrangements and new national oversight arrangements.

5. Keep under review the Board's future role and reporting arrangements as the programme moves increasingly from implementation towards assurance, impact and long-term sustainability.

Closing Remarks

The Board has now reached a stage where much of the original implementation work has been completed or embedded within normal service arrangements. Increasingly, the Board's focus is shifting towards assurance, impact and sustainability. The development and agreement of a comprehensive suite of outcome measures marks an important milestone in this transition, providing a stronger basis on which to assess whether tangible improvements are being experienced by children, young people, staff and communities.

Professor Sally Holland
Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board
27th October 2026.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet

Item title:	Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board
Cabinet Member:	Paul Rowlinson – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property Dilwyn Morgan – Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing Menna Trenholme – Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
Relevant Officer:	Dylan Owen, Director of Social Services
Meeting date:	10 November 2026

1. Decision Sought:

1.1 That the Cabinet agrees to establish a Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board to maintain an overview and lead on housing developments with care across Gwynedd, led by the Cabinet Members for Housing and Property, Adults Health and Well-being, Corporate Director and Director of Social Services.

1.2 That the functions, membership and arrangements of the Board are in accordance with the Terms of Reference in Part 3.2 of the report.

2. What is the reason why Cabinet needs to make the decision:

2.1 While there has been housing with care developments in Gwynedd over the past few years, it has become clear that many more similar developments are needed. Following the Research report, Llechen Lân, further work was commissioned by *Housing LIN* to consider the evidence on demographics, needs, and availability of suitable accommodation for older people in Gwynedd. See that report in Appendix I. The report shows that there is an urgent need for the development of more housing with care developments across Gwynedd, specifically for older people. In order to meet the need, plans and budgets will need to be co-ordinated across departments as part of the Council's overall housing development planning.

2.2 Whilst supported accommodation (for individuals with a Learning disability for example) and small group homes for children are not currently covered by this report, it is likely that these vital developments would also benefit from a similar overview in the future and could potentially be added to the Programme Board's remit at the appropriate time.

3. Introduction and Logic

3.1 Background/ Introduction

3.1.1 Housing with care needs exist across the social service sectors, with the need for suitable housing for children with disabilities; for children in care; for adults with disabilities; and for vulnerable elderly people who do not need to live in traditional residential homes.

3.1.2 The Adult Department undertook the Llechen Lân research in 2025 and that report recommended investing heavily in alternative methods of providing care and support to older individuals in Gwynedd, including the development of more extra care housing.

3.1.3 As a result, in 2025 the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department and the Housing Department jointly commissioned research on the housing needs for older people in Gwynedd. The research was provided by *Housing LIN* based on the findings of Llechen Lân and other evidence. Their findings show that the needs for extra care and sheltered housing are significant as set out in Appendix I, and as summarised below:

Table 1: Estimated needs for supported and specialist accommodation in Gwynedd

Supported housing types and specialist housing and accommodation	Current Provision	Estimate of Need by 2028	Estimate of Need by 2033	Estimate of Need by 2038	Estimate of Additional Need by 2043
Extra Care Housing (units)	***113***	**286**	**437**	**587**	**729**
Market Housing		*86*	*131*	*176*	*219*
Social Housing		*200*	*306*	*411*	*510*
Sheltered Housing (units)	***674***	**504**	**789**	**1,073**	**1,341**
Market Housing		*151*	*237*	*322*	*402*
Social Housing		*353*	*553*	*751*	*939*
Accessible Housing (units)		**1,149**	**1,726**	**2,289**	**2,799**
Market Housing		*345*	*518*	*687*	*840*
Social Housing		*805*	*1,208*	*1,602*	*1,959*
Age Appropriated Accessible Housing (Social Housing for Over 55s) (units)		**383**	**575**	**763**	**933**
Market Housing		*115*	*173*	*229*	*280*
Social Housing		*268*	*403*	*534*	*653*
Nursing Homes (beds)	***476***	**80**	**167**	**230**	**292**
Residential Homes (beds)	***518***	**-42**	**-7**	**2**	**10**

** Note that specific attention has been given to the number of residential beds to support action on the principle of reducing the number of people who would require traditional residential care, apart from people living with dementia.*

3.1.4 Therefore, Cyngor Gwynedd will need to work collaboratively with housing developers to ensure the availability of suitable accommodation for the county's ageing population over the coming decades. That means a significant programme of work to

continue for years to provide guidance and keep an overview of the planning and implementation of those developments. It should also be noted that a large increase in demand for other types of specialist accommodation is anticipated. Co-ownership of this work as a single Council will be essential to ensure success.

3.1.5 The Welsh Government stated in June 2026 that they want to see an additional 20,000 social houses provided in Wales within 4 years. The Government's goal is to increase the overall social housing stock, to reduce reliance on emergency accommodation and meet the needs of homelessness services. Extra care housing can contribute to this figure by developing homes suitable for the needs of these groups of individuals and enabling them to move to more suitable homes. There is a possibility that this could also release some of their existing homes into the market for the general population, although the numbers of social housing released through this are historically small, as it does not go through the housing register.

3.2 Terms of Reference: Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board

3.2.1 The Programme Board would promote and support cross-departmental collaboration to ensure the provision of suitable accommodation for the population of Gwynedd. It would enable the co-ordination of short and long term plans and ensure co-ordinated financial planning and applications for national funding, with co-ownership across several departments within the Council.

3.2.2 The Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board would consist of the following membership:

- Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
- Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
- Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
- Head of Housing and Property
- Assistant Head of Housing and Property (Housing)
- Assistant Head of Housing and Property (Property)
- Head of Adults, Health and Wellbeing
- Assistant Head of Commissioning/Business
- Director of Social Services
- Corporate Director
- Head of Children and Supporting Families*

**It is likely that the Head of Children and Supporting Families would not be a full member of the Connected Households Programme Board in the first instance, but would join as children's issues were considered by the board.*

3.2.3 See recommended roles in the table below.

Table 2: Recommended Roles

Chair		
**********		
Thematic Portfolios		
People Portfolio	**Housing Portfolio**	
Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being	Cabinet Member for Housing and Property	
Corporate Director of Social Services	Corporate Director	
Heads of Service		
Head of Adults' Services	Head of Housing & Property	
Programme Management		
Development Work	**Project Management**	**Commissioning Arrangements**
Assistant Head of Housing & Property (Property)	Assistant Head of Housing & Property (Housing)	Assistant Head of Commissioning / Business

3.2.4 The Board would meet quarterly to provide guidance and to keep track of specific projects and developments:

- Suitable accommodation for older people (e.g. sheltered and extra care housing)
- Supported Accommodation for adults with a disability
- It could be agreed within the Board to add other relevant matters/workstreams if the Board members unanimously agreed to do so.

3.2.5 Having received the proposed report on the needs of small homes for children in Gwynedd it is possible that the scope could be expanded to include houses for small group homes for children.

3.2.6 Additional suitable human resources will be required to lead on the programme and to co-ordinate specific projects within the programme. There will be further discussions on this between the relevant Departments to agree the resource and funding.

3.3 **Next steps**

3.3.1 If Cabinet agrees to establish a Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board, the intention is to hold the first meeting within the month and lay the foundations for the Board's development over the coming years.

3.3.2 One of the first considerations of the Programme Board would be to agree milestones from 2027 onwards between the three departments, Housing and Property, Adults, and Children and Supporting Families. These would feed in to the 'A Homely Gwynedd' and 'A Caring Gwynedd' elements of the Council's Plan.

4. Statutory Officers' Remarks.

4.1 Chief Finance Officer

The content of the Housing LIN report presents a clear and worrying picture of the housing and care developments that will be necessary over the coming years. The decision sought does not commit the Council to expenditure at this time and I welcome the intention to establish a Programme Board to deal with this difficult situation. In doing so, I expect that any developments will be subject to recognised programme/project management arrangements and that this in turn will provide an opportunity to ensure that sound financial discipline and control are an integral part of the programme moving forward. It is a core part of the governance of such programmes that regular financial advice is received from relevant officers from the Finance Department.

4.2 Monitoring Officer

The intention to create a Homes that Encourage Independence Programme Board appears to be an opportunity to promote and strengthen collaboration within the Council in areas that are significantly intertwined. The establishment of a cross-departmental planning board, with clearly defined membership and terms of reference, provides an acceptable governance solution. I am satisfied that the decision being sought is appropriate and justified.

Attachment List:

Appendix I: *Housing LIN* report on Gwynedd's care housing needs

Housing need assessment for older people in Gwynedd

Report for Gwynedd Council

Version: 2.0

Status: Final

9th June 2026

Housing Learning and Improvement Network

Contents

Executive summary 4

1. Introduction 15

2. Policy context 17

National policy context 17

Gwynedd policy context 19

3. Baseline population projections and population characteristics 21

Demographic projections 21

Tenure and income characteristics 24

Health and social care characteristics 27

4. Current supply of specialist housing for older people 31

5. Stakeholder and older persons' perspectives 33

Professional stakeholders 33

Older persons' perspectives 34

Likelihood of moving 35

Preferred Housing model 36

Factors influencing moving 36

Preferred area to move 37

6. Estimated need for specialist housing and accommodation for older people 39

Estimated need for sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing 39

Estimated need for accessible housing for older people 48

Estimated need for age designated accessible housing (subset of estimated need for accessible housing) 49

Estimated care home capacity requirements for people 65+ 53

Supply of care homes for people 65+ 53

Trends in older persons aged 65+ living in residential and nursing care homes who are eligible for adult social care (ASC) from Gwynedd Council 55

Estimated future care home capacity need for people 65+ to 2043 56

Estimated need for care home 65+ bed provision 62

7. Summary 66

8. Trends in contemporary housing for older people 69

Age designated housing 69

Sheltered and retirement housing 70

Contemporary new build 70

Refurbished sheltered housing 72
Extra care housing 74
Intergenerational communities 77
Care homes 79
Annexe 1 : Supporting evidence 82
Annexe 2 : Glossary 85

party Executive summary

The purpose of this research is to provide an evidence base that provides estimates of future need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation for the administrative area of Gwynedd Council.

The assessment covers need for different types of housing suited to older people, specifically the need for specialist and supported housing and accommodation for older people by 2043.

A range of sources of data and evidence have been used as part of the methodology including:

- Demographic data and projections produced by the Office for National Statistics and data from the Welsh Government
- Data produced by Gwynedd Council in relation to the size and characteristics of older population
- Expertise and insights from a wide range of stakeholders

The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation are produced in five-year intervals from a base year of 2025.

The table below shows estimated need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation for older people in Gwynedd. These estimates are further disaggregated by 13 sub areas in Gwynedd.

It is recommended that these estimates are reviewed and refreshed at least every 5 years.

Table 1. The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	***113***	**286**	**437**	**587**	**729**
Market housing		*86*	*131*	*176*	*219*
Social housing		*200*	*306*	*411*	*510*
Sheltered housing (units)	***674***	**504**	**789**	**1,073**	**1,341**
Market housing		*151*	*237*	*322*	*402*
Social housing		*353*	*553*	*751*	*939*
Accessible housing (units)		**1,149**	**1,726**	**2,289**	**2,799**
Market housing		*345*	*518*	*687*	*840*
Social housing		*805*	*1,208*	*1,602*	*1,959*
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		**383**	**575**	**763**	**933**
Market housing		*115*	*173*	*229*	*280*
Social housing		*268*	*403*	*534*	*653*
Nursing care homes (beds)	***476***	**80**	**167**	**230**	**292**
Residential care homes (beds)	***518***	**-42**	**-7**	**2**	**10**

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Figure 1. Estimated need of Sheltered and extra care housing for older people Gwynedd by subareas to 2043

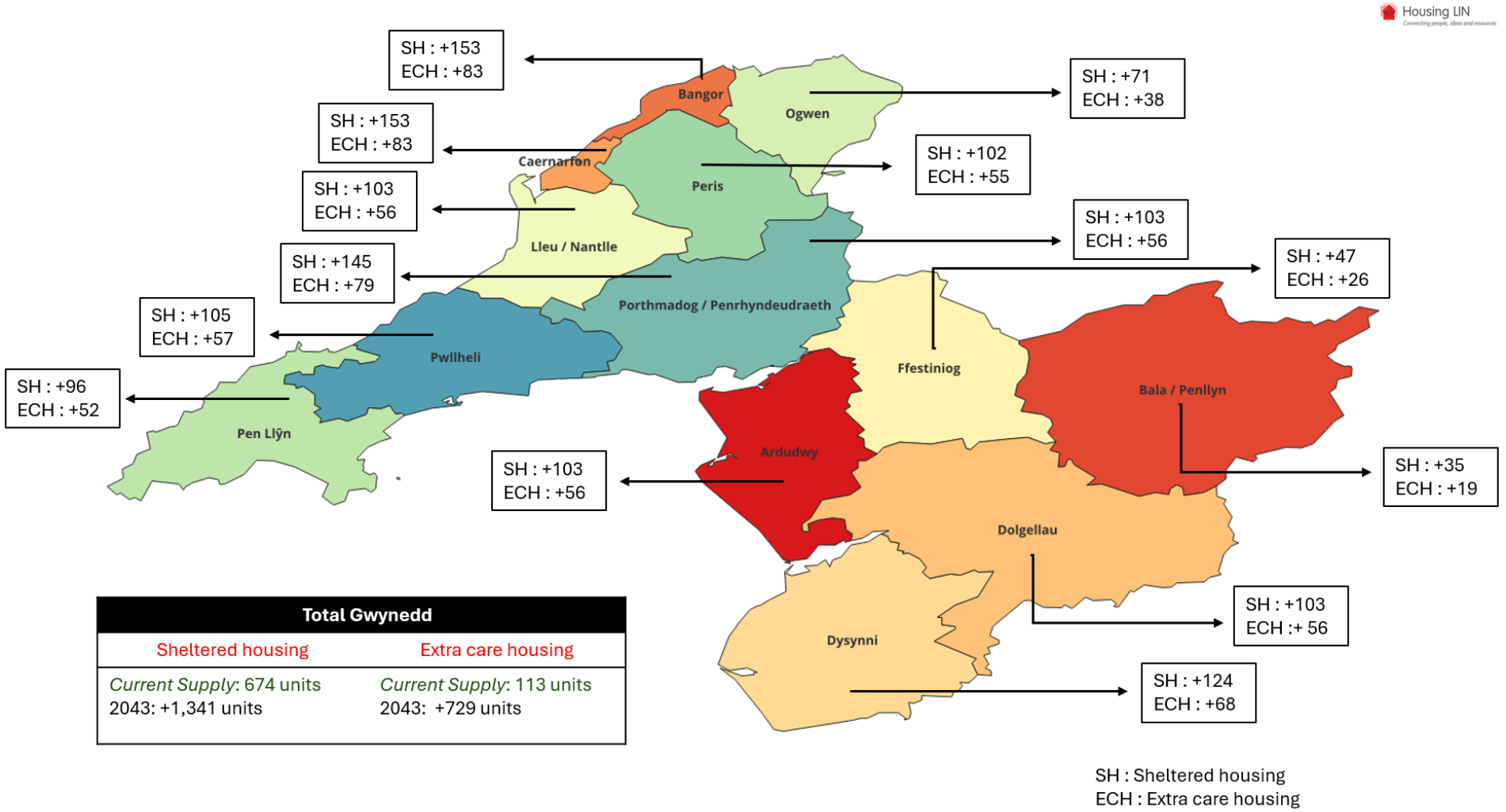


Figure 2. Estimated need of accessible and age designated housing for older people Gwynedd by subareas to 2043

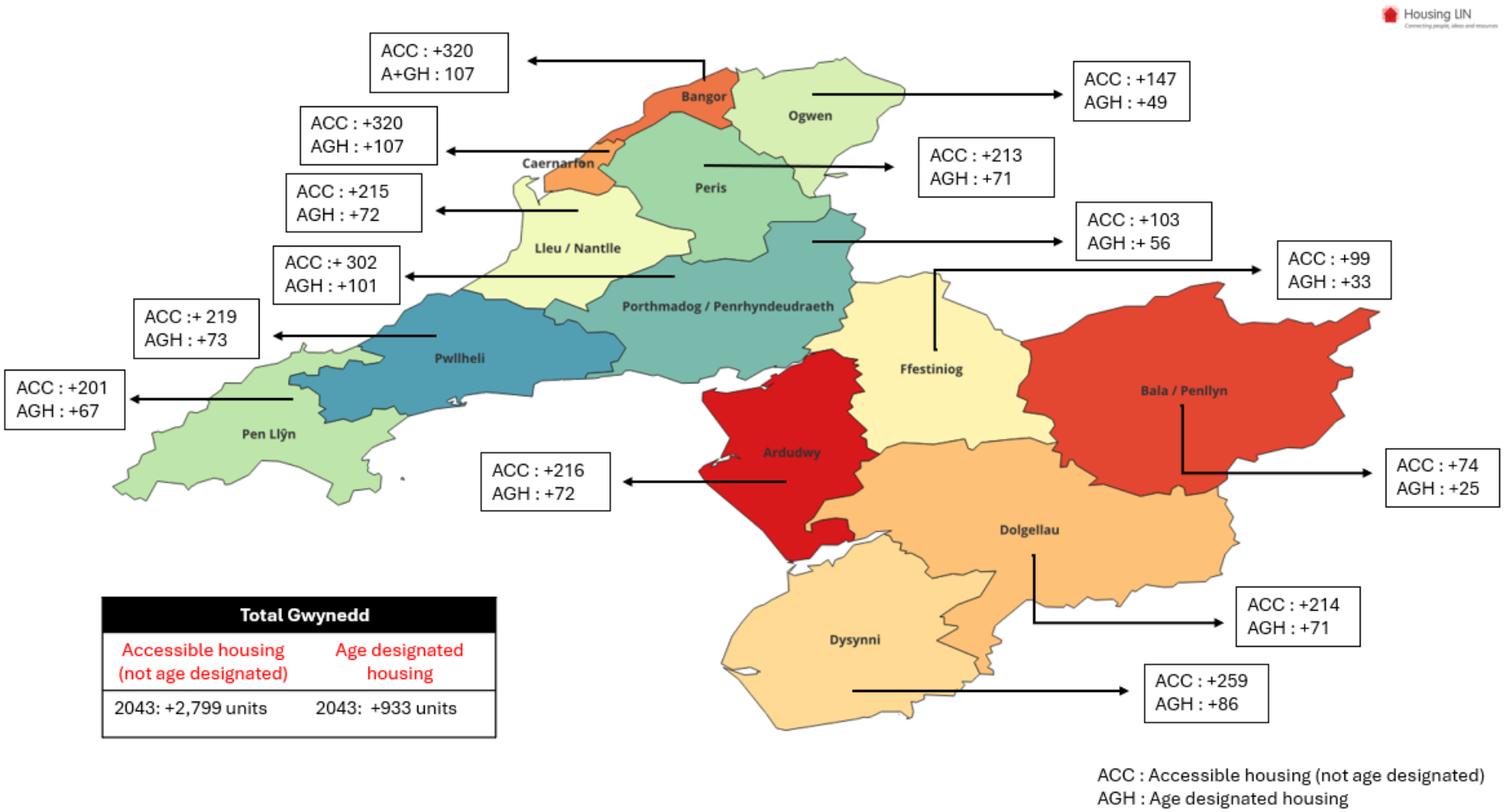
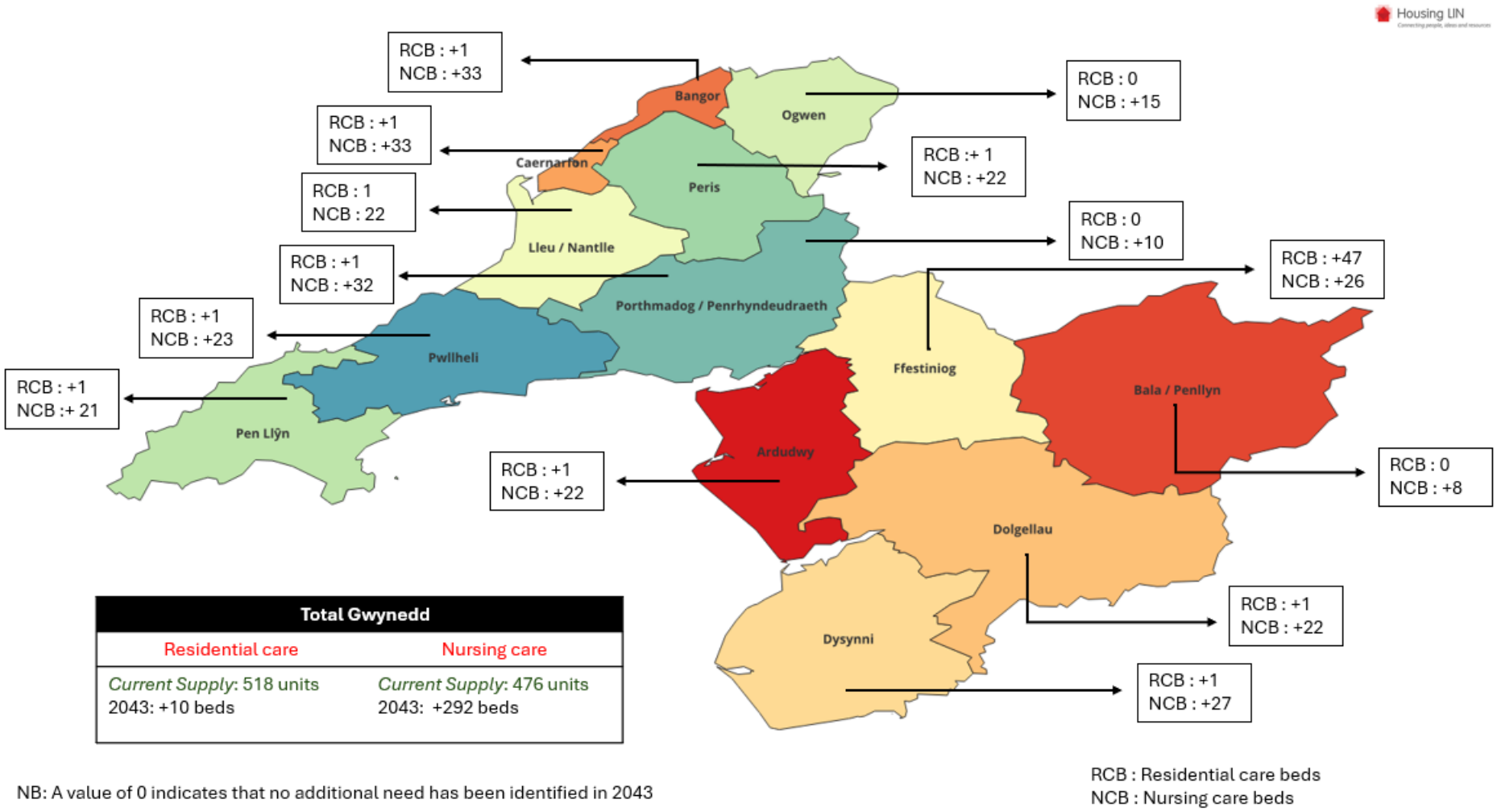


Figure 3. Estimated need for residential and nursing care home beds in Gwynedd by subareas to 2043



The summary by sub areas in Gwynedd is given in below tables:

Table 2. Ardudwy: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	22	34	45	56
Market housing		7	10	14	17
Social housing		15	24	32	39
Sheltered housing (units)	*34*	39	61	83	103
Market housing		12	18	25	31
Social housing		27	43	58	72
Accessible housing (units)		89	133	176	216
Market housing		27	40	53	65
Social housing		62	93	123	151
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		30	44	59	72
Market housing		9	13	18	22
Social housing		21	31	41	50
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	13	18	22
Residential care homes (beds)	*0*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 3. Bala / Penllyn: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*30*	8	11	15	19
Market housing		2	3	5	6
Social housing		5	8	11	13
Sheltered housing (units)	*69*	13	21	28	35
Market housing		4	6	8	11
Social housing		9	15	20	25
Accessible housing (units)		30	45	60	74
Market housing		9	14	18	22
Social housing		21	32	42	52
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		10	15	20	25
Market housing		3	5	6	7
Social housing		7	11	14	17
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	2	4	6	8
Residential care homes (beds)	*11*	- 1	- 0	0	0

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 4. Bangor: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*43*	33	50	67	83
Market housing		10	15	20	25

Social housing		23	35	47	58
Sheltered housing (units)	*126*	58	90	123	153
Market housing		17	27	37	46
Social housing		40	63	86	107
Accessible housing (units)		131	197	261	320
Market housing		39	59	78	96
Social housing		92	138	183	224
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		44	66	87	107
Market housing		13	20	26	32
Social housing		31	46	61	75
Nursing care homes (beds)	*78*	9	19	26	33
Residential care homes (beds)	*28*	- 5	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)
NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 5. Caernarfon: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	33	50	67	83
Market housing		10	15	20	25
Social housing		23	35	47	58
Sheltered housing (units)	*123*	58	90	123	153
Market housing		17	27	37	46
Social housing		40	63	86	107
Accessible housing (units)		131	197	262	320
Market housing		39	59	78	96
Social housing		92	138	183	224
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		44	66	87	107
Market housing		13	20	26	32
Social housing		31	46	61	75
Nursing care homes (beds)	*162*	9	19	26	33
Residential care homes (beds)	*226*	- 5	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)
NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 6. Dolgellau: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	22	33	45	56
Market housing		7	10	13	17
Social housing		15	23	31	39
Sheltered housing (units)	*38*	39	60	82	103
Market housing		12	18	25	31
Social housing		27	42	58	72
Accessible housing (units)		88	132	175	214
Market housing		26	40	53	64

Social housing		62	93	123	150
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		29	44	58	71
Market housing		9	13	18	21
Social housing		21	31	41	50
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	13	18	22
Residential care homes (beds)	*52*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 7. Dysynni: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	26	40	54	68
Market housing		8	12	16	20
Social housing		19	28	38	47
Sheltered housing (units)	*31*	47	73	99	124
Market housing		14	22	30	37
Social housing		33	51	70	87
Accessible housing (units)		107	160	212	259
Market housing		32	48	64	78
Social housing		75	112	149	182
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		36	53	71	86
Market housing		11	16	21	26
Social housing		25	37	50	61
Nursing care homes (beds)	*55*	7	15	21	27
Residential care homes (beds)	*38*	- 4	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 8. Ffestiniog: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	10	15	21	26
Market housing		3	5	6	8
Social housing		7	11	14	18
Sheltered housing (units)	*13*	18	28	38	47
Market housing		5	8	11	14
Social housing		12	19	26	33
Accessible housing (units)		40	61	81	99
Market housing		12	18	24	30
Social housing		28	43	56	69
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		13	20	27	33
Market housing		4	6	8	10
Social housing		9	14	19	23
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	3	6	8	10

Residential care homes (beds)	*0*	- 1	- 0	0	0

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 9. Lleu / Nantlle: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	22	34	45	56
Market housing		7	10	14	17
Social housing		15	24	32	39
Sheltered housing (units)	*44*	39	61	83	103
Market housing		12	18	25	31
Social housing		27	42	58	72
Accessible housing (units)		88	133	176	215
Market housing		27	40	53	65
Social housing		62	93	123	151
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		29	44	59	72
Market housing		9	13	18	22
Social housing		21	31	41	50
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	13	18	22
Residential care homes (beds)	*0*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 10. Ogwen: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	15	23	31	38
Market housing		5	7	9	12
Social housing		11	16	22	27
Sheltered housing (units)	*10*	27	42	56	71
Market housing		8	12	17	21
Social housing		19	29	40	49
Accessible housing (units)		60	91	120	147
Market housing		18	27	36	44
Social housing		42	64	84	103
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		20	30	40	49
Market housing		6	9	12	15
Social housing		14	21	28	34
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	4	9	12	15
Residential care homes (beds)	*27*	- 2	- 0	0	0

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 11. Pen Llŷn: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	21	31	42	52
Market housing		6	9	13	16
Social housing		14	22	29	37
Sheltered housing (units)	*16*	36	57	77	96
Market housing		11	17	23	29
Social housing		25	40	54	67
Accessible housing (units)		83	124	164	201
Market housing		25	37	49	60
Social housing		58	87	115	141
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		28	41	55	67
Market housing		8	12	16	20
Social housing		19	29	38	47
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	12	17	21
Residential care homes (beds)	*50*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 12. Peris: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	22	33	45	55
Market housing		7	10	13	17
Social housing		15	23	31	39
Sheltered housing (units)	*0*	38	60	82	102
Market housing		11	18	24	31
Social housing		27	42	57	71
Accessible housing (units)		87	131	174	213
Market housing		26	39	52	64
Social housing		61	92	122	149
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		29	44	58	71
Market housing		9	13	17	21
Social housing		20	31	41	50
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	13	17	22
Residential care homes (beds)	*0*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)

NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 13. Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*40*	31	47	63	79
Market housing		9	14	19	24

Social housing		22	33	44	55
Sheltered housing (units)	*126*	54	85	116	145
Market housing		16	26	35	43
Social housing		38	60	81	101
Accessible housing (units)		124	186	247	302
Market housing		37	56	74	91
Social housing		87	130	173	212
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		41	62	82	101
Market housing		12	19	25	30
Social housing		29	43	58	71
Nursing care homes (beds)	*181*	9	18	25	32
Residential care homes (beds)	*41*	- 5	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)
NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

Table 14. Pwllheli: The estimates of the need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	*0*	22	34	46	57
Market housing		7	10	14	17
Social housing		16	24	32	40
Sheltered housing (units)	*44*	39	62	84	105
Market housing		12	19	25	32
Social housing		28	43	59	74
Accessible housing (units)		90	135	179	219
Market housing		27	41	54	66
Social housing		63	95	125	153
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		30	45	60	73
Market housing		9	14	18	22
Social housing		21	32	42	51
Nursing care homes (beds)	*0*	6	13	18	23
Residential care homes (beds)	*45*	- 3	- 1	0	1

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)
NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

1. Introduction

1.01 The intention of this assessment is to identify the need for different types of housing suited to older people, specifically the need for specialist and supported housing and accommodation for older people by 2043 in Gwynedd, including:

- Sheltered housing
- Extra care housing
- Accessible age-designated housing (as distinct from sheltered housing, i.e. age designated housing typically does not have the communal facilities and level of staff support usually associated with sheltered housing); in the context of the Council's brief, this includes social housing for people 55+
- Accessible housing, i.e. housing designed to meet the needs of disabled people and older people (but which is not age designated), e.g. designed to Lifetime Homes standards and/or M4(2) accessibility standard.
- Residential care (including for people with dementia)
- Nursing care (including for people with dementia)

1.02 This assessment covers the need for specialist and supported housing and accommodation amongst the overall older population in Gwynedd including older people (aged 65+) who will need to self-fund their housing and care and for people who are eligible for adult social care support from Gwynedd Council; for this latter cohort of the older population this need may include affordable sheltered housing, extra care housing age-designated housing and accessible housing provided by Registered Social Landlords and care home capacity (placements) funded and/or arranged by Gwynedd Council.

1.03 This housing need assessment for older people in Gwynedd, including an assessment of need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation, follows the Council's specification and contains:

- Introduction: purpose of the research, structure of report and methodology
- Policy context
- Baseline population projections and population characteristics
- Current supply of specialist housing for older people
- Stakeholder and older persons' perspectives
- Detailed assessment of estimated need for housing and accommodation for older people
- Summary of estimated housing and accommodation need for older people
- Trends in and examples of contemporary housing and accommodation for older people
- Annexe 1: Supporting evidence
- Annexe 2: Glossary

1.04 The assessment of need for housing and accommodation suited to the needs of older people draws on a range of evidence, including:

- National and local policy context.

- Demographic evidence: current population and projected population of older people in Gwynedd (Gwynedd Council area and its localities) to 2043.
- Data from Gwynedd Council in relation to the services it provides for older people
- Current provision of specialist housing and accommodation for older people.
- Local stakeholder perspectives and intelligence.
- Evidence from a recent survey of residents, including older people, conducted by Gwynedd Council

2. Policy context

National policy context

2.01 There is a range of national policy that is intended to promote a wider range of housing options and choices suited to older people.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

2.02 The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

2.03 The fundamental principles of the Act are:

- **Voice and control** – putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.
- **Prevention and early intervention** – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.
- **Well-being** – supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.
- **Co-production** – encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015[1]

2.04 This Act provides the overarching framework for how public bodies in Wales plan and delivers services, making it directly relevant to later living and the relationship between housing and social care. The Act places a legal duty on organisations such as local authorities and health boards to work towards seven national wellbeing goals, including creating a healthier, more equal Wales with cohesive communities. It also requires them to adopt long-term, preventive, and integrated approaches.

2.05 In practice, this means recognising housing as a key determinant of health and wellbeing and ensuring that housing policy and social care provision are developed in tandem. Accessible, adaptable homes and integrated models such as extra care housing have the potential to reduce demand for residential care and hospital services.

Prosperity for All: The National Strategy (2017)[2]

2.06 National strategy detailing the Welsh Government's key priorities recognises that 'good housing plays a critical role in healthy, independent ageing'.

2.07 In relation to older people, it states that Wales will build more purpose-built housing developments that will allow people to live independently within a protected and sheltered environment, located close to easily accessible public transport.

Age friendly Wales: our strategy for an ageing society (2021)[3]

2.08 It sets out a vision of an 'age friendly Wales that supports people to live and age well'.

2.09 The strategy aims to unlock the potential of today's older people and tomorrow's ageing society and adopts a rights-based approach that promotes equality and social justice across a

[1] https://www.gov.wales/well-being-of-future-generations-wales
[2] https://wcva.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Prosperity-for-all.pdf
[3] https://www.gov.wales/age-friendly-wales-our-strategy-ageing-society-html

range of policy areas and places the older people's voice at the core of Welsh Government policy making.

Strategy for an Ageing Society: Delivery Plan 2022[4]

2.10 The Delivery Plan makes reference to housing under 'Aim 2: Improving local services and environments' where it states they will:

- Support the growth of new housing models that support people to age well
- Co-ordinate housing, health and social care capital programmes
- Make sure housing in Wales is of an acceptable standard

2.11 It also specifically references funding for extra care housing from April 2022 to March 2027 by means of the Integrated Care Fund.

Older Persons' Commissioner for Wales: Commissioner's Strategy 2025-28[5]

2.12 The Older Persons' Commissioner for Wales sets out priorities that include identifying opportunities to improve the support available to ensure older people can live safely and independently in their own homes.

2.13 This strategy seeks to enabling older people to live and stay well in their communities by ensuring that older peoples' experiences inform Welsh Government policy on preventative healthcare and are reflected in the delivery of front-line services.

National housing strategy (2021–2026)

2.14 The Welsh Government's national housing strategy (2021–2026) aims to deliver 20,000 new, high-quality, low-carbon social homes for rent, focusing on decarbonization, social justice, and reducing homelessness. Key pillars include strengthening the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS 2023), improving energy efficiency, and preventing evictions

Older people and people living with frailty: integrated quality statement (2024)[6]

2.15 This sets out what "good" looks like for health and social care for older people, especially those living with frailty. It emphasises helping people stay independent, connected to their community, having choice, and being able to live their later years in the place of their choosing.

Are homes in Wales meeting the needs of an ageing population?[7] **(2024)**

2.16 This briefing paper by the Welsh Senedd provides a snapshot of the policies and strategies in Wales for meeting the housing needs of an ageing population.

2.17 Over and above the demographic challenges, it looks at four particular areas and sets out some of the actions to address these. They are:

- Poor quality or unsafe housing
- A shortage of accessible and adaptable housing
- A lack of housing options for older people

[4] https://www.gov.wales/strategy-ageing-society-delivery-plan
[5] https://olderpeople.wales/commissioners-strategy-2025-28/
[6] https://www.gov.wales/older-people-and-people-living-frailty-integrated-quality-statement-html
[7] https://research.senedd.wales/research-articles/are-homes-in-wales-meeting-the-needs-of-an-ageing-population/

- Demands on health and social care services

Housing Support Grant (HSG) Practice Guidance[8] (2025)

2.18 The Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme is the policy and funding framework for delivering housing-related support to vulnerable people in different types of accommodation and across all tenures.

2.19 The HSG is an amalgamation of three existing grants: the Supporting People Programme Grant, the Homelessness Prevention Grant and the Rent Smart Wales Enforcement Grant.

2.20 The programme contributes to meeting the aims of 'Improving Lives and Communities - Homes in Wales', the National Housing Strategy and the ten-year Homelessness Plan, with a strong emphasis on the prevention of homelessness. It is also essential in assisting the local authorities to fulfil their duties under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Gwynedd policy context

2.21 Whilst the national policy context (above) encourages local authorities to commission and facilitate a wide range of housing and accommodation options suited to older people, in 2024 Gwynedd Council published a report titled Llechen Lân ('A clean slate'). This report sets out the perfect storm facing Gwynedd Council in relation to meeting the care/support and related accommodation needs of the older population in Gwynedd over the next 20 years:

- An increasing older population, particularly amongst the 'older, older' population aged 70+
- A declining working age population, available to work providing care and support
- Long waiting lists for access to social care services for older people
- The Council's budget to meet the costs of social care for older people is insufficient to meet current demand let alone predicted future demand for care/support
- A current traditional mix of care responses to current demand, e.g. domiciliary care and care homes.
- The need to build on the use of 'preventative' services that may mitigate some of these issues, such as the use of technology, strengths based social work and care practices and accommodation with care models such as extra care housing.

2.22 Without intervention to mitigate these trends, the assessment of this evidence provides a stark conclusion:

"…the social care provision situation for older people in Gwynedd is neither viable nor sustainable. The growth in demand could lead to a shortfall in funding and human resources that would be sufficient to put the Council under extreme financial pressure."

2.23 However, based on an assessment of this evidence the Llechen Lân report also concludes that, *"Having considered the evidence of other counties, the report suggests that social services in Gwynedd would be able to reduce demand and pressure on services for older people by operating differently, but even then, a gap remains in the potential provision and in the funding and workforce available to provide it. "*

[8] https://www.gov.wales/housing-support-grant-practice-guidance

2.24 The range of responses that are proposed to mitigate and manage the situation summarised above, include:

- Community work
- Strength-based working
- Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

2.25 Extra care housing / suitable accommodation models. Anecdotal evidence from providers of extra care housing suggests that it is easier to recruit and retain care staff in these schemes (compared to providing domiciliary care) as staff don't have to travel to clients and tend to have more time for informal interactions with residents.

2.26 In relation to housing and accommodation for older people, the report suggests:

- Increasing demand for residential care can be mitigated, in part, through the development of additional extra care housing services
- There is anticipated to be an increasing need for nursing and residential care for people living with dementia (and other complex health and care needs)
- The role and use of technology can be increased substantially to support older people to remain living independently in their own homes (which could include specialist housing such as extra care housing)

2.27 Whilst the Llechen Lân report doesn't specifically refer to the role of other types of age designated housing, such as sheltered housing, and housing designed to be accessible to better meet the needs of older people to age in place, this assessment of need for different housing and accommodation options for older people is in part a development of the Llechen Lân report and is intended to cover a wide range of housing and accommodation options to provide a part of the evidence base that the Council requires to implement the mitigations outlined in the Llechen Lân report, including:

- Sheltered housing
- Extra care housing
- Age-designated housing (as distinct from sheltered housing, i.e. age designated housing does not have the communal facilities and staff support usually associated with sheltered housing)
- Accessible housing, i.e. housing designed to meet the needs of disabled people and older people (but which is not age designated) e.g. designed to Lifetime Homes standards and/or M4(2) accessibility standard.
- Residential care
- Nursing care
- Residential/nursing care for people with dementia

2.28 To align with the findings of the Llechen Lân report, assumptions are made that reflect the type of mitigating actions that the Council will take, for example, increasing the amount and role of extra care housing as an accommodation with care setting that can support some older people instead of a move to a residential care home.

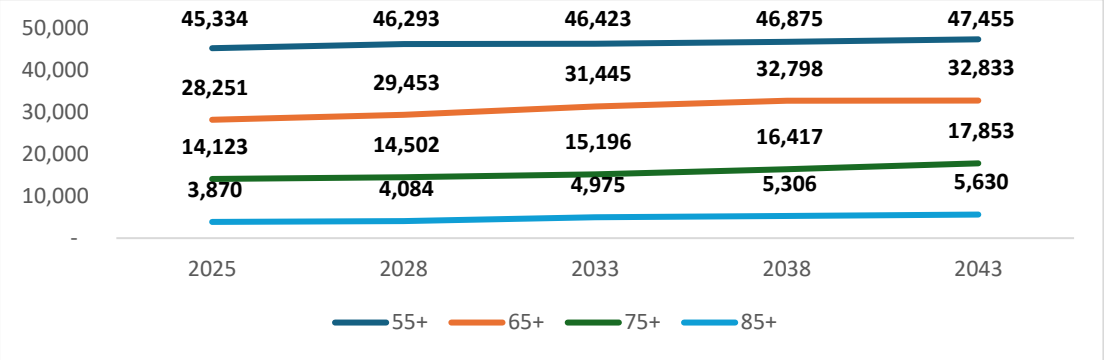
3. Baseline population projections and population characteristics

Demographic projections

3.01 To identify the current older population in Gwynedd, the ONS 2021 census has been used which identifies the number of people over the age of 55, 65, 75 and 85.

3.02 To produce population projections for the number of people aged 55+, 65+, 75+ and 85+, the most recent population projections for Wales (2018-based) growth rates data has been applied to data from the ONS 2021 census for the years 2025, 2028, 2033, 2038 and 2043.

Figure 4. Population projections for people aged 55+, 65+, 75+ and 85+ in Gwynedd.



Source: ONS Census 2021, population projections for Wales (2018-based) and Gwynedd Council

3.03 For the purposes of this assessment, Gwynedd has been divided into 13 sub-areas, based on groupings of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs).

3.04 For populations in locality based sub areas in Gwynedd, the estimates are produced from sub–local authority population projections for areas within the county, using the same methodology as the 2018-based projections for Gwynedd as a whole. However, comparison with the 2021 Census identified discrepancies between Census counts and the 2018-based projected population for 2021. To address this, projections were rebased to the 2021 Census. This was achieved by applying the percentage change between the 2021 and future-year projections from the 2018-based model to the 2021 Census baseline, ensuring consistency with observed population data.

Table 15. Population projections for people aged 55+, 65+, 75+and 85+ in Gwynedd by sub areas

Age	Sub areas	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
55+	*Ardudwy*	3,244	3,312	3,321	3,354	3,395
	Bala / Penllyn	1,788	1,826	1,831	1,849	1,872
	Bangor	4,863	4,966	4,980	5,029	5,091
	Caernarfon	3,894	3,976	3,987	4,026	4,076
	Dolgellau	2,495	2,548	2,555	2,580	2,612
	Dysynni	3,818	3,899	3,910	3,948	3,997
	Ffestiniog	2,398	2,449	2,456	2,480	2,510
	Lleu / Nantlle	3,723	3,802	3,813	3,850	3,897
	Ogwen	2,808	2,868	2,876	2,904	2,940
	Pen Llŷn	3,559	3,634	3,644	3,680	3,725
	Peris	3,993	4,077	4,089	4,129	4,180
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	4,628	4,725	4,739	4,785	4,844
	Pwllheli	4,123	4,210	4,222	4,263	4,316
	Gwynedd	**45,334**	**46,293**	**46,423**	**46,875**	**47,455**
65+	*Ardudwy*	2,112	2,172	2,316	2,415	2,406

Age	Sub areas	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
	Bala / Penllyn	1,109	1,185	1,293	1,357	1,396
	Bangor	2,965	3,140	3,405	3,623	3,639
	Caernarfon	2,462	2,588	2,789	2,944	2,946
	Dolgellau	1,484	1,531	1,640	1,700	1,683
	Dysynni	2,458	2,515	2,606	2,599	2,561
	Ffestiniog	1,411	1,475	1,575	1,610	1,585
	Lleu / Nantlle	2,248	2,353	2,534	2,662	2,619
	Ogwen	1,651	1,755	1,889	1,996	1,969
	Pen Llŷn	2,298	2,403	2,588	2,710	2,719
	Peris	2,452	2,568	2,763	2,905	2,866
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	3,067	3,116	3,195	3,238	3,258
	Pwllheli	2,535	2,652	2,853	3,039	3,186
	Gwynedd	**28,251**	**29,453**	**31,445**	**32,798**	**32,833**
75+	*Ardudwy*	1,028	1,029	1,070	1,152	1,269
	Bala / Penllyn	534	553	609	711	793
	Bangor	1,506	1,553	1,669	1,870	2,053
	Caernarfon	1,370	1,449	1,537	1,652	1,800
	Dolgellau	683	688	721	772	850
	Dysynni	1,256	1,243	1,254	1,285	1,365
	Ffestiniog	669	685	715	792	868
	Lleu / Nantlle	1,083	1,138	1,198	1,285	1,400
	Ogwen	729	749	797	895	983
	Pen Llŷn	1,169	1,199	1,275	1,384	1,518
	Peris	1,158	1,221	1,283	1,373	1,498
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	1,652	1,674	1,675	1,736	1,797
	Pwllheli	1,287	1,320	1,394	1,511	1,660
	Gwynedd	**14,123**	**14,502**	**15,196**	**16,417**	**17,853**
85+	*Ardudwy*	245	256	299	311	337
	Bala / Penllyn	142	147	172	200	230
	Bangor	417	436	541	590	641
	Caernarfon	388	427	533	596	624
	Dolgellau	191	200	235	242	263
	Dysynni	382	393	464	444	460
	Ffestiniog	186	187	222	243	261
	Lleu / Nantlle	272	300	376	416	434
	Ogwen	163	171	212	231	250
	Pen Llŷn	360	376	464	491	530
	Peris	280	308	385	428	447
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	492	514	616	635	637
	Pwllheli	352	368	457	479	518
	Gwynedd	**3,870**	**4,084**	**4,975**	**5,306**	**5,630**

Source: ONS Census 2021, population projections for Wales (2018-based) and Gwynedd Council

3.05 This demographic evidence indicates that for Gwynedd from 2025 to 2043:

- The 55+ population is projected to increase from 45,334 to 47,455, an increase of 2,121 people (5%).

- The 65+ population is projected to increase from 28,251 to 32,833, an increase of 4,582 people (16%).
- The 75+ population is projected to increase from 14,123 to 17,853, an increase of 3,730 people (26%).
- The 85+ population is projected to increase from 3,870 to 5,630, an increase of 1,760 people (45%).

3.06 The sub areas with the greatest projected increases in the older population are:

- For the 55+ population, the largest absolute increases are projected in Bangor, Caernarfon, Pwllheli, and Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth.
- For the 65+ population, the strongest growth is expected in Bala / Penllyn (26%), Pwllheli (26%), Bangor (23%) then followed by Caernarfon (20%) and Ogwen (19%).
- For the 75+ population, notable increases are projected across all sub-areas, with particularly strong growth in Bala / Penllyn (49%), Bangor (36%), Ogwen (35%), Caernarfon (31%), Ffestiniog (30%) *(Pen Llŷn and Pwllheli also 30%)*.
- For the 85+ population, the fastest growth is projected in Bala / Penllyn (62%), Caernarfon (61%), Peris (60%), Lleu / Nantlle (59%), Bangor (54%) *(Ogwen also 54%)*., highlighting a significant increase in the oldest age group across both urban and rural parts of Gwynedd.

Table 16. Projected percentage increases in the older population to 2043 (to baseline 2025)

Age	Sub areas	2028	2033	2038	2043
55+	*Ardudwy*	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Bala / Penllyn	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Bangor	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Caernarfon	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Dolgellau	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Dysynni	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Ffestiniog	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Lleu / Nantlle	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Ogwen	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Pen Llŷn	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Peris	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Pwllheli	2%	2%	3%	5%
	Gwynedd	**2%**	**2%**	**3%**	**5%**
65+	*Ardudwy*	3%	10%	14%	14%
	Bala / Penllyn	7%	17%	22%	26%
	Bangor	6%	15%	22%	23%
	Caernarfon	5%	13%	20%	20%
	Dolgellau	3%	11%	15%	13%
	Dysynni	2%	6%	6%	4%
	Ffestiniog	5%	12%	14%	12%
	Lleu / Nantlle	5%	13%	18%	16%
	Ogwen	6%	14%	21%	19%
	Pen Llŷn	5%	13%	18%	18%
	Peris	5%	13%	18%	17%

Age	Sub areas	2028	2033	2038	2043
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	2%	4%	6%	6%
	Pwllheli	5%	13%	20%	26%
	Gwynedd	**4%**	**11%**	**16%**	**16%**
75+	*Ardudwy*	0.1%	4%	12%	23%
	Bala / Penllyn	4%	14%	33%	49%
	Bangor	3%	11%	24%	36%
	Caernarfon	6%	12%	21%	31%
	Dolgellau	1%	6%	13%	24%
	Dysynni	-1%	-0.2%	2%	9%
	Ffestiniog	2%	7%	18%	30%
	Lleu / Nantlle	5%	11%	19%	29%
	Ogwen	3%	9%	23%	35%
	Pen Llŷn	3%	9%	18%	30%
	Peris	5%	11%	18%	29%
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	1%	1%	5%	9%
	Pwllheli	2%	8%	17%	29%
	Gwynedd	**3%**	**8%**	**16%**	**26%**
85+	*Ardudwy*	4%	22%	27%	37%
	Bala / Penllyn	3%	22%	41%	62%
	Bangor	5%	30%	42%	54%
	Caernarfon	10%	37%	53%	61%
	Dolgellau	5%	23%	27%	38%
	Dysynni	3%	21%	16%	20%
	Ffestiniog	1%	19%	31%	40%
	Lleu / Nantlle	10%	38%	53%	59%
	Ogwen	5%	30%	42%	54%
	Pen Llŷn	4%	29%	36%	47%
	Peris	10%	38%	53%	60%
	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	4%	25%	29%	29%
	Pwllheli	5%	30%	36%	47%
	Gwynedd	**6%**	**29%**	**37%**	**45%**

Source: Population projections for Wales (2018-based) and Gwynedd Council

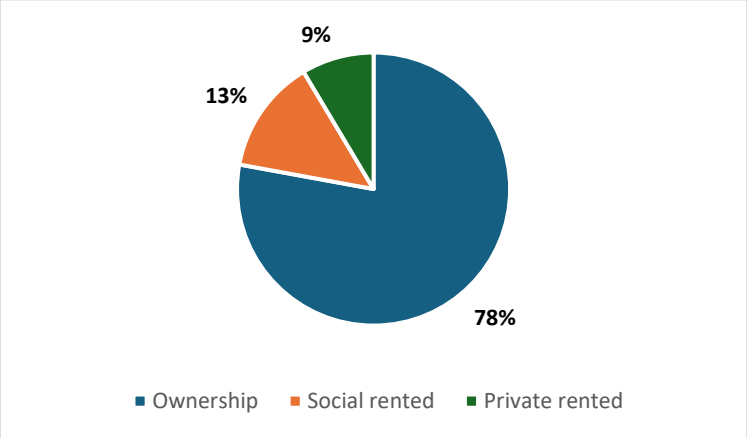
NB: Percentage changes are rounded to the nearest whole number; minor variations exist at sub-area level but do not materially affect the overall pattern.

3.07 The projected increases to 2043 in the 75+ and 85+ populations in particular are significant; this demographic trend suggests a likely increasing need for supported and specialist types of housing and accommodation for older people over the period to 2043.

Tenure and income characteristics

3.08 The majority of households headed by a person aged 65+ are home owners (78%). 13% of households headed by a person aged 65+ live in social housing. 9% of households headed by a person aged 65+ live in private rented housing. This is shown in Table 17.

Figure 5. Tenure split of 65+ households in Gwynedd



Source: ONS Census (2021)

3.09 It should be noted that amongst the 45-64 age group the home ownership rate is considerably lower at 71%. This is likely to be reflected in changes in the tenure split of need for sheltered/retirement housing and for extra care housing as this cohort enters the 65+ age cohort over the next 20 years, i.e. the need for social/affordable sheltered and extra care housing is likely to increase over the period 2033-2043 compared with the period 2025-2033.

Table 17. Household tenure type by different aged households in Gwynedd

Age group	Ownership	%	Social rented	%	Private rented	%	Total	%
45-64	13,577	71%	3,086	16%	2,526	13%	19,189	100%
65+	14,066	78%	2,447	13%	1,548	9%	18,061	100%

Source: ONS Census (2021)

3.10 The equivalent tenure breakdown amongst 65+ and 45 - 64 years households for the Gwynedd sub areas are shown in the table below.

3.11 The sub areas where the percentage of 65+ households who are home owners is lower than the Gwynedd average are Bala, Bangor, Caernarfon, Pen Llŷn and Pwllheli. These areas are likely to have a greater need for affordable sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing.

Table 18. Household tenure type by 65+ and 45-64 years households in Gwynedd by sub area

Sub areas	Age group	Ownership	%	Social rented	%	Private rented	%	Total	%
Ardudwy	65+	1,130	82%	135	10%	120	9%	1,385	100%
Bala / Penllyn		485	70%	118	17%	91	13%	694	100%
Bangor		1,298	69%	473	25%	121	6%	1,892	100%
Caernarfon		991	76%	227	17%	80	6%	1,298	100%
Dolgellau		784	82%	98	10%	79	8%	961	100%
Dysynni		1,159	86%	69	5%	123	9%	1,351	100%
Ffestiniog		760	80%	113	12%	79	8%	952	100%
Lleu / Nantlle		915	80%	148	13%	76	7%	1,139	100%
Ogwen		666	79%	120	14%	61	7%	847	100%
Pen Llŷn		1,116	77%	163	11%	165	11%	1,444	100%
Peris		1,274	81%	199	13%	92	6%	1,565	100%
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth		1,544	81%	214	11%	158	8%	1,916	100%
Pwllheli		1,252	77%	171	10%	209	13%	1,632	100%
Gwynedd		**13,374**	**78%**	**2,248**	**13%**	**1,454**	**9%**	**17,076**	**100%**
Ardudwy	45-64	775	71%	128	12%	195	18%	1,098	100%
Bala / Penllyn		555	72%	108	14%	106	14%	769	100%

Sub areas	Age group	Ownership	%	Social rented	%	Private rented	%	Total	%
Bangor		1,572	64%	611	25%	288	12%	2,471	100%
Caernarfon		945	67%	299	21%	162	12%	1,406	100%
Dolgellau		721	72%	133	13%	145	15%	999	100%
Dysynni		749	76%	89	9%	150	15%	988	100%
Ffestiniog		799	72%	168	15%	148	13%	1,115	100%
Lleu / Nantlle		1,074	77%	194	14%	130	9%	1,398	100%
Ogwen		877	73%	166	14%	157	13%	1,200	100%
Pen Llŷn		894	69%	170	13%	237	18%	1,301	100%
Peris		1,558	80%	213	11%	176	9%	1,947	100%
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth		1,141	73%	206	13%	221	14%	1,568	100%
Pwllheli		1,216	68%	296	17%	267	15%	1,779	100%
Gwynedd		**12,876**	**71%**	**2,781**	**15%**	**2,382**	**13%**	**18,039**	**100%**

Source: ONS Census (2021)

NB: Tenure data at sub-area level has been calculated by aggregating Census 2021 data for the constituent LSOAs within each sub-area. Data is available for 67 of the 71 LSOAs; results for the remaining four LSOAs cannot be published due to personal data protection and disclosure control requirements. As a result, sub-area totals do not sum to the Gwynedd County total.

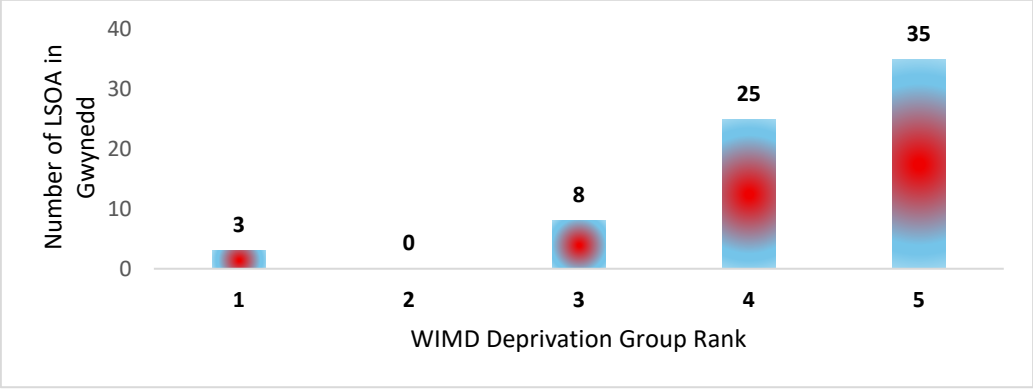
3.12 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2025 identifies relative levels of multiple deprivation across Wales's 1,917 LSOAs, ranking them from most deprived (1) to least deprived (1,917) based on eight deprivation domains including income, employment, health, education, access to services, housing, community safety, and the physical environment. The deprivation groups are ranked 1 to 5 within these, 1 is the most deprived group.

Table 19. WIMD Deprivation group ranks

WIMD 2025 Deprivation Group Rank	Group
10% Most deprived (Rank 1-191)	1
10-20% Most deprived (Rank 192-382)	2
20-30% Most deprived (Rank 383-574)	3
30-50% Most deprived (Rank 575-958)	4
50% Least deprived (Rank 959-1917)	5

Source: WIMD[9]

Figure 6. Distribution of Gwynedd LSOAs across WIMD overall deprivation groups



Source: WIMD (2025)

3.13 WIMD 2025 analysis shows that only three LSOAs (4%) in Gwynedd fall within the most deprived WIMD deprivation group in Wales, while almost half (49%) are among the least

[9] WIMD 2025 available at https://www.gov.wales/welsh-index-multiple-deprivation-2025

deprived WIMD deprivation group, indicating relatively low overall deprivation with limited pockets of higher deprivation.

3.14 Whilst Gwynedd's overall WIMD 2025 deprivation profile is relatively low, the housing domain reveals a markedly different picture. There are 27 neighbourhoods (38% of all neighbourhoods in Gwynedd) within the most housing-deprived 10% in Wales, and 56 neighbourhoods (79%) fall within the most deprived 30% nationally.

3.15 Housing deprivation is widespread across the county, affecting both rural and urban communities. The most deprived neighbourhoods include Deiniolen, Llandderfel and Llanfor, Aberdaron–Botwnnog–Tudweiliog, Efailnewydd and Buan, and Llanuwchllyn and Llanycil, all of which rank among the ten most housing-deprived areas in Wales

3.16 Housing conditions deprivation, poor quality stock and serious hazards is most pronounced in former slate-quarrying communities in the Ffestiniog valley, where older housing stock performs poorly against modern standards.

3.17 Evidence suggests that poor housing conditions and low energy efficiency are key contributors to Gwynedd's housing deprivation profile. Six neighbourhoods are among the ten worst in Wales for poor-quality housing, while nine neighbourhoods rank among the ten worst for housing energy efficiency. Areas such as Llanuwchllyn and Llanycil, Aberdaron–Botwnnog–Tudweiliog, Corris and Mawddwy, and Deiniolen feature prominently on both measures

Health and social care characteristics

3.18 The table below shows that Gwynedd's older population is relatively healthy with over 89% of older people reporting 'very good' or 'fair' health status. Health may influence an older person's decision to move into specialist housing and accommodation. For example, older people reporting 'bad' or 'very bad' health (11% of those aged 65+ in Gwynedd) may be more likely to need specialist housing or accommodation for health-related reasons.

Table 20. Self-reported health status of people aged 65+ living in Gwynedd

Self-reported health status	'Very good' or 'good'	'Fair'	'Bad' or 'very bad'	Total
Number of people (65+)	16,213	7,932	3,127	27,272
% of total counted	59%	29%	11%	100%

Source: ONS Census (2021)

3.19 In Gwynedd, the average life expectancy at age 65 for females during the period 2021–2023 was 21.0 years, which is higher than the Wales average of 20.6 years. For males, life expectancy at age 65 in Gwynedd was 18.5 years, which is slightly higher than the Wales average of 18.2 years over the same period.

3.20 In Gwynedd, in 2024, there were an estimated 2,050 people aged 65 and over living with dementia. Of this total, approximately 1,150 people were aged 65–84, while 900 people were aged 85 and over, highlighting the significant concentration of dementia among the oldest age groups.

Table 21. Estimated/projected number of people living with dementia aged 65+ in Gwynedd

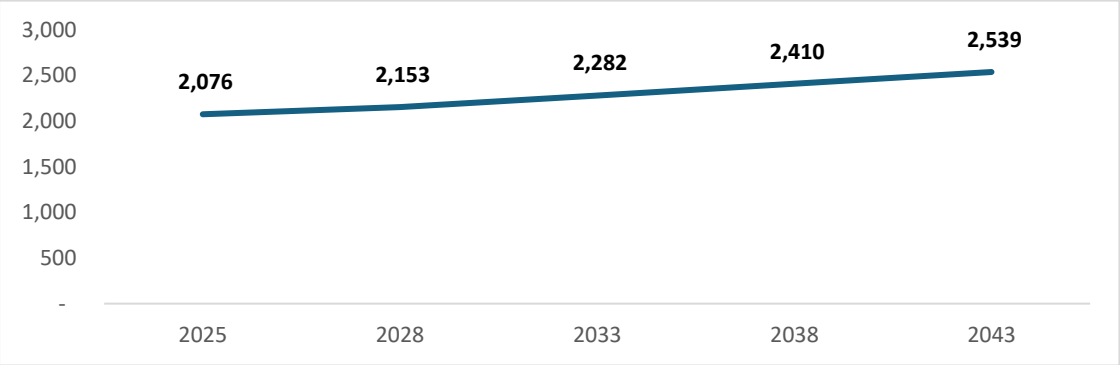
Year	Estimated no. of people living with dementia aged 65+
2021	1,975
2022	1,975

2023	2,025
2024	2,050

Source: North Wales Regional Innovation Coordination Hub
NB: These are estimated/projected numbers not diagnosed people living with dementia

3.21 To estimate the change in the number of people living with dementia to 2043, the average annual growth rate between 2021 and 2024 (c.1%) has been applied. By 2043, the estimated number of people in Gwynedd who are aged 65 plus with dementia is estimated to increase by c.22% to 2,539.

Figure 7. Estimated/projected number of people living with dementia aged 65+ in Gwynedd to 2043



Source: North Wales Regional Innovation Coordination Hub and HLIN
NB: These are estimated/projected numbers not diagnosed people living with dementia

3.22 The severity profile of dementia shows that the majority of individuals are living with moderate to severe dementia, with severe dementia consistently accounting for the largest share of cases over the period 2021–2024. On average, of people living with dementia, 57% were classified as having severe dementia, while a further 28% were assessed as having moderate dementia. Only 15% were estimated to have mild dementia.

Table 22. Number of people 65+ with dementia in Gwynedd by severity

Year	Mild	Moderate	Severe
2021	15%	28%	57%
2022	15%	28%	57%
2023	15%	28%	57%
2024	14%	29%	57%
Average	**15%**	**28%**	**57%**

Source: North Wales Regional Innovation Coordination Hub

3.23 Estimates of dementia severity to 2043 have been derived by applying the average severity distribution observed between 2021 and 2024 to the projected total number of people aged 65+ with dementia to 2043. This approach assumes a stable proportion of mild, moderate and severe dementia over the projection period and provides an indicative estimate of future severity-related need.

Table 23. Estimated of people with dementia 65+ in Gwynedd by severity to 2043

Year	Estimated no. of people with dementia (65+)	Mild	Moderate	Severe
2025	2,076	303	587	1,186
2028	2,153	314	609	1,230
2033	2,282	333	645	1,304

2038	2,410	352	681	1,377
2043	2,539	370	718	1,451

Source: North Wales Regional Innovation Coordination Hub and HLIN

3.24 The projected increase to 2043 in the number of people 65+living with dementia, particularly with severe dementia suggests a likely increasing need for supported and specialist types of housing and accommodation for older people over the period to 2043.

3.25 The total number of older people aged 65+ receiving Adult Social Care (ASC) services from Gwynedd Council has remained broadly stable over the past five years. Overall numbers decreased slightly from 3,175 in 2020/21 to 3,127 in 2024/25, representing a reduction of around 2%. While the total fell steadily between 2021/22 and 2023/24, there was a modest recovery in 2024/25.

3.26 The majority of ASC support continues to be provided to older people living in mainstream housing. Mainstream housing accounted for 2,276 people in 2024/25, representing around 73% of all older ASC service users. Numbers declined from 2,411 in 2021/22 to 2,200 in 2023/24 before increasing slightly in the most recent year. Despite this fluctuation, mainstream housing remains by far the predominant setting for support.

3.27 Residential and nursing care provision has increased steadily over the period. Placements rose from 694 in 2020/21 to 769 in 2024/25, an increase of 11%. This growth contrasts with the slight decline in overall ASC numbers and means that residential and nursing care now accounts for a larger proportion of ASC support than at the start of the period. When the use of care homes for people 65+ is measured per 100,000 head of population, Gwynedd has the highest use of care homes of all local authorities in Wales (this is addressed as part of this assessment in relation to the increased need for extra care housing to enable more people to avoid a care home placement).

3.28 Use of extra care housing has grown significantly over the five-year period, increasing from 28 people in 2020/21 to 48 in 2024/25. Although the overall numbers remain relatively small, this represents a 71% increase.

3.29 Supported living provision has remained limited and broadly stable, with numbers decreasing slightly from 38 people in 2020/21 to 30 in 2024/25. Shared Lives provision remains very small, declining from seven placements in 2020/21 to four placements in 2024/25 and accounting for only a negligible proportion of the overall ASC population.

3.30 Overall, the data indicates a gradual shift in the balance of ASC provision. While mainstream housing continues to accommodate the vast majority of older people receiving support, there has been growth in residential and nursing care and, to a lesser extent, extra care housing.

Table 24. Accommodation types: older people 65+ eligible for Adult Social Care support from Gwynedd Council from 2020/21 to 2024/25

Accommodation type	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Mainstream Housing	2,408	2,411	2,294	2,200	2,276
Residential/Nursing	694	714	716	733	769
Shared Lives	7	6	4	4	4
Extra Care	28	30	34	38	48
Supported Living	38	36	33	33	30

Total	**3,175**	**3,197**	**3,081**	**3,008**	**3,127**

Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

4. Current supply of specialist housing for older people

4.01 To identify the current supply of older persons' specialist age designated housing in Gwynedd, the Elderly Accommodation Counsel's (EAC) national database[10] of specialist accommodation for older people has been used as a baseline and then 'sense checked' for accuracy with Gwynedd Council. The current supply of older persons' specialist housing has been categorised into the following types:

- *Sheltered housing*: These homes typically offer self-contained accommodation available. They are usually supported by a part-time/visiting scheme manager and 24-hour emergency help via an alarm. There are often communal areas and some offer activities. In the social sector, most accommodation is offered for social or affordable rent, based on need, by local councils or housing associations. In the private sector, it is usually built by private developers for market sale (and sometimes for market rent). Once all the properties have been sold, the scheme is sometimes run by a separate management company that employ a scheme manager that organises maintenance and other services.
- Age-designated housing: as distinct from sheltered housing, i.e. age designated housing does not have the communal facilities and staff support usually associated with sheltered housing.
- *Extra care housing*: Often referred to as 'extra care housing' when provided by housing associations and local authorities (for affordable rent and shared ownership) and 'assisted living' or 'retirement villages' or 'integrated retirement communities' by private sector providers for market sale (and sometimes for market rent). Extra care housing is designed for older people, some with higher levels of care and support needs. Residents live in self-contained homes. It typically has more communal facilities and offers access to onsite 24/7 care services, which includes assistance with meal preparation, washing and other daily duties (some private extra care housing schemes may offer access to care services as distinct from onsite 24/7 care staff). Often includes a 24/7 alarm system, presence of a scheme manager and a team of support staff.

4.02 Figure 8 shows the current supply of specialist and supported housing for older people across Gwynedd's. This includes sheltered housing and extra care housing

Figure 8. Current supply of older people housing in Gwynedd

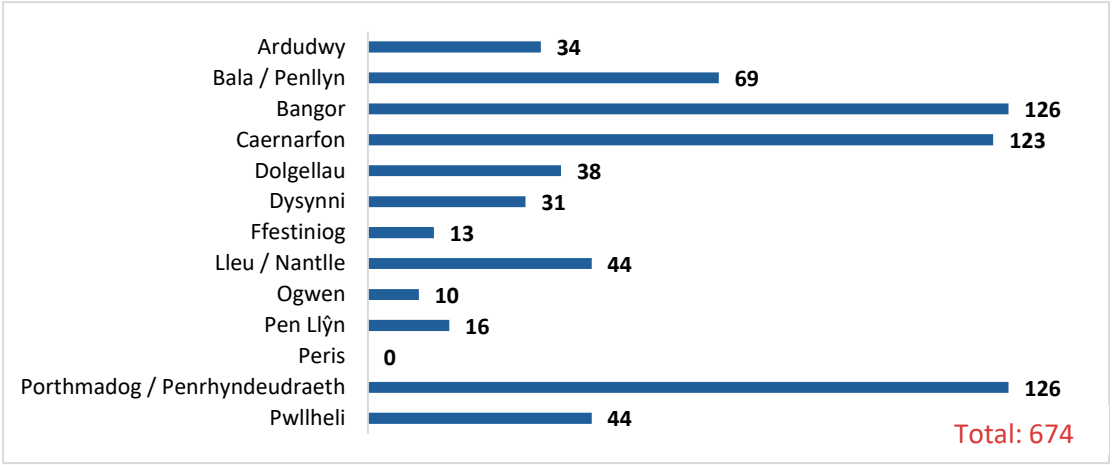


Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

[10] https://housingcare.org/

4.03 There are currently 674 units of sheltered housing in Gwynedd. The largest concentrations are located in Bangor (126 units) and Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth (126 units), closely followed by Caernarfon (123 units).

Figure 9. Current supply of sheltered housing in Gwynedd by sub area



Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

4.04 Extra care housing provision in Gwynedd is limited to three schemes providing a total of 113 units in Bangor, Bala/Penllyn and Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth.

Figure 10. Current supply of extra care housing



Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

Table 25. Current supply of older people housing in Gwynedd

Sub area	Retirement/sheltered housing	Extra care housing
Ardudwy	34	0
Bala / Penllyn	69	30
Bangor	126	43
Caernarfon	123	0
Dolgellau	38	0
Dysynni	31	0
Ffestiniog	13	0
Lleu / Nantlle	44	0
Ogwen	10	0
Pen Llŷn	16	0
Peris	0	0
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	126	40
Pwllheli	44	0
Total	**674**	**113**

Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

4.05 The supply of care homes for older people (65+) is set out in section 7.

5. Stakeholder and older persons' perspectives

Professional stakeholders

5.01 To provide expert qualitative insights in relation to the local supply of and need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation for older people, we spoke with:

- Officers from Gwynedd Council
- Representatives from a sample of providers of sheltered and extra care housing and providers of care homes for older people (these were informal discussions conducted as part of visits to a sample of services for older people).

5.02 The population of 'older, older'' people is increasing significantly. The most prevalent needs amongst older people that affect their need for care are frailty, falls and dementia.

5.03 The Council's objective is to support older people to live well at home for as long as possible and maintain their independence. However, there are challenges in achieving this including difficulties in securing domiciliary care in some parts of the county.

5.04 There is a need to increase the provision of extra care housing so that this option is available in all communities in Gwynedd over time.

5.05 The Council could better utilise the potential of the existing extra care schemes. There is a need to identify older people who would benefit from moving to extra care housing, particularly as an alternative to residential care

5.06 The Council Officers are keen to see at least 10% of older people per annum who would otherwise enter residential care move into extra care housing as a genuine alternative.

5.07 In the future the Council wants to see greater use made of extra care housing as part of the pathways in relation to hospital discharge services. This would require an expansion of the number of extra care housing schemes in the county

5.08 There is a desire to see an ongoing role for sheltered housing, particularly in rural areas, as a housing option that can provide an element of support to enable older people to remain living independently for as long as possible. In the context of small settlements and rural communities in Gwynedd, it is possible that the provision of sheltered housing may need to be combined with, for example, the delivery of care from nearby care homes in order to make all of these services sustainable and to enable older people to remain living in smaller towns and rural communities.

5.09 In relation to care homes for older people, whilst care home providers can manage older people with complex care and health needs, this is a challenge for the local authority as external providers seek higher fees and in-house provision seeks higher staffing levels. This is also a challenge because the predominant and increasing need profile of older people who require a place in a care home is complex care and health needs, often associated with dementia.

5.10 Council officers' assessment in relation to the need for care home bed capacity is that there is little requirement for additional residential care beds; rather there is a need for existing residential care services to be able to accommodate older people with more complex care and health needs. However, due to the increasing 'older, older' population and the increasing

prevalence of older people with complex care and health needs, there is likely to be an increased need for nursing care provision in the future.

5.11 Given the rural nature of Gwynedd, it may be necessary to develop a Gwynedd specific model of housing and accommodation for older people which can provide, for example, extra care housing and care home facilities on the same site, as well as providing a base for domiciliary care in the community, in order to provide a viable business opportunity for housing and care providers. This is what is currently in development at Penrhos and this may help to form a 'blueprint' for other housing and care developments on the same site.

Older persons' perspectives

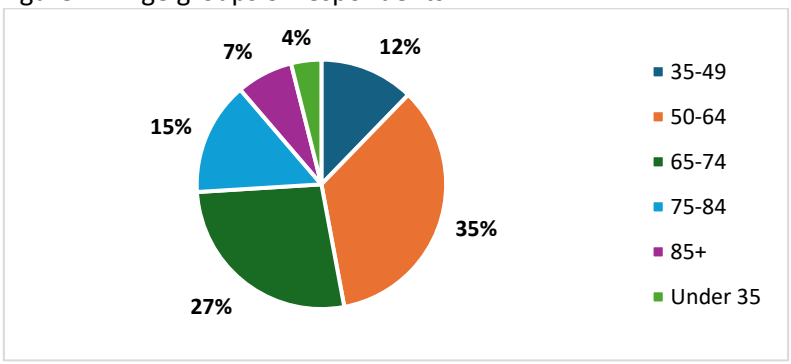
5.12 We have summarised here key messages from a survey of older people conducted by Gwynedd Council in autumn 2025 in relation to people's housing needs.

5.13 Over two-thirds of respondents (69%) were aged 50 and over, including 49% aged 65 and above. The largest single age group was those aged 50–64 (35%), followed by 65–74 year olds (27%).

5.14 A smaller proportion of responses were received from younger age groups, with 12% aged 35–49 and 4% under 35. While the survey was open to all residents, the age profile indicates that the findings are particularly reflective of the views of older households and those approaching retirement age groups most likely to consider downsizing, accessible housing or specialist accommodation in the future.

5.15 The relatively high proportion of respondents aged 75+ (22% combined aged 75–84 and 85+) provides valuable insight into later-life housing preferences and support needs.

Figure 11. Age groups of respondents



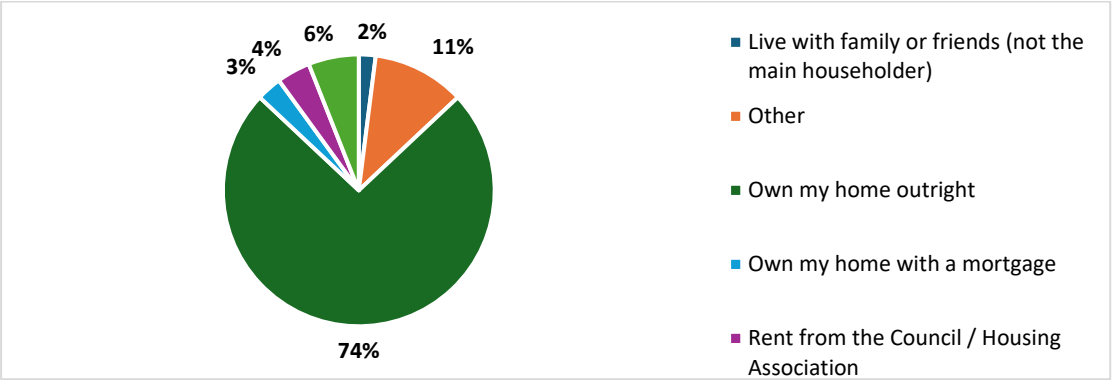
Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

5.16 The tenure profile of respondents is heavily weighted toward owner-occupation. Nearly four in five respondents (79%) own their home, including 60% who own outright and 19% who have a mortgage.

5.17 The tenure profile of respondents aged 65+ is overwhelmingly dominated by owner-occupation. Approximately 74% own their home outright. A further 3% own their home with a mortgage.

5.18 The rented sector represents a small minority of older respondents, with 4% renting from the Council/Housing Association and 6% renting privately.

Figure 12. Current housing situation of respondents aged 65+



Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

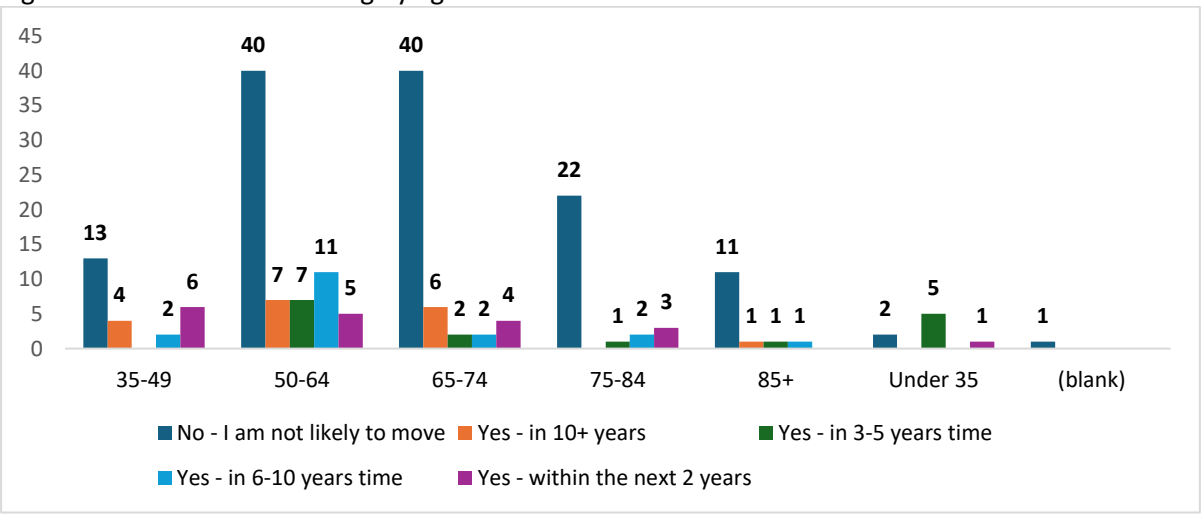
Likelihood of moving

5.19 The findings indicate that the majority of respondents (approximately two-thirds) are not currently likely to move from their existing home. This reflects a strong preference for ageing in place across the sample. However, just over one-third indicate some likelihood of moving in the future.

5.20 Among respondents aged 65–74, approximately three-quarters (74%) report that they are not likely to move from their current home. However, just over one-quarter (26%) indicate some intention to move within the next 10 years or beyond.

5.21 Moving intentions decline further among those aged 75 and over. In both the 75–84 and 85+ groups, around 79% state they are not likely to move, with only around one in five (21%) indicating any likelihood of moving.

Figure 13. Likelihood of moving by age

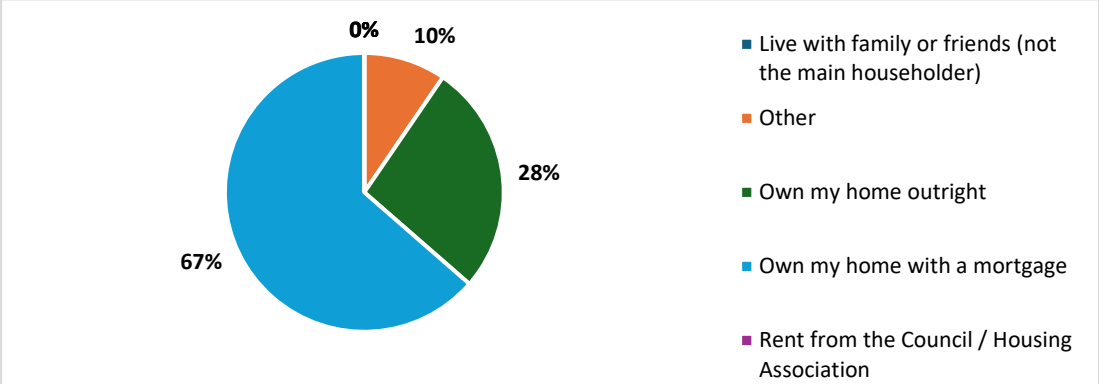


Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

5.22 Moving intentions are concentrated almost entirely among owner-occupiers, particularly those who own their home outright. Around 28% of outright owners indicate some likelihood of moving, accounting for the majority of potential future movers within the 65+ cohort.

5.23 In contrast, no social renters or private renters aged 65+ report an intention to move.

Figure 14. Tenure of respondents with likelihood to move within next years(aged 65+)



Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

Preferred Housing model

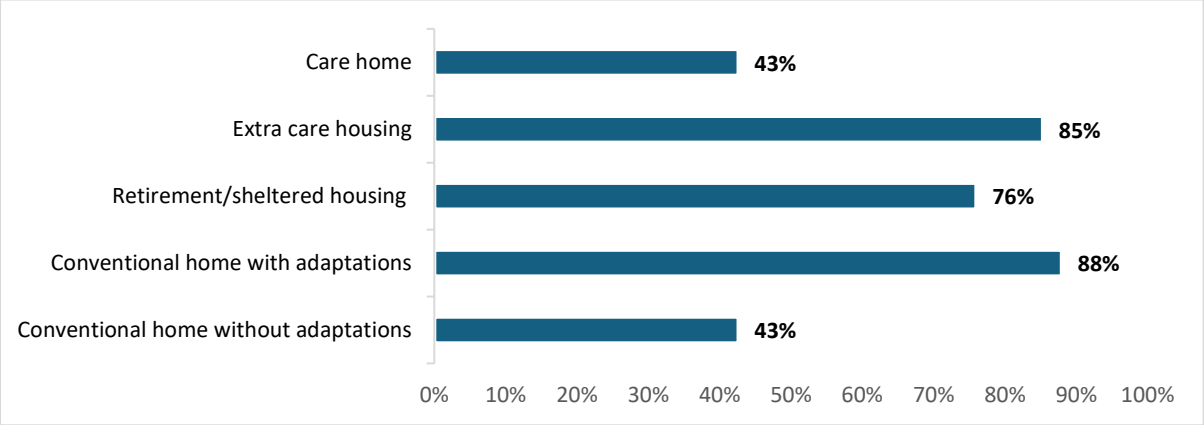
5.24 The strongest preference among respondents aged 65+ is for conventional homes designed or adapted for accessibility (88%), indicating a clear desire to remain in mainstream housing with design features that support ageing in place.

5.25 There is also substantial interest in extra care housing (85%), suggesting that many older residents are open to housing models with on-site care and support available if needed.

5.26 Retirement/sheltered housing (76%) is also widely considered, reinforcing demand for age-designated accommodation that provides some level of communal and staff support.

5.27 In contrast, care homes are less strongly preferred (43%).

Figure 15. Housing model that respondents prefer if not able to stay in your current home, would you consider the following options



Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

NB: As respondents were able to select more than one option, the findings reflect openness to different housing/accommodation models rather than a ranked or mutually exclusive preference. The results therefore indicate potential acceptability rather than definitive first-choice preferences.

Factors influencing moving

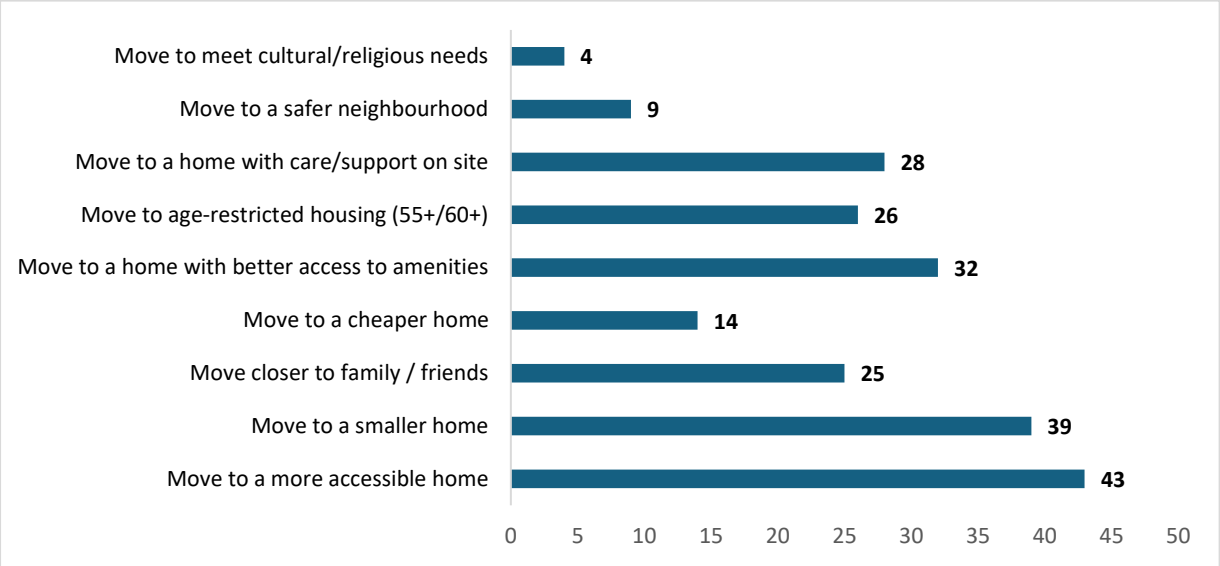
5.28 Among respondents aged 65 and over, the most cited factors relate to the suitability and accessibility of the home. 43% indicated that they would consider moving to a more accessible home, suggesting that the ability of a property to meet changing mobility and health needs is a key driver of potential moves among older people. A similar proportion (39%) reported that they would consider moving to a smaller home, reflecting the role of downsizing in enabling older households to move to more manageable accommodation.

5.29 Other important considerations include better access to amenities (32%), such as shops, services and transport, and moving to a home with care or support on site (28%), indicating that access to support services may influence housing decisions for some older residents. In addition, 26% of respondents aged 65+ indicated an interest in age-designated housing.

5.30 Financial considerations appear less prominent, with 14% indicating a preference for moving to a cheaper home, while relatively smaller proportions cited moving to a safer neighbourhood (9%) or meeting cultural or religious needs (4%) as key factors influencing a move.

5.31 Respondents were able to select multiple factors, meaning that the percentages represent the proportion of respondents identifying each factor.

Figure 16. Factors influencing to move home in the future



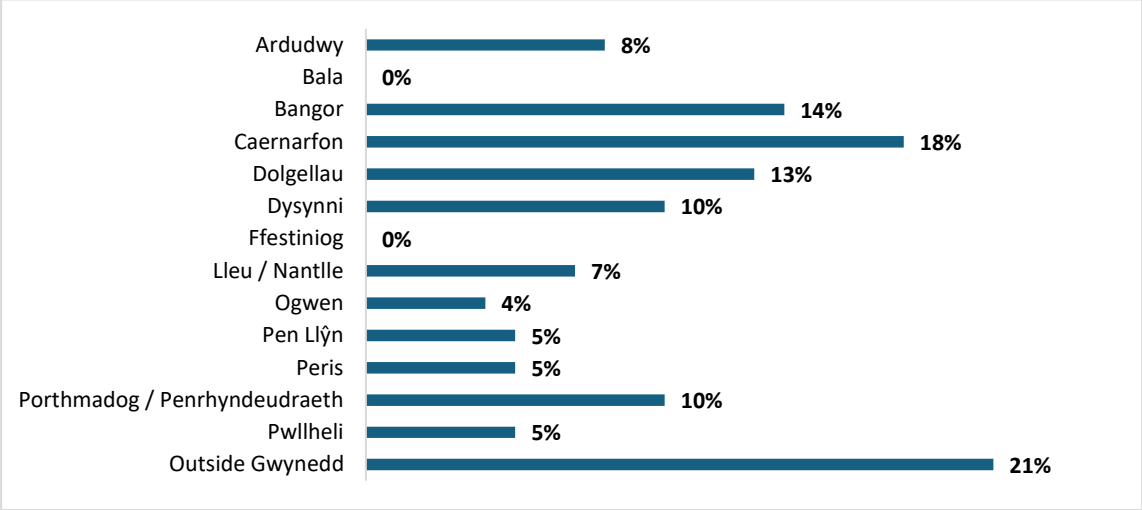
Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025)

Preferred area to move

5.32 Preferences in terms of preferred locations to move to among those aged 65+ are strongest for Caernarfon (18%), Bangor (14%), and Dolgellau (13%).

5.33 A notable proportion (21%) would consider relocating outside Gwynedd, suggesting that cross-boundary moves may form part of future housing demand patterns for example to places such as Llanrwst, Llandudno, Llangefni, and Machynlleth. However, it is important to note that this trend may also happen in the opposite direction, i.e. with older people moving into Gwynedd from other areas.

Figure 17. Preferred area to move into



Source: Gwynedd Council Survey (2025) NB: Respondents were able to select more than one preferred area. Percentages therefore indicate areas respondents would consider.

6. Estimated need for specialist housing and accommodation for older people

Estimated need for sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing

6.01 Modelling of estimated need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing suited to older people is based on a recent (published December 2024) large scale nationally representative survey of c.5,600 older people aged 50+ in the UK[11] and a statistical model that applies the survey findings to quantitative demographic data. This work has been jointly undertaken by the Housing LIN and Ipsos.

6.02 In 2024, the Housing LIN received funding from United Kingdom Research & Innovation to undertake large scale primary research with older people and to develop a statistical model to estimate the need for a range of housing options for people as they age.

6.03 The new model estimates the need for a *range* of housing options and types of homes for people aged 65+, including retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing, as well as the need for mainstream housing.

6.04 Unlike 'prevalence' based models of estimating need for specialist housing for older people, this new statistical model is based on primary research with older people (50+) about housing need and the likelihood of moving in later life. An analysis of the survey data has been undertaken to inform the modelling of future need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing, which takes into account the following survey evidence from the 5,600 respondents:

- Older persons' *housing needs* in relation to different housing types, including extra care housing and retirement/sheltered housing
- Older persons' *likelihood of moving* from their current accommodation within a 12-month period, within 1-2 years, within 3-5 years, and within 5-10 years
- Age of the older people (65+)
- Tenure (socio-economic) status of older people
- Health status of older people

6.05 The survey evidence is then combined with quantitative demographic data from the ONS 2021 Census and SNPP 2022 population projections.

6.06 An approach to using the survey data to model need for specialist housing for older people has been developed based on the survey findings in relation to the *expressed housing need* of older people and their *most likely housing need* in the future. This modelling has been used to develop estimates of future need for retirement/sheltered housing and for extra care housing.

6.07 Using evidence from the survey, specifically the stated *expressed housing need* of older people and the stated *likelihood of moving* amongst older people, 'Transition Probabilities' (TPs) have been produced to estimate the predicted likelihood of people moving in 5 year periods, based on their age, their current tenure status and health status, to generate a number of moves over the next 5 years, and subsequently the estimated number of moves over the subsequent 10, 15 and 20 years.

[11] Housing LIN (2024) Housing preferences for older people: A survey of 5,600+ older people across the UK carried out by Ipsos for the Housing LIN. Available at: https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Older-Peoples-Housing-Preferences/

6.08 The table below presents estimates of how the housing needs of older people 65+ are estimated to change over time. Rows 3–7 show the projected number of people expected to move from their existing home into different types of housing, based on expressed housing preferences and likelihood of moving from the Ipsos survey. Rows 1–2 indicate the number of older people who are expected to remain in their current home, either with or without adaptations.

6.09 The survey results have shown that amongst older people who express a likelihood to move in the future, there is a greater need for mainstream housing[12] rather than specialist housing such as retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing. Retirement/sheltered and extra care housing is needed but it is part of a wider need for mainstream housing that suits people as they age.

Table 26. Estimated 'Transition Probabilities' of moves (need) to different housing types amongst the 65+ population of Gwynedd to 2043

Housing types/situations	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
1. Stay in current mainstream home (without adaptations)	25,762	25,528	25,975	25,946	24,526
2. Stay in current mainstream home (with adaptations)	232	331	498	666	829
3. Move to mainstream home (without adaptations)	614	856	1,282	1,689	2,036
4. Move to mainstream home (with adaptations)	405	573	863	1,149	1,410
5. Move to mainstream/age designated home designed to be accessible	1,088	1,532	2,301	3,052	3,732
6. Move to specialist accommodation (sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing)	368	521	779	1,035	1,276
7. Other	616	874	1,310	1,744	2,155
Total population 65+	**29,085**	**30,215**	**33,009**	**35,282**	**35,964**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25).

NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

The total population figures vary slightly to the population estimates in Figure 1 due to the use of different data sources/methods.

6.10 This evidence of need for different types of housing by people aged 65+ indicates the following.

6.11 The majority of older people are estimated to be likely to stay in their existing homes with a minority needing other types of housing. The estimated moves to other types of housing are interpreted as need for these types of housing over time, in this case over the period to 2043 .

6.12 By 2043, approximately 7,180 people aged 65+ are estimated to need other types of mainstream housing (i.e. not specialist housing) and of these approximately 1,410 people are estimated to need another type of mainstream housing and with adaptations to suit their

[12] Mainstream housing is defined as general needs social housing, private rented housing and market housing (i.e. not specialist housing such as sheltered housing and extra care housing or age-designated housing)

needs in later life. These could include both adaptations to a property as well as the use of technology that can enable people to live independently in mainstream housing.

6.13 By 2043, approximately 3,730 people aged 65+ are estimated to need mainstream housing that is designed to be accessible, e.g. to Lifetime Homes standard and/or to M4(2) accessibility standard (or potentially with other adaptations such as wheelchair accessible housing). Of those people aged 65+ who are estimated to move from their existing home, this is the largest cohort.

6.14 A minority of people aged 65+ who are estimated likely to move to meet their housing needs are expected to move to specialist accommodation (sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing) approximately 1,276 by 2043 (see assessment of need in detail below).

6.15 The implications of these estimates of housing need amongst the 65+ population are:

- The majority of older people do not intend to move from their existing home.
- Of those that do intend to move, the majority need other mainstream housing, particularly housing that is designed to be accessible and that can support ageing in place, e.g. housing that is designed to Lifetime Homes standard.
- Amongst people with care and support needs, the majority are likely to stay in their existing homes and seek care/support services, as well as adaptations and technology, that enable them to remain living in their existing homes.
- There is likely to be growing demand for adaptations, both amongst self-funders and people on low incomes who are eligible for Disabled Facilities Grants, amongst older people who stay in their existing homes or who need other mainstream housing.
- There is likely to be increasing demand for technology, including care enabled technology, that can assist older people to remain living independently in mainstream housing.
- A minority of older people are likely to need specialist housing such as retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing.

6.16 The model (as shown in the table above) amalgamates the 'transition probability' of moves to 'specialist accommodation' which includes moves to retirement/sheltered housing and to extra care housing.

6.17 To disaggregate the estimated moves to 'specialist accommodation' i.e. to retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing the Ipsos survey data has been analysed as follows.

6.18 The survey findings indicate that when considering their future housing needs, the *expressed housing need* and *most likely housing need* amongst older people in relation to specialist accommodation are:

- 10% of respondents expressed a need to move to retirement/sheltered housing and 7% think that it is likely
- 5% of respondents expressed a need to move to extra care housing and 4% think that it is likely

6.19 To balance the difference between *expressed housing need* and *most likely housing need* a median value for each housing and accommodation type is calculated:

- 8.5% of moves to retirement/sheltered housing
- 4.5% of moves to extra care housing

6.20 Using evidence from the survey, based on evidence of older people's *expressed housing need* and *most likely housing need*, moves to 'specialist accommodation' (shown in Table 26) as moves to retirement/sheltered housing and to extra care housing, is disaggregated as follows:

- 65% of moves are estimated to be to retirement/sheltered housing
- 35% of moves are estimated to be to extra care housing

6.21 The estimated need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing to 2043 is shown in the table below; estimated need for 1,409 units of retirement/sheltered housing and estimated need for 746 units of extra care housing.

Table 27. The initial estimated need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing in Gwynedd to 2043 (in addition to existing supply) (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/ sheltered housing	403	571	857	1,140	1,409
Extra care housing	213	302	454	604	746
Total	**616**	**874**	**1,310**	**1,744**	**2,155**

Source: IPSOS (2025) and HLIN (2025). NB estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.22 To adjust the estimated need for extra care housing in Table 27 a 10% annual turnover rate in the existing/forthcoming supply of retirement/sheltered housing and 15% turnover for extra care housing in Gwynedd has been applied to the estimated need based on Gwynedd Council extra care turnover data, commissioner intelligence and the Housing LIN's experience. With 674 units in retirement/sheltered housing and 113 units in extra care housing available in Gwynedd this equates to 67 units in retirement/sheltered housing and 17 units in extra care housing schemes becoming available per annum on average.

6.23 The turnover calculation allows for 10% of the estimated need for retirement/sheltered housing and 15% for extra care housing to be met from the existing supply and has been subtracted from the estimated need in Table 27. The adjusted estimates of additional need for extra care housing are shown below.

Table 28. Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing for people over the age of 65 in Gwynedd to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	336	504	789	1,073	1,341
Extra care housing	196	286	437	587	729

Source: IPSOS (2025) and HLIN (2025). Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.24 The estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing by tenure is shown for 2025, 2028, 2032, 2038 and 2043 in Table 29. Estimated need is not cumulative. The estimated need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing is for all people over the age of 65, not just those that are who draw on adult social care support from Gwynedd Council.

6.25 It has been assumed initially that estimates of future need are based on the current tenure split amongst people aged 65+, i.e. 78% home ownership and 22% social rent (including people currently living in private rented housing) (Figure 5). On this basis, the tenure split for

future projected retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing need to 2035 is assumed to be:

- 78% of the estimated need for market housing
- 22% of the estimated need for social housing

6.26 Given the differing tenure breakdown of the current population group aged 45-64 years compared with the current 65+ population (i.e. lower levels of home ownership amongst the 45-64 years cohort), the current tenure split for 45-64 aged population is used for future projected housing need from 2035 onwards is:

- 71% of the estimated need will be for market housing
- 29% of the estimated need will be for social housing

6.27 However, evidence in relation to the potential affordability of market tenures of retirement and extra care housing indicates that these tenure splits of estimated future need should be adjusted further. In December 2025, average house prices in Gwynedd were £196,000[13]. More specifically, evidence from the ONS shows that for each property type, average prices as of December 2025 in Gwynedd were:

- Detached properties: £300,000
- Semi-detached properties: £202,000
- Terraced properties: £156,000
- Flats and maisonettes: £112,000

6.28 There are currently no market retirement housing or extra care housing schemes in Gwynedd. A McCarthy Stone retirement living development relatively close to Gwynedd at Benllech in Anglesey, has resale values in the period 2023-2024 of £185,000 to £285,000. This indicates that older homeowners in Gwynedd occupying flats, terraced properties and semi-detached properties either may not be able to afford an equivalent market retirement housing product if it was to be developed in Gwynedd or may not feel that they can afford it.

6.29 Discussions with Council Officers and Registered Social Landlords corroborate this evidence, i.e. in their experience the majority of older homeowners in Gwynedd are unlikely to be in a position to afford market retirement housing and extra care housing products; rather a minority of older homeowners are potentially to be in position to be able to afford to purchase market retirement housing or extra care housing.

6.30 On the basis of this evidence the proposed tenure split for future projected retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing need to 2043 is assumed to be:

- 30% of the estimated need for market housing
- 70% of the estimated need for social housing

6.31 In this context market housing could include market sale and market rent homes and social housing could include homes that are available for affordable or social rent or as shared ownership. The consideration of shared ownership for older people will be dependent on localised demand and viability considerations.

[13] https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/housingpriceslocal/W06000002/

Table 29. Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing for Gwynedd by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**336**	**504**	**789**	**1,073**	**1,341**
Market housing	101	151	237	322	402
Social housing	235	353	553	751	939
Extra care housing	**196**	**286**	**437**	**587**	**729**
Market housing	59	86	131	176	219
Social housing	138	200	306	411	510

Source: IPSOS and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.32 The estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered housing by 2033 is c.790 homes of which c.240 are estimated to be required as market housing, and c.550 are estimated to be required as social housing.

6.33 The estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered housing by 2043 is c.1,340 homes of which c.400 are estimated to be required as market housing, and c.940 are estimated to be required as social housing.

6.34 The estimated additional need for extra care housing by 2033 is c.435 homes of which c.180 are estimated to be required as market housing, and c.305 are estimated to be required as social housing.

6.35 The estimated additional need for extra care housing by 2043 is c.730 homes of which c.220 are estimated to be required as market housing, and c.510 are estimated to be required as social housing.

6.36 To distribute estimated housing demand across Gwynedd's sub-areas, a composite weighting approach was applied. First, the proportion of the 65+ population in each sub-area was calculated using ONS population estimates. Second, preferences expressed by the Gwynedd Council survey respondents regarding their preferred locations were analysed. As respondents could select multiple areas, preference percentages were normalised to create relative shares. A combined weighting was then calculated using a 70:30 balance between population distribution (demographic demand) and survey preferences (behavioural demand). The resulting weights were re-scaled to sum to 100% and used to disaggregate Gwynedd level estimates to the locality based sub areas.

6.37 The estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by sub areas is given in below tables

Table 30. Ardudwy: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**26**	**39**	**61**	**83**	**103**
Market housing	8	12	18	25	31
Social housing	18	27	43	58	72
Extra care housing	**15**	**22**	**34**	**45**	**56**
Market housing	5	7	10	14	17
Social housing	11	15	24	32	39

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 31. Bala / Penllyn: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**9**	**13**	**21**	**28**	**35**
Market housing	3	4	6	8	11
Social housing	6	9	15	20	25
Extra care housing	**5**	**8**	**11**	**15**	**19**
Market housing	2	2	3	5	6
Social housing	4	5	8	11	13

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 32. Bangor: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**38**	**58**	**90**	**123**	**153**
Market housing	11	17	27	37	46
Social housing	27	40	63	86	107
Extra care housing	**22**	**33**	**50**	**67**	**83**
Market housing	7	10	15	20	25
Social housing	16	23	35	47	58

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 33. Caernarfon: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**38**	**58**	**90**	**123**	**153**
Market housing	12	17	27	37	46
Social housing	27	40	63	86	107
Extra care housing	**22**	**33**	**50**	**67**	**83**
Market housing	7	10	15	20	25
Social housing	16	23	35	47	58

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 34. Dolgellau: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**26**	**39**	**60**	**82**	**103**
Market housing	8	12	18	25	31
Social housing	18	27	42	58	72
Extra care housing	**15**	**22**	**33**	**45**	**56**
Market housing	5	7	10	13	17
Social housing	11	15	23	31	39

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 35. Dysynni: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**31**	**47**	**73**	**99**	**124**
Market housing	9	14	22	30	37
Social housing	22	33	51	70	87
Extra care housing	**18**	**26**	**40**	**54**	**68**
Market housing	5	8	12	16	20
Social housing	13	19	28	38	47

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 36. Ffestiniog: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**12**	**18**	**28**	**38**	**47**
Market housing	4	5	8	11	14
Social housing	8	12	19	26	33
Extra care housing	**7**	**10**	**15**	**21**	**26**
Market housing	2	3	5	6	8
Social housing	5	7	11	14	18

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 37. Lleu / Nantlle: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**26**	**39**	**61**	**83**	**103**
Market housing	8	12	18	25	31
Social housing	18	27	42	58	72
Extra care housing	**15**	**22**	**34**	**45**	**56**
Market housing	5	7	10	14	17
Social housing	11	15	24	32	39

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 38. Ogwen: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**18**	**27**	**42**	**56**	**71**
Market housing	5	8	12	17	21
Social housing	12	19	29	40	49
Extra care housing	**10**	**15**	**23**	**31**	**38**
Market housing	3	5	7	9	12
Social housing	7	11	16	22	27

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 39. Pen Llŷn: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**24**	**36**	**57**	**77**	**96**
Market housing	7	11	17	23	29
Social housing	17	25	40	54	67
Extra care housing	**14**	**21**	**31**	**42**	**52**
Market housing	4	6	9	13	16
Social housing	10	14	22	30	37

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 40. Peris: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**26**	**38**	**60**	**82**	**102**
Market housing	8	11	18	24	31
Social housing	18	27	42	57	71
Extra care housing	**15**	**22**	**33**	**45**	**55**
Market housing	4	7	10	13	17
Social housing	10	15	23	31	39

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 41. Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**36**	**54**	**85**	**116**	**145**
Market housing	11	16	26	35	43
Social housing	25	38	60	81	101
Extra care housing	**21**	**31**	**47**	**63**	**79**
Market housing	6	9	14	19	24
Social housing	15	22	33	44	55

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 42. Pwllheli: Estimated additional need for retirement/sheltered and extra care housing by tenure to 2043 (units)

Specialist housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Retirement/sheltered housing	**26**	**39**	**62**	**84**	**105**
Market housing	8	12	19	25	32
Social housing	18	28	43	59	74
Extra care housing	**15**	**22**	**34**	**46**	**57**
Market housing	5	7	10	14	17
Social housing	11	16	24	32	40

Source: IPSOS, ONS 2021 and HLIN (2025), Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Estimated need for accessible housing for older people

6.38 The estimated additional need for accessible homes for older people (65+), i.e. housing designed to meet the needs of disabled people and older people (but which is not age designated), e.g. designed to Lifetime Homes standards and/or M4(2) accessibility standard (which are separate to the estimates above for sheltered housing and extra care housing), are based on the 'transition probabilities' model derived from Ipsos survey evidence shown in Table 26.

6.39 Based on this modelling, it is estimated that by 2043 approximately 3,730 people aged 65 and over will need accessible homes.

Table 43. Estimated need for accessible homes in Gwynedd to 2043 (people 65+)

Housing type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Accessible housing	1,088	1,532	2,301	3,052	3,732

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25).
NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.40 The same tenure assumptions described above (see para 6.25 to 6.31) have been applied in estimating demand for accessible housing. On this basis, it is assumed that 30% of the estimated need will be for market housing and 70% for social housing.

Table 44. Estimated need for accessible homes in Gwynedd by tenure (people 65+)

Housing / accommodation type	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Accessible housing	**1,088**	**1,532**	**2,301**	**3,052**	**3,732**
Market housing	326	460	690	916	1,120
Social housing	761	1,073	1,610	2,136	2,613

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.41 Estimated need is disaggregated to locality based sub area following the combined weighting between population and the Gwynedd Council survey preferences (see paragraph 6.36)

Table 45. Estimated need for accessible home in Gwynedd by sub areas to 2043 (people 65+)

Locality based sub area	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Ardudwy	84	118	177	235	288
Bala / Penllyn	29	40	61	80	98
Bangor	124	175	263	349	426
Caernarfon	124	175	263	349	427
Dolgellau	83	117	176	234	286
Dysynni	101	142	213	283	346
Ffestiniog	38	54	81	107	131
Lleu / Nantlle	84	118	177	235	287
Ogwen	57	81	121	161	196
Pen Llŷn	78	110	165	219	268
Peris	83	116	175	232	284
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	117	165	248	330	403
Pwllheli	85	120	180	239	292
Gwynedd	**1,088**	**1,532**	**2,301**	**3,052**	**3,732**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 46. Estimated need for accessible home in Gwynedd by sub areas and tenure to 2043 (people 65+)

Locality based sub area	Market sale					Social housing				
	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Ardudwy	25	35	53	71	86	59	83	124	165	201
Bala / Penllyn	9	12	18	24	29	20	28	42	56	69
Bangor	37	53	79	105	128	87	123	184	244	298
Caernarfon	37	53	79	105	128	87	123	184	244	299
Dolgellau	25	35	53	70	86	58	82	123	164	200
Dysynni	30	43	64	85	104	71	99	149	198	242
Ffestiniog	11	16	24	32	39	27	38	57	75	92
Lleu / Nantlle	25	35	53	70	86	59	82	124	164	201
Ogwen	17	24	36	48	59	40	56	85	112	137
Pen Llŷn	23	33	50	66	80	55	77	116	153	188
Peris	25	35	52	70	85	58	82	122	162	199
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	35	50	75	99	121	82	116	174	231	282
Pwllheli	26	36	54	72	88	60	84	126	167	205
Gwynedd	**326**	**460**	**690**	**916**	**1,120**	**761**	**1,073**	**1,610**	**2,136**	**2,613**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Estimated need for age designated accessible housing (subset of estimated need for accessible housing)

6.42 The baseline for estimating need for age-designated housing is the transition probability model derived from Ipsos survey evidence (see Table 26), which estimates the number of households aged 65+ who need homes designed to be accessible. These estimates represent the potential need for accessible housing among older households in Gwynedd. This is distinct and separate to estimated need for specialist housing such as sheltered/retirement housing and extra care housing.

6.43 To estimate the proportion of these households that may need accessible *age-designated housing* (e.g. accommodation restricted to residents aged 55+ or 60+), responses from the Gwynedd Council's resident survey were analysed (see Figure 16). The survey asked respondents about factors influencing a potential move, including accessibility, downsizing, affordability, proximity to amenities, and preferences for age-restricted housing or housing with care or support. Among respondents aged 65+, 26% indicated that moving to age-restricted housing would be a factor influencing their decision to move. A similar proportion was observed when analysing responses for those aged 50 and over, with around 27% identifying age-designated housing as a factor influencing a move.

6.44 As respondents were able to select multiple factors, this percentage represents the proportion expressing an interest in age-designated housing rather than an exclusive preference and therefore should be interpreted as an indication of potential need.

6.45 On this basis, it is assumed that approximately 25% of older people who need accessible homes may require age-designated accessible housing. This proportion has been applied to the estimated need for accessible homes derived from the transition probability model to

produce an estimate of demand for accessible age-designated accessible housing over the projection period.

Table 47. Estimated need for age designated accessible housing in Gwynedd to 2043

Housing types/situations	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Accessible age designated housing	272	383	575	763	933

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25).
NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.46 The same tenure assumptions described above (see para 6.25 to 6.31) have been applied in estimating need for accessible housing. On this basis, it is assumed that 30% of the estimated need will be for market housing and 70% for social housing.

Table 48. Estimated need for age designated accessible housing in Gwynedd by tenure to 2043

Housing type	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Accessible age-designated housing	**272**	**383**	**575**	**763**	**933**
Market housing	82	115	173	229	280
Social housing	190	268	403	534	653

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.47 Estimated need is disaggregated to locality based sub area following the combined weighting between population and survey preferences (see paragraph 6.36)

Table 49. Estimated need for age designated accessible housing in Gwynedd by sub areas to 2043

Locality based sub area	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Ardudwy	21	30	44	59	72
Bala / Penllyn	7	10	15	20	25
Bangor	31	44	66	87	107
Caernarfon	31	44	66	87	107
Dolgellau	21	29	44	58	71
Dysynni	25	36	53	71	87
Ffestiniog	10	13	20	27	33
Lleu / Nantlle	21	29	44	59	72
Ogwen	14	20	30	40	49
Pen Llŷn	20	28	41	55	67
Peris	21	29	44	58	71
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	29	41	62	82	101
Pwllheli	21	30	45	60	73
Gwynedd	**272**	**383**	**575**	**763**	**933**

Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 50. Estimated need for age designated accessible housing in Gwynedd by sub areas and tenure to 2043

Locality based sub area	Market sale					Social housing				
	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Ardudwy	6	9	13	18	22	15	21	31	41	50
Bala / Penllyn	2	3	5	6	7	5	7	11	14	17
Bangor	9	13	20	26	32	22	31	46	61	75

Locality based sub area	Market sale					Social housing				
	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Caernarfon	9	13	20	26	32	22	31	46	61	75
Dolgellau	6	9	13	18	21	15	21	31	41	50
Dysynni	8	11	16	21	26	18	25	37	50	61
Ffestiniog	3	4	6	8	10	7	9	14	19	23
Lleu / Nantlle	6	9	13	18	22	15	21	31	41	50
Ogwen	4	6	9	12	15	10	14	21	28	34
Pen Llŷn	6	8	12	16	20	14	19	29	38	47
Peris	6	9	13	17	21	14	20	31	41	50
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	9	12	19	25	30	21	29	43	58	71
Pwllheli	6	9	14	18	22	15	21	32	42	51
Gwynedd	**82**	**115**	**173**	**229**	**280**	**190**	**268**	**403**	**534**	**653**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.48 As a consequence, the estimated demand for accessible housing can be interpreted as comprising two distinct components. Of the total estimated need for 3,732 accessible homes for older people by 2043, approximately 933 homes (around 25%) are estimated to be age-designated accessible housing, while the remaining approximately 2,799 homes (around 75%) are likely to be accessible mainstream homes that are not age-designated.

Table 51. Estimated need for accessible homes (not age designated) in Gwynedd by tenure (people 65+)

Housing / accommodation type	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Accessible housing	**816**	**1,149**	**1,726**	**2,289**	**2,799**
Market housing	245	345	518	687	840
Social housing	571	805	1,208	1,602	1,959

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

6.49 Estimated need is disaggregated to locality based sub area following the combined weighting between population and the Gwynedd Council survey preferences (see paragraph 6.36)

Table 52. Estimated need for accessible home in Gwynedd by sub areas to 2043 (people 65+)

Locality based sub area	Estimated need at 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Ardudwy	63	89	133	176	216
Bala / Penllyn	21	30	45	60	74
Bangor	93	131	197	261	320
Caernarfon	93	131	197	262	320
Dolgellau	62	88	132	175	214
Dysynni	76	107	160	212	259
Ffestiniog	29	40	61	81	99
Lleu / Nantlle	63	88	133	176	215
Ogwen	43	60	91	120	147
Pen Llŷn	59	83	124	164	201
Peris	62	87	131	174	213
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	88	124	186	247	302
Pwllheli	64	90	135	179	219
Gwynedd	**816**	**1,149**	**1,726**	**2,289**	**2,799**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Table 53. Estimated need for accessible home in Gwynedd by sub areas and tenure to 2043 (people 65+)

Locality based sub area	Market sale					Social housing				
	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Ardudwy	19	27	40	53	65	44	62	93	123	151
Bala / Penllyn	6	9	14	18	22	15	21	32	42	52
Bangor	28	39	59	78	96	65	92	138	183	224
Caernarfon	28	39	59	78	96	65	92	138	183	224
Dolgellau	19	26	40	53	64	44	62	93	123	150
Dysynni	23	32	48	64	78	53	75	112	149	182
Ffestiniog	9	12	18	24	30	20	28	43	56	69
Lleu / Nantlle	19	27	40	53	65	44	62	93	123	151
Ogwen	13	18	27	36	44	30	42	64	84	103
Pen Llŷn	18	25	37	49	60	41	58	87	115	141
Peris	19	26	39	52	64	43	61	92	122	149
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	26	37	56	74	91	62	87	130	173	212
Pwllheli	19	27	41	54	66	45	63	95	125	153
Gwynedd	**245**	**345**	**518**	**687**	**840**	**571**	**805**	**1,208**	**1,602**	**1,959**

Source: Ipsos (2024/5), Housing LIN (2024/25). NB. Estimates of need are not cumulative.

Estimated care home capacity requirements for people 65+

6.50 This part of the assessment covers estimated need for care home capacity for older people (aged 65+).

6.51 It draws on evidence in relation to:

- The current supply of residential care and nursing care home provision for older people (65+) in Gwynedd
- Current utilisation of this 65+ care home capacity
- Gwynedd Council's use of this care home capacity
- Demographic projections of the 65+ population to 2043
- Evidence and expert intelligence from Council Officers about the local care home market and likely trends in future need for care home bed capacity

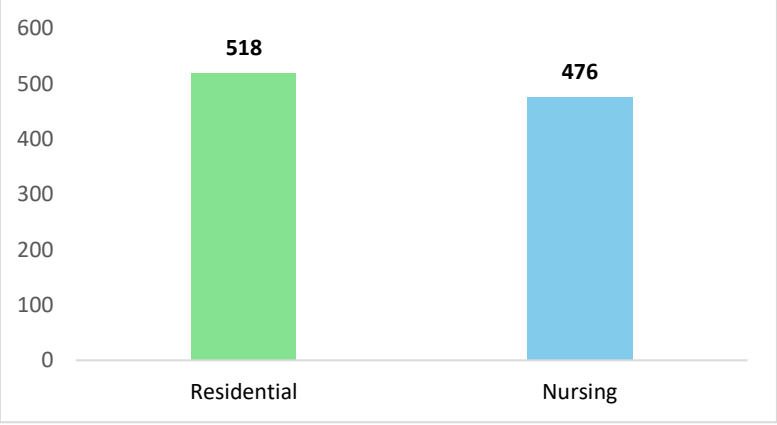
Supply of care homes for people 65+

6.52 To identify the care home capacity in Gwynedd, care home provision data was provided by Gwynedd Council including local care capacity tracker data. The types of care homes include:

- *Residential care home* provides accommodation, meals, wellbeing activities and support for multiple people, with access to personal care and support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Personal care activities can include support with washing, dressing, taking medicines, going to the toilet etc
- *Nursing care home*[14] similar to a residential care home but additionally providing care from qualified nurses. There will always be 1 or more qualified nurses on duty to provide nursing care. These are sometimes called 'care homes with nursing'

6.53 There is a total of 994 care home beds in Gwynedd that Gwynedd Council has categorised as being for older people (65+). This includes both residential and nursing care home beds. Of these, 52% are residential care beds and 48% are nursing care beds.

Figure 18. Care home beds supply in Gwynedd



Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

[14] NHS: Care homes

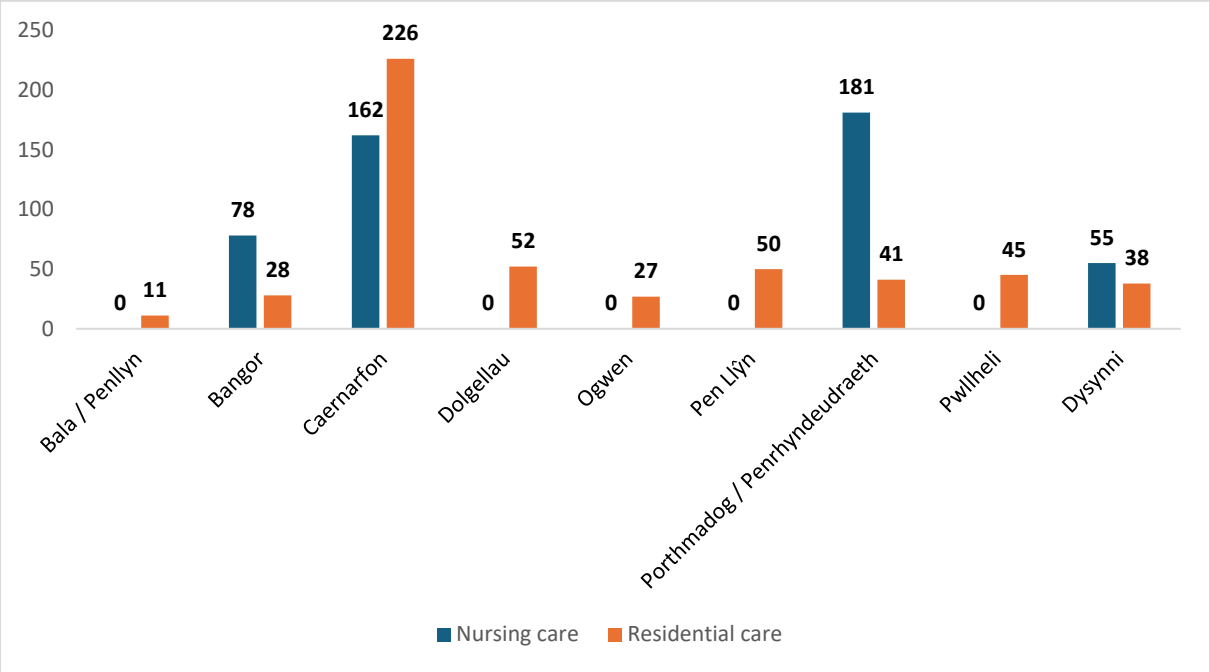
6.54 Caernarfon contains the largest volume of provision, with 388 bedspaces (39% of the county total), including 162 nursing care beds and 226 residential care beds.

6.55 Porthmadog/Penrhyndeudraeth has the second largest supply, with 222 bedspaces (22% of the total). The locality has the highest concentration of nursing care provision in the county, accounting for 181 nursing beds, equivalent to around 38% of all nursing care capacity in Gwynedd.

6.56 Provision in the remaining localities is more limited. Bangor provides 106 bedspaces, of which the majority are nursing care beds (78), while Pen Llŷn offers 50 residential beds and no nursing care provision. Similarly, Pwllheli contains 45 residential care beds and no nursing capacity.

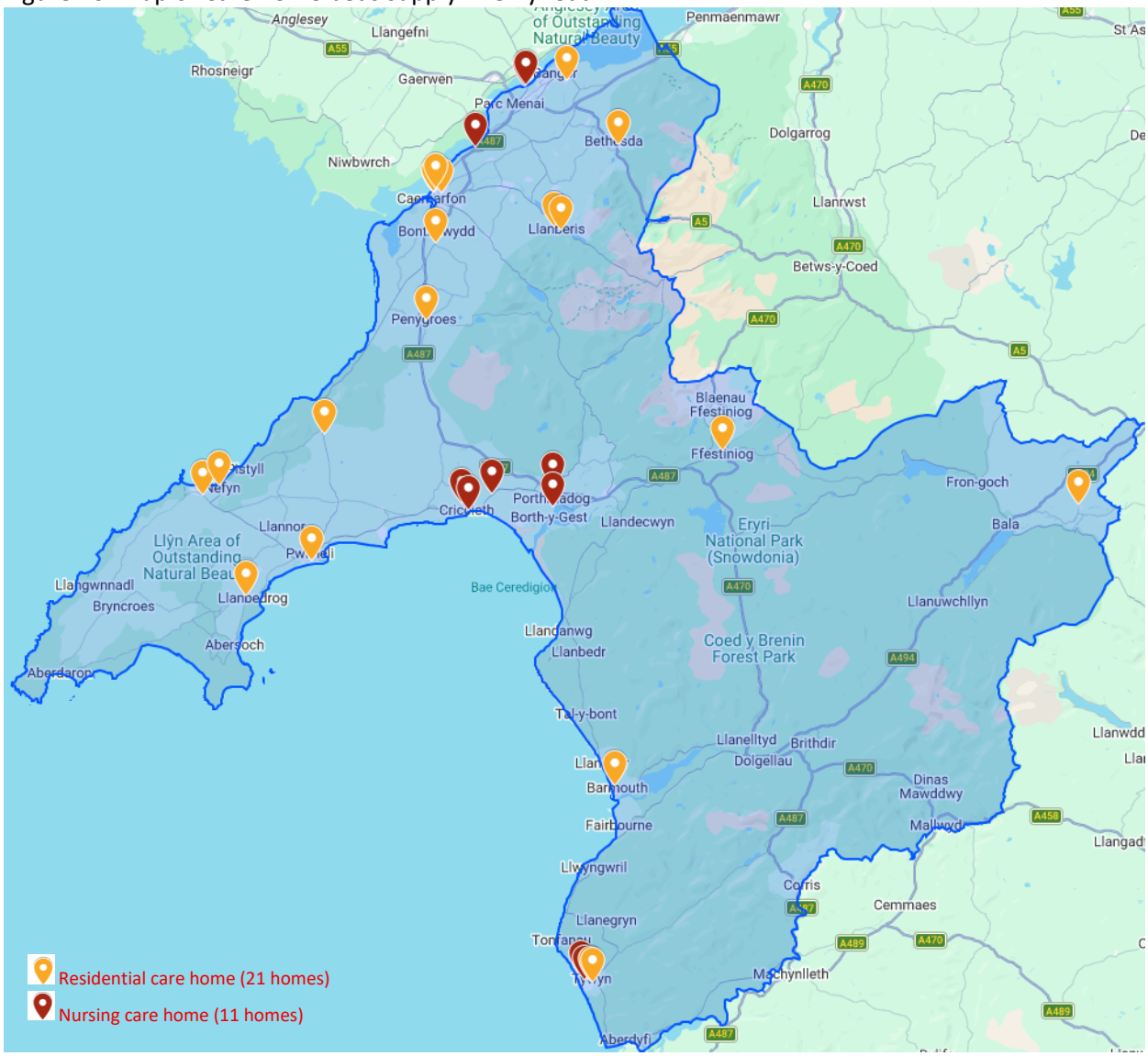
6.57 In the southern parts of the county, supply is comparatively modest. Dysynni provides 93 bedspaces, including 55 nursing beds and 38 residential beds, while Dolgellau and Ogwen contain only residential provision, with 52 and 27 beds respectively. Bala/Penllyn has the smallest overall supply, with just 11 residential care beds.

Figure 19. Care home beds supply in Gwynedd by sub area



Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

Figure 20. Map of Care home beds supply in Gwynedd



Source: My Maps, HLIN

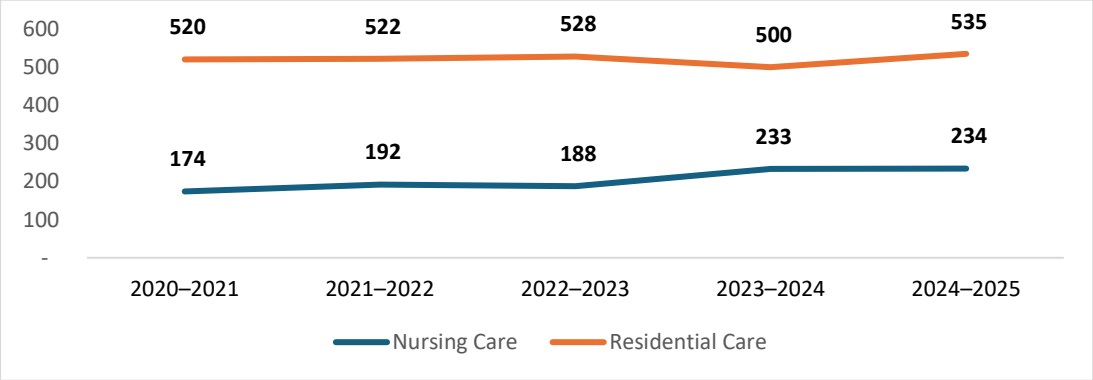
Trends in older persons aged 65+ living in residential and nursing care homes who are eligible for adult social care (ASC) from Gwynedd Council

6.58 Analysis of trends in placements for people aged 65+ in residential and nursing care in Gwynedd between 2020/21 and 2024/25 shows:

- Residential care placements have remained broadly stable over the five-year period. There were 520 placements in 2020/21 and increased slightly to 535 in 2024/25, representing a 2.9% overall rise. The highest level of placements was recorded in 2022/23 (528), followed by a dip in 2023/24 (500), before increasing again in 2024/25.
- Nursing care placements show a clearer upward trajectory. Placements increased from 174 in 2020/21 to 234 in 2024/25, representing a 34% overall increase over the period. The most significant growth occurred between 2022/23 and 2023/24, when placements rose from 188 to 233 (a 24% increase in a single year). Growth continued more modestly into 2024/25.

6.59 When combined, total residential and nursing placements for people aged 65+ increased from 694 in 2020/21 to 769 in 2024/25. This equates to an 11% overall increase. This growth has been driven primarily by increases in placements into nursing care rather than residential care. This pattern suggests a shift in the profile of need among older people supported by Gwynedd Council, with a growing proportion requiring more complex health and care interventions consistent with nursing care provision.

Figure 21. Trends in care home placements



Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)

Estimated future care home capacity need for people 65+ to 2043

6.60 A range of evidence and data has been analysed and used to produce estimates of future need for care home capacity for people 65+ in Gwynedd over the period to 2043.

6.61 Evidence reviewed includes:

- Current supply of care home beds for people 65+ capacity in Gwynedd
- Evidence from Council Officers knowledgeable about the care home market in Gwynedd
- Evidence from the most recent ONS census in relation to the proportion of older people (65+) usually living in care homes
- Evidence from local NHS/Gwynedd Council care home capacity tracker data in relation to actual occupancy levels in care homes for people 65+ in Gwynedd

6.62 The method used for assessing future need for care home bed capacity is:

- Using data in relation to the current percentage of people aged 65+ usually residing in care homes drawn from the ONS 2021 census[15]
- Disaggregating data on people residing in care homes by the following population groups: 65-74 years; 75-84 years; 85+ years
- Applying this evidence of the percentage of older people from these population groups living in care homes to the projected population for these age cohorts in Gwynedd over the period to 2043
- Net from estimated future care bed capacity requirements, current care bed capacity

[15] ONS 2021; https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/olderpeoplelivingincarehomesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-10-09

- Make the following adjustments to estimates of need for care home bed capacity for people 65+localised to Gwynedd (*based on assumptions checked with Council Officers)*
    - Consider and apply Gwynedd Council Officer/stakeholder knowledge of the care home (65+) market in Gwynedd
    - Based on the current distribution of total care home beds between residential and nursing care home beds, drawing on Council Officer knowledge and trends in the care needs of older people, apply assumptions about the likely future trend of need between residential care provision and nursing care provision
    - Make adjustment/s in relation to placements in care homes in Gwynedd from other local authorities
    - Make adjustment/s to allow for anticipated care home closures over next 10-15 years
    - Triangulate initial estimates of need for residential care beds and nursing care beds with evidence from local NHS/Gwynedd Council capacity tracker data regarding actual occupancy levels in care homes for people 65+ in Gwynedd
- Make adjustment/s (if appropriate) to allow for care home rooms without full ensuite facilities

Current use of care home bed capacity

6.63 The care home bed capacity tracker provides real time intelligence about the utilisation of bed capacity in local care home markets. This evidence and intelligence are available to the NHS and councils but is not publicly available.

6.64 The evidence from the capacity tracker data for the care home market in Gwynedd for 2022 to 2025 is that on average c.93% of available beds were being occupied at any given time in the local 65+ care home market. Vacancy rates are not consistent across all care homes with variation evident between residential and nursing provision.

6.65 In the context of the overall number of beds in the Gwynedd care home market, this suggests an under-utilisation rate of c.7%. However, based on the Housing LIN's experience of undertaking similar assessments of need for 65+ care home capacity for other local authorities, it is assumed that it is necessary for the local care home 'system' to have some available capacity, for example to manage spikes in demand during the period of hospital 'winter pressures', say of 5%. On this basis, 65+ care home capacity does not appear to be significantly underutilised. This suggests limited scope for further absorption of demand without additional capacity, changes to the level and type of care needs that existing care home operators will accommodate and/or changes in flow through the system.

6.66 For residential care, capacity tracker evidence indicates average occupancy of approximately 91% across the period from 2022-2025. This equates to an under-utilisation rate of approximately 9% of available residential beds. Allowing for the local system requirement of c.5% spare capacity to manage fluctuations in demand, this suggests the market is operating approximately 4% below this equilibrium (i.e. supply and demand, at least in terms of the bed capacity – not necessarily the type of beds – is relatively balanced).

6.67 For nursing care, average occupancy was higher, at around 96% across the period. 2022-2025. This represents an under-utilisation rate of c.4%. After taking account of the estimated 5%

'buffer' required for local system flexibility, this implies that there is currently likely to be insufficient nursing care bed capacity to meet demand.

Council Officer/stakeholder knowledge of the care home (65+) market

Evidence and intelligence from Gwynedd Council Officers who purchase care home beds on behalf of the Council and who support self-funders to purchase care home beds indicates the following.

Care home stock for people 65+

6.68 Much of the care home stock for people aged 65+ is made up of older, converted properties.

6.69 Many of the older properties that have been converted in the past for use as care home homes are increasingly not fit for purpose in accommodating older people with significant mobility and care/health needs.

6.70 The majority of the care home market in Gwynedd for people aged 65+ is operated by smaller businesses.

6.71 There are fewer of the larger and regional/national care home operators running and developing care homes for people 65+in Gwynedd.

6.72 Approximately half the market (around 330 beds) is supplied internally by Cyngor Gwynedd. All residential currently.

Need profile of older people using care homes

6.73 There is a deficit in the current care home market in relation to catering for people 65+ with more complex care and health needs, including dementia related needs. Other complex needs that are currently difficult for many care home operators to meet include:

- Mental health needs
- Drug/alcohol related needs
- Acquired brain injury
- Bariatric needs

6.74 The predominant need is for both residential and nursing care beds for older people with complex care and health needs associated with dementia, frailty and long term conditions.

Provision of full ensuite facilities

6.75 Some of the older care home stock, derived from conversions of existing properties, do not have full en-suite facilities (and are unlikely to be able to introduce these facilities often due to space constraints).

6.76 Gwynedd Council Officers note that some of these homes will close as a result of, for example, owners retiring, however other care homes without full en-suite facilities will remain in operation and will continue to form an important part of the, often more affordable, care home market.

6.77 To address these issues (above), current and additional care home bed capacity:

- Should be targeted at older people living with complex dementia related care needs and for people with other complex health and care needs
- Will need to be, in relation to both nursing care beds and residential care beds, for older people with the most complex care and health needs
- Should be affordable to enable the Council to purchase care home bed capacity and for less affluent self-funders

Minimising the use of care homes for people 65+: preventative approaches used by Gwynedd Council

6.78 Gwynedd Council has a policy intention and supporting operational practice to minimise, reduce and delay the use of care home placements for people 65+ through a range of 'preventative' services.

6.79 This is preventative care consists of support for carers, short breaks, and used of care enabled technology. The intention of all these service interventions is to support older people to remain living in their own homes and to avoid completely or delay any permanent move into a care home.

6.80 Another strand of Gwynedd Council policy and operational practice is to seek to use extra care housing as an alternative to the use of residential care for people 65+. However, there is considered to be a need for additional extra care housing to support this policy intention in practice.

6.81 Preventative care services and extra care housing have the potential to reduce the number of older people moving into residential and nursing care homes, or to at least delay the point of admission, both for older people placed by Gwynedd Council and for self-funders. The impact of these preventative services is anticipated to be a reduction in the number of people aged 65+ entering residential care. On this basis the modelling of future need for care home bed capacity allows for approximately 20% of people 65+ who would otherwise been placed into residential care to be 'diverted' into extra care housing as well as older people who would otherwise have been placed into residential care to remain living in their own homes due to the effect of preventative care services, (i.e. adjust downwards estimated future need by 10%).

Distribution of total care home beds between residential and nursing care home beds

6.82 According to Gwynedd Council data on the overall care home market, there are a total of 994 care home beds in Gwynedd that have been categorised as being for older people (65+). This figure includes both residential and nursing care beds. Of these, 52% are residential care beds, 48% are nursing care beds

6.83 Drawing on capacity tracker evidence for 2022–2025 and allocating dual-registered beds equally between residential and nursing care, the distribution adjusts to an average of 53% residential care beds and 47% nursing care beds.

6.84 Based on evidence of the increasing complexity and acuity of care and health needs amongst older people needing to use a care home and local care market trend evidence from Gwynedd Council Officers, it is assumed that over the next 10-15 years there is likely to be a trend towards the percentage of overall care beds in the market that are for nursing care increasing and the percentage of the overall beds in the market that are for residential care decreasing. On this basis the modelling of future need for care home bed capacity assumes that the

current balance of 53% residential care beds and 47% nursing care beds is anticipated to change over time to a balance of 45% residential care beds and 55% nursing care beds by 2043.

Capacity tracker evidence

6.85 Capacity Tracker evidence provides the most up-to-date record of care home capacity and occupancy in Gwynedd, including residential and nursing provision (with dual-registered homes split equally). As at the end of 2024/25 there were 962 people living in care homes in Gwynedd with 498 people are in residential care and 464 people in nursing care.

6.86 The 2022 figures reflect a period during which care home services were still experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, occupancy levels in 2022 may not be fully representative of typical demand or utilisation patterns.

Table 54. Capacity tracker snapshot evidence (31st March each year), 2022–2025

Year	Care Type	Beds occupied	Unused beds	Occupancy rate
2022	Residential care	532	62	88%
2023	Residential care	555	31	94%
2024	Residential care	538	71	87%
2025	Residential care	525	27	95%
			Average	**91%**
2022	Nursing care	487	37	92%
2023	Nursing care	476	21	96%
2024	Nursing care	476	4	99%
2025	Nursing care	476	12	97%
			Average	**96%**

Source: Gwynedd Council (2025)
NB: the impact of COVID-19 on year 2022.

6.87 The evidence shows that in recent years:

- Residential care capacity has ranged between 525 and 555 beds over the period 2022–2025, with between 463 and 524 residents in occupation. Occupancy rates have generally remained high, fluctuating between 87% and 95%, with an average occupancy of 91%.
- Nursing care capacity has ranged between 476 and 487 beds, with between 450 and 472 residents in occupation. Occupancy rates have consistently been very high, varying between 92% and 99%, with an average of 96%, suggesting a tightly constrained market with limited spare capacity.

6.88 The capacity tracker evidence has been used to calibrate and then amend as necessary initial estimates of need based on ONS evidence of the likely number of people aged 65+ anticipated to be living in care homes.

Placements in Gwynedd 65+ care homes by other local authorities.

6.89 Gwynedd Council does not have definitive evidence in relation to the percentage of care home beds that are occupied by non-Gwynedd residents, but a conservative estimate based on experience from working with other authorities and local stakeholders is that it is likely to be between 5% and 8% of beds.

6.90 This in effect means that a percentage of 65+ care home bed capacity is meeting need from outside of Gwynedd.

6.91 On this basis the modelling of future need for care home bed capacity allows for at least 5% of care home beds being occupied by people aged 65+ who were not previously residents of Gwynedd and therefore are occupying beds that could meet the needs of Gwynedd residents (i.e. adjust upwards estimated future need by 5%)

Care home rooms without ensuite facilities.

6.92 Assessments of need for care home bed capacity are typically carried out by a small number of private consultants on behalf of care home developers. These assessments typically contain very similar evidence and often make the following types of assumptions in relation to estimating need for care home bed capacity:

- They assume that existing care home provision which does not have full ensuite bedrooms is effectively redundant and should not be included within the current supply of care home beds for the purpose of 'netting off' from overall estimated need for future care home bed capacity
- They typically use Laing and Buisson estimated prevalence rates for the use of care home beds amongst the 65 to 74 years population group, the 75 to 84 years population group, and the 85 plus population group. These prevalence rates typically assume that:
  - 0.54% of the 65 to 74 years population group will need a care home bed
  - 3.3% of the 75 to 84 years population group will need a care home bed
  - 13.4% of the 85 plus years population group will need a care home bed

6.93 It should be noted that:

- Local evidence and intelligence indicate that care home beds without ensuite facilities continue to be used and purchased. It is not reasonable or realistic to assume that all these non ensuite rooms are redundant and should be discounted as part of the current supply of care home beds for the purposes of assessing future need for care home bed capacity. Discounting all beds that do not currently have full ensuite facilities will have the effect of inflating estimates of need for future care home bed capacity
- The Laing and Buisson estimated prevalence rates (above) for the use of care home beds (above) are higher than the most recent evidence for these older population groups usually resident in care homes from the ONS 2021 census

6.94 It is assumed that existing care home rooms without full ensuite facilities will continue to be used and that the current care home beds with non ensuite facilities will likely reduce over time as operators upgrade their facilities and there is a group of older people who have a need for the most affordable care beds, which is likely to include residual rooms without ensuite facilities. It is also assumed that some of the current non ensuite room beds will be taken out of the market as some care home operators, typically smaller operators, exit the market over the next 10-15 years (see assumption below).

Anticipated care home closures over next 10-20 years

6.95 Based on evidence from Gwynedd Council Officers, exits from the 65+ care home market by operators are relatively low. There is some evidence of existing care homes being acquired by other operators.

6.96 On this basis the modelling of future need for care home bed capacity allows for approximately 2% bed capacity loss per annum due to providers exiting the market (assuming there are no new replacement beds), i.e. adjust upwards estimated future need by 2% .

Estimated need for care home 65+ bed provision

6.97 Estimated need for 65+ care home bed provision in Gwynedd to 2043 based on the method and assumptions above, is set out below. Table 55 shows the current percentage of people aged 65+ usually residing in care homes drawn from the ONS 2021 census.

Table 55. Percentage of people aged 65+ usually residing in care homes

Population group	Percentage usually residing in a care home
65-74 years	0.63%
75-84 years	2.38%
85+ years	11.07%

Derived from ONS 2021[16]

6.98 Table 56 shows the projected population for the following population groups: 65-74 years; 75-84 years; 85+ years in Gwynedd to 2043.

Table 56. Projected population for Gwynedd for 65+ population groups to 2043

Population group	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Gwynedd 65-74	14,128	14,951	16,250	16,381	14,980
Gwynedd 75-84	10,253	10,418	10,221	11,111	12,223
Gwynedd 85+	3,870	4,084	4,975	5,306	5,630

Source: 2022 sub national population projections

6.99 Table 57 shows initial estimated need for care home beds by applying the evidence of the percentage of older people from these population groups usually resident in care homes (from Table 55) to the projected population for these population groups in Gwynedd over the period to 2043 (from Table 56). This produces initial estimates of need for care home beds in Gwynedd to 2043 as shown in the below table.

Table 57. Initial estimated need of care home beds in Gwynedd to 2043

Age population group	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
65-74	89	94	102	103	94
75-84	244	248	243	264	291
85+	428	452	551	587	623
Total	**761**	**794**	**896**	**955**	**1,009**

Source: Gwynedd Council and HLIN. NB estimates of need are not cumulative. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

6.100 The overall estimated need for care home beds in Table 57 is distributed between residential and nursing care based on the assumptions set out in paragraph 6.62. This is shown in the table below.

[16] https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/olderpeoplelivingincarehomesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-10-09

Table 58. Estimated need for residential care and nursing care beds to 2043

Care type	Estimated need in 2025	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Residential care (beds)	403	404	438	448	453
Nursing care (beds)	359	390	458	507	556
Total	**761**	**794**	**896**	**955**	**1,009**

Source: Gwynedd Council and HLIN. NB estimates of need are not cumulative. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

6.101 When compared to modelled estimates based on national prevalence rates, capacity tracker evidence for 2024/25 (Table 54) show consistently higher resident numbers. To reconcile this difference, a calibration factor (actual ÷ estimated) is calculated for residential and nursing care separately, using the ratio of actual care home residents to estimate care home need across the period 2022–2025.

6.102 Table 59 and Table 60 shows the effect of netting off from estimates of future need (from Table 58), the current supply of residential care home beds (518 beds) and nursing care beds (476 beds). This is then checked against and adjusted in relation to evidence from local capacity tracker data, the other assumptions set out in paragraphs 6.68 to 6.96 and triangulated with local knowledge and expertise in relation to 65+ care homes in Gwynedd.

Table 59. Adjusted estimated need for residential care home beds in Gwynedd to 2043

Year	Gross estimated care home bed need	Gross estimated care home bed need (adjusted for capacity tracker evidence)	Adjust for use of beds by non-Gwynedd residents (+5%)	Adjust for potential care home closures (+2%)	Adjustment for diversion to ECH and replacement care services (-20%)	Initial estimated care home need	Current supply of beds	Available supply (95% of supply to allow for demand 'spikes')	Total adjusted estimated care home bed need
2025	403	515	26	10	−103	448	518	492	−44
2028	404	517	26	10	−103	450	518	492	−42
2033	438	561	26	10	−112	485	518	492	−7
2038	448	573	26	10	−115	494	518	492	2
2043	453	579	26	10	−116	500	518	492	10

Source: Gwynedd Council and HLIN. NB estimates of need are not cumulative

Table 60. Adjusted estimated need for nursing care home beds in Gwynedd to 2043

Year	Gross estimated care home bed need	Gross estimated care home bed need (adjusted for capacity tracker evidence)	Adjust for use of beds by non-Gwynedd residents (+5%)	Adjust for potential care home closures (+2%)	Initial estimated care home need	Current supply	Available supply (95% of supply to allow for demand 'spikes')	Total adjusted estimated care home bed need
2025	359	459	24	10	492	476	452	40
2028	390	499	24	10	532	476	452	80
2033	458	586	24	10	619	476	452	167
2038	507	649	24	10	682	476	452	230
2043	556	711	24	10	744	476	452	292

Source: Gwynedd Council and HLIN. NB estimates of need are not cumulative

6.103 In summary, this evidence indicates that:

- There is estimated to be a very modest need for additional residential care beds in Gwynedd currently and over the period to 2043; an additional 10 residential care beds are estimated to be required by 2043.
- There is estimated to be a significant need for additional nursing care bed capacity over the period to 2043; an additional 290 nursing care beds are estimated to be required by 2043. Some of this estimated additional capacity may be met by residential beds specifically for people living with dementia.
- This is consistent with evidence from Council Officers which indicates that there will need to be some restructuring in the local market i.e. that existing care home provision shifts to be able to support older people with increasing complexity and acuity of care and health needs.

6.104 To distribute estimated care home capacity need across Gwynedd's sub-areas, a composite weighting approach was applied. First, the proportion of the 65+ population in each sub-area was calculated using ONS population estimates. Second, preferences expressed by Gwynedd Council survey respondents regarding their preferred locations were analysed. As respondents could select multiple areas, preference percentages were normalised to create relative shares. A combined weighting was then calculated using a 70:30 balance between population distribution (demographic demand) and survey preferences (behavioural demand). The resulting weights were re-scaled to sum to 100% and used to disaggregate county-level estimates to sub area level.

Table 61. Estimated need for care home beds in Gwynedd by sub areas to 2043

Locality based sub area	Residential care					Nursing care				
	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043	2025	2028	2033	2038	2043
Ardudwy	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	13	18	23
Bala / Penllyn	-1	-1	0	0	0	1	2	4	6	8
Bangor	-5	-5	-1	0	1	5	9	19	26	33
Caernarfon	-5	-5	-1	0	1	5	9	19	26	33
Dolgellau	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	13	18	22
Dysynni	-4	-4	-1	0	1	4	7	16	21	27
Ffestiniog	-2	-1	0	0	0	1	3	6	8	10
Lleu / Nantlle	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	13	18	22
Ogwen	-2	-2	0	0	0	2	4	9	12	15
Pen Llŷn	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	12	17	21
Peris	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	13	17	22
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	-5	-5	-1	0	1	4	9	18	25	32
Pwllheli	-3	-3	-1	0	1	3	6	13	18	23
Gwynedd	**-44**	**-42**	**-7**	**2**	**10**	**40**	**80**	**167**	**230**	**292**

Source: Gwynedd Council and HLIN. NB estimates of need are not cumulative

7. Summary

7.01 The implications of the estimates of housing need amongst the 65+ population are:

- The majority of older people do not intend to move from their existing home
- Of those that do intend to move, the majority need other mainstream housing, particularly housing that is designed to be accessible and that can support ageing in place, e.g. housing that is designed to Lifetime Homes standard
- There is likely to be growing demand for adaptations, both amongst self-funders and people on low incomes who are eligible for Disabled Facilities Grants, amongst older people who stay in their existing homes or who need other mainstream housing
- There is likely to be increasing demand for technology, including care enabled technology, that can assist older people to remain living independently in mainstream housing.
- A minority of older people are likely to need specialist housing such as retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing.

7.02 The estimated need for specialist housing and accommodation by 2043 for Gwynedd is summarised below in Table 62 for:

- Sheltered housing
- Extra care housing
- Age-designated housing (as distinct from sheltered housing, i.e. age designated housing does not have the communal facilities and staff support usually associated with sheltered housing)
- Accessible housing, i.e. housing designed to meet the needs of disabled people and older people (but which is not age designated), e.g. designed to Lifetime Homes standards and/or M4(2) accessibility standard.
- Residential care (including for people with dementia)
- Nursing care (including for people with dementia)

7.03 The estimated need summarised in Table 62 is consistent with the evidence in the Llechen Lân report, i.e. a radical shift towards housing models that have the potential to mitigate increasing care/support needs and that support older people to live independently for as long as possible, including the need for extra care housing and other housing models that support older people to age in place in appropriate accommodation that suits their needs:

- A significant estimated increase in the need for extra care housing (of all tenures) both to meet the needs of an ageing population and to mitigate and divert demand away from the use of (residential) care homes.
- A significant increase in the need for contemporary sheltered housing[17] (of all tenures) to meet the needs of older people who require housing suited to ageing and with access to a degree of support.

[17] Adra's new housing scheme, Plas Leiod in Caernarfon, is an example of this type of contemporary sheltered housing/age-designated housing

- A significant increase in the need for housing designed to be accessible (such as to Lifetimes Homes standard) that enables older people to live in a home that better suits ageing in place.
- An increase in the provision of nursing care home beds that can accommodate people with complex health and care needs, including people with dementia related needs. There is estimated to be a far more modest additional need for residential care beds, which has the potential to be mitigated in full through the estimated need for growth in the provision of extra care housing.
- It should be note that these trends do have staffing implications, particularly in relation to the recruitment and retention of nursing staff to work in nursing care home provision.

Table 62. Current provision and estimated future need for supported and specialist housing and accommodation in Gwynedd to 2043

Types of supported and specialist housing and accommodation	Current provision	Estimated need by 2028	Estimated need by 2033	Estimated need by 2038	Estimated need by 2043
Extra care housing (units)	***113***	**286**	**437**	**587**	**729**
Market housing		*86*	*131*	*176*	*219*
Social housing		*200*	*306*	*411*	*510*
Sheltered housing (units)	***674***	**504**	**789**	**1,073**	**1,341**
Market housing		*151*	*237*	*322*	*402*
Social housing		*353*	*553*	*751*	*939*
Accessible housing (units)		**1,149**	**1,726**	**2,289**	**2,799**
Market housing		*345*	*518*	*687*	*840*
Social housing		*805*	*1,208*	*1,602*	*1,959*
Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+) (units)		**383**	**575**	**763**	**933**
Market housing		*115*	*173*	*229*	*280*
Social housing		*268*	*403*	*534*	*653*
Residential care homes (beds)	***518***	**-42**	**-7**	**2**	**10**
Nursing care homes (beds)	***476***	**80**	**167**	**230**	**292**

Source: Ipsos, Gwynedd Council and HLIN (2025)
NB: Estimated needs are not cumulative

7.04 **Extra care housing**: There are currently 113 extra care housing units in Gwynedd. The modelling indicates that significant additional provision will be required to meet the needs of older people who require housing with care while maintaining independent living. The estimated additional need is:

- 437 additional units by 2033
- 729 additional units by 2043

7.05 **Sheltered housing**: Current provision of sheltered housing is estimated at 674 units across Gwynedd. The analysis indicates that demand for this type of accommodation will increase substantially over the projection period. The estimated additional need is:

- 789 additional units by 2033
- 1,341 additional units by 2043

7.06 **Accessible housing**: Accessible homes./Lifetime Homes play an important role in enabling older people to remain living independently in mainstream housing. While current supply is not quantified, the modelling estimates that the following number of accessible homes will be required to meet future demand:

- 1,726 homes by 2033
- 2,799 homes by 2043

7.07 **Accessible age designated housing (social housing for people 55+)**: Current supply of age designated housing is estimated at 899 units. In addition to specialist accommodation, there is also projected demand for age designated housing specifically for older people. The modelling estimates that the following provision will be required:

- 575 units by 2033
- 933 units by 2043

7.08 **Care homes**: The analysis indicates that while there are currently provision of 476 nursing care beds and 518 residential care beds, additional provision will be required over the projection period as the population ages and levels of care and health need increase.

- Nursing care beds (including dementia care)
    - 167 additional beds by 2033
    - 292 additional beds by 2043
- Residential care beds (including dementia care)
    - no additional beds by 2033
    - 10 additional beds by 2043

8. Trends in contemporary housing for older people

8.01 This section is intended to provide examples of contemporary practice in relation to the provision of housing and accommodation for older people that may influence future development in Gwynedd.

8.02 Examples are provided in relation to housing and accommodation specifically designed to meet the needs of older people, including contemporary practice examples from Gwynedd.

Age designated housing

8.03 Several providers are developing contemporary housing for older people that is focused on providing good quality and accessible housing with more limited staffing models. The intention is to create communities that support each other with support from the housing provider when needed. The focus is still on providing good quality, accessible homes that enable people to live independently.

Age-friendly housing, Ireland (Clann Housing)

8.04 Clann Housing's[18] 'age-friendly housing' is a model developed by Clúid Housing in Ireland to support older people to live independently for longer. It was created to address the gap between mainstream housing and institutional care, as many older residents were moving into nursing homes not because of clinical need but because their housing was unsuitable.

8.05 Clann Housing's 'age-friendly housing' schemes provide accessible, purpose-designed homes that enable people to age in place while maintaining their independence.

8.06 What differentiates it from sheltered/retirement housing is the philosophy and staffing approach. Clann found that having staff on site daily sometimes encouraged residents to rely on them too much, which conflicted with the goal of independence. Clann scheme managers therefore may cover several schemes and focus on community development rather than daily support. A major aim is building community networks between residents to reduce isolation and delay care needs.

8.07 On the left below is Maydenhayes Lawn which provides 12 age-friendly bungalows in Meath, on the right below is Fernwood which provides 17 age-friendly bungalows in Dublin.





[18] https://clannhousing.ie/schemes/

Bruyn's Court, Thurrock (Thurrock Council)

8.08 Bruyn's Court in Thurrock has 25 flats, all of which are flexibly designed to adapt to meet the changing needs of residents as they grow older. The scheme does not provide care and support services; however, the aim of the scheme is to radically improve the standard of living for older people in Thurrock, taking account of their social and physical needs, and encouraging social interaction and mutual support.

8.09 The development has also been designed to help revitalise the town centre, modernising the local built environment while adding further commercial viability to the town centre shops. It has been designed to HAPPI standards[19], Lifetime Homes[20] standards and Sustainable Code Level 4.



Sheltered and retirement housing

Contemporary new build

8.10 Several social housing providers are developing contemporary versions of sheltered housing to broaden the range of housing options available to older people and create attractive housing choices that can encourage 'rightsizing'.

8.11 Developments increasingly incorporate the HAPPI design principles that enable residents to age in place by providing accessible homes including features such as step-free access, adaptable interiors, smart home technologies, and dual aspect homes.

8.12 A key trend is providing environments that promote social connection and active ageing but including shared lounges and landscaped attractive outdoor spaces. Sustainability and energy efficiency are also shaping contemporary sheltered housing. New developments often incorporate high environmental standards, recognising the need to reduce running costs for residents while contributing to broader climate goals.

[19] Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI). A set of design principles for housing suited to older persons. https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/

[20]. Housing designed to be flexible, accessible, and adaptable, allowing residents to remain in their homes comfortably as their needs change. These standards focus on inclusivity, sustainability, and affordability, often with minimal extra cost. While largely replaced by the optional building regulations standard M4(2) in 2015, they remain a benchmark for accessible design. https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/AccessibleDesign/LifetimeHomes/

Plas Leiod, Caernarfon, Gwynedd (Adra)

8.13 Adra recognised a need for more affordable housing in Gwynedd for older people. Plas Leiod[21] is on the former Lleiod Garage brownfield site and comprises 21 self-contained one- and two-bedroom flats, all provided at social rent and designed primarily for people aged 55 and over or those with disabilities.

8.14 The apartments are built to Welsh Government Development Quality Requirements and Lifetime Homes standards and to very high-level insulation specification and modern heating facilities such as Solar PV and air source heating equipment. The building also includes communal spaces, landscaped outdoor areas and on-site parking. It is in a central, accessible location close to Caernarfon town centre.



Ty Darren, Risca (Caerphilly Homes, Caerphilly County Borough Council)

8.15 Ty Darren is Caerphilly Home's flagship scheme in Risca which is referred to as 'later living'. The scheme has been developed on the site of a former care home and provides modern, energy-efficient accommodation designed for older residents who wish to live independently while having access to support and communal facilities.

8.16 The development includes 45 one-bedroom apartments alongside shared indoor and outdoor spaces such as communal lounges and a central garden, which are designed to encourage social interaction and support residents' wellbeing. It also forms part of the Council's wider programme to deliver new low-carbon, affordable housing across the borough. (see a video of the scheme here[22])

[21] https://www.adra.co.uk/en/developments/lleoid-garages-caernarfon-gwynedd/

[22] https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/news/news-bulletin/march-2026/from-vision-to-vibrant-community-official-opening



Addison House, Rumney (Cardiff City Council)

8.17 Although an urban context example compared to Gwynedd, Cardiff City Council has possibly the most ambitious development programme in the UK for new build contemporary 'sheltered housing', providing 574 new homes for older persons in the city across 11 new 'Community Living' schemes by March 2028. Each site offers something different, from contemporary sheltered housing to extra care housing models as well as a wellbeing village and intergenerational housing.

8.18 Addison House is the first that opened and provides 44 self-contained flats, including 32 one-bedroom flats, and 12 two-bedroom flats. The scheme has been designed to RNIB Platinum standards and is designed to meet the HAPPI standards. As such the flats are dual aspect, spacious and open plan and have large private balconies to create a light and airy space.

8.19 A scheme manager is available during office hours from Monday to Friday to offer advice on day-to-day issues and to help in an emergency. Each flat also has an alarm linked to Telecare offering 24-hour support and reassurance when the scheme manager is not on site.



Refurbished sheltered housing

8.20 In the social housing sector, the majority of 'sheltered housing' consists of dated housing stock. Many social landlords are starting to address the fitness for purpose and future viability of this stock, much of which was developed in the 1970s/80s and is not consistent with modern standards i.e. HAPPI standards or TAPPI (Technology for an Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation)[23] principles. Most providers are relinquishing the 'sheltered housing' terminology in favour of more age-positive terminology, e.g. Retirement Housing, Independent Living, Later Living.

[23] https://www.housinglin.org.uk/tappi/

8.21 A number of social housing providers have embarked on remodelling/redevelopment programmes, which have modernised their sheltered schemes and created more accessible homes. These have been relatively cost-effective ways of revitalising schemes, although it is not always possible to reach modern accessibility standards.

8.22 To demonstrate what some social landlords have achieved with refurbishment/renovation, some examples have been provided below.

Wrexham Borough Council

8.23 Wrexham Borough Council has an ambitious Sheltered Housing Remodelling and Refurbishment Programme, which has involved the remodelling and refurbishment of two sheltered housing schemes at Llys y Mynydd, Rhos and Tir y Capel, Llay, and complementary new build apartments to the rear of the existing scheme at Llay.

8.24 The new assisted living apartments are designed to be 'care-ready', with the latest technology intended to support improved health and wellbeing. The council aims to help older people remain independent in their own home for longer by investing in the upgrades.

8.25 The main works that have been carried out include, remodelling the existing layout to increase the sizes of the flats, providing better storage facilities within the flats, refurbishing the communal lounges, improving the energy efficiency of the scheme, including the provision of 2 EV chargers and increasing the car parking provision around the schemes.



Eccles Grange, Backworth, North Tyneside (North Tyneside Council)

8.26 The refurbishment of Eccles Grange in Backworth, North Tyneside was part of the council's £300m North Tyneside Living project, which saw more than 920 modern, independent living homes created or refurbished at 26 sites across the borough.

8.27 The refurbishment involved creating a new, relocated spacious front entrance with modern automatic doors and space for seating that created an attractive and obvious entrance way. All flats were refurbished which involved installing new kitchens and bathrooms. The communal lounge, corridors and garden areas were also modernised with new furnishings and residents' kitchen. From the outside, the previous exposed brickwork was rendered to change the external look and feel.

8.28 Total refurbishment costs were c.£2.1m with funding from a Private Financial Investor contract.



Extra care housing

8.29 Extra care housing is a type of specialist housing that has been in existence for approximately 25 years. The term extra care housing is typically used to describe developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features to support independence and the availability of care on-site. The terminology used by the social housing and private sector differs. Whilst social landlords tend to use the extra care housing terminology, private developers tend to avoid reference to 'extra care' and tend to use 'retirement living/village'. However, some social landlords have made the deliberate decision to refrain from using 'extra care' in favour of terms such as 'retirement living plus'; Housing LIN research with older people has shown that the term 'extra care' can be off-putting and can suggest a care home to some people.

8.30 Extra care housing was originally built to accommodate an older customer with 'age-related needs', particularly as an alternative to residential care. In recent years, extra care housing across the UK has experienced a more diverse customer cohort as a result of increasing pressures for local authorities to find accommodation for older people with a range of support needs and well as an increase in older people living with dementia.

Hafan Cefni, Anglesey (ClwydAlyn)

8.31 Hafan Cefni extra care housing scheme consists of 63 high quality extra care apartments for rent; of which 15 are specifically designed and adapted for older people living with dementia. The apartments are available for individuals aged 60 years and over with an assessed care and support need.

8.32 Hafan Cefni acts as a hub for the local area, a trend that is increasingly being implemented across extra care housing. Communal facilities include a café, restaurant, hairdressers and multi-purpose rooms that can be used as a small cinema, to hold workshops and as an IT space, which are open to the local community.



Dora Matthews House, Coleford (Ambient)

8.33 Dora Matthews House offers 44 one and two bedroom apartments for older people with a care need and is designed to support those living with dementia. At the rear of the site 5 two bed chalet bungalows for adults with learning disabilities complement the main use and those residents may take up associated job opportunities.

8.34 A key part of the development is a wellbeing centre and 'Sixteen' the community café, which is situated on the street frontage, linked to the accommodation by an enclosed bridge sheltering a public courtyard with outdoor seating. This focal point for residents is where they can go to socialise and meet friends.



Hafod Y Parc, Abergele, Conwy (North Wales Housing Association)

8.35 Hafod Y Parc[24] comprises 49 self-contained apartments (44 two bedroom, 5 one bedroom flat) for persons aged 60 and over with care and support needs. One apartment is utilised as a short term apartment.

8.36 The apartments were designed in accordance with the Development Quality requirements of the Welsh Government and Lifetime Homes standards. The main aim was to create a "home from home", designing a building which is sympathetic to its neighbours and residential in appearance rather than institutional as displayed by the curved design of the building. This has eliminated the sometimes institutional feel of long straight corridors.

[24] https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/Practice_examples/Housing_LIN_case_studies/HLIN_CaseStudy_154_HafodYGest.pdf



Hafod y Gest, Gwynedd (Grŵp Cynefin)

8.37 Hafod y Gest is Grŵp Cynefin's fourth extra care scheme and was developed in partnership with Gwynedd Council. It includes 40 apartments; 26 two bedroom and 14 one bedroom and is located in the centre of the town in Porthmadog so it is in the heart of the community and close to the shops and other facilities. It incorporates a very high standard of interior design.

8.38 Various communal and social activities are held regularly, including coffee mornings, arts and crafts sessions, book club, Dementia Go activities, music sessions and a very popular Intergenerational Project with a local primary school.



Quayside, Totnes (Guinness)

1.01 Quayside is Guinness's latest extra care housing development, located in Totnes close to the River Dart, for people aged over fifty-five. The development has 30 apartments for shared ownership and 30 for affordable rent. The communal facilities include a café bistro, activity areas, and a 'pamper suite' where residents can arrange haircuts, manicures and beauty treatments. There is no large communal lounge; rather, smaller sitting areas take advantage of the views from the site. The internal decor and layout are designed to be dementia friendly but in a way that is attractive and luxurious.



Intergenerational communities

8.39 The 2026 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People Inquiry of the UK parliament report (*to be published 17th March 2026*) explored how organisations are considering how they create intergenerational communities through the provision of a mix of housing types to support people of different ages to live alongside each other.

Penrhos Polish Village, Penrhos, Gwynedd (ClwydAlyn Housing)

8.40 As part of a merger with the Polish Housing Society, ClwydAlyn Housing is redeveloping a site which has been a housing scheme for the Polich community since the end of the second world war.

8.41 The new village will provide 112 new homes, with a mixture of bungalows and general needs homes as well as a block of age designated apartments that will be linked to a nursing care home so that the communal facilities can be used by tenants of the older persons' housing and care home residents.

8.42 The development includes accessible homes for people with learning disabilities and family homes, which could be for people with a family member with disabilities. All homes will be designed to be energy efficient as well as complying with Welsh Housing Quality standards and Lifetime Home standards to support people to age in place.

8.43 All partners, Gwynedd Council, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and ClwydAlyn, are continuing to work together on this innovative new housing and care model for the Penrhos site, with the first homes due to be completed during 2026.



Wellbeing Village, Ely (Cardiff City Council)

8.44 As part of Cardiff City Council's delivery programme to provide c.600 new homes across the city for older people, it is redeveloping a former college and pub site in Ely as a 'Wellbeing Village'.

8.45 The Wellbeing Village will see 265 new homes built, with 107 1 & 2 bedroom apartments designated for older people designed to HAPPI principles. Decisions are still being made about whether the housing for older people will be provided as housing with or without care onsite

but this will provide contemporary, accessible housing that is intended to encourage rightsizing.

8.46 As part of the aspiration towards integrated services, the Wellbeing Village will also include a GP surgery, pharmacy, community centre, council hub, respite centre and supported accommodation for adult services, as well as public gardens and café.

8.47 The intention behind integrating a variety of health and wellbeing services on the same site is to enable joined up working between services and a holistic service for residents and local people. As well as providing a neighbourhood that enables residents to live and age well.



Melfield Gardens, Lewisham, London (Phoenix Community Housing)

8.48 Melfield Gardens is the UK's first intentionally designed intergenerational housing scheme. It includes 30 'one-bed plus' affordable apartments for residents aged 55+ designed to HAPPI principles and two four-bedroom apartments for Goldsmith University students. In return for a reduced market rent student tenants commit to spending time with their neighbours, building relationships and supporting community activities.

8.49 Melfield Gardens built on the learning from Hazelhurst Court, Phoenix's 2018 extra care scheme which created a series of 'chain lettings' when residents from Phoenix's family homes moved in. With 703 of Phoenix's family homes occupied by one person, Melfield Gardens has so far enabled ten larger family homes to be released, and subsequent 'chain lettings' have directly benefited 22 people.

8.50 This has involved an agreed local lettings plan with London Borough of Lewisham prioritising Phoenix residents 'under occupying' their home.

8.51 Designed by Levitt Bernstein Architects to Passivhaus Standard, the scheme is split into two buildings that partially enclose a public route and pedestrian-prioritised central green space. Residents front doors overlook this space creating opportunities for people to naturally come together, increasing the chance of interaction and overall sense of community.



Care homes

8.52 Contemporary care homes (both residential care homes and nursing care homes) provide a high quality of care in attractive and purpose designed accommodation to suit the needs of older people with complex care and health needs. This is a very different care home model to a more traditional care home often based on conversion and adaption of existing buildings. Contemporary person centred care homes have a 'homely feel' and the design avoids looking institutional.

Speedwell Court, Southampton (Abbeyfield)

8.53 Abbeyfield's Speedwell Court is a purpose built Abbeyfield care home in Southampton. The care home provides a high-quality residential and residential dementia friendly care services. Speedwell Court provides 80 en-suite rooms arranged over 5 households of 16 rooms in total, helping to create a more intimate setting for residents. Each household benefits from their own lounge and dining suite.



Winnerish, Wokingham (Abbeyfield)

8.54 Abbeyfield's Winnish is a purpose built, dementia focussed residential care home. This is a 60 bed residential care home separated into 4 circular courts that look onto private gardens. Whilst each room has its own en-suite, the home also has separate spa-bathrooms with sensory lighting and the technology to be able to play favourite relaxing music. A beauty salon,

communal and private lounges, a cinema, shop and café complete the home and are available for residents and visiting friends and family to use at their leisure. The large garden and roof terrace has been designed to encourage outside living with lots of areas for activity or relaxation.



Saffron Gardens, Bristol (Brunelcare)

8.55 Brunelcare's Saffron Gardens in Bristol provides five care home courts that are centred around their own gardens and have homely open-plan kitchens with comfortable seating areas. This innovative care home design provides 70 rooms, all en-suite, and includes many features to maximise independence and opportunities for people living with a dementia or with high nursing and end-of-life care needs. The care home is situated on the same site as 14 independent living flats.



Belong Atherton, Manchester (Belong Villages)

1.02 Belong (a charity,) at Atherton, has 26 self-contained apartments for independent living and six supported 'households' with modern en-suite bedrooms and open plan lounge and kitchen areas (a care home). Belong households represent an alternative to conventional care homes. They operate with a higher-than-average staffing ratio and a maximum of 12 residents per household, offering a family atmosphere. It is described as a 'care village' with independent living apartments which do not form part of the registered care home service but are central to the care village and its design. There is a range of one or two bedroom apartments, available for market rent or purchase, for individuals or couples.



Penrhos Polish Village, Penrhos, Gwynedd (ClwydAlyn Housing)

8.56 As mentioned above, the redevelopment of the Penrhos Polish Village will see a nursing care home situated on the same site as a range of housing typologies.

8.57 The mix of housing and accommodation types will mean that people are able to age in place should their needs change over time.

Annexe 1 : Supporting evidence

Table 63. Supply details of care homes in Gwynedd

Care home	Care type	sub area	Internal/Private	Capacity
Alexandra	Nursing	Tywyn / Dysynni	Private	25
The Bay	Nursing	Tywyn / Dysynni	Private	30
Bodawen	Nursing	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Private	36
Bryn Awelon	Nursing	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Private	28
Bryn Seiont	Nursing	Caernarfon	Private	107
Ceris Newydd	Nursing	Bangor	Private	44
Glyn Menai	Nursing	Bangor	Private	34
Cerrig yr Afon	Nursing	Caernarfon	Private	55
MC Porthmadog	Nursing	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Private	42
MC Criccieth	Nursing	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Private	38
Plas Gwyn	Nursing	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Private	37
Total nursing care beds				**476**
Bryn Meddyg	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	33
Dolwar	Residential	Pwllheli	Private	17
Gwynfa Lodge	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	20
Hillsboro	Residential	Tywyn / Dysynni	Private	5
Marbryn	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	18
Snowdon	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	27
Tirionfa	Residential	Bala / Penllyn	Private	11
Willow Hall	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	24
Plas Madryn	Residential	Pen Llŷn	Private	20
Plas Pengwaith	Residential	Caernarfon	Internal	31
Plas Hafan	Residential	Pen Llŷn	Internal	30
Hafod Mawddach	Residential	Dolgellau	Internal	31
Llys Cadfan	Residential	Tywyn / Dysynni	Internal	33
Plas Hedd	Residential	Bangor	Internal	28
Bryn Blodau	Residential	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Internal	41
Plas Gwilym	Residential	Caernarfon	Internal	27
Plas Maesincla	Residential	Caernarfon	Internal	23
Cefn Rodyn	Residential	Dolgellau	Internal	21
Plas y Don	Residential	Pwllheli	Internal	28
Plas Ogwen	Residential	Ogwen	Internal	27
Gwynfa	Residential	Caernarfon	Private	23
Total residential care beds				518
			Total care home beds	**994**

Source: Gwynedd Council, HLIN (2025)

Table 64. Supply details of sheltered housing in Gwynedd

Housing Association	Sub area	Address	Town	Units
North Wales Housing	Bangor	Y Gorlan, High St	Bangor	30
Grŵp Cynefin	Dysynni	Rhos Ddyfi	Aberdyfi	6
Grŵp Cynefin	Bangor	Llys Cadwaladr	Bangor	8
Grŵp Cynefin	Bangor	Carreg Y Garth	Bangor	10
Grŵp Cynefin	Caernarfon	Cae Morys	Beddgelert	6
Grŵp Cynefin	Ffestiniog	Fron Fawr	Blaenau Ffestiniog	1
Grŵp Cynefin	Ffestiniog	Trem Y Bwlch	Blaenau Ffestiniog	10
Grŵp Cynefin	Dysynni	Llain Yr Eglwys	Corris	4
Grŵp Cynefin	Dolgellau	Meyrick Square	Dolgellau	25
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Bro Gwgan	Garndolbenmaen	4
Grŵp Cynefin	Bala / Penllyn	Maes Y Priordy	Llandderfel	3
Grŵp Cynefin	Lleu / Nantlle	Bryn Rhedyw	Llanllyfni	7
Grŵp Cynefin	Pwllheli	Penlleiniau	Llannor	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Caernarfon	Cefn Elan	Llanrug	4
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Trem Y Moelwyn	Penrhyndeudraeth	4
Grŵp Cynefin	Lleu / Nantlle	Cae Capel Bach	Penygroes	3
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Stryd Fawr	Porthmadog	40
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Tai'r Felin	Porthmadog	10
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Cerrig Yr Afon	Porthmadog	9
Grŵp Cynefin	Pwllheli	Glan Rhyd	Pwllheli	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Pwllheli	Cefn Traeth	Pwllheli	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Pwllheli	Llys Madryn	Pwllheli	10
Grŵp Cynefin	Ffestiniog	Hafan Deg	Tanygrisiau	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Pen Llŷn	Bryn Meillion	Trefor	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Pen Llŷn	Hen Ysgol	Trefor	8
Grŵp Cynefin	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Maes Y Môr	Tremadog	38
Grŵp Cynefin	Pen Llŷn	Cae Capel	Tudweiliog	2
Grŵp Cynefin	Pen Llŷn	Bro Dwylan	Tudweiliog	4
Grŵp Cynefin	Bala / Penllyn	Awel Y Coleg	Y Bala	30
Grŵp Cynefin	Bala / Penllyn	Plas y Ddôl	Y Bala	10
Adra	Dysynni	Morfa Cadfan	Tywyn	21
Adra	Dolgellau	Ffynhonnau	Dolgellau	13
Adra	Ardudwy	Hafan Deg	Barmouth	23
Adra	Ardudwy	Pentre Uchaf	Dyffryn Ardudwy	11
Adra	Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	Bro Llewelyn	Penrhyndeudraeth	21
Adra	Bala / Penllyn	Cysgod Y Coleg	Bala	26

Housing Association	Sub area	Address	Town	Units
Adra	Pwllheli	Frondeg	Pwllheli	28
Adra	Caernarfon	Plas Leiod	Caernarfon	21
Adra	Bangor	Plas Penrhos	Bangor	39
Adra	Caernarfon	Tan Y Mur	Caernarfon	22
Adra	Caernarfon	Hafan Elan	Llanrug	25
Adra	Caernarfon	Tre Gôf	Caernarfon	2
Adra	Caernarfon	Wesley Street	Caernarfon	2
Adra	Ogwen	Rhydfadog	Deiniolen	4
Adra	Lleu / Nantlle	Trem Yr Wyddfa	Penygroes	11
Adra	Lleu / Nantlle	Bryn Llwyn	Penygroes	9
Adra	Lleu / Nantlle	Lôn Yr Eglwys	Penygroes	2
Adra	Lleu / Nantlle	Gwelfor	Rhosgadfan	5
Adra	Lleu / Nantlle	Cae Catrin	Penygroes	7
Adra	Bangor	Llys Dewi Sant	Bangor	21
Adra	Bangor	Craig Menai	Bangor	18
Adra	Ogwen	Maes Y Garnedd	Bethesda	6
Adra	Caernarfon	Llys Yr Eifl	Caernarfon	25
Adra	Caernarfon	Llys Y Foel	Caernarfon	8
Adra	Caernarfon	Cae Corn Hir	Caernarfon	8
			Total	**674**

Table 65. Weighted distribution of 65+ demand by sub-area

Sub-area	65+ pop	Pop %	Survey preference %	Normalised preference share	Weighted score (70/30)
Ardudwy	2,067	8%	8%	8%	8%
Bala / Penllyn	1,031	4%	0%	0%	3%
Bangor	2,812	10%	14%	14%	11%
Caernarfon	2,340	9%	18%	18%	11%
Dolgellau	1,455	5%	13%	13%	8%
Dysynni	2,444	9%	10%	10%	9%
Ffestiniog	1,377	5%	0%	0%	4%
Lleu / Nantlle	2,180	8%	7%	7%	8%
Ogwen	1,585	6%	4%	4%	5%
Pen Llŷn	2,219	8%	5%	5%	7%
Peris	2,382	9%	5%	5%	8%
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	3,041	11%	10%	10%	11%
Pwllheli	2,474	9%	5%	5%	8%
Gwynedd	**27,408**	**100%**	**99%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Gwynedd Council survey (2025), HLIN
NB: Multiple responses were permitted; preferences were normalised to 100% for modelling.

Annexe 2 : Glossary

Affordable housing

Housing that is provided for rent or shared ownership for people who cannot afford to rent or purchase a property on the open market.

Care Technology

The term used to describe digital or smart devices and services that can support a person's independence; to help them/others to better self-manage and monitor their health and wellbeing and/or provide peace of mind. Services include telecare (long distance monitoring), assistive technology, such as digital assistants, and telehealth (remote health monitoring).

Extra care housing

Self-contained homes with design features and support services available to enable self- care and independent living.

General Needs Housing

Housing that is not purpose built, adapted or managed for a particular client/care group.

Housing Association

An organisation that provides houses and flats to people on low incomes or with needs. Also known as 'registered provider'.

Housing Related Support (HRS)

A service provided to help vulnerable people regain, maintain or achieve independent living.

Housing register

A register or list of people who are seeking social and affordable housing in a LHMA, city or borough council area. Most councils have local rules about who can join their housing register.

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)

Partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services, and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area

Local Plan

A document produced by LHMA, city, borough or unitary councils to set the framework and policies for decisions on future development proposals and to address the development needs and opportunities of the area for a 15-20 year period. Local Plans identify specific sites for development and their development principles to demonstrate it can meet the local housing need. Topics that Local Plans usually cover include housing, employment, retail and the infrastructure needed to support any new development (such as schools, health facilities, transport). The Local Plan will also identify where development should take place and areas where development should be restricted given local, national and international environmental constraints.

Nursing care

Long-term personal and medical care provided in a care home.

Residential care

Long-term personal care provided in a care home instead of a person's own home.

Sheltered housing

These homes typically offer self-contained accommodation available. They are usually supported by a part-time/visiting scheme manager and 24-hour emergency help via an alarm. There are often communal areas and some offer activities. In the social sector, most accommodation is offered for social or affordable rent, based on need, by local councils or housing associations. In the private sector, it is usually built by private developers for market sale (and sometimes for market rent). Once all the properties have been sold, the scheme is sometimes run by a separate management company that employ a scheme manager that organises maintenance and other services.

Age-designated housing

As distinct from sheltered housing, i.e. age designated housing does not have the communal facilities and staff support usually associated with sheltered housing.

Extra care housing:

Often referred to as 'extra care housing' when provided by housing associations and local authorities (for affordable rent and shared ownership) and 'assisted living' or 'retirement villages' or 'integrated retirement communities' by private sector providers for market sale (and sometimes for market rent). Extra care housing is designed for older people, some with higher levels of care and support needs. Residents live in self-contained homes. It typically has more communal facilities and offers access to onsite 24/7 care services, which includes assistance with meal preparation, washing and other daily duties (some private extra care housing schemes may offer access to care services as distinct from onsite 24/7 care staff). Often includes a 24/7 alarm system, presence of a scheme manager and a team of support staff.

Social housing

Housing provided by either local councils or housing associations. Social homes have rents set to reflect local incomes. The providers of the homes are independently monitored by a national regulator.

Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation

Specialist and Supported Accommodation is where housing, support and/or care services are provided to help people with a particular need to live as independently as possible. Supported accommodation provides homes for a wide range of people including older people, people with a disability or autism, people with mental health related needs, and vulnerable young people.

Tenure

The conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied, for example, owned outright, secured on a mortgage, rented from a private landlord or rented from the or a Housing Association.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET

Date of Meeting:	**10 November 2026**
Cabinet Member:	**Cllr. Craig ab Iago**
Relevant Officer:	**Bethan Richardson, Climate Change Programme Manager**
Title of Item:	**Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26**

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

---

1. Decision Sought

i. That the Cabinet considers and approves the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26.

---

2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

i. Gwynedd Council issued a climate emergency declaration in March 2019 which led to the publication of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 - 2029/30 (CNEP) in March 2022. During 2025 a public consultation was undertaken to review the plan, which led to the creation of an update of the plan (version 2) which was approved by the Council's Cabinet in July 2026. However, this annual report assesses progress on the original plan published in March 2022.

ii. The CNEP is also one of the projects within the Green Gwynedd heading in The Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28, and therefore one of our strategic priorities.

iii. Annual progress reports on the CNEP have been published on the Council's website since 2022/23 following approval by Cabinet.

iv. Much of the work described in this Annual Report has already been scrutinised by the Climate and Nature Board and through the Council's internal performance challenge arrangements, but the annual report brings all the information together for the first time.

v. A draft version of the Annual Report was discussed at a meeting of Gwynedd Council's Communities Scrutiny Committee on 1 October, and the committee's comments are summarised in 5. below.

vi. Following the same procedure as in previous years, this is an opportunity for Cabinet to decide whether they are satisfied that the Annual Report at Annex 1 provides an accurate and balanced picture of the work delivered during 2025/26 to meet the ambition of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

vii. According to Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to maintain and improve biodiversity and to promote the strength of ecosystems. We report on the progress against the 'Section 6 duty' within the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2025/26.

viii. Cabinet can also offer comments and guidance on the future work of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

3. Background

i. The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (the Plan/CNEP) outlines how we as a Council will adapt the way we work and deliver services to reduce our carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption capacity. It provides examples of projects we will be pursuing, their outline costs and the timeframe to deliver.

ii. This is also the fourth year that we, like most other public organisations in Wales, have submitted data on our emissions and carbon absorption levels to the Welsh Government's Energy Service. Clear guidance is set on what data needs to be collected, which ensures accuracy and consistency between organisations.

iii. We measure our carbon emissions across the following categories: buildings and energy; street lighting; fleet and equipment; business travel; staff commuting; working from home; waste; procurement of goods and services. We also measure carbon absorption levels in the lands owned by the Council.

iv. We need to collect data about the carbon derived from our procurement processes, but the current methodology is based on measuring by financial expenditure alone. Simply put, the more we spend, the greater the emissions. Because this can paint an imperfect picture of the true situation the Annual Report sets out two different sets of data – with procurement and without procurement data.

v. Gwynedd Council's carbon data for 2025/26 has been submitted to the Welsh Government by 14 September, and the information in the Annual Report is based on what has been submitted. It is too early for us to receive comments back from the Government, but the information was accurate to the best of our ability.

vi. Based on this data we know how much the 'gap to net zero' is and therefore how much more work lies ahead if we are to reach our target.

4. Main Issues

i. Chapter 5 of the Annual Report provides information on the levels of carbon emissions and absorption for which the Council was responsible, and on the all-important figure of the remaining gap to reach net zero.

ii. The carbon emissions from our procurement processes are currently based solely on spending, and this can create a misleading picture of the true impact of our spending on the climate. Simply put, the more we spend the bigger the emissions. For this reason, we present two sets of data in each chapter, namely ‘including procurement’ and ‘excluding procurement’.

iii. Cyngor Gwynedd’s total carbon emissions in 2025/26, **including** procurement, had fallen by 8% since the 2019/20 baseline year and by 11% since 2024/25.

iv. Cyngor Gwynedd's total carbon emissions in 2025/26, **not including** procurement, had fallen by 39% since the 2019/20 baseline year and by 6% since 2024/25.

v. Looking at our carbon emission and absorption data together, **without** considering procurement data, our gap to net zero is 37% lower in 2025/26 compared with 2019/20 and 7% lower than in 2024/25.

vi. The percentage of carbon emissions decreased in every category except commuting, and we consider that the increase in this category is due to a staff survey being held to collect more accurate data than was available in previous years.

5. Recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee

i. The Annual Report was presented to a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 1 October and their comments and recommendations of matters to be discussed by Cabinet are set out below:

1. To accept the report noting the comments submitted during the discussion.
2. The intention to discuss with Welsh Government Ministers the methodology for calculating carbon emissions in the area of Procurement, as well as a follow-up to the expiring EC04 scheme, was welcomed.

6. Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

i. Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 says public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to maintain and improve biodiversity and to encourage ecosystem strength.

ii. The Welsh Government published a national biodiversity strategy, the 'Nature Restoration Action Plan' in 2015 which outlined the commitment to reverse biodiversity loss in Wales, with which there are 6 objectives for action. In order to comply with the duty of Section 6 public authorities must publish a plan of their own based on the Welsh Government's plan, and then the progress needs to be reported upon.

Cyngor Gwynedd has been updating our own Nature Recovery Plan to comply with the requirements of the Act, but in the meantime we are reporting on our progress against the 6 objectives of the national Nature Recovery Action Plan through the Climate and Nature Annual Report. The information can be found in chapter 3 and at the end of chapters 6 to 11.

7. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

i. Have you **included** residents / service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult with them?

ii. The final Annual Report will be published on the Council's website after receiving the Cabinet's seal of approval and we will share information about it with all Council members, and with the residents of Gwynedd and the general public.

iii. Have you considered **collaboration**?

iv. Chapters 11 and 12 of the Annual Report cover the work carried out in part by the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, namely a consortium of local organisations led by the Council. A number of other projects in CNEP are carried out in partnership with others, such as active travel projects in collaboration with Public Service Board partners.

v. What has been done or will be done to **prevent** problems arising or worsening in the future?

vi. One of the basic principles of CNEP is to try to prevent further increases in the average temperature of the planet and to limit global warming to "well below 2oC" in accordance with the United Nations Paris Agreement. Each of the plan's projects seek to stabilise or even reverse the probability that the current situation will lead to further problems in the future.

vii. How have you considered the **long-term** and what will people's needs be in coming years?

viii. As noted above, the basis of the CNEP is to try to prevent the problems of global warming from getting worse in the future, and the Welsh Government has set a target for the whole of Wales to be net zero by 2050. The CNEP therefore also takes into account that changing the habits of Gwynedd's residents and businesses will be a long-term work beyond the lifetime of the CNEP itself, which is 2030.

1. The Annual Report highlights that the CNEP itself states that further work is needed to incorporate projects that will help residents, businesses and communities to respond to climate change that is already changing our landscape, such as the impact of flooding and extreme weather. The development of a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is one of the projects in version 2 of the CNEP and therefore it is very likely that we will see additional projects in the future that will focus on helping Gwynedd residents adapt to the different needs over a long period of time.

ix. To ensure **integration** have you considered the possible impact on other public bodies?

x. A large number of the CNEP projects are planned or implemented in conjunction with other public bodies or with the voluntary sector and communities. See 7.iv.

A number of local public bodies including Cyngor Gwynedd are members of the Public Services Board and one of the three Well-being Objectives in the Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan 2023-2028 is 'We want to work together to support our services and communities to move towards Net Zero Carbon'. There is ongoing collaboration with other local authorities across north Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh Government's Energy Service, Transport for Wales which has resulted in joint planning and commissioning. A number of CNEP projects are also dependent on successful collaboration with other partners, such as our biodiversity and land use projects in conjunction with the Gwynedd Nature Partnership.

8. Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duty

The impact of Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duties on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan were assessed when it was adopted at a meeting of the Cabinet on 8 March 2022. This assessment is directly relevant to the Annual Report on the CNEP.

9. Next steps and timetable

i. We will publish the Annual Report on our website and share information about it.

ii. We will continue to discuss in partnership and build relationships with external partners to discuss lessons learned from each other's work, and how best to develop the work into the future.

---

10. Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

It is appropriate that the Cabinet has an opportunity to approve Gwynedd Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report. No further observations to add in relation to propriety.

Chief Finance Officer:

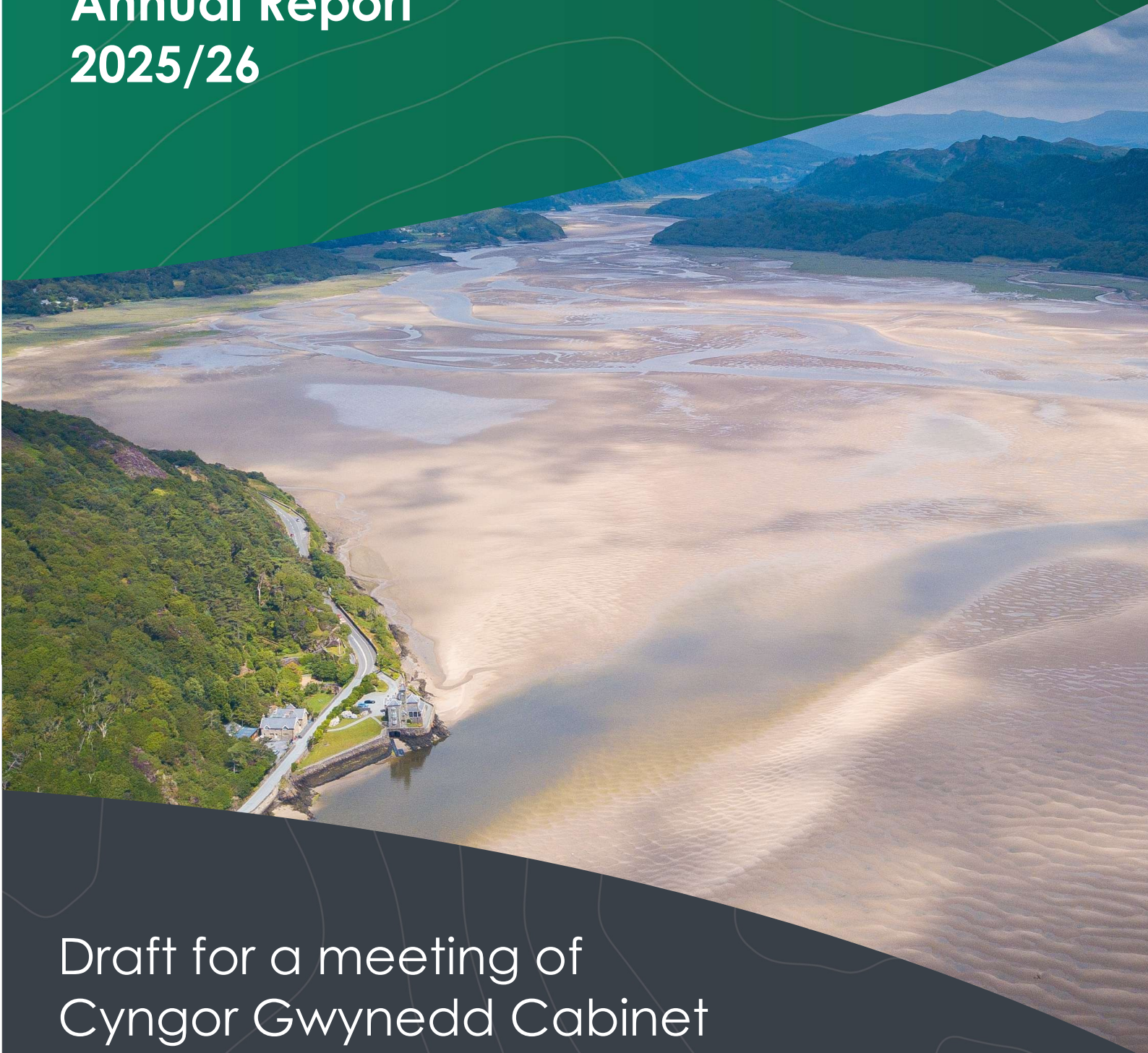
I am satisfied that approving the decision sought will not create a new spending commitment as it reports on the activities of the last year. I have no objections to the decision sought from the perspective of financial propriety.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26

Cyngor Gwynedd

Climate and Nature Annual Report 2025/26



Draft for a meeting of
Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet
10 November 2026

gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Contents

1. Foreword of the Cabinet Member for the Environment
2. Measuring in order to reach the aim
3. Carbon Emissions and Absorption 2025/26
4. The Gap to Net Zero
5. Section 6 - Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity
6. Buildings and Energy
7. Movement and Transport
8. Waste
9. Governance
10. Procurement
11. Land Use
12. Biodiversity

1. Foreword of the Cabinet Member for the Environment

The climate and nature crisis is not a threat to the distant future. Its effects can be seen in our communities, on our land and on our coast today. Gwynedd's environment and nature are just as unique and special as its people and language, and we have a responsibility to protect them, not only for us today, but for the generations to come after us.

This annual report gives us reason to be hopeful. During 2025/26 the Council's carbon emissions, excluding procurement, fell by 39% compared to the 2019/20 baseline year and 6% compared to 2024/25. Of course, this work did not begin in 2019; for over a decade before that, Cyngor Gwynedd has been at the forefront of prioritising the need to reduce our carbon footprint and responding to the climate crisis.

We recognise that no council, nor one community, has the capacity to solve the climate crisis alone, but we do have a responsibility to do everything within our ability to lead by example and be a force for positive change. The progress we are seeing this year is a clear sign that we are moving in the right direction, and evidence that leadership, consistent action and deliberate investment can lead to real change.

Some of the biggest reductions in our carbon emissions have been seen through the work achieved in buildings and energy. We have continued to be proactive by investing in the fabric of our buildings, installing additional solar panels, upgrading LED lighting and introducing more low-carbon heating systems. Not only does this investment reduce carbon emissions, but it also helps to reduce building running costs and make better use of public resources.

The same principle applies to our work in the field of nature. The Council cannot deliver the change needed alone, and collaboration is central to our response. Through the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, we work with public organisations, voluntary organisations, individuals and town and community councils to protect and enhance nature. During 2025/26, the Partnership worked with town and community councils and local organisations to strengthen biodiversity, connect people to nature and ensure lasting benefits for communities.

Despite the progress, there is still a lot of work ahead of us. The gap to reach net zero is significant and we need to continue to reduce emissions while also increasing the carbon absorption capacity of our lands and habitats.
The results for 2025/26 give us a solid foundation to build on, but they also remind us that we need to continue to make bold decisions, invest wisely and work closely with our communities and partners in order to make the best use of every pound available to us. By doing so, we can continue to reduce our climate impact, restore nature and create a greener, fairer and more resilient Gwynedd for future generations.



Cllr. Craig ab Iago
Environment Cabinet Member

2. Measuring in order to reach the aim

This annual report presents the Cyngor Gwynedd emissions and absorption accounts of Cyngor Gwynedd for the year 1 April - 31 March 2025/26 and provides an update on the work done to implement the Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.
By taking an objective view of the work done in 2025/26, and the results of that in terms of carbon emissions and absorption, we would be better placed to measure the best way forward to reach our goal to be a net zero and ecologically-positive council.

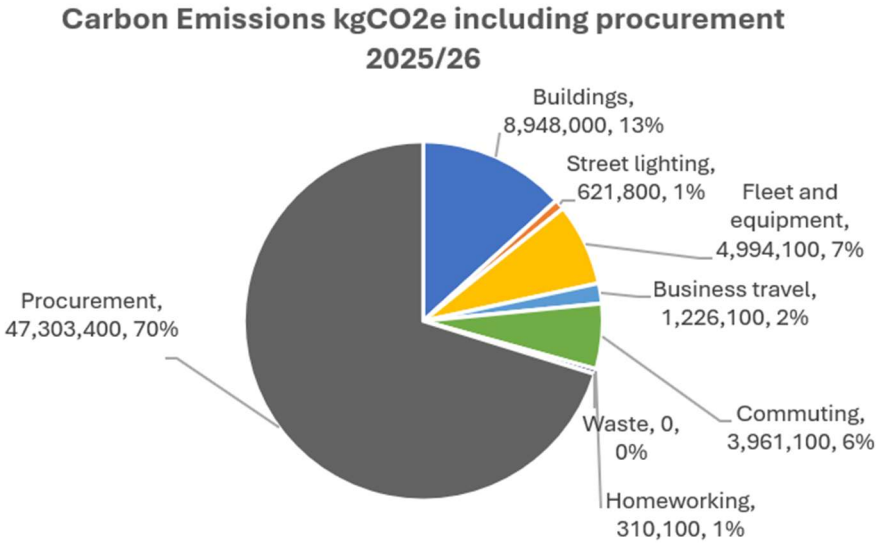
3. Carbon Emissions and Absorption 2025/26

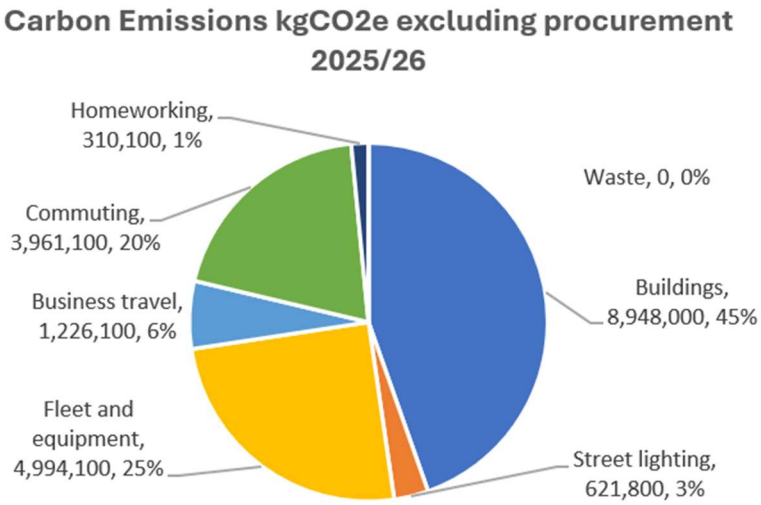
Like most other public organisations in Wales, Cyngor Gwynedd calculates carbon emissions, following the Welsh Government's guidance, and then presents the results to the government annually.
The carbon emissions are being compared with the Council's baseline years, namely 2019/20 and the previous reporting year, 2024/25, whilst providing an explanation for any variances.
By measuring the carbon emissions and absorption data every year, we will have evidence to see where we are along the journey to be a net zero and ecologically-friendly council.

Carbon Emissions

The total Cyngor Gwynedd carbon emissions in 2025/26 **EXCLUDING** procurement emissions was 20,061,200 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 39% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 6% reduction since 2024/25.
The total Cyngor Gwynedd carbon emissions in 2025/26 **INCLUDING** procurement emissions was 67,364,600 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 8% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 11% reduction since 2024/25.

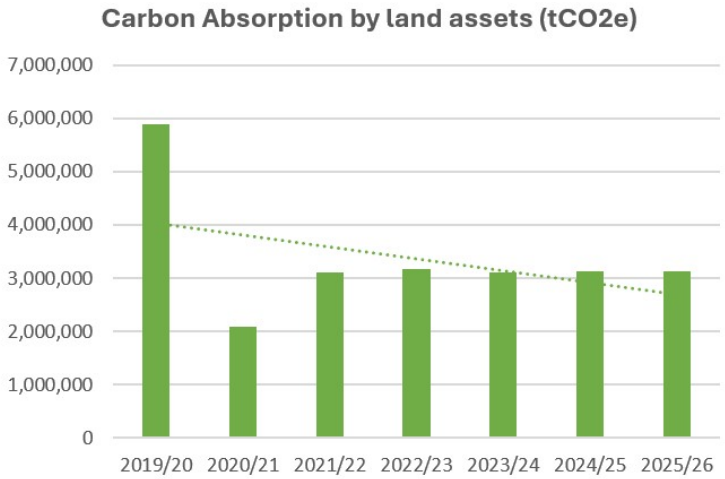
The first chart below shows our carbon emissions over 8 headings and includes procurement emissions (purchasing goods and services).
The methodology of measuring carbon emissions resulting from our procurement processes is imperfect because it is based on the amount of money we spend. The more we spend the greater the emissions.
As the procurement data can create an imperfect picture, the second chart opposite presents data for the remaining 7 headings after procurement is disregarded.
More information about why emissions increase or reduce are to be found in the subsequent chapters.





Carbon Absorption

The amount of carbon dioxide being absorbed and stored by the Council's land assets helps to offset a proportion of the Council's carbon emissions, and close some of the gap to net zero.
However, calculating the estimated carbon absorption rate is challenging because you would need a very deep level of detail about sites, and thus far there is no clear guidance in the Welsh Government guidance on how best to gather the correct data.
Meanwhile, we are using data being collected through OS maps and the Council's asset management system. We had a problem with using this technology in 2025/26; therefore, we have used the data for 2024/25 as we are confident that there has not been a great deal of change in land use or land purchasing and selling from one year to another.
More information on what the Council has done during the year to improve the quality of lands and their ability to absorb carbon can be seen in the Land Use and Biodiversity chapters.
Lands owned by Cyngor Gwynedd have absorbed 3,123,254 kgCO2e of carbon during 2025/26.



4. The Gap to Net Zero

Our gap to net zero (**excluding** procurement) in 2025/26 was 16,937,946 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 37% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 7% reduction since 2024/25.
Our gap to net zero (**including** procurement) in 2025/26 was 64,241,346 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 5% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and an 12% reduction since 2024/25.

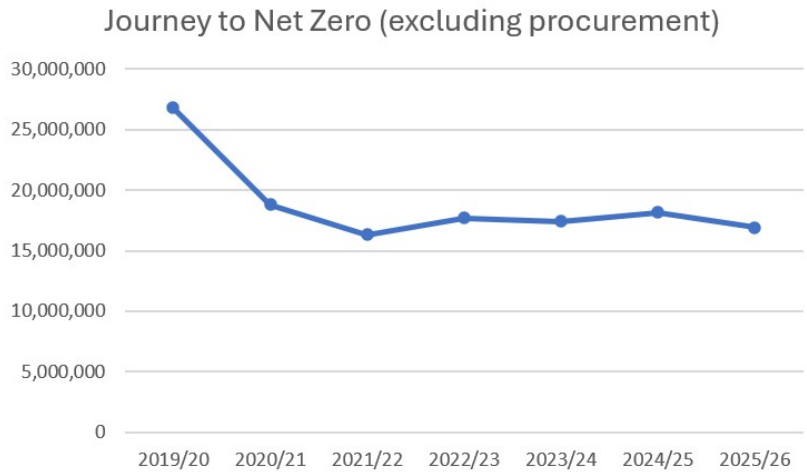
Emissions
20,061,200
$kgCO_2e$



Absorption
3,123,254
$kgCO_2e$

The Gap to Net Zero
16,937,946
$kgCO_2e$

In simple terms, the gap to net zero is the amount of CO2e that we need to remove in order to reach our ambition of being a net zero and ecologically-positive council. The gap is calculated by deducting the total value of the carbon being absorbed from the total of the carbon being emitted.
The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, and this annual report, shows that Cyngor Gwynedd is attempting to close the gap from both sides at the same time, and acknowledges the equal importance of reducing emissions and increasing absorption levels.



5. Section 6 - Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity

The aim of the Cyngor Gwynedd Climate and Nature Emergency Plan is to be a net zero and **ecologically-positive** council. One route to take to reach that aim is to ensure that we implement 'Section 6'.
According to Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to "seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity" and to "promote the strength of ecosystems".
In practical terms, this means that public bodies, including local authorities, must consider biodiversity and nature in all aspects of their work, not just in environmental projects.
The Welsh Government published a national biodiversity strategy, namely the 'Nature Recovery Action Plan' in 2015 which outlined the commitment to reversing biodiversity loss in Wales, and the objectives for action. It contains 6 objectives for nature recovery in Wales:

- **Objective 1**: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels
- **Objective 2**: Protect species and habitats of paramount importance and improve their management
- **Objective 3**: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats
- **Objective 4**: Address key pressures on species and habitats
- **Objective 5**: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- **Objective 6**: Implement a governance framework and support to achieve the objectives

In order for Cyngor Gwynedd to meet the 'Section 6' requirements, we need to prove how we have contributed to each of the 6 objectives above.
At the end of each section of this annual report, you will find a description of how the work that has been undertaken contributes to the realisation of one or more of the above 6 objectives, which in turn comply with Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
Here is a summary of the link between the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan projects and the Objectives of Section 6:

Climate and Nature	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6
Buildings and Energy		✓	✓		✓	
Movement and Transport		✓	✓			

Waste						
Governance						
Procurement						
Land Use						
Ecology						

6. Buildings and Energy

The carbon emissions deriving from **buildings and energy** in 2025/26 is 45% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 23% reduction since 2019/20 and a 10% reduction since 2024/25.

The carbon emissions deriving from **street lighting** in 2025/26 is 3% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 44% reduction since 2019/20 and a 13% reduction since 2024/25.

Refurbishing buildings to save energy

Three sites have seen improvements made to the buildings' fabric in 2025/26, namely Hafod Mawddach care home, Ysgol Llanbedrog and Byw'n Iach Penllyn (Bala). Substantial alteration work was done in order to stop energy waste, and in turn this will save money and carbon. This work is also necessary in order to prepare the site for the installation of heat pumps. This was all possible due to the Low Carbon Heating Grant contribution from the Welsh Government. More information on Ysgol Llanbedrog can be found below.

Electrification of heating systems

After upgrading the sites of Hafod Mawddach, Ysgol Llanbedrog and Byw'n Iach Penllyn, they were then ready for us to install heat pumps. As it is not possible to close the sites whilst the work is being done, patience is required when scheduling the work, but we look forward to seeing the results of the end of the project in 2026.

In 2025/26, heat pumps were also installed in 3 new sites: Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes (Bangor), Ysgol Felinwnda and Ysgol Maesincla Language Unit (Caernarfon). 11 sites are now heated by further heat pumps.

Installation of PV solar panels to save energy and costs

Solar panels were installed on 6 new sites, and further panels were added on another 9 sites in 2025/26, producing 973.25 kW of clean energy every year.

This brings the total number of Cyngor Gwynedd sites that generate their own electricity to 64. 50 of these are schools and 6 are care or nursing homes.

We can see the results in full during 2026/27, but all PV installations are expected to save energy purchasing costs of £34,495 per year, as well as annual carbon savings of 128.7tCO2e.

Solar Panels, and more...

A very exciting project completed during the year was the installation of a solar canopy on Ysgol Hafod Lon in Penrhyndeudraeth, as part of a local smart energy system. More information on this work can be seen below.

Thanks to a grant from Ynni Cymru, local smart energy systems were installed at the Byw'n Iach Plas Silyn (Penygroes) and Plas Ffrancon (Bethesda) leisure centres. Solar panels have been installed to power the buildings, with the remaining electricity being stored in batteries. In turn, these will power a community charging hub.

LED Lighting Scheme
LED bulbs use much less electricity than the other 'long-life' lightbulbs, and therefore, there is a big financial benefit in electricity cost savings and resulting carbon savings benefits.
LED lighting was installed on 8 sites during 2025/26, and from the existing data, we have been saving at least 29,513 kWh of electricity in a year, which leads to a saving of £6,492.86 in annual costs.

Street lighting, signage and traffic
64 new sites were added to the Gwynedd street lighting network in 2025/26 (e.g. new housing estates, highways). Nevertheless, we are still seeing a reduction in energy use and 13% of a reduction in carbon emissions since the previous year because we are continuing with the LED lighting renovation programme. The carbon reduction since the 2019/20 baseline year is 44%.

Energy advice on fuel poverty
The Council's Energy Team supports residents with energy costs, and information on energy efficiency in the home and information on tariffs. Over 100 drop-in sessions were held to provide advice and information for residents, and many of these were in collaboration with local community organisations.
ECO4 is a national initiative aimed at helping low-income households improve their home energy efficiency and reduce bills and carbon. 1,140 homes in Gwynedd received an ECO4 grant, and increased their EPC score, reducing bills.
Unfortunately, the ECO4 initiative will end in December 2026, but in reality, the applications to the initiative have dropped substantially since December 2025. We are expecting an announcement from the Welsh Government on what is coming next under the Warm Homes scheme.

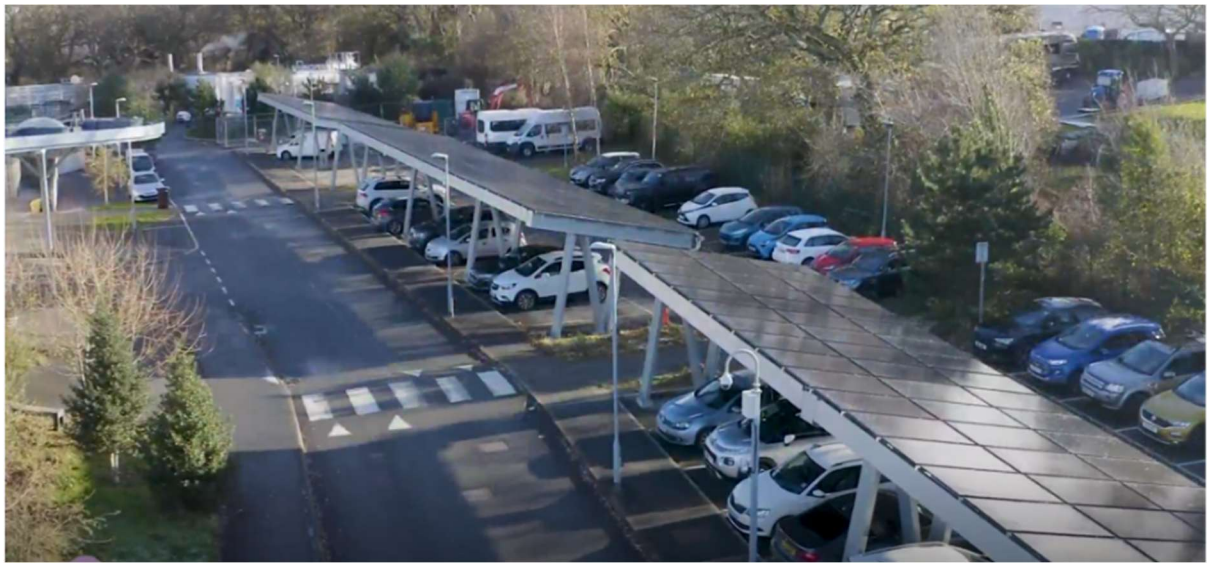
Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)
The Welsh Government commissioned a programme for all local authorities in Wales to develop a Local Area Energy Plan to contribute to these national targets to reach net zero. The Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet adopted our Local Area Energy Plan in September 2025, and its intention is to look at the most efficient and cost-effective methods of de-carbonising a complete energy system for Gwynedd by 2050.

Added benefit
All of the above work has led to spending with several local contractors, with 4 companies that are local to Gwynedd. Not only has this kept the pound in the local economy; it has also upgraded the skills of the workforce, strengthening their situations in the future.

Success story - Ysgol Llanbedrog
The school's pupils and staff are now learning and working in a much more successful environment. This low carbon heating project has refurbished the heating system and retrofitted improvements to the school's Victorian building fabric and its extensions. The project commenced in 2024 following the Council's success when securing several

grants through the Welsh Government's Low Carbon Heating Grant Programme. The project is expected to complete in October 2026.
The work has included installing an air source heat pump (*ASHP*), internal and external insulation, triple glazing windows and a mechanical ventilation system that regains heat (*MVHR*). Together, these measures have created a comprehensive retrofit project that improves the building's energy performance, reduces carbon emissions, and provides a more comfortable and sustainable environment for the pupils and staff of Ysgol Llanbedrog.

Success story - Ysgol Hafod Lon
A new local smart energy system was developed on the school's site in 2025/26, and the electricity generated will not only save energy costs for the school, but it will also power the charging point for a new electric mini bus that transports the pupils to the school and back home.
139kW solar systems were installed on the site - a combination of solar panels on the roof and 147 panels on a 120kW solar canopy that supplies electricity to the school building, mini bus charging point, and a 215kW battery.
At peak times of solar generation in the summer, it was estimated that the school is 50% self-sufficient as a result of the project. There are substantial savings as a result of the project in terms of importing less energy from the grid, financial savings as a result of reduced electricity bills (estimated at £19,941 per annum), and carbon savings (estimate of 24tCO2e per annum).





The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Aim for long-term benefits when planning construction or building renovations.
2. Save 5% of carbon emissions from buildings by bringing them up to the CIBSE 'good practice' standard.
3. De-carbonise the Council's energy supply.
4. Increase our carbon 'credit' by installing solar farms to generate energy that the Council could use or sell.
5. Reduce our carbon emissions by expanding our use of PV to create renewable energy.
6. Use *Passivhaus* low carbon construction methods in developing our innovative housing pilot scheme.
7. Offer advice and information to Gwynedd residents about the benefits and opportunities of using low carbon building methods when building homes and low carbon heating/energy systems to maintain a home.
8. Improve the fabric of Council-owned buildings to make them as energy efficient as possible.
9. Electrification of building heating systems to reduce carbon emissions.
10. Install EC (electronically commutated) ventilation fans in buildings to reduce the energy needed to run them compared to normal fans.
11. Set individual room heating regulations to reduce the energy required to heat a building.
12. Upgrade specialist lighting in leisure centres to reduce energy consumption.
13. Upgrade streetlights and traffic signs to use less energy.
14. Prevent the over-development of fossil fuel energy schemes.
15. Maximise the benefits that come from implementing our energy and heating policies.
16. Equipment used within Council buildings to be as energy efficient as possible.

17. Improve the energy infrastructure in Gwynedd and north Wales to maintain low carbon energy and transport systems.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The above work contributes to the objectives below:

Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management

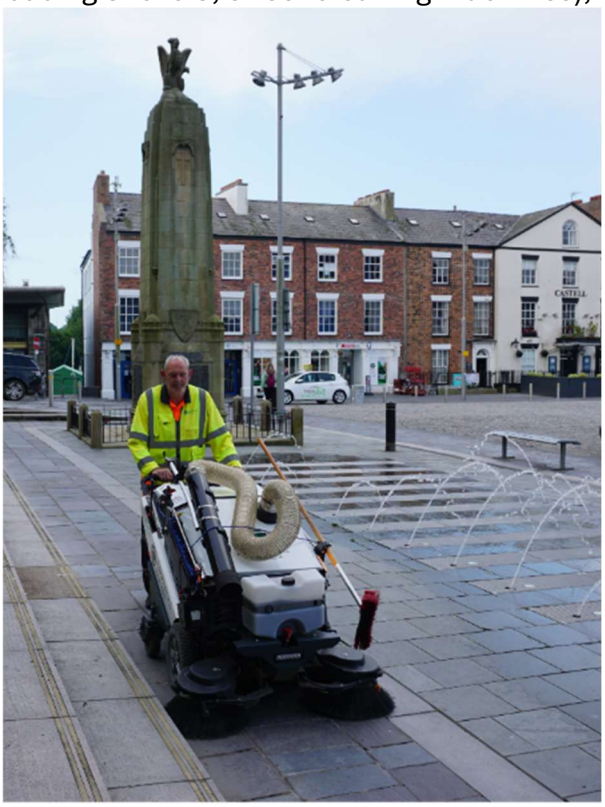
Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

7. Movement and Transport

The carbon emissions deriving from the council **fleet** in 2025/26 is 25% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 3% reduction since 2019/20 and a 4% reduction since 2024/25.
The carbon emissions deriving from the **staff commute** in 2025/26 is 20% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 30% reduction since 2019/20 and a 6% reduction since 2024/25.
The carbon emissions deriving from **business travel** in 2025/26 is 6% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 37% reduction since 2019/20 and a 4% reduction since 2024/25.

Green Fleet Plan
Since adopting our Green Fleet Plan 2023-29 in January 2023, our policy is to buy new electric vehicles (EV) where possible as the current fleet of petrol and diesel cars reach the end of their lifespan.
The Council owns 82 cars or small electric vans and 9 hybrid, and 6 electric equipment (*loading shovels*, street cleaning machines), namely 40% of all cars and vans we own.





We have succeeded to save energy costs and carbon emissions during the year as we saw a 6.1% reduction on fuel use (petrol and diesel) between 2024/25 and 2025/26. This was due to the transfer to an electric fleet and favourable weather, which meant fewer gritting trips during the winter.
66% of all of our fleet's carbon emissions derive from our HGV vehicles, and that because we are continuing to use diesel lorries. We should also bear in mind that these HGV lorries are waste collection and delivery vehicles, and road gritting vehicles,

therefore the carbon emissions associated with waste collection and delivery for processing is recorded under 'fleet' carbon emissions instead of 'waste'.

Electric Car Charging Points
Fleet - by the end of 2025/26, the Council had 58 charging points in 12 locations across the county in order to keep our fleet of electric vehicles on the road.
Public - by the end of 2025/26, the Council has installed and manages 48 charging points in 12 locations and 12 additional charging points in 4 Council-owned sites in collaboration with Transport for Wales.

Success story - Green Fleet Plan
The Energy Service (Welsh Government) reported that Cyngor Gwynedd has the second highest number of green vehicles in its fleet compared with other rural councils in Wales.

Active Travel
Bangor - The work of creating the multi-use path for cyclists and pedestrians between Ysbyty Gwynedd and Treborth was completed. The plan also includes the installation of a new crossing in front of Ysgol y Faenol, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor.
Mynytho - Walking paths and crossings were created for Ysgol Foel Gron, as well as an improved footpath and crossing to connect with the shop and post office.
There are several other projects commenced in 2025/26 that are continuing into 2026/27 and 2027/28 -

- Walking and cycling paths from Chwilog to Afonwen, and Tywyn to Aberdyfi.
- Feasibility and design work on a series of other plans, including travel routes: Llanberis-Caernarfon, Llanystumdwy-Cricieth, Bethel-Caernarfon.

Cyngor Gwynedd is responsible for managing and maintaining the coast path in the county. We installed path use monitoring devices in 8 locations along the coast path, and the 3 sites with the highest use of the 8 were - Dinas Dinlle, Llanbedrog, Penrhyn Bangor.

Success story - Lôn Las Ogwen
The work of building the new Pont Sarnau bridge, has created a safer and more accessible path for everyone who wishes to walk, cycle or scoot along Lôn Las in this part of Dyffryn Ogwen, improving the connection with paths to reach Llyn Ogwen and the Zip World attraction.
The improvements include installing a subway for cattle so that the path does not need to be closed occasionally, which will help farmers and path users alike.

Success story - Schools' active travel
The Schools Transport Pack was prepared as part of the efforts to improve safety around schools and encourage more sustainable travel across the county. The pack has been developed to provide clear and practical information for headteachers, school staff and parents, as well as useful resources to promote active travel and reduce traffic congestion around schools, which in turn will improve the quality of the air breathed in by our children.

The pack has been developed by Cyngor Gwynedd and has been funded by the Welsh Government with support from Transport for Wales.



Public transport
During 2025/26, the Council piloted and monitored the Sherpa'r Wyddfa services, the G23 between Barmouth and Porthmadog and the Fflecsi in south Meirionnydd - and increase of 6.6% was seen in the number of journeys compared to the previous year. Across the county's bus services, we saw an increase of 14.7% in bus journeys in 2025/26 compared with 2024/25.
A 4% reduction in journeys from those paying for a ticket, but a 36% increase in journeys with a free bus pass. 60% of journeys were made with paid tickets, and 40% with a free travel pass.
Improvements totalling £500,000 were completed to bus stops in 3 locations in Arfon, 3 in Dwyfor and 3 in Meirionnydd.

Staff Commute
The data that we have been gathering for 2025/26 is slightly different to previous years as we have been conducting a staff commute questionnaire. As the sample collected was not representative enough, the final data is a combination of an analysis of the questionnaire and of data based on the 2021 Census.

Business Travel
One significant change made in 2025/26 was changing our arrangements to measure the carbon emissions deriving from business journeys much more accurately than previous years.

Staff and councillors use public transport or private cars to make necessary journeys for their work, and we are now able to connect with the DVLA's data systems to receive an accurate measure of the vehicle engine's carbon emissions.
Therefore, it is encouraging that the emissions are reducing, particularly since several journeys are made on public transport or personal electric vehicles.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Move away from using fossil fuel vehicles towards a fleet of ULEV vehicles (cars and vans).
2. Install electric vehicle charging points for Council vehicles.
3. Have low carbon or zero carbon fuel options for the Council's heavy fleet.
4. Install electric vehicle charging points for Gwynedd residents.
5. Reduce business travel.
6. Reduce carbon emissions through staff commuting habits.
7. Encourage active travel among staff – in the interests of health and well-being and to reduce carbon emissions.
8. Encourage active travel among residents and visitors to Gwynedd to improve physical and mental well-being and reduce carbon emissions of short car journeys.
9. Reduce carbon emissions and parking problems in areas that are popular with visitors.
10. Increase opportunities for community organisations to access EV or ULEV vehicles or use low carbon technology.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The above work contributes to the objectives below:

Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management

Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

8. Waste

Carbon emissions from Council waste in 2025/26 are 0% of the total (excluding procurement) which is a 100% reduction from 2019/20 and consistent with the 2024/25 figure.
The Welsh Government changed the methodology of calculating the waste carbon emissions in 2024/25. Now, all waste treatment methods, except for landfill (e.g. recycling, incineration, anaerobic digestion, etc.) give us a figure of zero. All residual waste from Gwynedd residents and businesses is treated on the Parc Adfer site in Deeside, where it is incinerated to generate energy, therefore no waste is taken to landfill.
It should be borne in mind that the figure for **processing** waste is 0%, as the carbon emissions of **collecting** waste and **delivering** it for processing is counted under the fleet carbon emissions - see the chapter on 'Movement and Transport'.
Although a proportion of the waste we recycle has increased from 55% to 65% over the past decade, the progress has stopped. The Gwynedd recycling percentage in 2025/26 is 65.1% compared with 65.3% in 2024/25. Therefore, it will be some challenge for us to meet the Welsh Government's target for recycling, reusing and composting 70% of our waste.

Waste and Recycling Strategy 2025-2030
2025/26 was a year of developing, and consulting with Gwynedd's public, on the new strategy. It was adopted in its final form by the Cabinet in July 2026.
The strategy places emphasis on increasing recycling, improving services, maintaining the current infrastructure and investing in the infrastructure of the future.

Changing recycling habits
Whilst the work of developing the new Waste and Recycling Strategy is progressing, the recycling service trialled new arrangements to increase the amount of waste being recycled and reduce how much is sent for processing at Parc Adfer:

- hessian sack trial piloted on 3 routes in the Arfon area
- opening black bin bags at the recycling centres in order to move waste that would have been disposed of, and placing the material in the recycling skips instead
- campaign to raise awareness amongst residents

Street cleanliness and waste
The Tidying Team is offering a street maintenance and cleaning service, and service to clear any fly tipping. Here are some of the results:

- 31% reduction in fly tipping between 2024/25 and 2025/26
- Keep Wales Tidy is monitoring cleanliness levels across local authorities, and the number of sites inspected in Gwynedd in 2025 which reached the acceptable level was 64.5% compared with 58.5% in the whole of Wales.

Reduce food waste
The Emergency Food Aid Fund is a grant aimed at supporting projects that provide food aid to people. During 2025/26, 41 community groups were supported through the fund, with £150,300 being allocated to support food banks, food pantries, supper clubs, and a lunch box provision.

Reduce paper use
During 2025/26, the new contract for printers across the Council's sites was commenced, and the new arrangements will substantially reduce paper use and will save energy.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Repair and modify equipment that would otherwise be disposed of and incinerated and sold.
2. Reduce the number of items arriving at waste incineration sites by encouraging people to repair and re-use.
3. Promote a circular economy in order to reduce the number of items being disposed of and reducing carbon emissions in the supply chain from the purchase of new goods.
4. Reduce food waste by supporting community projects seeking to re-distribute food that would otherwise be thrown away.
5. Reduce the amount of street waste that is disposed and increase the amount of street waste that is recycled.
6. Reduce paper use.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above work contributes to the objectives below:
Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels.
Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management.
Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats.
Objective 4: Addressing key pressures on species and habitats.

9. Governance

No carbon emissions derive directly from the work in the Governance field.

Improving skills and knowledge
We continue to promote our Climate and Nature training e-module among staff and councillors as it explains why the Council needs to do work in these areas.
See the chapter on Biodiversity / Ecology for information on the tree protection training.

Workforce Development
Two new members of staff were appointed on professional trainee and apprentice contracts during the summer of 2025:

- Planning Ecologist Professional Trainee
- Energy Degree Apprentice

Policy Revision
2025/26 was a year of reviewing and recreating some of the main strategies that is leading the Council's climate and nature work. We consulted during the year on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and the Waste and Recycling Strategy, and they were accepted by the Cabinet early on in 2026/27.
The 2026-2031 Procurement Strategy was also accepted by the Council's Cabinet during the year, and it provides sound guidance on buying locally, gaining social value and reducing carbon.

Sharing information in order to change habits
It must be acknowledged that changing deeply embedded habits is one of the hardest tasks on our journey to net zero. Nevertheless, we have used our social media to share information and good news stories about how residents and businesses, as well as staff and councillors, reduce our carbon footprint.
We consulted widely with community initiatives, other public enterprises, and residents, when developing the Local Area Energy Plan, and work has commenced to discuss collaborating on future energy plans.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Elected members and staff who:
    - understand the implications of the impact of climate change
    - make decisions based on information about the effects
    - act in the most positive manner possible towards mitigating the impact of climate change and being ecologically positive
2. Encourage staff to develop careers in areas that reduce the impact of climate change or are ecologically positive.
3. Review current Council policies and strategies so that reducing carbon emissions or reducing the impact of climate change is a factor in reaching a decision.

4. Share information publicly about the work the Council is doing to reduce carbon emissions to encourage others to change habits.
5. Support communities to plan and deliver local solutions to local needs.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above work contributes to the objectives below:
Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels.
Objective 6: Implementing a governance framework and support for achieving the objectives.

10.Procurement

70% of the Council's carbon emissions during 2025/26 were from our procurement processes, which is a 16% increase from 2019/20 and a 14% reduction from 2024/25. The method of measuring procurement carbon emissions, or the supply chain, is based on spending alone. Simply put, the higher the spending, the greater the emissions. The increasing cost of purchasing goods and services and inflation increases, therefore leads to an increase in carbon emissions under the 'procurement' heading.
Due to the problems of this methodology, we are introducing two sets of emissions data - with, and without, procurement data.

Improving our evidence
In an attempt to move away from the spending methodology only, we collaborated with our suppliers in 4 high-spend areas in order to obtain much more accurate information about their carbon emissions - food contracts for schools, school transport contracts, information technology equipment, printers.
The information was inputted in the 'Tier 2' section of the Welsh Government's data spreadsheet, and the results have shown that the emissions have reduced, compared when measuring based on spending.

Supporting suppliers
If we help our suppliers to decarbonise their way of working, this will help us better understand our supply chains' carbon emissions, as well as help the climate!
During 2025/26 the Council collaborated with Busnes Cymru and Adra to hold support sessions for the providers of the care and housing sector, and to help them create Carbon Management Plans.
The officers have held 'meet the buyer' events to highlight the expectations when awarding procurement contracts and reducing carbon emissions is one of those.

2026 - 2031 Procurement Strategy
The new strategy accepted by the Cabinet in January 2026 identifies seven priority fields, which include: Local benefits, zero carbon, value for money, social value, technology, governance arrangements and the Welsh language.
To assist with the implementation of the new strategy, we have been supporting officers within the Council which award contracts regularly to raise awareness and understanding of the objectives to buy local, gain social value and reduce carbon.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Providing market support, particularly to local providers, to be able to measure the impact of their operations on their carbon footprint.
2. Understanding and measuring carbon emissions when realising contracts in the procurement chain.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above projects contribute to the objectives below:

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring.
Objective 6: Implementing a governance framework and support for achieving the objectives.
The above work contributes to these two Objectives, as receiving and monitoring Carbon Management Plans would give us evidence of how providers are going to protect biodiversity.

11. Land Use

We are currently using an estimated figure for the absorption levels of all council lands (including 'brownfield' sites built upon), whilst we check the accuracy of the data.
As no major changes have occurred between 2025/26 and the previous year, we are temporarily using the 2024/25 data.
All Council lands absorb 3,123,254 kgCO2e net worth of carbon in 2024/25 and 2025/26. This is 47% less than the 2019/20 baseline year.
Offsetting the carbon absorbed against our carbon emissions contributes to reducing the gap to net zero.

Establish and develop tree nurseries
Extra care had to be given to three existing tree nurseries - at Plas Glyn y Weddw, Llanbedrog, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Tregarth - following the major storms in 2025/26, but we managed to undertake the necessary remedial works.
New species of gorse and Welsh apple trees, which are genetically unique, have been discovered, and seeds collected and replanted in the nurseries.
A new tree nursery has started being established at Parc Glynllifon near Caernarfon, at a new and exciting project jointly with the Adults Department in order to offer work and well-being opportunities for vulnerable adults.

Urban tree planting
We managed to attract a grant from the Welsh Local Government Association, to run a feasibility study to see what tree would be best to plant and in what locations in urban and coastal areas. This work should lead to creating a tree planting programme to help with flood risks and create an environment to help the well-being of residents.

Protecting woodlands
Through the work of the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, the Council was involved in the work of improving public access to the woodlands of Parc Meurig in Bethesda and Coed Doctor in Llanberis.
Four community orchards were planted at Cricieth, Y Ffôr, Carmel and Abererch, jointly with local organisations.

Measuring carbon in trees
The work of investigating what model better suits our woodlands - the drone can measure how much wood and dead wood exists in a woodland, and we also use the Ezytreev and Forest Research systems.
The ability to measure correctly will be important, not just to understand the value of tree carbon for the purposes of our journey to net zero, but also to understand the health of the trees in order to treat and protect them. This is essential as a part of the work of the team responsible for Ash Dieback.

Measuring carbon in our lands
We collaborated with DataMapWales and the WLGA on a national scheme to see whether it was possible to map the carbon value of lands, but unfortunately, the results

of the project were not as we had hoped. Therefore, we are continuing to experiment with the best methods of measuring and keeping record.
Meanwhile, we are using data arising from OS maps, and the Welsh Government's carbon data collection methodology.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Identify the contribution of Council-owned trees to carbon absorption and storage and flood reduction.
2. Identify the contribution of Council-owned lands to carbon absorption and storage and flood reduction.
3. Establish tree nurseries to grow trees ready for planting.
4. Identify opportunities to plant trees as part of the National Forest for Wales initiative.
5. Controlling Ash Dieback Disease in trees and compensating for any carbon emissions as a result of felling trees.
6. Council-owned woods are protected to maximise their potential to absorb carbon and become habitats for nature.
7. Conserve agricultural land in Gwynedd and using it for a competent purpose and managing afforestation projects.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The proposed policy contributes to each of the six objectives.

12. Biodiversity / Ecology

Collaboration
The Gwynedd Nature Partnership is a collection of public and voluntary organisations and individuals who collaborate to protect and enhance nature in the county. Although Cyngor Gwynedd administrates the partnership, it succeeds due to the level of successful collaboration.
During 2025/26 the Partnership collaborated with 5 town and community councils on work to improve quality and access to nature in the communities. The Council also collaborated, via the Partnership, with the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to improve the quality and safety of land near Abersoch.

Support and spread the word
Information about the work of the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau, Llŷn AONB and Council biodiversity teams are all shared via social media channels regularly, as well as in the Llygad Llŷn and O Dan y Don magazines.
Educational workshops have been held at Plas Glyn y Weddw and the Llwyn Isaf Wild Landfill sites.
The Council and the Partnership visited local shows and fairs to gain the interest of residents in the protection of nature.





Success story – 'For Them' (*'Iddyn Nhw'*)
One of the biggest successes of 2025/26, were our plans to plant and protect wildflower meadows, particularly on road verges. A target was set by the government to create a meadow across Wales, and now over 25% of all those meadows are in Gwynedd.
This project has proven that there is no need for huge lands to be able to make the biggest difference. Plots of land on road verges, which are often ignored or neglected, can be a valuable haven for insects and wildlife.
If grass and flowers are left to 'grow wild', please do not assume that the location is not being looked after. On the contrary! The photo shows a machine being used to cut the grass carefully at the end of the season in order to collect seeds to plant during the next season.





The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Identify the steps we need to take to protect nature's habitats and biodiversity into the future.
2. Identify our valuable species and habitats and what measures are needed to protect and restore them.

3. Increase the number of pollinators by conserving habitats or planting new habitats.
4. Support voluntary and community organisations and town and community councils that protect or enhance nature.
5. Nurturing and maintaining Gwynedd residents' interest in ecological issues so that they want to help conserve nature.
6. Protecting valuable habitats for nature.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The projects above contribute to each of the six objectives.



CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of item:	Annual Performance Report and Self-assessment 2025/26
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Nia Jeffreys
Relevant officer:	Dewi Wyn Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager
Date of meeting:	10th November 2026

1. **Decision Sought:**
To approve Cyngor Gwynedd's Performance and Self-Assessment Report 2025/26 and to recommend its adoption by the Full Council.

2. **The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision:**
In accordance with the Council's performance management procedure, Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance and Self-Assessment Report for 2025/26 is initially submitted to the Cabinet for approval.

3. **Introduction and Rationale**

3.1 Background / Introduction

This report provides information about the progress made against the content of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 during 2025/26. The intention is to provide a balanced report, that highlights aspects that were not successfully achieved as well as the successful aspects. It is noted that the self-assessment is a statutory requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Regular reporting is an essential monitoring requirement within the Council's performance management arrangements. We monitor our performance regularly at Departmental performance challenge and support meetings and since June 2025 performance reports have been presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee in order to increase transparency and provide independent public challenge to performance.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance and Self-Assessment Report 2025/26 **(Appendix 1 and 2)** is structured to reflect the format of the Cyngor Gwynedd's Plan 2023-28. In the first part the focus is on the performance of the Council Plan projects and the day-to-day work while the second part includes the Self-Assessment. As in 2024/25 the report is much more concise than in the past and the intention was to make it a document that is easier to read while continuing to give the reader reassurance that the Council reports meaningfully on its performance.

To demonstrate the impact of the Council's work on the people of Gwynedd, a selection of case studies, chosen with your input as Cabinet Members, will be included at the end of each priority section, with further case studies published on the website. We will also publish an easy-read version or a separate easy-read document to ensure that the information is as accessible as possible.

There is a duty to publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment annually and to complete the work "as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year in which it relates."

A duty to consult at least once in a financial year with local people, local businesses, council staff and trade unions is also stated. These consultations should be used to obtain feedback on the extent to which the authority is fulfilling the performance requirements. Over the past year, the Council has conducted surveys with staff and residents of the county and consulted with trade unions regarding its performance.

In developing the 2025/26 Self-Assessment, the Council considered feedback gathered through surveys, consultations and engagement activity. Residents' feedback highlighted the need to strengthen trust, demonstrate value for money and ensure that their views influence decision-making. Businesses highlighted cost pressures and recruitment challenges, as well as the need for practical and financial support. Staff feedback was positive about the Council as a place to work, while also highlighting workload pressures and the need for greater appreciation. The Council continued to engage with trade unions on strategic and workforce matters, although no formal response was received to the specific request for feedback on the Self-Assessment. This evidence has shaped the strengths, risks and improvement priorities identified within the Self-Assessment. (Further detail on the feedback and findings arising from this work is set out on pages 7–9 of the Self-Assessment).

The Governance Group has led/taken an overview of the process within the Council to ensure that the work is owned and led at a strategic level.

Statutory guidance requires the involvement of the Governance and Audit Committee in the self-assessment process, giving them the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations, which the Council is responsible for considering. As in 2024/25, the main potential issues for inclusion in the 2025/26 Self-Assessment were presented for the Committee's consideration at its meeting on 9 July, and a number of recommendations and comments were received.

A draft of the Self-Assessment document was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee at their meeting on the 22nd October, where it was agreed to accept the draft report while offering the following comments:

- Recommend that the Council consider consulting Gwynedd residents on Council Tax.

- Recommend that 'staff sickness absence' be added to the list of challenges/risks within the Self-Assessment document, in response to the increase in sickness absence.

The above comments have been addressed within the draft version of the Self-Assessment.

In accordance with the requirements of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, Appendix 3 outlines how the Council has complied with the Social Partnership duty. A draft of this document was discussed with trades unions representatives at a Trades Unions Liaison Group meeting on 21 October, and no comments or recommendations were received.

A Panel Assessment was undertaken in March 2026 as part of the Council's arrangements for reviewing its performance and governance. The findings of the 2025/26 Self-Assessment are aligned with the findings and recommendations of the Panel's report, providing further assurance that the key issues have been consistently identified and are being addressed through the next steps

3.2 The reasoning and justification for recommending the decision

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Reviewing, reporting and assessment arrangements on the Council's performance has been the subject of legislative change through the arrangements of part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This requires the Council to measure its performance against three aspects, namely;
(a) That it is exercising its functions effectively
(b) That it uses resources economically, effectively, efficiently and
(c) That its governing arrangements are efficient in achieving this.

This report responds to these new requirements.

Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023
Since 1 April 2024, the Council has been subject to the Social Partnership Duty, which means it must collaborate with staff representatives or trades unions when setting well-being objectives or making strategic decisions. At the end of each financial year, an annual report must be published showing how the Council has complied with the duty, including evidence of collaboration, the outcomes of the process, and the views of the workforce.

Equality Act 2010
As part of the process of preparing the 2023-28 Cyngor Gwynedd Plan, an Equality Impact Assessment was prepared and this assessment is adapted as the Plan is reviewed annually. The assessment on the Plan in its entirety does not identify any impact that would justify a departure from the recommendation, and there are elements for which a positive impact is anticipated. Project Leaders are responsible for undertaking a full Equality Impact Assessment on individual projects.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
In order to meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act we need to report on what we have done to contribute towards the principles of the Act and specifically the well-being objectives we have adopted. This report has been drawn up based on our well-being objectives (the seven priority areas) outlining what has been achieved in the period in question. For convenience a table will be included at the end of the performance report identifying the objectives to which the projects contribute.

3.3 Next steps and timetable
The Full Council will discuss and accept the report, or not, at its meeting on the 3rd of December 2026. When the Council approves the final report, it will be published. Arrangements will be made to inform the public of the report by communicating the report and the main successes visually via social media as well as by printing copies and sharing them via the Council's usual media and locations e.g., libraries.

4. Views of the Statutory Officers

4.1 Chief Finance Officer
The Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment is a key document that is now a core part of demonstrating the appropriateness of the Council's governance and performance arrangements. I am satisfied that the contents of the document are a fair and accurate reflection of Cyngor Gwynedd's position.

4.2 Monitoring Officer
As noted, undertaking a self-assessment is part of statutory duties placed on the Council in relation to assessing and reporting on its performance. There are a number of statutory steps which relate to reaching this point and these are specifically referenced in the head report and the Performance Report and Self-Assessment as well as how the Council is to have regard to them. These are specifically around consultation and the views of the Governance and Audit Committee. I am satisfied with the propriety of the recommendation.

List of Appendices:
Appendix 1 – Gwynedd Council Annual Performance Report 2025/26 (Draft)
Appendix 2 – Gwynedd Council Self-Assessment Report (Draft) 2025/26
Appendix 3 – Annual Social Partnership Report for 2025/26 (Draft)

Annual Performance Report and Self-assessment 2025-26

The Leader's Foreword

Councillor Nia Jeffreys
Council Leader

DRAFT

Introduction

The 'Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28' includes a series of ambitious projects that will enable us to develop and improve our services to the county's residents over a five-year period. The projects fall under seven priority areas:

- **Tomorrow's Gwynedd**
  Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life.
- **A Prosperous Gwynedd**
  Strengthening the economy and supporting the residents of Gwynedd to earn a decent wage.
- **A Homely Gwynedd**
  Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities.
- **A Caring Gwynedd**
  Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities.
- **A Welsh Gwynedd**
  Ensuring that we give every possible opportunity for our residents to use the Welsh language in the community.
- **A Green Gwynedd**
  Protecting the natural beauty of the county, and responding positively to the climate change crisis.
- **An Efficient Gwynedd**
  Putting the people of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently.

This report looks back at what was achieved during the third year of the Council's Plan. It is customary to undertake an annual review of the Plan to ensure that the projects remain suitable, and to give the Council the opportunity to adapt them in light of local and national developments over the period of the Plan. This annual report provides an update on the plan as agreed by the Council on 6 March 2025.

Like last year, the report is divided into chapters that reflect the seven priority areas, describing the progress made during the year along with the main achievements in the day-to-day work of our departments, for example education, the environment and finance.

The Priority Areas within this document are our Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Objectives will directly contribute to achieving the seven national well-being goals. As we take action, we will also give appropriate consideration to the five ways of working within the Act by considering the long-term, prevention, integrated working, collaborative working and involving people of all ages. We will do this by adopting a way of working which focuses on putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do. The table at the end of the report shows the contribution of each priority project towards the five ways of working.

Looking ahead, the review of the Plan for 2026/27 will build on the progress already achieved by introducing and placing greater emphasis on a new priority area, **An Equal Gwynedd**, and the **Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice**. An Equal Gwynedd will emphasise that equality, equity and inclusion are at the core of all the Council's work, bringing together the work to ensure fairness for all, strengthen inclusive representation in leadership, and develop Gwynedd into a child-friendly and trauma-informed county. Giving a prominent place to the Response Plan will also underline its importance and the Council's continued commitment to implementing the report's recommendations. Although it was not part of the Council's Plan for 2025/26 we have been consistently reporting on the progress of measures that have been put in place to respond to recommendations over the past few months and will continue to do so. These reports can be found on the Council's website.

The second part of the performance report is our self-assessment for the year. This is our fifth self-assessment. The Council is expected to submit this annually under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. A section is appended that outlines how the Council is complying with the Social Partnership Duty which is a new reporting requirement under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

The need to make financial savings is more or less an annual challenge for Local Government by now, and last year was no different. Savings of almost £47 million, namely 93% of the revised schemes since 2015, have now been realised. Despite these financial challenges, the Council continues to adapt and tries to find better and more efficient ways of providing services.

As part of our performance arrangements, a series of departmental performance challenge and support meetings are held on a regular basis to see how the departments are making progress with their day to day work as well as Council Plan projects. This Annual Performance Report is based on the findings of these performance challenge and support meetings. The aim of the report is not just to highlight the good things, but to give a fair and honest picture of our performance during the year. In doing so, we have been able to celebrate our successes and see which aspects of our work need further attention, to assist us in providing the best possible service for the residents of the county within the resources we have.

This annual Report will be submitted to the Council Cabinet and to a meeting of the Full Council for approval.

Tomorrow's Gwynedd

Tomorrow's Gwynedd focuses on giving children and young people the best possible start. By investing in education, well-being, play, inclusion and early support, we work to ensure that all children have a fair opportunity to learn, develop and thrive in their communities.

Our ambition is to ensure that all pupils educated in Gwynedd get:

- Treated equally, encouraged to treat others equally and assurance that their well-being and happiness is a priority for us.
- Education of the best possible standard including access to a broad range of academic and vocational subjects in order to fulfil the requirements of the new 'Curriculum for Wales'.
- Access to Welsh-medium education throughout their time in education.
- Educated in buildings that are in a good state of repair, and to the best of our ability are safe and fit for purpose.
- Receive the opportunity to develop into rounded, happy and confident people in the world.
- Tailored support from professional services to meet their additional learning needs.
- The opportunity to have a nutritious meal at school, free of charge to as many pupils as possible.
- Access to equipment and technology that promote modern and effective learning.
- Assurance that suitable facilities and playing fields are available for children and young people in their leisure time.

Projects

- Transform education for children in their early years
- Modernise buildings and the learning environment
- Promote the well-being of children and young people and reduce the cost of sending children to school
- Extend opportunities for play and socialising for the county's children and young people
- Formulate and implement a 10-year strategic direction for education in Gwynedd
- Review and improve the range of inclusion provisions in Gwynedd

An update on the projects

Transform education for children in their early years

The early years work has focused on widening access to childcare and supporting parents with practical advice:

- The Childcare for Two-year-olds Scheme has been extended to the following areas: Tywyn, Harlech, Llandderfel and Llanuwchllyn, Penrhyndeudraeth, Efailnewydd/Buan, Botwnnog/Tudweiliog, Cricieth, Seiont 1 – Caernarfon, Llanberis and Porthmadog West ensuring that more areas within the county benefit from the Scheme. The Scheme has a positive impact on families by providing access to 12.5 hours of free childcare, helping to reduce the cost of living. There is a positive impact on children, through access to quality care and activities that support their development alongside their peers. The Scheme enables providers to benefit through financial investment in resources and professional support from the Early Years Advisory Teacher and the wider childcare team.
- The Toileting Policy for Gwynedd schools was changed in September 2025 and families were prepared for the change by collaborating cross-departmentally with Health and an episode of the *'Mam, Dad a Magu'* podcast was created, which

focused on toileting. The podcast helps families on the journey through the early and crucial years of childhood. The podcast is available on various platforms such as YouTube and Spotify.

Modernise buildings and the learning environment

School modernisation has progressed to ensure more suitable, safe and sustainable learning environments for children and staff:

- The Council continued to invest in the modernisation of educational buildings to ensure that Gwynedd's children and young people have access to safe, sustainable learning environments suitable for future needs. This investment will not only enhance learners' educational experiences, but also contribute to the well-being of local communities. The Cabinet approved increasing the budget for the Ysgol Tryfan project from £18 million to £23.6 million to achieve net zero requirements, supporting a modern and more sustainable learning environment for Bangor learners. The design team continues to work on developing the plan and the business case will be submitted in the Summer 2026 term.
- In the Bontnewydd area, a new temporary building has been completed which has enabled the school and community centre to continue to operate without disruption to educational provision or community activities. This has ensured stability for pupils, staff and users of the centre while work is underway on the development of the new permanent building.
- At Our Lady's School, construction work on the new school has been completed. Providing high-quality modern facilities for pupils and staff. The new building will support improved learning experiences, offer a more accessible and engaging environment, and contribute to the well-being of the whole school community for years to come. The school opened following the summer holidays in 2026.
- In addition, the design work for the Ysgol Hirael development was completed during the year. This is an important step towards providing modern facilities that will strengthen local educational provision and ensure that learners in the Bangor area can benefit from a learning environment that meets the needs of contemporary education. The school modernisation programme ensures that more children and young people have access to modern, sustainable and inspiring buildings that support their education and well-being. As well as improving learning experiences, the investment strengthens local communities by providing high-quality facilities that schools and communities can use and enjoy together.

Promote the well-being of children and young people and reduce the cost of sending children to school

This work has focused on understanding and reducing the costs that can prevent children from participating fully in school life:

- The schools have used the findings of the Cost Friendly School Audit to implement practical steps to reduce costs for families. As a result, they have reviewed school uniform policies, promoted second-hand clothing schemes, considered the cost of school trips and additional activities, ensuring that information about financial support is clearly available and shared with parents and carers. Following this, a Cost

Friendly School Charter was developed, and the schools are now working towards achieving the relevant metrics to be recognised as 'Cost Friendly' schools. The schools are supported to implement the principles of the Charter, share successful practices across the county, and ensure that the voice of families and learners continues to inform provision. In addition, children and young people are given more opportunities to participate in activities, regardless of the family's financial situation.

- This work contributes to reducing the financial pressure on Gwynedd families at a time when many are facing significant cost of living challenges. By reducing costs associated with school uniforms, trips and activities, schools help ensure that all children are able to benefit from educational and developmental opportunities equally. This supports the well-being of children and young people, strengthens their sense of belonging to the school community, and reduces the risk of any child being excluded due to financial circumstances.

Extend opportunities for play and socialising for the county's children and young people
The play and youth project has focused on giving children and young people more opportunities to socialise, play and have a voice.

- Youth forums have been set up across the county, with plans to launch the Council's full young people's voice forum. This creates new opportunities for children and young people to influence decisions that affect their lives, ensuring that services are more responsive to their needs and that the voices of often under-represented groups are heard and valued.
- This work has expanded opportunities for the children and young people of Gwynedd to socialise and have a say in decisions that affect them. This contributes to improving their well-being, developing their confidence and social skills, and strengthening their sense of belonging to their schools and local communities.
- The Welsh Government's Play Opportunities grant was used to improve 29 playing fields across the county. This provides safer, more attractive and accessible play spaces for children and families in their local communities.

Formulate and implement a 10-year strategic direction for education in Gwynedd
The Schools 2026-2036 strategy has been developed to set a clear direction for the future of education in Gwynedd.

- The draft strategy was presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet, after engaging with Gwynedd's schools, governors, children and young people. This ensures that the long-term direction of education in Gwynedd is informed by the experiences of learners and the aspirations of learners, families and the education workforce. The Strategy provides a clear direction for the development of education provision over the next decade, helping to ensure that Gwynedd's children and young people have the skills, support and opportunities they need to thrive in school and in their future lives.

- The Strategy will also help the Council, schools and partners to plan more effectively for future challenges and opportunities, ensuring that investment in education remains focused on improving outcomes and the well-being of Gwynedd's children and young people.

Review and improve the range of inclusion provisions in Gwynedd

The inclusion work has focused on strengthening support for learners who need additional support:

- The 'Camu i'r Copa' Pupil Referral Unit in Llanwnda is now operational as a registered provision. 'Camu i'r Copa' was established as a specialist provision to support learners who are struggling to thrive within mainstream education. The main aim of the Unit is to restore learners' confidence, build their resilience and help them develop the skills they need to reconnect with education in a positive manner. It provides educational, emotional and social support in a safe and nurturing environment, helping learners who need extra support to stay in education, improve their well-being and develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed. The provision also provides families with additional reassurance that their children are receiving the appropriate support in an environment that responds to their individual needs.
- The Inclusion Strategy was published to strategic headteacher groups. This will help schools and the Council to provide more consistent and coordinated support to vulnerable learners across the county, reducing barriers to learning and ensuring that children and young people get the help they need as quickly as possible. As a result, more families will be able to access clear and consistent support, giving their children the best opportunity to participate fully in school life and achieve their potential.
- This work contributes to the creation of a more inclusive education system in Gwynedd where children and young people are given the support they need to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, where families can be confident that their children's needs are being identified and met in a timely and appropriate manner. For many of the young people, the provision has offered a fresh start. Learners have had the opportunity to build positive relationships with adults and peers, develop greater confidence in themselves and strengthen their social and emotional skills. This has helped to improve their well-being, engagement with learning and their willingness to participate in education.

Some of our key achievements

- The Youth Service delivers 34 community projects and clubs on a weekly basis across Gwynedd, with 16 based in Arfon, 10 in Meirionnydd and 8 in Dwyfor, ensuring a wide geographical spread and fair access for young people throughout the county. The provision includes 12 clubs funded by local councils, 3 Friendly Clubs in partnership with Derwen, 18 mobile community clubs that respond flexibly to local needs, and 1 specialist Neuro club.
- There are high levels of participation, 489 accreditations completed by young people, 97% reported an improvement in their well-being after using the service, and 95% enjoy the provision.
- The Free School Meals provision for all primary learners has continued to be a success during 2025/26. In March 2026, an average of 6,160 free school meals were provided on any given day. The service has also continued to support the Council's wider priorities by promoting local food, reducing food waste and raising awareness among learners of the importance of healthy eating.
- The average attendance of pupils within the Authority up to April 2026 was 91.0%. This equates to the Wales rate for the same period. Gwynedd's historical data shows a steady increase over a three-year period. Direct support through Education Welfare Officers has remained a key element of the work, helping to reduce barriers to school attendance and supporting learners to re-engage with their education. This progress is supported by a continuing focus on early intervention, monitoring of attendance patterns, and close collaboration between schools, the Authority's services and families.
- 100% of Year 7 Admission applications were first choice, and 99.8% of Reception applicants were offered a place at their first-choice school.
- User satisfaction levels are consistently very high (often 97%-100%) across several ALN services, with clear evidence of progress in children receiving specialist support.

Case Study - Further case studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

'Camu i'r Copa' - Pupil Referral Unit in Felinwnda

The 'Camu i'r Copa' Pupil Referral Unit was established on the site of the former Ysgol Felinwnda, Llanwnda, in September 2025 in response to the increase in the number of learners facing complex emotional, behavioural and social needs. The aim is to provide specialist support to young people who have difficulty engaging with mainstream education, helping to prevent disengagement, improve attendance and reduce the risk of being excluded from school.

During its first year, a safe, stable and nurturing environment was developed with small classrooms, personal learning plans, a flexible curriculum and emotional support tailored to individual needs. Emphasis was also placed on strengthening the connections between the

Unit, schools, families and partner services to ensure effective transition arrangements and support for learners.

The provision has had a positive impact on many young people by improving their confidence, resilience, social skills and engagement with education. Families have benefited from seeing their children receiving appropriate support in an environment that understands their needs, providing more assurance and reducing concerns. Schools had also taken advantage of the Unit's expertise to plan more effective support. Although this is the first year of the provision, the early evidence shows that 'Camu i'r Copa' already plays an important role in reconnecting vulnerable learners with education and setting a firm foundation for their success in the future.

DRAFT

A Prosperous Gwynedd

A Prosperous Gwynedd focuses on strengthening the local economy, supporting businesses and creating better job opportunities for the people of Gwynedd. By investing in our local economy, culture, sustainable tourism and local procurement, we are working to retain greater economic benefit within the communities of the County. Our ambition is to ensure:

- High-quality jobs.
- Support for businesses to thrive.
- Sustainable tourism for the benefit of communities.
- Strong and resilient communities.
- Prosperous and vibrant town centres.

Projects

- Promoting our culture and a sustainable visitor economy
- Regenerating communities and town centres
- Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work
- Keeping the Benefit Local

An update on the projects

Promoting our culture and a sustainable visitor economy

The culture and visitor economy work has focused on strengthening local attractions and supporting tourism that benefits communities:

- Discussions were commenced on the development of the Arosfan space in Tywyn following the completion of the Cricieth, Pwllheli, Llanberis and Caernarfon sites. This will help to better manage overnight stays and ensure that visitors contribute more positively to local communities. It is intended to carry out an evaluation of the pilot in 2026/27 to to assess its value and identifythe key lessons learned.
- Improvements to the Lloyd George Museum have been completed and the museum has now reopened. This strengthens the cultural offer of the area and provides more opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about local heritage.
- Storiel's exterior improvements are underway and the café has reopened. The exhibitions and the Audience Development Plan are helping to attract more people to the site and to strengthen Storiel's role as a cultural hub for the community.
- Significant projects are underway across the slate landscape, helping communities benefit from the World Heritage Site's heritage through activities, public art and local investment:
    - The Llewyrch o'r Llechi project has already attracted over £35 million of investment to Gwynedd's slate communities. The project has been given an extension and all elements of the programme are now in place. This will

ensure that the investment continues to support Gwynedd's slate communities.

- 68 events were held with 3,100 people attending, including 1,938 children. This helps residents connect with their heritage and ensures that the World Heritage status brings direct benefit to local communities.
- Public art was installed at four of the six locations, with arrangements progressing for Llanberis and Bethesda. This enhances the appearance and identity of local places and helps to celebrate the history and culture of the slate areas.
- LleCHI LleNI activities were carried out in communities and schools. This provides opportunities for children, young people and residents to understand and appreciate the slate heritage of their areas.

Regenerating communities and town centres

Work has focused on investing in town centres and local projects that improve facilities, support businesses and strengthen community pride:

- £800,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund was secured for a fund that supports local regeneration projects such as Menter y Tŵr, Meithrinfa Seren Fach, the Old Library in Deiniolen, Canolfan Rhyd Ddu, Antur Nantlle and Menter Rabar to improve facilities and support local activity.
- £1.3 million was secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund for the Gwynedd Ni Regeneration Plan. The package has supported improvements to public spaces, toilets, community buildings and local schemes, making towns and villages more attractive to residents, businesses and visitors.
- The Empty Properties programme has helped bring 13 empty properties back into use in town centres, and £995,000 has been secured for the Bangor High Street pilot. This helps to regenerate town centres and create new uses for properties that have been empty.
- A Transforming Towns grant was secured for projects at the Porthmadog Community Centre, Cob Crwn and Llety Arall, as well as preparatory funding for Bangor Roman Camp and Slate Quay. A £1.5 million package has also been developed for the Pride in Place Impact Fund, creating further opportunities to improve local places in 2026/27.
- As part of the Gwynedd Ni Regeneration Plan, grants were offered to 55 town and community councils through a pilot fund of £370,000. This has supported local projects such as murals, new play equipment, street furniture and information panels, enhancing community spaces and increasing local pride.
- Since 2022/23, £31.8 million of grants have been secured for the development and implementation of town centre regeneration projects in Gwynedd. This investment

helps improve local places, support businesses and create more vibrant town centres for residents and visitors.

Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work

The economic work has focused on supporting businesses, creating jobs and helping residents develop skills and find work:

- £500,000 was secured to continue ARFOR across Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. This helps to transfer the learning from the programme and to develop interventions that support young people, positive migration and Welsh-speaking communities.
- Business Week 2025 took place in October and news and opportunities were shared with over 4,000 businesses weekly via business bulletins. This provides local businesses with timely information and helps them take advantage of support and development opportunities.
- A new economic strategy was developed which was approved by the Cabinet and the Full Council. This will provide a clear direction for the Council's economic investment and target resources to the areas that have the greatest potential to create benefit for businesses, employees and local communities.
- Several major economic projects are progressing, including the industrial units of Parc Bryn Cegin, Glynllifon Rural Hub, Portmeirion Tourist Academy, Zip World developments (Penrhyn and Llechwedd Quarry), Albert Gubay Business School (Bangor University) and Trawsfynydd Skills and Science Centre. These investments will create new work, training and business opportunities in different parts of Gwynedd.

Keeping the Benefit Local

The procurement work has focused on ensuring that increased Council spending creates local benefit, social value and a positive impact on the local economy:

- A new Procurement Strategy was developed which sets clear priorities in the areas of delivering local benefit, carbon reduction, value for money, social value, technology, governance and the Welsh language.
- Purchases in areas such as domiciliary care, housing, school transport, equipment hire and recycling are provided by local companies. This helps to keep more public spending within Gwynedd's economy.
- Training sessions for procurement officers were developed and conducted on a regular basis. This increases understanding of how to buy locally, deliver social value and reduce carbon through day-to-day procurement decisions.
- We worked with Business Wales and Adra to raise business awareness of procurement opportunities and the new national procurement regulations. This helps local businesses understand how to compete for work and to take advantage of opportunities in the public sector.

DRAFT

Some of our key achievements

Economic Development and Community Regeneration

- Since June 2024 to the end of March 2026, 3,518 overnight parking bookings have been made at Arosfan sites in Caernarfon, Cricieth, Llanberis and Pwllheli. This helps to better manage overnight stays, reduce pressure on local communities and improve the visitor experience. Fresh water, chemical waste-water, recycling and general waste facilities are provided at the sites. The sites are located within walking distance of the county's key towns and destinations.

- Grants worth almost £300,000 were offered to 69 community organisations across Gwynedd to support cultural and healthy living activities, including Sports Clubs, cultural and community events, activities for children and young people and well-being projects. The Diwyllesiant project supports the benefit and well-being of Gwynedd's communities, environment and businesses by promoting and developing opportunities in the priority areas of Culture, Heritage, Leisure and Sports and Sustainable Visitor Economy.

- £1.3 million of grants were secured from Government funds to support 118 businesses in Gwynedd in 2025/26. The support, along with drop-in sessions and a business survey, has helped local enterprises reduce costs, increase income and access relevant information and training.
- Support was provided for 255 residents of Gwynedd to find work, and 130 residents were supported to earn a better salary, develop skills or overcome obstacles. This increases income, confidence and stability for individuals and families throughout the county.

Culture and Leisure

- Almost 965,000 visits to Byw'n Iach centres were recorded, demonstrating strong usage and demand for the services.
- There were over 1.2 million digital visits and engagements with the museums and galleries service. Customer satisfaction was consistently high across cultural services, including 95% in Museums and Galleries, 98% in Libraries and 95% in Neuadd Dwyfor.
- Between 97% and 100% of participants reported that they had benefited from community arts and well-being projects.
- Neuadd Dwyfor attracted almost 20,000 ticket sales and over £200,000 in income, while there was a significant increase in visits and activities at other cultural locations.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

Gwaith Gwynedd

DRAFT

The number of people who want work but are unable to get a job in Gwynedd is low; but there are a higher than average proportion of working age people in our community who do not have work and are not looking for a job.

Gwaith Gwynedd is the name of Cyngor Gwynedd's service to help our residents overcome barriers that prevent them from working or getting a better job. During 2025/26, Cyngor Gwynedd secured a £1.5 million investment for this important field, employing a team of 14 to offer help directly to the residents and fund further support from partners within our communities.

As a result of this commitment and intensive support, 255 individuals got a job during the year and another 130 completed training that will help them to get a better paid job.

One of the Gwaith Gwynedd beneficiaries in 2025/26 was Seimon:
Seimon was homeless, sleeping rough and without any income when he self-referred to Gwaith Gwynedd at the advice of Job Centre Plus. Seimon was supported to get urgent access to the Council's homelessness team and, once he had gained temporary accommodation, Gwaith Gwynedd helped him to apply for jobs locally and prepare him for an interview. With our support, within a month, Seimon moved from sleeping rough to having accommodation and a job. To ensure that his success was sustainable, Gwaith Gwynedd provided him with a bus ticket to ensure that he could travel to work until he received his first pay packet
.

DRAFT

A Homely Gwynedd

A Homely Gwynedd focuses on helping people live in suitable, affordable and quality homes in their communities. By increasing the supply of housing, bringing empty homes back into use, reducing fuel poverty and strengthening homelessness arrangements, we are working to improve the quality of life, health and well-being of Gwynedd residents. We will try to achieve this by setting an ambition to:

- Ensure that no one is homeless in Gwynedd.
- Help the residents of Gwynedd to own an affordable home in their community.
- Ensure that new housing in Gwynedd is environmentally friendly.
- Ensure that Gwynedd housing has a positive influence on the health and well-being of the county's residents.

Projects

- Increasing the supply of housing for local people
- Tackling the energy cost and fuel poverty crisis
- Ensuring that no one is homeless in Gwynedd
- Managing second homes and short-term holiday lets

An update on the projects

Increasing the supply of housing for local people

Work to increase the supply of housing has focused on creating more homes for local people and making better use of existing properties:

- 139 social homes were developed during the year, bringing the total to 506 since the start of the Housing Action Plan (HAP), exceeding the target of 500. This increases the choice of affordable homes and helps more people stay or return to their local communities.
- It was proposed to bring 28 empty properties back into use through the empty homes grants during the third year of the Plan. A further 37 empty properties were brought back into use during the year through the grant, bringing the total to 145 vacant properties since the start of the HAP.
- 85 properties were purchased through the Homebuy Scheme helping 221 people to live in their local communities. This gives individuals and families a practical opportunity to find a suitable home close to their local networks and services.
- A target was set to buy 68 homes off the open market through the Buy to Let Scheme by March 2026, with the aim to let at least 40 of them to tenants in need of housing. 66 were purchased with a further 4 in the legal process. 32 houses were let with a further 7 in the process of being let.
- Difficulties with the water connection have delayed the work. There was some slippage with the two Tŷ Gwynedd developments due for completion during 2025/26, namely Dôl Afon Goch in Llanberis and the Coed Mawr site in Bangor, but they will be completed during 2026/27 and two further developments are in the pipeline.

DRAFT

Tackling the energy cost and fuel poverty crisis

Work on fuel poverty has focused on supporting residents facing high energy costs and on improving the efficiency of homes:

- Almost 650 individuals were referred to ECO4 and Nyth in 2025/26 exceeding the original ambition of 300. This helps residents access energy improvements that can make homes warmer, more efficient and cheaper to run. Between October 2022 and March 2026, 1158 homes have seen an improvement in their energy performance with an increase in the EPC (Energy Performance Certificate), with 125 increasing to A; 824 to B and 166 to C. This has meant that over £10 million has been spent in the county since the start of ECO4.
- 309 vouchers worth £11,880 were distributed to residents in need who were on prepayment meters. Since the scheme began, 6,515 vouchers worth £264,773 have gone directly to the county's most vulnerable residents, providing direct support with vital living costs. This has helped the county's most vulnerable residents to receive assistance with heating costs.
- 67 residents were referred to support services such as the foodbanks, Age Cymru, Carers Support, Canllaw, Citizens Advice and housing associations. This ensures that people are connected to the most suitable support for their situation.
- 32 energy drop-in sessions were held across Gwynedd. These sessions give residents face-to-face advice and help them understand what support is available to reduce energy costs.

Ensuring that no one is homeless in Gwynedd

Homelessness work has focused on increasing suitable accommodation options and reducing reliance on emergency accommodation:

- Improvement work was completed at 35 Ffordd y Coleg, Bangor and tenants are due to move in over the coming months. Tenants have also moved to 137 Stryd Fawr Bangor, which provides accommodation for 12 individuals. This increases local accommodation options and helps people move on from vulnerable situations.
- An open day was held for the Penrallt scheme in Caernarfon and the planning application is ready to be submitted. The scheme will help create additional and suitable accommodation provision for people who need support.
- Reliance on costly, unsuitable emergency accommodation to house homeless people remains high in Gwynedd, but the Housing and Property Department is making intentional and successful efforts to reduce dependency and further increase temporary accommodation options. The department is seeking opportunities to purchase prefabricated buildings, and 3 buildings were purchased over the last period to further increase temporary accommodation options – 1 in February (Bangor) and 2 in March (Caernarfon and Bangor).

Managing second homes and short-term holiday lets

The work on second homes and short-term holiday accommodation has focused on managing the impact of the housing market on local communities:

- The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) report was submitted to the Cabinet in June 2025, and was adopted to assist applicants in understanding and implementing

relevant planning policies when submitting applications. However, in February 2026 the Judge refused to allow the Council's appeal, quashing the Article 4 Direction. As a result, the SPG is no longer operational. However, the Council remains committed to tackling the housing crisis, protecting Gwynedd's communities, and ensuring fair opportunities for residents to live in the county.

- The results of the research into the impact of the Council Tax Premium in relation to any change of use of a property were reported to the Council on 4 December 2025. The premium has been shown to have made a contribution to bringing second homes back into use as primary residences. The Council Tax Premium on second homes was maintained at 150% (2025/26) and the Council Tax Premium on long-term empty properties increased to 150% in 2026/27, as a result of the number of empty houses that still exist. The money raised since the introduction of the Premium in 2018/19 has contributed to funding the Housing Action Plan, which aims to build, purchase or refurbish over 2,000 units that will help over 15,000 Gwynedd residents over the lifespan of the Plan. This has resulted in helping 13,194 people in Gwynedd since the introduction of the Premium in 2018/19.

Some of our key achievements

- The empty housing grant has helped 145 people in Gwynedd to bring empty properties back into use. The grant, which is now available to a wider range of buyers, supports vital works such as roofing, insulation and heating systems, turning derelict homes into suitable and quality homes for local people.

- Through the Buy to Let Scheme, 66 homes were purchased from the open market, with 32 already let and others being renovated or in the process of being let. This keeps more homes in use and offers more affordable rental options to people on the intermediate housing register.

- The average time spent in accommodation has remained stable over the past year, and it can be reported that the number of of people in B&Bs decreased from a peak of 217 in July 2025 to 182 in March 2026.

- Leasing Scheme Wales is a scheme that gives landlords and owners of empty homes the opportunity to lease their property to the local authority for a period of between 5 and 20 years. The scheme guarantees property owners a monthly rental income and a full property management service from the local authority, without the need to pay commission. 53 expressions of interest for Leasing Scheme Wales were received over the year from landlords and owners of empty homes, and several properties are going through the process of being assessed or further action being discussed. 91 individuals have benefited from the Council's houses on lease, and the ability to move households from emergency accommodation to more suitable

temporary accommodation has eased some of the pressure on the homelessness service.

- 13,194 people have received support to live in a home in their local area through the Housing Action Plan schemes since it was launched. The Housing Action Plan includes Supported Accommodation for the homeless, Tŷ Gwynedd, a Homebuy Scheme and a One Stop Shop.
- 506 social units have been developed through the Housing Action Plan, which is part of the Social Housing Development Programme, with a further 299 underway on the Main Programme at various stages of the process.
- The Council has helped bring 343 empty homes back into use with an additional 62 properties in the last year alone.
- 97% of social housing lettings were made to people with a local connection to Gwynedd during the last 12 months, ensuring that housing meets the needs of local communities.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

A young local couple receives a house in Porthmadog through the Buy to Let Scheme
The Cyngor Gwynedd scheme to buy and upgrade houses to let for local people has already changed the lives of residents in the county, including a young couple in Porthmadog who have now received keys to an affordable home in their own community.

Since 2021, the Council has been implementing the Buy to Let scheme, which is a central part of the Housing Action Plan that is worth £190 million. The aim is to purchase 100 properties across the county and let them to local people to address the shortage of affordable rent houses in Gwynedd.
Through the scheme to date, the following has occurred:

- 66 properties have been purchased by Cyngor Gwynedd
- 32 of these have been let to local people
- The remaining ones are in the process of being renovated to appropriate standards before being let.

These properties include houses in areas where many people in Gwynedd are having difficulties finding affordable housing, such as the communities of Aberdyfi, Llanberis, Cricieth and the Pen Llŷn area.

The Council is working with Adra on this scheme, with Adra taking responsibility for managing the properties on behalf of the Council. The homes are available for individuals who meet the Tai Teg criteria. For those who are interested, registering with Tai Teg is the first step to apply for one of the houses.

One of those who have benefited is Ffion Morris and her partner Rhodri, who now live in a house through the scheme in Porthmadog:

"As a local couple, one from Penrhyndeudraeth and one from Porthmadog, we had been looking for a home for some time but had difficulty finding a suitable place to rent in the area.

Moving to our new home through the Council's Buy to Let scheme feels like a dream and an incredible opportunity for us.

We see a bright future here in our new home and are very grateful to the Council, Tai Teg and Adra for supporting us through the process."

DRAFT

A Caring Gwynedd

Caring for vulnerable individuals is one of our main responsibilities and our ambition is to support Gwynedd residents to live full and safe lives in our communities by:

- Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Supporting residents to participate and engage with their communities, and to reduce poverty and its impacts.
- Ensuring that children, young people and their families live happy lives and reach their potential in terms of their education, health and well-being.
- Ensuring there is information available for the residents of Gwynedd to assist them in making informed decisions about their health and well-being.
- Enabling Gwynedd residents to live independently in suitable accommodation and with dignity for as long as possible in their community.
- Supporting unpaid carers.
- Providing high-quality care and support in the right place at the right time.
- Supporting our communities to ensure accessibility and to develop into an Age Friendly county.

Projects

- Modernising our care resources to meet future needs
- Using more technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care
- Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families
- Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community
- Developing training and employment opportunities for individuals in need of support
- Llechen Lân
- Support People's Well-being
- Autism Plan
- Develop a residential provision for children in care in small group homes

An update on the projects

Modernising our care resources to meet future needs

The work of modernising care has focused on developing services and accommodation that suit people's needs now and in the future. This is what we achieved during the year:

- The Council's priority is to ensure that the county's care homes meet modern standards and that a wide range of accommodation options are available to support individuals who continue to be able to live independently with little support. An outline business case for a new nursing and dementia home in Penyberth was submitted to the Cabinet in December 2025. The scheme is a partnership between the Council, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and ClwydAlyn Housing Association. The scheme will be part of the Penrhos integrated health and care campus, offering modern and bilingual care provision, which will have 56 beds

including high-quality dementia and nursing provision closer to home. This new model of nursing care helps people receive appropriate care closer to their communities.

- 2 supported houses were completed for individuals with learning disabilities in Harlech and Penrhyndeudraeth. Supported Housing in the Community offers individuals suitable and safe care homes and gives them the opportunity to live independently, with the support they need.
- Work to develop Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli is ongoing. The scheme will help people live independently for longer, with support available when needed.
- A brief and business case was submitted to the Housing and Property Department for Extra Care Housing in the Caernarfon area. However, due to the need to confirm practical information, there is a delay in drawing up the timetable.
- Although we had planned to commission work during the year to produce a full analysis of the Council's internal residential homes to identify the investments needed to meet modern standards, the timetable has slipped. It is planned to appoint a company to undertake the work shortly.
- Work with the Housing and Property Department was commissioned by Housing LIN to produce a report summarising the demand for care accommodation in Gwynedd over the next 20 years. This will enable us to plan accommodation developments for the coming years based on clear evidence. The final version is expected to be ready during 2026/27.

Using more technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care

The digital work has focused on helping people and their families access information, advice and support more easily:

- The Dewis Cymru website shares information about services, organisations and events that support individuals in their community, with many of the services being statutory. We continued to promote the website and train editors to support the system in future. This helps residents find local information about support services and well-being activities.
- It was seen that the number of telecare users continued to increase steadily, as individuals transferred from services from the housing associations of Adra and Grŵp Cynefin. The team continues to work closely with the housing associations to ensure a smooth transition for residents. Social work teams are supported to understand and use telecare devices so that they can promote the menu of telecare devices to individuals and families. This enables people and their families to request equipment through the Council's website, helping more people to become safer and more independent at home. The aim is to promote independence and living well, reducing the need for traditional care intervention.
- The project to transfer people using Direct Payments to the new employment card system has faced a number of challenges. While the new arrangements allow for closer monitoring and better collaboration with individuals and their carers, issues with the current provider have led the department to consider alternatives to ensure better choice for users.

Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families

This work has focused on ensuring that support for individuals and carers is more timely, clear and co-ordinated:

- The Council encourages people with medical conditions or who are vulnerable to be part of a national plan that could save vital time in an emergency. Working with local partners, the Council is promoting the 'Message in a Bottle' scheme, which is a way of keeping key personal and medical details where the emergency services know to look out for in an emergency. It includes a form to record details such as allergies, health conditions, medications, and emergency contacts, which is safely kept in a small bottle with a green cross on it in the refrigerator. Stickers and a green cross will be put on display at the home, drawing the attention of the emergency services to the presence of the bottle. This gives families peace of mind and helps services respond more quickly when needed.
- While waiting lists for domiciliary care have remained relatively similar, work on the implementation of the work programme has been progressing steadily and the number of people waiting over 91 days for domiciliary care has reduced. The work continues to promote closer collaboration between the social work teams and the provider.
- During the year, a new Independence Promotion Services Team was established to bring together the areas of direct payments, telecare, assistive technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and development of micro companies. The aim of the work is to ensure that individuals get the support, technology and choices they need to live as independently as possible, in line with their wishes and circumstances.

Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community

Collaboration with health services has continued to support people to live their best life in the community:

- The Adults department continues to pilot the role of a Social Work Practitioner who is based with Hospital Discharge Coordinators to facilitate patient discharges and prevent unsuitable referrals from reaching the community resource teams. This allows access to the local care knowledge and expertise to ensure the most appropriate support in the community where the patient lives. The results are encouraging and the performance data shows that there is an increase in the number of assessments being carried out.
- To ensure that the Council fully promotes the well-being of individuals, local community resource teams are now working on a sub-area basis, taking greater ownership of local care packages. This improves an overview of people's needs and helps provide more co-ordinated care.

  By making more effective use of third sector support, it enables the Council to provide alternative support to promote good living and early identification of needs. It is expected that this will reduce pressure on statutory services and enable the Council to focus its resources on those who need it most. A review of the

commissioning of 3rd sector services has been undertaken, and we will continue to work with Mantell Gwynedd.

- Gwynedd Dementia Actif provides activities, information and support to individuals living with dementia and their families. The service helps people to stay active, connected to their communities and to access support after diagnosis reducing isolation and supporting the well-being and confidence of individuals and carers. The impact has been significant, and an increase was seen again in the number of people contacting the service: in March 2026, 305 individuals attended, 55 living with dementia, 61 were unpaid carers, and a further 189 socially benefited. This shows the value of Dementia Actif when supporting individuals to live independently and to support carers.

Developing training and employment opportunities for individuals in need of support
This project focuses on increasing employment and training opportunities for individuals who need additional support:

- Work to raise awareness of employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities within the Council is starting to bear fruit. More individuals are now employed, and discussions are ongoing with other services to expand these opportunities. This helps people develop skills, confidence and independence. By the end of 2025/26, there were 134 individuals involved in the scheme, with 60 of these in paid employment and the remainder volunteering. These opportunities are very important from a well-being perspective and a sense of fulfilment for the individual, while also promoting independence and providing an opportunity to engage with others within the community and consequently reducing the demand for care services.
- The Learning Disability work: Extending Work Opportunities has gained national recognition, with the team being invited to present at the IMPACT conference 'Improving Adult Care Together' in Cardiff. This was an opportunity to share Gwynedd's good practice, showcasing the innovative approach to supporting people with learning disabilities into meaningful work, and strengthening the county's profile as a leader in the field.
- Work has begun on developing a community opportunities strategy with the department's partners for learning disabilities in Gwynedd. The work will continue in 2026/27 alongside the reshaping of the Llwybrau Llesiant scheme. Funding for the employment support service will continue until March 2027 but we are yet to resolve how the service will be funded permanently into the future.

Llechen Lân
The Llechan Lân work has focused on bringing together the work of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department in a clearer and more coherent manner:

- It is planned to create a single plan for bringing together all the work of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to streamline the work streams. When preparing an analysis of the demography of Gwynedd; the demand for service and the best practices of adult social services, we will better understand and highlight the demand for service and the associated resources that will be needed for the next twenty years.

Supporting People's Well-being

Well-being support work has focused on ensuring that local support is available to residents facing hardship, isolation or cost of living pressures:

- The Council supports networks of Community Hubs, which are in place in all 13 areas across the County. The hubs provide help with information about things like food, energy and money, as well as activities and services in residents' communities.
- The Well-being Facilitator has established a programme of drop-in sessions at local libraries and partnership events to raise awareness of the cost-of-living help and support services available. This makes it easier for people to get advice and support close to their homes.
- Grants worth £217,743 have been allocated to community groups and foodbanks to strengthen local support for residents. The Food Scheme includes the establishment of a grant fund for food and feeding schemes by community groups, community cooking courses in conjunction with the Health Board and the creation of community gardens and allotments.
- As part of strengthening the support offered to residents, the Council has started to introduce Money Guiders training to front-line staff to develop residents' support skills with financial and budgeting matters. The training comes in three levels and aims to give staff the skills and confidence to support individuals with financial issues in a sensitive and effective manner. Staff in libraries, Siopau Gwynedd and Galw Gwynedd have already started attending the training, moving towards providing more comprehensive support rather than just a discursive approach.
- Through the Community Resilience Project, the Council continues to work with Citizens Advice and Advice Mid Wales to strengthen the financial support and advice available to people locally. This includes supporting individuals to complete national financial application forms. This brings specialist advice closer to people who need support and numeracy and budgeting support is provided to the residents of Gwynedd.
- As part of our efforts to tackle under-claiming, Pension Credit campaigns were carried out during 2025/26, targeting 167 residents who were identified as eligible but not claiming the benefit. This can mean up to an extra £23,199 a year for residents, or around £209,874 over the average lifetime of someone claiming it.
- The social tariff offers a 'cap' on bills to households on lower incomes or in vulnerable circumstances, helping to reduce the pressure of vital living costs. In September 2025, it was reported that 2,607 Gwynedd residents were claiming Welsh Water's HelpU social tariff. However, up to 5,400 residents may be eligible for this support but are not currently claiming it. The Council is pleased to be working with Welsh Water to promote this scheme and to ensure that more residents are aware of their entitlement and receive the support they deserve.
- 26,368 food packages were distributed, ensuring urgent and vital support to thousands of households at a time of financial pressure.

- During 2025/26, 41 community groups were supported through the Emergency Food Grant with an amount of £150,335 going towards Food Banks, Food Pantries, Dinner and Lunch Clubs and Food Packages in communities.
- Housing Benefit continues to be a vital source of support for Gwynedd residents, with 2,557 citizens receiving it during 2025/26, with a total value of £11,779,117.
- The Benefits service administers the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Fund, which provides additional financial support to those facing housing difficulties. During 2025/26, 1,105 families received support through the DHP fund with a value of £451,296.
- A large number of Warm Welcome venues in Gwynedd continue to grow from strength to strength. During 2025/26, 67 new locations were registered on the Warm Welcome map, and £49,045 in grants were allocated to support a range of locations. The scheme offers warm, welcoming spaces throughout the county where people can drop in for a cup of tea and a chat, take part in social activities, or have a bite to eat, helping to reduce loneliness and strengthen community ties.
- The Council's Cost of Living website has been used significantly, including 495 visits to an energy support page, 544 visits to a community hubs page and 412 to a page for information on keeping warm.
- The Preparing for Winter campaign has attracted around 1,900 visitors to the information page on the website since September 2025. A specific booklet was also printed for the campaign, which was distributed to GP surgeries, community hubs, libraries and various community settings and partners.

Autism Plan

The Autism Plan has continued to strengthen understanding, support and resources for neurodiverse people, their families and the workforce:

- 2163 Social Services workers have completed Autism level 1 and 2 training, with further training underway in fields such as social work through a neuro-positive lens in the workplace. This improves staff understanding and helps to provide more suitable support for neurodivergent people. The team also trains employees to facilitate and run support and educational groups and programmes for parents and carers, as well as identity groups for autistic young people.
- The Cygnet Train the Trainer programme runs quarterly, and a parent support programme through the medium of Welsh has been developed in-house which reflects the voice of parents/carers, current research with a neuro-positive ethos and approach. More relevant, accessible and responsive support is provided to parents and carers.

Develop a residential provision for looked after children in small group homes

This work focuses on providing local, stable and home placements for looked after children:

- The plan for developing residential provision for looked after children in small group homes has now developed significantly. The home in Morfa Bychan has been operational with two children living there since 2025, and the house has received a registration from Care Inspectorate Wales. Ensuring that they are looked after in Gwynedd allows them to attend local schools and participate fully in the life of their communities. Although renovation and registration work is ongoing, the house in

Deiniolen is now operational with two children living there, increasing local provision for looked after children.

- The renovation work on the children's residential home in Edern is ongoing and no children are living there yet. The Children and Families department is currently working on the Care Inspectorate Wales registration application to ensure that the application is ready once staff have been appointed for the home.

Some of our key achievements:

- RoboPet technology was introduced to some members of the community within the Physical Disability and Older People's service and the Learning Disabilities service, in the form of a pet. This simple technology can help reduce loneliness, reduce anxiety, offer comfort and connection on a daily basis and improve the well-being of people living alone.
- The bilingual Niwro Cymru App was developed and launched by Autism Gwynedd to support children and young people and neuro-diverse adults, their families and professionals. The App offers clear and reliable information, fun and soothing activities, local event and support spaces as well as other resources. Through discussions with the young people of Gwynedd and their families, their ideas were used to create the content, key features and logo design of the App.
- There was a total of 293 looked after children in Gwynedd at the end of the financial year, and over the last year, 7% of them have left care and returned home. 96% of case conferences were held where the voice or opinion of a child over the age of 5 had been heard. Also, 100% of assessments are now completed using a child's language. This shows that the voice of the child is taking a more central place in decisions.
- Within the Youth Justice Service, the number of young people entering the service for the first time fell to 20, a decrease of 17%. This is welcomed given the efforts made by the service and the Management Board over the past two years. It reflects prevention and support work that helps young people to avoid further contact with the justice system.
- 39 Fun sessions took place during 2025/26, with 1,142 children attending. In addition, 706 children and 323 parents attended 34 Play Trailer sessions during the year. This provides play, socialising and support opportunities for children and families across the county.
- Additional funding was secured to support the Children and Families services, including operational jobs, residential service, out-of-county placements, direct payments and Derwen support workers. This helps to maintain more stable and responsive services for the children and families of Gwynedd.
- The After-care Team continues to identify opportunities for young people to come together, socialise and get extra support. During May, some young parents were given the opportunity to come together in the company of an individual from the Care Academy to discuss the opportunities available to them within the field of care in Gwynedd.
- 150 career events were held to promote the Care Academy, and 110 work experience placements were organised. 6 new Gwynedd Care Academy trainees

were appointed in February 2026, bringing the number of Academy trainees to 11. 51 applications were received for this opportunity. This will increase the workforce and help respond to recruitment challenges by developing local talent.

- A 72% increase in the number of followers of Teulu Gwynedd's service on social media following the re-branding and re-structuring of the team to have more officers operating on the marketing and engagement element.
- 'The Right Way' by the Office of the Children's Commissioner has been adopted as the main national framework, focusing on embedding children's rights (UNCRC) in all aspects of policy, planning and services. In February 2026, a 'The Right Way' workshop was held for Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Chairs, the Senior Management Team and the Youth Forum with the aim of raising awareness and strengthening understanding of the principles.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

Team Around the Family

A young person was referred to support services following concern about his behaviour in the community, where he had already received two yellow cards and was at risk of getting into further problems. He also faced significant educational challenges because of additional learning needs that they had not fully understood, with a risk of being excluded from the school. As a result, tensions and conflict in the home were increasing, impacting the well-being of the whole family.

Support was provided by appointing a Team Around the Family Co-ordinator to assess the needs of the family and co-ordinate services. A wide range of interventions were held, including parenting support, outdoor counselling sessions, support to improve communication between the parents, and educational support through Rhwyd Arall. Other family members also had access to additional support services.

By the end of the intervention, the young person was attending school regularly three days a week and engaging well with his education. A much better understanding of his needs had led to more suitable support, whilst familial tensions had significantly reduced. The mother noted an improvement in her mental health and her relationship with her child, and the family felt stronger and more stable. This positive impact was confirmed through the family's feedback, improved school attendance and assessment measures that showed clear progress.

DRAFT

A Welsh Gwynedd

As a national leader, we will promote the prosperity of the Welsh language in all parts of the county. Our ambition is to:

- Ensure that every child in Gwynedd can use the Welsh language confidently at school and in their social life.
- Promote the prosperity of the Welsh language in all parts of the county and to ensure that there are adequate opportunities for everyone to be able to use the Welsh language naturally in their communities.
- Collaborate with our partners to facilitate the ability for Gwynedd residents to access all public services through the medium of Welsh.
- Ensure that the promotion of the Welsh language is a key part of all the Council's work, and any schemes that affect the people of Gwynedd.
- Support efforts to create new Welsh speakers of all ages.
- Ensure access to quality recreational, cultural and artistic information and facilities.

Projects

- Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children
- Promoting the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd
- Review Gwynedd's Education Language Policy and conduct an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all the education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language

An update on the projects

Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children
The modernisation of the immersion system has focused on improving the resources available to children, teachers and schools, and sharing good practice more widely:

- A new website was launched, which includes weekly blogs and resources. The resources have also been shared with schools through HWB, along with additional resources on request. This gives schools easier access to high-quality materials, supporting more children to develop their Welsh skills, gain confidence in the Welsh language and participate fully in the life of the school and their communities.
- Training on the principles of immersion education was held for prospective teachers at Bangor University in October 2025, with some visiting immersion centres to observe the work first-hand. This helps to develop a skilled and confident education workforce that can support children to acquire the Welsh language effectively, ensuring a high-quality learning experience for learners who are new to the language.
- This work expands the opportunities available to the children and young people of Gwynedd to develop Welsh language skills and thrive in Welsh-medium education. It also supports families that are new to the Welsh language by ensuring that appropriate support and provision is available, contributing to the Council's aim of strengthening the Welsh language and increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the county over the long term.

- The Immersion System has developed work units suitable for use in schools to support pupils following the Agored Cymru – World of Work Skills course. They have ensured that linguistic support is included within the units so that pupils who are latecomers to the Welsh language can access the work. The need to develop the units was discussed with Agored Cymru to ensure that the work meets the requirements of the framework and is useful to schools that already offer World of Work Skills as part of their curricular offer.

Promoting the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd
This work has focused on increasing practical opportunities for people to use the Welsh language in businesses, workplaces and communities:

- We worked with Menter Iaith Gwynedd and the Business Support Team to encourage businesses to use more Welsh with customers. Around 200 businesses in Dolgellau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Penrhyndeudraeth, Tywyn and Bro Peris were targeted to display a poster stating that they are happy to speak Welsh and support new speakers. This makes it easier for residents and learners to use the Welsh language when shopping and receiving services locally.
- The Cabinet gave its seal of approval to adopt Twf – The Welsh at Work Charter in partnership with the Welsh Trades Union Congress and local unions. This reinforces the Council's position as a leading organisation in fostering a culture that places the Welsh language at the heart of its work, as it is the first workplace in Wales to sign and adopt the Charter. The Charter will support workers, trade unions and employers to create bilingual workplaces and to increase the natural use of the Welsh language at work.
- Work has begun on the establishment of a Welsh Language Project Board to provide a better strategic overview of the work taking place across the Council's departments. This will help to agree clearer priorities for the promotion of the Welsh language in the future.
- The Gwynedd Language Forum Young People Sub-group was established, and a consultation was held with young people aged 16-18 who live or work in Gwynedd about their use of Welsh. 200 responses were received highlighting the need to strengthen young people's confidence in using Welsh, particularly in writing and on social media.

Review Gwynedd's Education Language Policy and conduct an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all the education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language
This work has focused on ensuring that Gwynedd's education policies and services lay a strong foundation for the Welsh language from the early years to the end of statutory education:

- The Gwynedd Schools' Model Education Language Policy was adopted to strengthen Welsh language education and support schools to respond to new legislative requirements. This will help ensure that children and young people across the county have a consistent educational experience that develops their Welsh language skills

and confidence to use the language in school, in the community and in the workplace in the future.

- The policy is for Gwynedd and reflects Gwynedd, its values, its ambition, its needs and the needs of the children and young people of the county.
- The report on the Immersion Evaluation was completed by Bangor University which reviewed the practical arrangements of the 10-week course and empowered the after-care provision, and it was submitted to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee in October 2025 where it was accepted. The research identifies clear strengths and proposes four recommendations to further develop the provision. This work helps to ensure that every child and young person in Gwynedd, regardless of their linguistic background, has the opportunity to develop strong Welsh language skills and take advantage of the benefits of Welsh education.

Some of our key achievements

- A draft of the Model Education Language Policy was submitted to the Cabinet, prior to public engagement and subsequent adoption of the Policy as a model for Gwynedd schools. This provides clear and consistent direction for schools in implementing the new requirements of the Welsh Language and Education Act (2025).
- Guidelines, information sessions and a support programme have been developed for headteachers, governors and schools to support the consistent implementation of the Language Policy across the county.
- The Immersion System's new website was launched, providing resources, blogs and support tools to schools, staff and learners across Gwynedd.
- Immersive resources for schools and new speakers were developed and renewed, including materials on HWB and new work units for older learners.
- Training was provided to prospective teachers and teaching staff on the principles of immersion education, strengthening the expertise of the workforce and supporting the quality of provision for new Welsh learners.
- The quality of the immersion provision was positively recognised by Estyn, who noted that the provision was extremely valuable in supporting latecomers to acquire Welsh and succeed in Welsh-medium education.
- Menter Iaith Gwynedd collaborated with Sesiwn Fawr Dolgellau to hold a nursery rhyme event for parents and children. A professional playlist was produced so that families can continue to listen and sing together at home, helping to introduce the Welsh language to young children in a natural and fun way.
- Community activities and chat sessions were provided to learners in all well-being areas in Gwynedd. This has provided informal opportunities for learners to practise Welsh, gain confidence and use the language in their local community.
- Community organisations were supported to increase the use of the Welsh language locally including the Rhiwlas Hall committee, a group in Dinas Mawddwy and the Urdd groups in Llanystumdwy and Penrhosgarnedd. This strengthens opportunities for people of all ages to use the Welsh language in community and social activities.
- A Support for Sports Clubs Project was developed to maintain and increase the use of the Welsh language. Local football and rugby clubs contributed to the

development of the package ensuring that the support was practical and relevant to clubs that play an important role in the lives of young people and communities.

- During the year, attention was given to increasing the visibility of Welsh names as well as promoting them through the implementation of the Place Names work programme. We worked with Engineers in the Arfon and Dwyfor area to install around 40 new Welsh language street signs and discussed a list of other street signs to be installed during the next financial year. It was arranged for Welsh language signs to be installed at the beaches of Porth Neigwl and Porthor.
- The Council advised others such as Conwy County Borough Council and Monmouth Council on the Council's internal processes relating to property naming, a digital names map and a names app for staff and advised Caernarfon Civic Association about promoting a list of old Caernarfon Street Name plaques.
- 97% of primary pupils and 79.24% of secondary pupils complete at least 70% of their school activities through the medium of Welsh, with very high levels of confidence among teachers to teach through the medium of Welsh. The Language Centres also deliver excellent results with 100% of learners reaching Level 1 or above.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

Developing and Implementing the Gwynedd Education Language Policy

Cyngor Gwynedd has been committed for years to ensuring that children and young people develop robust Welsh language skills and can use the language confidently. However, as a result of demographic changes and national policy developments, it became apparent that there was a need to review and modernise the framework that steered Welsh-medium education across the county.

Although all Gwynedd schools shared the commitment to the Welsh language, there was a need to ensure consistent expectations across the whole education system. The need for a modern and strategic policy that would provide a clear direction for schools when planning the linguistic development of learners and when contributing to the aim of maintaining and strengthening the Welshness of Gwynedd communities was noted.

A new Gwynedd Education Language Policy was developed to provide a consistent strategic framework to develop the Welsh language across the county's schools. The policy was created based on research, analysing evidence and engagement with key stakeholders, including headteachers, governors, learners, parents, officers, elected members and the wider community.

After a period of consulting and refining, the policy was submitted through the Council's formal democratic processes, including the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet, where it was approved.

The new policy was developed based on evidence, research and existing practices, with input from schools and stakeholders to ensure that its content reflected the needs and reality of Gwynedd schools. The policy was submitted to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee to challenge and review before being submitted to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet for approval. Following this, the policy was submitted to school headteachers across the county and schools were encouraged to consider its adoption. To support the implementation process, guidelines, information sessions and discussion opportunities were provided to ensure a clear understanding of the expectations and, where required, governing body meetings were attended to explain the content of the policy and respond to enquiries. In addition, schools received practical support to strengthen Welshness and increase the natural use of the Welsh language within their school community.

From adopting the policy, Gwynedd learners benefit from a clear and consistent direction to develop their skills. Schools and governing bodies also benefit by having a strategic framework to support planning, evaluating and developing their linguistic provision.

On a wider scale, Gwynedd communities benefit as the policy helps schools to contribute to maintaining and increasing the use of Welsh, supporting the language as an integral part of the county's community life and culture.

Although the first step of every school's journey is adopting the policy, an important impact can already be seen. Gwynedd schools now have a general strategic framework that sets a clear direction to develop the Welsh language and plan the learners' linguistic progress.

The policy has sparked strategic discussions in schools regarding their existing Welsh provision. It has also provided a clear path for schools to evaluate their existing situation and plan further steps to strengthen the use of Welsh.

In addition, the work has strengthened the willingness of schools to respond to national developments such as school linguistic categorisation arrangements and the Welsh Government's language policy developments in the future.

An increasing number of schools have already adopted the Education Language Policy or are considering its adoption through their local governance processes. This commitment shows that schools acknowledge the value of the policy as a strategic framework for planning linguistic provision.

Discussions with headteachers and governors show that the policy has already sparked a reflection on schools' Welsh language provision and provide a general foundation for

planning further developments. The demand for presentations, clarity and practical support from the Education Department's officers is also evidence that schools use the policy to steer their plans and decisions.

Developing and implementing the Gwynedd Education Language Policy is a strong example of strategic leadership, collaboration and building a consensus across the whole education system. The policy being adopted by schools is not the end of the road, but the beginning of a new period of planning and developing. By providing a clear direction and general expectations, the policy sets a robust foundation for strengthening the Welsh language, supporting learners and ensuring that Welshness remains a central element of education in Gwynedd for years to come.

DRAFT

A Green Gwynedd

Cyngor Gwynedd has declared a climate emergency, and our aim of being a net zero carbon and ecologically positive council by 2030 remains central to this field. By reducing carbon, improving biodiversity, strengthening recycling arrangements, managing flood risks and improving travel options, we are working to create more resilient, cleaner and healthier communities for the people of Gwynedd:

- Significant reduction in carbon emissions.
- Response to the impacts of climate change.
- An increase in biodiversity and nature habitats.
- An excellent network of paths so that the residents have the option of active travel to their place of work, education or leisure.
- A public transport network that meets the various needs of the communities of Gwynedd.

Projects

- Acting on flood risks
- Waste and recycling
- Climate and Nature Emergency Plan
- Active Travel
- Public Transport
- New Local Development Plan
- Clean and Tidy Communities

An update on the projects

Acting on flood risks

Work to manage flood risks has focused on putting clearer arrangements in place to protect communities from the effects of extreme weather:

- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires the 22 Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) in Wales to produce Local Flood Risk Management Strategies. The strategy for Gwynedd was completed and submitted to the Welsh Government. The strategy sets a clear direction for local risk management to protect homes, businesses and community infrastructure. It identifies the current and future risks associated with flooding and coastal erosion, ensuring residents are aware of all sources of flooding in the community. The work plan that accompanies the strategy is now part of the Council's day-to-day work. This will help to respond more proactively to flood risks and to increase the resilience of communities over time.

Waste and recycling

Work has continued to improve waste and recycling arrangements to make it easier for residents to recycle more and reduce the amount of waste that is disposed:

- A draft Waste and Recycling Strategy was submitted to the Cabinet, and residents were consulted over a period of more than seven weeks. 1,245 responses were received to the consultation, and 62% reported that their residual waste bin was

only about three quarters full or less at the end of the three-week period. The feedback has been used to strengthen the strategy so that future arrangements reflect the experience and needs of the people of Gwynedd.

- Hessian sacks instead of the recycling cart have been trialled in three circuits in the Arfon area in around 1,500 homes, with relatively successful results. Further trials are planned to be held in other areas of the county. The hessian sack trial has shown potential to increase recycling capacity at a lower cost than the recycling cart, with 78% of respondents willing to use them for additional materials.
- The Environment department aims to encourage and persuade residents to improve their recycling practices. Specific awareness raising campaigns were carried out and all households received information about recycling services. This helps to drive behavioural change while also helping residents understand what is available and to recycle more consistently and ensuring that recycling rates continue to improve.

Climate and Nature Emergency Plan

During the year, practical progress was made to reduce the Council's carbon footprint, strengthen clean energy infrastructure and protect nature in Gwynedd:

- The Council now owns 82 electric cars or vans and 9 hybrids, and 6 electric equipment (loading shovels, street cleaning machines), representing 40% of all Council cars and vans.
- By the end of 2025/26, there are 58 charging points at 12 locations across the county to keep the fleet of electric vehicles on the road. During the same period, 48 charging points were installed at 12 public locations, and an additional 12 charging points at 4 Council sites in collaboration with Transport for Wales. The Energy Service (Welsh Government) reported that the Council has the second largest number of green vehicles in its fleet compared to other rural councils in Wales.
- The pilot project of installing LED lighting across the Council estate has been completed at 8 sites, and the provision will be extended across the Council estate in 2026/27. These works will reduce energy consumption and running costs while also contributing to the reduction of carbon emissions.
- The Local Energy Plan was adopted by the Cabinet in September 2025 and all energy saving or generating projects will contribute to the implementation of the scheme.

Active Travel

Active travel has focused on improving walking and cycling routes, so that residents have more choice to travel safely and sustainably, ensuring that walking and cycling become a normal choice for everyday journeys:

- Work was completed on Phase 3 of Ffordd Penrhos/Penchwintan in Bangor creating a multi-use path between Ysbyty Gwynedd and Treborth. The new path and crossing near Ysgol y Faenol make travelling on foot or by bike safer for local children, families and workers.
- Work on footpaths and crossings for Ysgol Foel Gron, Mynytho has improved links in the village. This helps children, parents, and residents move around more safely.
- £500,000 from the Active Travel Core Capital Fund was used to progress several schemes, including, Chwilog to Afonwen, Tywyn to Aberdyfi, Llanberis to Caernarfon,

Llanystumdwy to Cricieth and Bethel to Caernarfon. These plans will improve local connections and offer more opportunities to travel without relying on a car.

- Information packs for headteachers have been developed to raise awareness of road safety, active travel and public transport. A further consultation in 2026 will give residents the opportunity to influence future active travel priorities.

Public Transport

Public transport work has focused on improving access to bus services and making travel easier for residents and visitors:

- We continued to pilot and monitor the Sherpa'r Wyddfa services, G23 between Barmouth and Porthmadog and the Fflecsi service in South Meirionnydd. 563,783 journeys were made in 2025/26 which is an increase of 6.6% on the previous year. This shows that more people are using public travel options.
- As the County's old bus stops have seen better days, sites have been identified to prioritise improvements and install new stops. Improvements worth £500,000 to bus stops have been completed in line with the programme at nine locations across Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd. This has made traveling by bus more comfortable, accessible and reliable, which offers a better experience for passengers.

New Local Development Plan

Work on the new Local Development Plan has begun to lay the foundation for planning the future of Gwynedd's communities:

- An informal survey was carried out to gather views on the matters that the Local Development Plan should consider. This gives people the opportunity to contribute to decisions that can influence housing, jobs, services and the local environment.
- Work is underway to develop strategic options, including considering the demographic evidence of Gwynedd. This will help to ensure that the scheme responds to the needs of local communities over the coming years.

Clean and Tidy Communities

The Clean and Tidy Communities project has focused on improving the appearance of towns and communities, and supporting more desirable local environments for residents, businesses and visitors:

- The town centre cleaners are now active in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd. Their presence helps to keep town centres cleaner and more attractive for people who live, work and visit these areas.
- Eight purpose-built road sweepers were purchased as part of the modernisation of the cleaning fleet. This will help the workforce to respond more effectively and maintain standards of cleanliness in local communities.
- The Ardal Ni Tidying-up Teams continue to work with community and town councils and local members. Feedback from these councils will help prioritise tidy work where it is most needed. This promotes local ownership and develops a sense of pride by working at a community level.

DRAFT

Some of our key achievements

- There are improvements in recycling centres such as ensuring that leftover paint can be re-used. This reduces waste, saves costs and provides a practical benefit to residents who can use resources that would otherwise be thrown away.
- A recent study shows that 57% of residents' bins and 58% of business bins contain materials that could be recycled. A trial of opening black bags at recycling centres has reduced the amount of recyclable material that goes into the residual waste. This helps residents make better use of recycling facilities and reduces the environmental impact of waste.
- Town cleaners were introduced in the centre of Bangor, Caernarfon and Porthmadog. Their daily presence means that cleanliness issues are addressed sooner, creating a more welcoming town centre for residents, businesses and visitors.
- The work of transferring the Council's fleet to green vehicles continues with 89 cars or vans being electric or hybrid by the end of the financial year. Comparing 2024/25 with 2025/26, there is a 6.1% reduction in fuel consumption or 102,525 litres less fuel. The decrease is due to the transition of many vehicles from traditional fuel to electric vehicles. Favourable weather also means that there is less use of gritting vehicles etc. during the year. This reduces emissions and supports cleaner public services across Gwynedd.
- Improvements have been completed on Lôn Las Ogwen, and a new multi-use footbridge has been installed over afon Ogwen. This improves access for pedestrians and cyclists, and strengthens links between communities, recreational paths and local attractions.
- The Waste and Recycling service manages to collect 99.8% of bins accurately and on time, reflecting a high level of operational performance. During the period between 2023/24 and 2024/25 a significant reduction of over 8,200 complaints was recorded, equating to a reduction of 44%. There was a further decrease of 1,600 (15%) of complaints between 2024/25 and 2025/26. The continued decline reflects significant improvements in the department's operating arrangements.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

Recycling Centres

To modernise Gwynedd's recycling centres and reduce waste, many practical improvements were introduced during 2025/26. Two main challenges existed: the cost and the waste that was associated with the removal of half-full paint pots, and the fact that many recyclable materials were being thrown into black bin bags with residual waste instead of being recycled.

In response, a plan was submitted to re-use leftover paint in recycling centres, enabling residents to take paint from the recycling centres for free. This has helped to reduce waste,

save money for residents and the Council, and ensure that useful resources are being reused instead of thrown away. In addition, a plan was submitted to open black bin bags in recycling centres to identify and separate recyclable materials before they are disposed.

These improvements have been beneficial to residents and the environment. The paint scheme has received extremely positive feedback from the public, with less paint being disposed of at the same time. Similarly, the plan to open black bin bags has led to a significant reduction in the amount of recyclable material going to the residual waste stream, increasing recycling rates in the centres. The initiative is an example of how simple but effective changes can reduce waste, improve environmental performance and make a better use of local resources.

DRAFT

An Efficient Gwynedd

An Efficient Gwynedd is focused on ensuring that the Council makes the best use of its people, finances, technology and assets to provide good, fair and sound services to the residents of Gwynedd:

- Promote a culture of open and inclusive working which always puts the needs of the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do.
- Provide adequate and suitable staffing resources for delivering services.
- Be an organisation that looks after our workforce's well-being and embeds the principles of equality naturally in all parts of the organisation.
- Make the best use of all financial resources.

Projects

- Workforce Planning
- Develop the Council's Culture
- Ensuring fairness for all
- Women in Leadership
- Manage the impact of national budgetary cuts
- Digital Plan
- Strategic review of Health and Safety management
- Adopt a Property Asset Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for working in the future.

An update on the projects

Workforce Planning

Workforce planning work has focused on ensuring that the Council has an adequate supply of qualified staff to enable it to provide services to the residents of the county, as well as staff with the right skills to continue to provide essential services to residents: The following was achieved during the year:

- By collaborating with Council departments and services to produce workforce plans, a draft Workforce Plan was produced, with the intention of consulting on it during 2026/27. The plan will help the Council to better prepare for future staffing needs and to maintain stable services for the people of Gwynedd, by identifying key posts assessed on the basis of risk to continuity of service, analysing the workforce profile of the teams, producing action plans and establishing review arrangements for the plans.

Develop the Council's Culture

The Council's culture development work has continued to embed a way of working that puts the people of Gwynedd at the centre of decisions and services:

- We continued to implement a work plan to develop the culture of the Council, with a particular focus on listening to staff, strengthening communication and supporting managers in their leadership role. The 2026 Staff Voice Survey was conducted, with the results shared and discussed with the Corporate Management Team, departmental management teams and the Managers' Network. Departmental response plans were

developed to ensure that staff feedback leads to practical action and to strengthen trust that staff views make a difference.

- We continued to use the Managers' Network as a key way to discuss organisational culture, share findings from the Staff Voice Survey and promote the expectations of the Council's leadership. This contributed to strengthening managers' ownership of the culture agenda and supporting better communication and collaboration across departments.
- In addition, new governance arrangements were established for the work of Staff Voice, including cross-departmental groups to monitor progress, share good practice and identify corporate improvements. This supports the ambition to foster a culture where staff feel their voice is being heard and the organisation is continually learning and improving.

Ensuring fairness for all

Fairness work has focused on ensuring that Council decisions are evidence-based and consider their impact on different people and communities. The achievements during the year were as follows:

- A core dashboard of data on Gwynedd was created to support impact assessments. This will help the Council to make more informed decisions and ensure that policies and procedures are fairer for all.
- A new electronic system for equality impact assessments is ready to be promoted, and awareness-raising work has begun with management teams. Raising managers' awareness of the need to undertake an assessment will ensure that the Council complies with the Equality Act 2010 to improve policies and procedures, and ensure that equality issues are duly addressed when making any changes.

Women in leadership

The Women in Leadership work has continued to support women to develop their confidence, networks and opportunities to lead:

- Two series of the 'Sgyrsiau Dros Baned (A Cuppa and a Chat)' forum were held, with the sessions continuing to be popular. They provide an opportunity for women in leadership roles as well as women in external organisations to share their experiences and backgrounds and be a means of building confidence and supporting each other within the workplace. It is a friendly and informal forum.
- A video was produced to celebrate International Women's Day and the achievements of women within the Council. This raises the profile of women in leadership and encourages others to consider development opportunities. The sixth series of the developmental programme came to an end, with 13 women taking part this year and 71 having taken part since it was established. This strengthens the leadership development pipeline and supports more women to consider and advance to senior positions.

- No specific event has been held directly to raise awareness among men of the opportunities of the Women in Leadership programme, but opportunities are used to promote the project's work in various networks and meetings.

Manage the impact of national budgetary cuts

Work on managing the impact of financial cuts has focused on monitoring the Council's financial position and planning savings responsibly:

- Performance was monitored and reported to the Cabinet and the Governance and Audit Committee during the year. This ensures clear oversight over progress and helps make transparent financial decisions.
- Following the establishment of the Medium Term Financial Plan Programme Board, information on savings and cuts for 2025/26 was provided. This will help the Council to plan better and minimise the impact on services for residents where possible.

Digital Plan

The Digital Plan has focused on improving systems, strengthening cyber resilience and making services more efficient for staff and residents:

- The work of improving the Council's telephone provision was completed with everyone moving to the new provision. This includes 3 Contact Centres, 1719 softphones and 1539 desk phones which are now live. It strengthens the ability to connect with the Council's services in a more reliable way.
- A new supplier has been selected for the introduction of a new Payroll and Human Resources system, with the aim of paying salaries through the new system in December 2026. This will modernise internal processes and support a more efficient service for staff.
- A Cyber Resilience Officer has been added to the IT team, and work continues to develop and test an incident response plan. This will strengthen the security of digital services and help protect the information of the people of Gwynedd.

Strategic review of Health and Safety management

The Health and Safety review has focused on creating more consistent and proactive arrangements to manage risks across the Council:

- The first phase of a new Health and Safety Information Technology system has been completed which is an electronic form to report accidents, incidents and near misses. A planned pilot was carried out, alongside a structured programme for managers, adopting a 'train the trainer' approach. Over 450 managers have received training, highlighting efficiency, consistency and improved reporting quality.
- The corporate risk register was strengthened to map legislative requirements across the Council. This will help to prioritise audits on the basis of actual risk and to manage health and safety more effectively over the long term.
- Progress was made on an action plan to introduce an integrated model for Health and Safety management. This will reduce risks, improve workforce well-being and support safer and more reliable services for residents.

Adopt a Property Assets Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for future working

Work on property assets has focused on ensuring that Council buildings are suitable, accessible and support modern ways of working:

- Office needs were identified at Ffordd y Cob and Penarlâg and feasibility work was commissioned for the Penarlâg site. This will help the Council to make better use of its sites and to plan workplace locations that are suitable for the future.
- The Well-being Space at Headquarters was completed and is now operational, and is being used during lunchtime, to hold meetings and for individual use. Funding was also secured to improve equality and accessibility provisions, creating a more inclusive working environment for staff and visitors.
- Plans were also made to make adjustments to Penrallt Offices to relocate PP/YGC officers from Cibyn offices and centralise children's services.

Some of our key achievements

- Savings of almost £7 million, representing 93% of the revised savings schemes since 2015/16, have now been realised.
- Since November 2025, 100% of payments have been made by BACS. The drive to move more to BACS has been completed and means that we have been able to move away from paying with cheques entirely. This will modernise the payment process, eliminating the need for cheques and creating more efficient, secure and reliable arrangements.
- Through the Care Academy, 65 work placements have been arranged and 6 new trainees have been appointed in 2026, and there are now 11 trainees involved in the Academy. The scheme provides a range of opportunities to work with experienced people within the Council enabling participants to develop skills to ensure a long and successful career within Cyngor Gwynedd's Care services.
- A Staff Voice Survey was carried out during the year, and the results are being used to identify the needs of our employees and how the Council can improve further.
- Cynllun Yfory and the Apprenticeship Scheme contribute to strengthening the Council's workforce by developing in-house talent, attracting new people into key areas and supporting succession planning across services. For 2026, a total of 30 new jobs are available, namely 22 apprentice jobs and 8 graduate jobs with most already filled.

Case Study - Further studies can be found on the Council's performance website [link]

Trainees - Apprentices and Graduates

Since 2019, the Apprenticeship Scheme has given 103 individuals an opportunity through an apprentice contract which is one of the highest numbers in Wales compared to the population and size of other Councils. Similarly, since 2017, the Graduate Scheme, namely Cynllun Yfory, has given opportunities to 47 professional trainees.

DRAFT

There are several examples of success, with various participants have gone on to secure promotions and permanent posts within the Council. For 2026, a total of 30 new jobs is available, namely 22 apprentice jobs and 8 graduate jobs with most already filled. The work areas vary - from new areas such as land maintenance, forestry and digital marketing to established areas such as Civil Engineering, Finance and Business to name but a few. The schemes were praised by Audit Wales in a recent report in 2026.

DRAFT

Contribution to the 5 Ways of Working, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

	Long-term	Prevention	Integration	Collaboration	Involvement
TOMORROW'S GWYNEDD					
Transform education for children in their early years	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modernise buildings and the learning environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promote the well-being of children and young people and reduce the cost of sending children to school	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extend opportunities for play and socialising for the county's children and young people	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Formulate and implement a 10-year strategic direction for education in Gwynedd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review and improve the range of inclusion provisions in Gwynedd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

DRAFT

A PROSPEROUS GWYNEDD					
Promoting our culture and a sustainable visitor economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regenerating communities and town centres	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive, and support the people of Gwynedd into work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Keeping the Benefit Local	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A HOMELY GWYNEDD					
Increasing the supply of housing for local people	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tackling the energy cost and fuel poverty crisis	✓	✓		✓	
To ensure that no one is homeless in Gwynedd	✓	✓		✓	
Managing second homes and short-term holiday lets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

DRAFT

A CARING GWYNEDD					
Modernising our care resources to meet future needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Using more technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developing training and employment opportunities for individuals in need of support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Llechen Lân	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supporting People's Well-being		✓	✓	✓	✓
Autism Plan	✓	✓		✓	✓
Develop a residential provision for looked after children in small group homes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

DRAFT

A WELSH-SPEAKING GWYNEDD					
Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children	✓	✓			
Promoting the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review Gwynedd's Education Language Policy and conduct an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all the education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A GREEN GWYNEDD					
Acting on flood risks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waste and recycling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Climate and Nature Emergency Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Active Travel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public Transport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

DRAFT

New Local Development Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clean and Tidy Communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AN EFFICIENT GWYNEDD					
Workforce Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop the Council's Culture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring fairness for all	✓	✓		✓	
Women in Leadership				✓	
Manage the impact of national budgetary cuts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategic review of Health and Safety management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adopt a Property Assets Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for future working	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

https://www.llyw.cymru/llesiant-cenedlaethaur-dyfodol-cymru

DRAFT

https://www.gov.wales/well-being-of-future-generations-wales

DRAFT

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Cyngor Gwynedd Self-Assessment 2025/26

Background and Introduction

This is the fifth self-assessment conducted by Cyngor Gwynedd under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

The Act requires all Councils in Wales to continually review the extent to which it meets the 'performance requirements', i.e. the extent to which:-

i. it is exercising its functions effectively;
ii. it is using its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively;
iii. the Council has robust governance arrangements in place to ensure performance requirements i. and ii.

This year, like the last, we are considering these three questions in the context of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the priorities in the Council's Plan. The purpose of this 5-year Plan is to set out the Council's vision and priorities for the period from April 2023 to the end of March 2028, so considering the above three questions when detailing our main strengths and weaknesses is a suitable and effective approach to shining a light on the Council's performance.

Since adopting the 5-year Plan, annual reviews have been held in order to ensure that the Plan continues to be relevant and that it responds to the Council's current needs and priorities.

As part of the development of the Plan, we considered a wide range of issues to be prioritised and engaged and consulted with local people, elected members, Town and Community Councils and partners. One part of the work that was key in the Council Plan development was the ‘Ardal Ni work, which outlines what is good about the area, what is not as good, and what needs to be done to create a better area by 2035.

The self-assessment process is intended to encourage honesty, objectivity and transparency about the Council's performance and governance. Although this duty is quite new, the Council is already preparing a number of documents containing the type of information that we are expected to include within the self-assessment. This includes documents such as Performance, Equality, Director of Social Services' annual reports, Annual Statement of Accounts and the Governance Statement.

The Governance Arrangement Assessment Group, which comprises officers such as the Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Head of Corporate Services and the Head of Legal Services, amongst others, has led /taken an overview of this work within the Council. In doing so, the intention is for the work to be owned and led on a strategic level.

During the year, an independent Panel Performance Assessment was conducted on the Council's work. A Panel Assessment needs to be carried out at least once within an electoral

cycle and linked to the duty to carrying out annual self-assessments on performance with these documents forming part of the evidence base.

Our arrangements for challenging and supporting performance have been in place for several years now. Meetings are held at Departmental level every other month, and focus on the progress of Council Plan projects, service performance (namely the 'day-to-day' work), and the response to key risks within the Corporate Risk Register. The information then feeds into regular performance reports submitted by each Cabinet Member during the year together with the Annual Performance Report at the end of the financial year. A copy of the Council's Annual Performance Report is available on the Council's website. Adaptations were made to the arrangements for challenging and supporting performance from April 2025 onwards, when a procedure was introduced to report directly to the Scrutiny Committees. This has led to providing more input to the process of challenging and supporting performance for members.

The document includes an assessment of our governance arrangements responding to the 3 performance requirements that Councils are expected to respond to as part of the self-assessment. We have also considered the draft methodology published by the Welsh Local Government Association for Panel Assessments in preparing the self-assessment for 2024/25 and have responded to the following questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know that?
- What can we do to improve, and how?

The self-assessment for 2021-22 was our first assessment and steps have been put in place to act on the improvements that had been identified. It was seen that some of these improvements continue in subsequent years as they are long-term issues, but several additional points were also reiterated. This year, we see the pattern continuing, with the long-term matters re-appearing but with new considerations also being added.

This document is therefore a high-level summary of the Council's performance during 2025/26, categorised as a series of Strengths and Risks/Challenges under each priority area that align with the priorities set out in the Annual Report and the Council's Plan.

The Strengths are based on:

- highlights of the annual performance report
- feedback received from external audit bodies (e.g. Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales, Estyn, etc.)
- Issues arising from the internal performance challenge and support process
- Independent Panel Performance Assessment

DRAFT

The Risks/Challenges are based on:

- our main risks as noted in the corporate risk register
- issues identified by external audit bodies
- other matters we have identified and included in the Council Plan
- issues arising from the internal performance challenge and support process
- Independent Panel Performance Assessment

It is important to note that many our strengths are included in other parts of the annual report, particularly where they relate to the Council's Plan projects and our day-to-day work. To avoid repetition, we (mostly) do not list them in the Self-assessment as well. For the reader, considering the two documents (the Annual Report and the Self-Assessment) together will give a fuller picture of the Council's performance over the period in question.

While many of the priorities involve cross-departmental responsibilities, it should be noted that 'Efficient Gwynedd' is much more corporate in nature as many of the strengths and weaknesses found here are institutional. This priority is therefore a little different from the rest, which is more inclined to reflect departmental strengths and weaknesses.

In accordance with sections 90 and 91 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Council has considered the views of local people, people who use the Council's services, recognised trade unions, businesses, partners and other stakeholders in reaching its conclusions on its performance during 2025/26.

These views were gathered through a range of activities, including the National Residents' Survey, local surveys and consultations, the Staff Voice Survey, discussions with trade unions, service user feedback and complaints, and engagement undertaken when developing and reviewing the Council's plans.

This evidence has been considered alongside information on service performance, the Council's financial position, corporate risks, feedback from audit and inspection bodies, and the Panel Performance Assessment. It has informed the strengths, risks and improvements identified in this self-assessment. In particular, residents' views have contributed to the conclusion that more needs to be done to strengthen trust and satisfaction, demonstrate value for money, ensure that residents' views influence decisions, and improve the use of engagement findings to inform services.

DRAFT

An Efficient Gwynedd

Strengths

- The Council has been able to effectively cope with periods of austerity/lack of funding, but the situation is becoming increasingly difficult as the funding provided by the Government has dwindled. The Council is very concerned about the pressure this is putting on the county's residents to meet the increase in Council Tax (6th highest in Wales, when the income level of the County's residents is relatively low), as well as the Council's ability to provide adequate services to the population of Gwynedd within our budget.
- The Governance Arrangements Assessment Group keeps a continuous, disciplined view of governance matters, raises broader awareness of them, and promotes broader ownership of the Annual Governance Statement. The Group comprises the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Head of Corporate Support, Assistant Head of Corporate Support, the Assistant Head of Finance, the Risk and Insurance Manager and the Council's Business Support Service Manager.
- We have good corporate Governance arrangements on the whole. To ensure that we deliver our functions effectively, we put performance measures in place to challenge performance across all services. We review these measures from time to time to ensure that they continue to be relevant, and we are aware of the need to continuously challenge ourselves and set meaningful measures to allow us to improve consistently. We recognise that there is room for improvement in terms of detailed workflow forward planning over the period of the Council's Plan 2023-28, and as a result we have introduced a series of annual milestones for each of the projects to allow us to measure progress as well as plan work for the future. The work to improve this further continues, particularly to ensure that the arrangements in place are followed consistently.
- The Council has adopted codes of conduct for its members and officers, based on national regulations (codes such as the Member/Officer Relationship Code; Members' Code of Conduct; Officers' Code of Conduct; Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Code of Practice) and these together set the foundation to ensure integrity and ethics. There is clear evidence that the Council considers the Ombudsman's reports as part of the work of the Standards Committee, which works effectively.
- The Council publishes an annual Governance Statement outlining our governance arrangements and their effectiveness following the principles of the CIPFA/Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework.
- An annual workshop on assurance and risks is held with external auditors (Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn) to share our strengths/successes and risks/challenges.
- When recommendations are issued by external audit bodies, an institutional response will be prepared on behalf of the Council, and the Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing and assessing the response along with progress against the

DRAFT

recommendations. In 2025, a new arrangement was introduced where departments have a maximum of 12 months to act on the recommendations of external auditors. This will ensure that the Council responds to and acts promptly following the auditors' recommendations.

- The 2021-2026 Council Information Plan (updated in 2024) includes several plans to address the information management risks and use of data. The cross-departmental Information Group takes a corporate overview of this field.
- The Health and Safety Policy adopted by the Council is reviewed annually. There are appropriate arrangements to respond to any reports from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- Note that principal governance risks are scored corporately and on a Departmental level, since the risk level varies. The in-house Governance Arrangements Assessment Group has an overview and responsibility for quality assurance within Cyngor Gwynedd.
- In terms of significant governance matters, the Council's self-assessment of its governance arrangements (in accordance with the CIPFA Framework/Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government and the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) identifies the following improvements that will be implemented in 2026-27:
  - In response to the recommendations of a study by Audit Wales, we will be looking to improve our service commissioning arrangements.
  - Improve training on risk identification and management.
  - Act on the relevant recommendations in the Assessment Panel's report.
  - Act on the relevant recommendations in the Local Partnerships report.
  - Act on the findings of the Staff Voice Survey, including appreciation and well-being.
- The new Asset Management Plan for the 10-year period between 2024-2034 was adopted by the Council on 11 July 2024.
- During 2025-2026, *Local Partnerships* were commissioned to carry out a review of our governance arrangements, giving the Council an independent and objective challenge as well as proposing improvement recommendations. The following were addressed specifically:
  i. Undertake a rigorous review of our existing arrangements including our governance and financial arrangements.
  ii. Review our governance arrangements in the context of the current Constitution to assess whether it is fit for purpose.
  iii. Assess whether the Annual Governance Statement fulfils its purpose.
  iv. Identify how we meet the full range of statutory requirements in decision-making, e.g. Equality, the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the Welsh language.
  v. Evaluate how we identify and assess risks and review and monitor them.
  vi. Evaluate how we monitor and deliver recommendations for improvement from external and internal regulators and learn lessons across the organisation.

DRAFT

vii. Identify what we can do to strengthen our governance arrangements in the future.

- The Governance Group has a work programme in place to respond to the recommendations deriving from the work of *Local Partnerships*.
- The Council has a process to manage risks by having a Corporate Risk Register in place.
- In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, an independent Panel Assessment was carried out on Cyngor Gwynedd's governance arrangements in March 2026. The Panel acknowledged that further work was to be done to reconcile the risk management arrangements, and this included continuing to review the procedure to ensure consistency across the organisation. We will implement a response plan to the Panel's recommendations, which will be tied in with the response to the recommendations of our insurers. These actions will place the Council in a stronger position in terms of reconciling the process of identifying, assessing, scoring and mitigating risks.
- Although the future risk management procedure and strategies are improving and strengthening on the whole, new arrangements have been put in place in an attempt to standardise and seek to reconcile the scores for very high risks. During 2025/26, our insurers were commissioned to review our risk management arrangements, and their recommendations will be implemented in 2026/27.
- Audit Wales's work to undertake a Review of the Council's Risk Management Arrangements during 2026/27 (slipped from 2025/26) will feed into this work, along with recommendations from the *Local Partnerships* review.
- The risk management strategy is owned at a corporate level through the Governance Group referred to above and the Governance and Audit Committee which is responsible for challenging the governance risk scores.
- The Panel Assessment suggested that the Council needs to develop and agree on a corporate risk strategy which expresses the Council's risk appetite, and:
    i. Ensures an up-to-date corporate risk register and strategy.
    ii. Defines the role of the leadership team, the governance and audit committee, the cabinet, and the full council in supervising and monitoring the strategy and the register regularly.
    iii. Consider the training and development needs of members on supervising the council's risk.

  As a result, we will:
    i. Complete and present the Corporate Risk Management Strategy and Policy (including a risk appetite statement) to be approved by the Cabinet/Full Council, and an annual review from the Governance and Audit Committee.
    ii. Ensure that the Corporate Risk Register is up to date: standardise the risk register template, define the risk owners, and confirm that every risk includes Residual and Target scores, using the Council's 5x5 matrix.
    iii. Impose governance, reporting and reviewing arrangements:
        a. Corporate Management Team to review the Corporate Risk Register every quarter and agree on escalating/degrading risks;

b. To report every quarter to the Governance and Audit Committee;
c. Cabinet to set the Council's risk appetite, ensuring that decisions consider risks and stay within the limitations, whilst reviewing and improving the risk management arrangements regularly.

iv. Develop and provide a training and development programme on risk management for Members (including a supervisory role, risk appetite, reading the risk register and challenge controls), and for managers as "risk owners"; record attendance and conduct annual refresher sessions.

- Reinforce the process and the culture; establish a service risk register timetable (at least quarterly), use a "SMART" method of tracking mitigation steps, and record "lessons learnt" from incidents/audits to guide continuous improvement.
- Based on the work of Internal Audit completed during 2025/26, it was considered that Cyngor Gwynedd's internal control framework during that financial year was operating at a level of reasonable assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control framework.
- Gwynedd is a host authority for several different partnerships and provides effective support to them.
- There are robust arrangements in place for supporting Elected Members in Gwynedd, with 97% of Gwynedd Councillors reporting that the service provided by the Democracy Team is good/ very good. We will continue to build on these solid foundations in the year ahead.
- The Head of Finance has undertaken a self-assessment of compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code and updates it at least once a year and the current assessment shows high compliance across all standards. Since 2025, we have commissioned CIPFA to undertake an independent verification of the self-assessment, and the outcome of that work is being considered when designing a financial support service for the future.
- Since 2019, the Apprenticeship Scheme has given **103** individuals an opportunity on an apprenticeship agreement, which is one of the highest numbers in Wales when comparing with the population and size of other Councils. Similarly, since 2017, the Graduates Scheme, Cynllun Yfory, has provided an opportunity for **47** professional trainees. There are several examples of success, with various individuals who have commenced the scheme accepting promotions and permanent jobs within the Council. For 2026, a total of **30** new jobs are available, namely 22 apprenticeship posts and 8 posts for graduates with most already filled. The work areas vary - from new areas, such as grounds maintenance, forestry and digital marketing, to established areas such as Civil Engineering, Finance and Business to name but a few. The schemes were praised by Audit Wales in a recent report in 2026.
- A Staff Voice Survey was conducted in 2026. This followed a challenging period which included financial uncertainty, political changes in the Council, and a period of introducing further changes to our 'future working' working arrangements. A small increase was seen in the staff satisfaction levels in response to most of the questions, and the satisfaction level remains high for some of the main indicators, e.g. the score for

the statement 'the Council is a good place to work' at 80%, and 88% for "My service makes a difference to the lives of the people of Gwynedd." Like last year's survey, there were 4 parts to this year's review - Me and my well-being, Me and my job, Me and my service, and Me and my employer.

It was seen that some emerging themes last year and the previous year were repeated, particularly relating to receiving appreciation and acknowledgement, and although an improvement has been seen, these continue to be points for improvement. Work pressures, which may possibly be because of the financial squeeze facing the Council over recent years, has improved slightly but it remains a concern and this will also receive further attention.

1,279 staff members completed the Voice of Staff questionnaire, which is around 21% of the staff that had the opportunity to respond to the survey. Including Council staff and the county's school staff, 69.6% noted that they agreed or strongly agreed that the Council was achieving its duties effectively.

65.8% agreed or strongly agreed that the Council was making the best use of its resources, and 69.2% agreed or strongly agreed that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure that they perform effectively.

The results of the above are very similar to what was reported last year.

- Cyngor Gwynedd has established a Liaison Group between the Council and the trade unions for many years, and the group meets monthly. The social partnership arrangements were strengthened during the year by holding meetings between the Council's Chief Officers, including the Chief Executive and Directors, and the trade unions. These meetings were used to discuss strategic matters that are affecting the organisation and the workforce, including the Council Plan and budget.
- As part of the process of producing the Council's Self-Assessment for 2025/26, the recognised trade unions were asked for their feedback and comments on the authority's performance and potential areas for improvement. No formal response was received to this request, but we will continue with the discussion at the Liaison Group's meetings and our meeting with the Chief Officers.
- The Council gathers the views of the people of the county in many different ways to improve services and also to meet the legal requirement for councils to engage with residents under various acts such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- In 2025, Gwynedd was a part of the National Resident Survey, the first of its kind to be conducted in Wales. While we are aware of the limitations of such a survey, it is an additional means of gathering opinions and we will triangulate the findings with other data and information we collect to ensure that we respond appropriately. One particular advantage with this survey is that it allows us to compare our results with other councils, something that has not been possible with internal surveys alone. There were 3,094 responses to the survey and the results include:
    i. Percentage of respondents who are fairly or very satisfied with how the Council is running things:

Gwynedd: 31% (3rd out of 9 councils that took part in the survey)

ii. Percentage of respondents who generally believe that the council provides high-quality services (to some extent or to a large extent):

Gwynedd: 55% (3rd out of 9 councils that took part in the survey)

iii. Percentage of respondents who generally believe that the council provides services that represent good value for money (to some extent or to a large extent):

Gwynedd: 43% (3rd out of 9 councils that took part in the survey)

Other results seen in the survey include:

iv. Percentage of respondents who generally believe that the council takes residents' views into account when decision-making (to some extent or to a large extent):

Gwynedd: 27% (2nd out of 9 councils that took part in the survey)

v. Percentage of respondents who generally believe that the council is acting on the concerns of local residents (to some extent or to a large extent):

Gwynedd: 30% (2nd out of 9 councils that took part in the survey)

vi. The percentage of respondents who agree somewhat or strongly that contacting the council is simple:

Gwynedd: 50% (1st in Wales of the 9 councils that took part in the survey)

vii. Percentage of respondents who agree little or strongly that up-to-date information about council services is easy

Gwynedd: 45% (1st in Wales of the 9 councils that took part in the survey)

viii. Percentage of respondents who trust the council to a large or very large extent

Gwynedd: 37% (joint 3rd of the 9 councils that took part in the survey)

- It is intended to hold a residents' survey again in the Autumn 2027.
- Several local surveys were carried out in Gwynedd with residents throughout the year. This was a way for the Council to make decisions about service development and how to prioritise spending in the future, making sure we make the best use of available resources, among other factors. The main ones included consultations on:

i. Climate and Nature Emergency Plan
ii. Bangor Public Spaces Protection Order
iii. Gwynedd Council and the Third Sector 'Compact' (Partnership Agreement)
iv. Waste and Recycling Strategy Survey
v. Tourism Survey - Gwynedd Residents 2025
vi. Ageing Well in Gwynedd
vii. Gwynedd Model Education Language Policy
viii. Draft Education Transport Policy
ix. Gwynedd Local Development Plan Survey

DRAFT

- The engagement findings have reinforced the need to strengthen trust and satisfaction, demonstrate value for money, increase the influence of residents' views on decision-making, and make more consistent use of engagement intelligence to inform service delivery.
- Surveys were also carried out with businesses in the county, including the annual Business Survey, and specific parts of other consultations were aimed at businesses as well, e.g., the Waste and Recycling Strategy Survey, since business needs are very different from the general public. In the Business Survey, 20% of responses reported that they had received support from the Gwynedd Council Business Support Team in the past 12 months, and all businesses were given the chance to indicate what type of support would be helpful to them in the future. It was noted that local businesses continue to face significant economic pressures, with rising energy prices, operating costs and economic uncertainty among the main challenges. A quarter of businesses had experienced recruitment difficulties, primarily due to a lack of local expertise, while financial and regulatory barriers were limiting the ability of many businesses to invest. Despite this, there was an ambition to develop, with 41% planning to grow over the next 12 months. The survey also highlighted demand for practical and financial support, including grants, assistance to improve business sustainability and one-to-one support.
- While the Council engages with residents on a range of financial and operational matters, there is an opportunity to further develop the ways in which the public are involved in discussions about spending priorities, taxation decisions and budget-setting. There is also a challenge in ensuring that meaningful opportunities are available for residents to contribute to these discussions within the tight timescales imposed by the Welsh Government financial settlement process.
- These results were considered alongside other performance evidence in reaching the self-assessment conclusions. This led to the recognition of strengths in the accessibility of information and the ease of contacting the Council, but also to the identification of areas for improvement in trust, satisfaction, value for money and the extent to which residents feel that their views influence decisions. These findings are reflected in the conclusions section of the self-assessment.
- We also prepare an annual report on complaints and are continuously adjusting our services when observations or complaints point to improvements.
  It can be seen that the number of Valid Formal Complaints has increased, and those submitted to the Ombudsman have increased again this year, compared to the same period in 2024/2025. The pattern/trend over a longer period shows that the number of Formal Complaints has reduced gradually from 2018/2019 to 2021/2022, when a substantial increase was seen, but things seem to be relatively stable. A change in culture was seen, with most Services receiving complaints in a more positive and constructive way in order to learn from them, with the response time gradually reducing. We are still working on reducing the time taken to respond to complaints by implementing the Customer Care Plan.
- The Procurement Team provides advice and support to services and ensures that the organisation adheres to regulations and best practice in the procurement field. The

DRAFT

team's aim is to enable the Council to achieve value for money, strengthen and develop procurement expertise, adopt best practice in the field and support the local market.

- The Council has already adopted the Sustainable Procurement Policy which complies with the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. By adopting the Policy, the intention is to consider the possible social, economic and environmental impact that our procurement decisions can have and what steps can be taken to make the best possible use of the Council's expenditure, for the county's benefit.
- Ongoing work is underway to support businesses to respond to requirements in tenders as a result of any developments in the field, such as gaining accreditations or responding to the requirements of the new Legislation. We continue to work with the supply chain to assess the environmental impact and seek to reduce the carbon footprint, helping businesses with the new procurement arrangements will continue to be a priority.
- Ffordd Gwynedd continues to be one of the Council's key strengths, and the Panel Performance Assessment acknowledges this as an important organisational strength which has made a positive contribution to the Council's culture and performance. However, it was also noted that there is a need to re-emphasise its purpose and role as a common framework for the organisation to ensure that it remains relevant, understandable and influential across every service.
- From the point of view of the Council's internal activities, we have good engagement and communication arrangements in place with important messages centrally shared with staff in a variety of ways including a weekly staff bulletin, a staff Facebook group, the intranet, staff self-service, the 'Gair o Gyngor' magazine, front-line staff visits and Q&A sessions with the Chief Executive. In addition to this, departmental and managerial communication activities take place on a regular basis. However, we acknowledge that we need to ensure a stronger voice for the workforce when developing our strategic and transformation plans in the future, bringing different practice areas that already exist in the Council together, to ensure a whole Council method of inclusion and internal engagement.
- A broad training programme was provided for Elected Members in 2025/26, which included core training in eight specific areas:
    i. Safe Leadership and Personal Safety
    ii. Code of Conduct
    iii. The Well-being of Future Generations Act
    iv. Safeguarding Children and Adults
    v. Your Responsibility for Equality
    vi. Your Responsibility as a Corporate Parent
    vii. Information about People: Your Responsibility
    viii. Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- In addition to this, training was offered in several other areas as well as the opportunity for each Councillor to receive a personal development interview in order to identify specific areas of development. There is an offer for councillors to have specific sessions before they take up roles on different committees e.g. Cabinet Members, and several

DRAFT

other committees such as Planning, Licensing and Audit and Governance. Furthermore, briefings will also be held for members, which are an opportunity to present an update on important issues e.g. when there are changes in legislation, etc.

- We as a Council take advantage of opportunities to innovate and embed digital technology to improve the lives of our residents, to work better with partners, and to strengthen and improve the responsiveness of our services to the needs and expectations of our customers. To assist us with this, in 2023 Cyngor Gwynedd's new Digital Plan for the five years from 2023-28 was approved. The period of this Plan coincides with the period of the Council Plan (in the same way as the period of the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan). Funding has been secured to complete the work programme of the two first years of the Digital Plan, and several of the priorities are already operational. During 2025/26, the responsibility for its implementation was transferred to the Corporate Services Department, and the Plan will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect the Council's priorities.
- Over the last two years, changes were seen in the Council's political leadership with the appointment of many new Cabinet Members, as well as new appointments amongst the Council's senior officers. We know that changes like this can cause challenges in terms of consistent leadership and causing a delay when making strategic decisions, but we have been aware of this possibility and have addressed the issue. The Panel Performance Assessment referred to a healthy and appropriate working relationship between members and officers, and this confirms that the Council has dealt with the changes effectively.

Risks

- Although strong defences are in place to withstand a Cyber-attack, including firewalls, anti-virus software, protocols and access policies and maintenance procedures, the risk of a cyber-attack remained high, and attacks were seen on several other public organisations during the year.
- Setting a balanced budget for 2027/28 is a challenge, particularly given the need to ensure that departmental budgets are adequate to provide the necessary level of services for the people of Gwynedd, and to avoid overspending as seen in 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- In 2025/26, a 3.8% increase was seen in the Cyngor Gwynedd grant from Welsh Government, which equates to an increase worth £9.1m in external funding. However, it was anticipated that the Council's spending would need to be increased by £25.8m to "stand still", due to the demand for services as well as the continuing high inflation pressures. Therefore, savings and cuts had to be introduced as well as raising the Council Tax levels to set a balanced budget.
- Pressures were seen on the Council's services in 2025/26, with an overspend of £6.6m at the end of the year, mainly in the field of adult and children care and the waste field. A grant receipt and an underspend on corporate budgets assisted to alleviate the financial position somewhat, but £3.2m had to be transferred from the Financial Strategy Fund to balance the position of departmental financial deficit. The financial

DRAFT

out-turn position 2025/26 was reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 19 May 2026. The Cabinet members approved the services' net overspend of £160k for the year.

- We have held an internal review and provided additional support to improve our Council Tax collection arrangements, and actions have been introduced in order to increase the collection rates. Nevertheless, the matter continues to be a challenge, and as a result, it will continue to receive attention and added support for the year to come. We are also eager to ensure that such matters receive attention earlier in the future, and we will review our arrangements to ensure that this happens. Audit Wales will carry out further work to look at our Council Tax collection arrangements during 2026-27.
- There are recruitment difficulties in key areas, such as social care and education, which can endanger service continuity. This concern led to the establishment of a specific project in the Council Plan, namely 'Workforce Planning', to address the challenge and develop a range of answers. Following a recommendation from the Governance and Audit Committee, the matter was considered by the Panel Performance Assessment at the start of 2026, and the Panel noted the importance of workforce planning to ensure the continuity of Council services. The Panel approved 'Cynllun Yfory', namely the Council's scheme to recruit graduates and apprentices, and the Council itself has acknowledged the value and importance of this scheme for many years.
- We are eager to refine our performance management arrangements, and to do so, we will review and map existing performance management arrangements across the Council in order to merge processes, reduce duplication and create a more coordinated corporate framework. This will include:
    - Developing a clear set of performance measures and indicators, which show the contribution of services and departments towards prioritising the Corporate Plan.
    - Integrating performance reports and the corporate risk register and departmental risk registers to strengthen the connection between progress, risks and mitigation steps.
    - Strengthening the scrutiny and challenge arrangements by establishing regular opportunities for peers within and beyond the Council to review performance, share good practice and offer a constructive challenge.
    - Strengthening arrangements for regular monitoring, reporting and reviewing to ensure that information and performance is used consistently to guide decisions, improve services and support corporate accountability.
- The Council is part of a number of local and regional partnerships such as the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. It would be fair to note that the effectiveness of these partnerships is currently fluctuating, and we will continue to work to try to ensure that we benefit from these arrangements. Similarly, our relationship with the third sector continues to evolve and we, with the support of the Third Sector Liaison Group, will be looking at this again during 2026/27.
- The work of ensuring that equality is deeply rooted within the Council's work to improve our services for all the people of Gwynedd continues. A Strategic Equality Plan

DRAFT

2024-28 was developed to provide a framework to improve fairness within the Council and ensure that we treat people according to their needs. This work continues, and we are now in the plan's third year, with many actions completed, e.g., develop the training framework, commence the establishment of the data dashboard, assess the accessibility of our website, and raise awareness of our impact assessment.

- As has already been noted, the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 was adopted during 2023, and three years have now elapsed. By now, most of the schemes should be clearly defined, with the necessary resources identified and considered as a part of the annual planning and budgeting cycles. As a result, the lack of money in itself is unlikely to be the main reason for not completing what is in the Plan. The risk now is ensuring that the Council continues to prioritise clearly, maintaining focus on the most transformational projects, and managing capacity and dependencies effectively to achieve what is realistic by the end of March 2028.
- There is a need to develop a united corporate transformational method that sets a clear strategic direction for change across the whole Council. This will bring different existing transformational programmes, projects and initiatives together within a coordinated framework with clear governance priorities, outcomes and arrangements. We will give particular attention to this when drawing up our next Council Plan, focusing on a smaller number of projects of a transformational nature, which will improve the services provided to the people of Gwynedd.
- The Finance Department, in close contact with the Chief Executive and Directors, undertakes ongoing reviews of the Council's financial forecasts over the next 3 years, updating the model regularly when new information is received and reporting regularly to Cabinet members and to the Corporate Management Team (Chief Executive, Directors and Department Heads). The corporate planning cycle coincides with the statutory cycle of budget planning, and we aim to present the annual update of the Council Plan to the same meeting of the Full Council as the budget.
- Every year, the Council prepares a Financial Strategy and sets a balanced Budget to ensure continuity of service. The Council also publishes a Statement of Accounts at the end of every financial year, which shows its annual expenditure. The review of expenditure against budgets and monitoring that savings have been achieved by all Council departments and ensures that the services are operating efficiently. However, as noted earlier, the increasing pressures on the Council's budget are making it harder for departments to maintain the same level of services within the budget provided, which leads to a risk of overspending.
- The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 has created new duties for Political Group Leaders to take an element of responsibility over promoting good conduct and collaboration with the Standards Committee. Agreement was reached on a protocol and criteria to assess the discharge of the duty at a workshop between members of the Committee and Leaders. These were adopted by the Standards Committee, and they will contribute towards preparing the Committee's annual report. This work has been supported by meetings and regular communication with the Monitoring Officer.

DRAFT

- Sickness absences continue to pose a risk to the capacity and sustainability of the Council's services. During 2025/26, the average number of sick days per capita increased to 13.01 days (12.94 days in 2024/25), with long-term illness accounting for 62% of all absences. Stress continues to be a leading cause of sickness, contributing to 28.3% of all absences. The Council responds by strengthening attendance management arrangements, improving sickness recording and monitoring systems, providing support through the Occupational Health Service, carrying out individual case reviews and developing support and training for managers to reduce long-term illness and support staff health and wellbeing.
- When the independent Panel Performance Assessment was held at the start of 2026, it was noted that the Council should review the capacity of its strategic leadership on an operational level to enable it to complete its key priorities and plan for the long-term. We will further consider this and review the strategic leadership capacity to ensure that we are able to complete priorities and plan effectively for the future.
- We wish to ensure that we have completely robust corporate safeguarding arrangements, and several actions have already been completed, including ensuring that the Safeguarding Strategic Panel meets regularly to discuss the corporate safeguarding agenda, and present e-learning safeguarding training for staff. Fields such as the counter-terrorism and modern slavery agenda are also being discussed under this agenda.
- The Council has identified the need to improve and upgrade the financial system. Work is underway to do this, but in the meantime, a risk exists if this is not completed in a timely way.
- A risk has been identified regarding the management of open land in the Council's ownership, which varies from a plot of flat, green land, to quarries, where no management plan is in place for them. The Housing and Property Department are busy identifying site managers on every site by collaborating with departments, and this includes raising departments' awareness of lands designated to them.
- We are aware of the need to improve our forward planning and our management of projects across the Council. This also includes managing the challenges associated with the introduction of new IT systems/software, as well as managing other departmental projects.

A Caring Gwynedd

Strengths

- Timely and good quality Statutory Reviews are carried out to ensure that care and support plans remain appropriate.
- During the year, a new Independence Promotion Services Team was established to bring together the areas of direct payments, telecare, assistive technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and development of micro companies. The aim of the work is to ensure

DRAFT

that individuals get the support, technology and choices they need to live as independently as possible, in line with their wishes and circumstances.

- An increase in the appropriate use of direct payments and practice based on strength and developments in the extra care housing field.
- Individuals and their families can now apply directly for telecare equipment through the Council's website, facilitating faster and easier access to support. At the same time, the work of transferring residents from analogue systems to digital technology is gathering pace. The Council works closely with the housing associations (Adra and Grŵp Cynefin) to ensure a smooth and safe transition for residents.
- A new head was appointed to the Adults Department, as well as a temporary head for the Children's Department. The appointments offer an opportunity to reconsider the operational systems and structure of the departments.
- Day services for people with learning disabilities in Gwynedd have continued to develop significantly during the year, with various models across the county meeting local needs and promoting the well-being of individuals.
- During the year, it was managed to ensure that there was no waiting list for mental health assessments, and the vast majority of individuals were assessed in around 10 days, with only a small number waiting up to a fortnight. In addition, several residential placements were commissioned for individuals with mental health problems, ensuring that appropriate support was available when required.
- The Llechen Lân report proved useful during the past year, assisting us to plan for the long-term needs of social services. We will update the report following the publication of new demographic projections and we are continuing to implement the recommendations with a focus on developing preventative methods and reducing reliance on traditional care services.
- During the year, Cyngor Gwynedd and the Health Board developed a live information dashboard for individuals at Ysbyty Gwynedd who need to return home with support. This work, along with the discharge safety arrangements over the winter period, has been very successful, with the associated data systems now being refined and shared regionally across the Health Board.
- Gwynedd continues to be the only authority in North Wales that does not use agency social workers, a situation that has been sustained for over a decade. Every other authority in the region, as well as the vast majority of councils across Wales, now rely on agency staff to some degree. Amongst the advantages seen from this in Gwynedd is a more consistent service for the county's people, as well as the ability to provide care through the medium of Welsh.
- Departmental budgets were reviewed again this year to consider the additional resources needed to complete any action plans, and to deal with historic budget shortfalls in some departments (e.g. social services). This is intended to ensure that the services provided can be provided within the base budget to support the Council's financial sustainability. The work of reviewing provisions in budgets will continue over the next year when preparing the 2027/28 budget.
- Further developments in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) are starting to transform the way that services operate. The Beam Notes pilot was successful with a cohort of

DRAFT

staff at the beginning of 2026, and it is intended to extend the use of technology across the service during 2026/27. Technology such as Beam Notes keeps a record of the conversation, helping reduce the time spent on administrative work and thus releasing more time for social workers to focus on working directly with individuals and families.

Risks

- Following the publication of the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board's report, Our Bravery Brought Justice, in the autumn, a comprehensive response plan was drawn up by Cyngor Gwynedd to address the recommendations, as well as broader matters noted in inspections and associated investigations. This was a challenging and damning report, and the Council acknowledged that there were important lessons to be learnt. A Response Board was established to supervise the work, chaired by Professor Sally Holland, the former Children's Commissioner for Wales. The board has met regularly and has benefited from input and guidance from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Estyn, the Children's Commissioner's Office, and the Welsh Government. Also considered was what was learnt from the CIW and Estyn joint-inspection in November 2025. Professor Sally Holland reports every quarter to the Council's Cabinet, whilst the Welsh Government's Ministerial Assurance Group also monitors progress against the recommendations. By March 2026, positive progress was achieved on several of the steps noted. However, work is still to be done, and the Council remains committed to act on what was learnt and to ensure continuous improvements. Details on what has already been done and what is in the pipeline can be seen on the website: Response Plan Programme Board
- We did not manage to reach the target of ensuring that no person waited for more than 28 days for a domiciliary care package after their assessment. Although staffing challenges have contributed to this, the performance showed that more needs to be done to ensure that people receive the right support at the right time. This highlights the need to speed-up the implementation of the Llechen Lân report's recommendations: Older People's Services in the Future, particularly work to ensure that alternative options to traditional care services are offered consistently across the county. By strengthening this method, we can give a greater voice and choice for individuals, reduce reliance on traditional care packages, and ensure that more flexible support is available sooner to meet people's needs. We will continue to try and reduce our waiting lists for new domiciliary care packages and ensure that no person in Gwynedd waits for more than 28 days following a care assessment.
- To ensure the highest quality services and effectively manage costs, the teams need to collaborate on a multi-disciplinary level with partners such as health, police, the third sector, and care providers. Steps have already been taken to strengthen these partnerships although there is further work to be done, for example to further develop the collaborative relationship with the Health Board.
- If enough staff cannot be recruited, there is a risk that the best services cannot be provided to the people of Gwynedd. We have therefore recently reviewed salaries and

introduced the Llechen Lân project, as well as introducing a Care Academy to try and improve the situation and we intend to take additional steps shortly as well.

- In general, it was acknowledged that the focus on the Our Bravery Brought Justice report and the follow-up work has taken most of the time and resources available over the past year, making it difficult to give equal attention to every field of social services.
- A weak relationship with institutional stakeholders could lead to a failure to provide quality services to the people of Gwynedd. Steps are being taken to ensure a good relationship between organisations, as well as to try to simplify the working relationship which can be overly complex due to legislative barriers.
- An increase in demand for services coupled with an increase in the complexity of needs, leads to budgetary pressures and risk of overspending.
- There is a need to reconsider and simplify "front doors" to create a consistent and simple experience for residents as they access social services.
- In March 2025, the national population forecasts were received, and the research will be further updated based on new population data. It is suggested that it will show even higher demand levels than previously predicted.
- There is a need to strengthen support for unpaid carers by ensuring unpaid carers are identified early and receive full support to help them continue in their role without jeopardising their own well-being.
- Concern exists regarding the availability of statutory review officers in the Children and Families field. If no statutory review officer is available, there is no assurance that the voice of the looked-after child is being heard.
- If the Business, Care Commissioning and Monitoring services are not effective and efficient, there will be a risk to the safety of individuals and staff, and a risk that we are not providing quality services to the residents of Gwynedd.
- Being unable to obtain mental health assessments outside working hours leaving individuals at risk and facing mental health distress without appropriate support.
- There was a need to ensure a new system as the current social services data system (WCCIS) is coming to an end. There was collaboration with local authorities across North Wales to complete a tendering process within a challenging timetable, and since then, the MOSAIC system has been purchased. During the year, extensive work commenced to prepare for the transfer, including planning, technical work and preparing the workforce. The operational timetable has now slipped to March 2027. MOSAIC is expected to improve the recording, sharing of information and communication with residents and partners.
- Although temporary leadership is now in place, uncertainty continues in terms of the long-term leadership of the Council's children's department.
- Reducing the substantial profit made by private companies when delivering children's services is a national priority. There is a need to speed-up the work on strengthening the local provision, including extending the fostering opportunities, reducing the reliance on expensive placements outside the county, and ensuring that more children and young people can stay close to their families, their schools and communities.

DRAFT

- Any competition with staff salaries in nearby counties/regions can cause discontent and affect the recruitment market.

Tomorrow's Gwynedd

Strengths

- The outcomes of primary and secondary school inspections are generally strong.
- Support to meet the needs of learners/Welsh-language provision - including the Immersion Education system.
- A new Schools Strategy for 2026-2036 is now in place.
- We continue to make improvements to schools across the county, and substantial capital schemes are in progress in Bangor and Bontnewydd. We have taken every opportunity to apply for grant support to enable us to modernise existing buildings and develop new buildings.

Risks

- Changes in the county's demography affect the viability of the current school system and increase the lack of equity that exists due to the significant variation in cost per capita, per pupil.
- Arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and promoting pupil attendance need to be improved. Attendance levels remain a concern following the pandemic-induced slump. Attendance is also a priority for the Government and Estyn.
- We will strengthen provision for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and ensure arrangements for monitoring and improving the quality of that provision.
- Ensuring that our safeguarding arrangements in schools are of the best possible standard and delivering on the content of our Crime Response Plan. We have already created a new Safeguarding and Well-being Team service in the Education Department.
- Being unable to provide Catering and Cleaning services adequately and safely.

A Prosperous Gwynedd

Strengths

- As part of a new Regeneration Framework, a Local Regeneration Plan has been prepared for each of the 13 regeneration areas in the County. The plans reflect local priorities highlighted during the 'Ardal Ni' consultation with Gwynedd residents. The Local Regeneration Plans incorporate projects that are being developed by a wide range of organisations and groups active in the area and contribute to the economically, environmentally, socially or culturally improvement of areas to create healthy, thriving, dynamic and sustainable communities with a prominent and central place for the Welsh language.

DRAFT

- The 'Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035' has been jointly developed by Cyngor Gwynedd and the Eryri National Park Authority. This is a groundbreaking scheme and introduces a new way of operating, supporting and measuring the impact of the visitor economy as a whole on the area.
- Again, this year, we have managed to secure substantial funding from sources such as the Shared Prosperity Fund. Together with our partners, we have allocated a further £8.2 million from the Shared Prosperity Fund to schemes that have contributed towards strengthening the Gwynedd economy, improving skills and creating pride in our communities. During 2025/26, over 780 businesses, enterprises and organisations have received support, over 100 jobs created or safeguarded, and over 300 local people have received training.
- A total of over £32.6 million has been invested in local plans since 2022 by Cyngor Gwynedd via the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Town Centre Schemes have been created for several towns in Gwynedd. The Plans give particular attention to high street areas, with the intention of making them more attractive places to visit and work, and to encourage people to spend their time and money there.
- New plans in the pipeline include:
    - Work to establish the Visitor Levy has developed well and we will hold a public consultation on this early in 2026-27.
    - Trawsfynydd Science Park - a capital package of £20M is almost in place and the business case has been completed.
    - Growth Deal - Glynllifon and Bryn Cegin project awaiting the CJC approval this month.

Risks

- Implications because of the end of the ARFOR Programme has led to possible adjustments to the Council Plan to establish a new "Back to Gwynedd" project.
- The SPF Programme is ending with only partial transitional arrangements confirmed through new funds (Pride in Place and Local Growth Fund).
- A substantial reduction in finance, flexibility and scope compared with the SPF, creating uncertainty regarding finance and administration in the future.
- Bangor City Centre - continuing to seek to establish a capital package for the Health Hub.

A Homely Gwynedd

Strengths

- Substantial Capital schemes have been completed and in the pipeline.

DRAFT

- The Housing Action Plan is continuing to create new social housing, bringing empty houses back into use and buying houses in order to let them.
- A Housing One Stop Shop was established in September 2025 for all housing and accommodation enquiries.
- The Empty House Council Tax Premium was increased by 150% to be reinvested mainly in the housing field.
- The Housing and Property department is working closely with its housing partners on social and intermediate housing developments to meet the huge demand for housing in Gwynedd.
- Through the Buy-to-Let Scheme, the Council buys homes off the open market to let them to residents in housing need.
- To bring more empty homes back into use, there are a number of interventions available for the people of Gwynedd to take advantage of.
- The Department has been successful in attracting additional funding from the Welsh Government to deliver more affordable housing developments.
- The Council helps many county residents avoid or get out of fuel poverty by providing support to insulate houses, receive effective heating equipment and eco-friendly upgrades such as solar panels and air-source heat pumps.

Risks

- Homelessness remains a challenge even though several new interventions have recently been introduced. We will continue to implement a number of ambitious schemes including the development of several additional sites across the county.
- Managing expectations and tensions relating to social housing development applications.
- An increase in construction costs, contractor availability and an adequate workforce. e.g., small-holdings, Buy-to-Let houses.
- Use of planning powers as one of the interventions for the Management of Second Homes in the county, particularly in the context of Article 4.
- Following the Article 4 court case, the Council will look again at the situation and consider whether there are any lessons to be learnt.

A Green Gwynedd

Strengths

- We have updated our "Climate and Nature Emergency Plan" to meet the ambition of being carbon net zero and ecologically positive.
- A Flood Strategy has been adopted which highlights the current and future risks of flooding and coastal erosion in the county and how the risks will be managed.
- Attracted significant grants from the Government to fund renewable energy schemes, an electric vehicle fleet and public and fleet charging points.

DRAFT

- Willingness to experiment and innovate – Welsh Government grants and capital from the Council will fund projects to reduce carbon emissions.
- Working with external partners – the Council leads the Gwynedd Nature Partnership
- In line with the Council's Green Fleet Plan, when vehicles need to be replaced, we have been converting to electric vehicles where possible. 48% of the Council's cars and vans are now electric vehicles.

Risks

- In order to meet the national recycling target of 70% and avoid a financial penalty, residents' behaviours need to change so that they recycle more and reduce the residual waste that needs to be collected.
- Waste treatment sites need to be modernised as well as improvements made to our recycling centres.
- There is a significant risk of coastal flooding which could have a detrimental impact on many communities, such as Fairbourne.
- Failure to meet frequency targets in relation to food hygiene inspections and food standards.
- National expectations and changes can lead to a delay as we develop a new Local Development Plan.
- The Council's 'Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 - 2029/30' sets an ambition that notes that "Cyngor Gwynedd will be carbon zero net and ecologically positive by 2030." The Plan includes a broad range of projects to reduce carbon emissions and to absorb carbon across several fields: buildings and energy, movement and transportation, waste, procurement, governance, land use, ecology. We acknowledge that reaching net zero is a long-term task, but this plan sets a number of specific milestones in order for us to measure our annual progress up to 2030. There are so many policy, legislative and budgetary factors that are beyond the Council's control and are having a huge impact on the Council's ability to deliver many of our projects, such as electricity grid network supplies or investment in energy and heating buildings. Nevertheless, the Council has chosen to spend substantial funding from our coffers to deliver many of our projects in our Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, and £3m was earmarked for the work. Despite the investment, however, the uncertainty from the perspective of external factors means that meeting the ambition to be ...'net zero carbon and ecologically positive by 2030' remains a practical and financial risk for the Council.
- While the Council has invested £3M of its own funding since 2022, which is a continuation of significant investment in carbon saving schemes since 2010, there is a real risk to not having the funding or human resources to deliver the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan as a whole.
- Work is ongoing to ensure that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other statutory requirements are fully integrated within our corporate planning frameworks, rather than in a way that is responsive and fragmented in nature.

DRAFT

- Making hazardous buildings safe, e.g. The Corbett Arms, and act on building control enforcement matters.

A Welsh Gwynedd

Strengths

- The Welsh language is a key part of all the Council's work, and any plans that affect the people of Gwynedd. Welsh is the Council's main administrative language, which means that we are one of the largest employers in the country who use Welsh on a day-to-day basis in the workplace.
- We offer opportunities for staff to develop their language skills including training to learn Welsh and to further develop Welsh language skills across all levels.
- The Council has modernised and expanded the immersion provision for learning Welsh to children and intends to further increase the provision of Welsh-medium education in the county.

Risks

- There may be a perception by some that a 'University' standard Welsh is needed to work for the Council, and while that is not accurate, it may affect recruitment to some posts.
- Welsh-speaking young people migrating.

Conclusions of the Self-evaluation

Based on the evidence gathered, the general conclusion is that Cyngor Gwynedd is operating from a firm organisational foundation. The governance, scrutiny, risk management, engagement and performance monitoring arrangements provide a sound basis for the Council to assess its performance, and examples such as the Apprenticeships and Graduates Schemes and the £8.2m in funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund in 2025/26, can show the Council's ability to turn priorities into practical steps.

When evaluating the broader picture, the quantitative data shows a mixed performance. The results of the Staff Voice Survey 2026 are positive in terms of pride and purpose, with 80% agreeing that the Council is a good place to work and 88% agree that their service is making a difference to the lives of the people of Gwynedd. However, the results on the three performance requirements are lower, namely 69.6% on achieving duties effectively, 65.8% on making the best use of resources, and 69.2% on arrangements to ensure effective performance. The National Residents Survey (2025) reinforces this picture: although Gwynedd is relatively strong in terms of contacting the Council and obtaining information, only 31% was satisfied

DRAFT

with how the Council is running things, 43% saw services as good value for money, and 37% trusted the Council (it should be noted that Cyngor Gwynedd is among the best 3 local authorities out of the 9 that participated in the Survey in 2025). This shows that there are firm foundations, but that more needs to be done to strengthen trust, satisfaction and consistent use of information to improve services. This conclusion has been directly informed by the views of residents, staff, businesses and other stakeholders. The Council has given due consideration to these views in identifying its strengths, risks and priorities for improvement for 2026/27.

It can be concluded that the Council performs effectively in several fields, but that there is a need to strengthen arrangements for improving and developing services, as well as how progress is measured. Substantial risks continue in terms of financial sustainability, costs and staffing of care services, schools' sustainability, recycling rates and the ambition to be carbon net zero and ecologically positive by 2030. These are areas where the impact on residents is direct, including access to timely services, service costs, experiences of children and young people, and the quality of the local environment.

Additional improvements identified for 2026-27

Improvement	Responsibility
• We will update the Llechen Lân report following the publication of new demographic projections and continue to implement the recommendations with a focus on developing preventative methods and reduce reliance on traditional care services.	Dylan Owen
• We will act on the recommendations within the report prepared following the Panel Assessment.	Governance Group

Improvements identified in previous Self-Assessments that will continue into 2026/27.

Improvement	
We will:	**Our progress to date**
• In response to the recommendations of a study by Audit Wales, we will seek to improve our service commissioning arrangements.	• Actions have been developed in response to the recommendations in the Audit Wales study. The plan was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee at its meeting in February 2026, with the intention of responding fully to the recommendations by the end of 2026/27.
• Improve training on identifying and managing risk.	• Work to strengthen risk management arrangements is being developed in response to recommendations from our insurers and as part of the Panel Performance Assessment. This will include developing and delivering a training programme

DRAFT

	for Members and managers as risk owners, with annual refresher sessions.
• Act on the relevant recommendations in the Local Partnerships report.	• Local Partnerships was commissioned during 2025/26 to undertake an independent review of the Council's governance arrangements, and a number of recommendations were made. The Governance Group has a work programme in place to respond to the recommendations arising from that work.
• Consider how we can build on the residents' survey organised by the Welsh Local Government Association/Data Cymru and obtain more information/evidence to enable us to improve services.	• Gwynedd took part in the National Residents Survey in 2025, which received 3,094 responses. The results provide a new comparative basis for understanding residents' views, and the Council will use the findings alongside other data and information to inform service improvements. It is intended to conduct another residents' survey in autumn 2027 and we will continue to explore options to obtain additional information and evidence to help us improve services as part of our response to the recommendations arising from the Panel Performance Assessment.
• Review the process for identifying and scoring risks, particularly to ensure consistency across the organisation in the assessment and scoring process.	• The Chief Executive and Corporate Directors have been looking specifically at the very high risks to ensure that the correct risks are included and that there is consistency in how they are scored. New arrangements have also been put in place to seek to align very high risk scores, and further work to strengthen the corporate risk strategy and register is continuing.
• Continue the work to strengthen our internal arrangements to ensure that statutory requirements/guidance or legislation are a core element and are better integrated with our corporate planning work.	• During 2025/26, work continued to strengthen the use of impact assessments, including raising awareness of them as part of the implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan. This work helps to ensure that statutory requirements, including equality, the Welsh language and the Well-being of Future Generations Act, are considered an integral part of the Council's planning and decision-making arrangements. • In addition, the recommendations of the Panel Performance Assessment emphasise the need to strengthen the links between corporate planning, performance management and risk management. An action plan has been developed to respond to the recommendations in the assessment, which will contribute to this improvement.
• Continue the work of reviewing the Council's Asset Plan to ensure that the priorities remain	• During 2025/26, work continued to develop asset management arrangements following the adoption of the Asset Management Plan 2024–2034 (July 2024). Relevant policies were reviewed and discussions were held with

DRAFT

current in light of the experiences and developments of recent years.	Council departments to ensure that the priorities reflect recent needs and developments. Work to prepare a Property Asset Action Plan is continuing and is linked to the development of the Corporate Property Management Strategy.
• Seek to develop a way of measuring value for money (efficiency) at service level as part of our performance challenge arrangements.	• The Finance Department has begun work to develop a benchmarking framework to identify areas where appropriate interventions could be considered to improve value for money where possible, including comparisons with relative costs in other authorities. This work is under way during 2026/27, with the intention of being able to report on initial results before the end of the financial year. This will be ongoing work, and a range of other suitable solutions is also under consideration, including acting in accordance with suggestions from CIPFA.

DRAFT

Cyngor Gwynedd

Annual Report on the Social Partnership Duty 2025-26

1. Introduction

The aim of the report is to show how Cyngor Gwynedd has complied with the Social Partnership Duty.

The **Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023** (the "SPPP Act"), which came into force on 1 April 2024, requires public bodies, including **Cyngor Gwynedd**, to produce an annual report to show how they have complied with the **Social Partnership Duty** established by the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act.

The Social Partnership Duty requires local authorities to seek a **consensus or compromise** with their recognised trade unions, when:

i. setting their **well-being objectives**; and
ii. making **strategic decisions** about the reasonable steps they intend to take to achieve those objectives.

Section 16(2) of the Act sets out a number of specific requirements relating to the Duty, which a public body must comply with when "seeking consensus or compromise".

In order to seek consensus or compromise, a public body must involve its recognised trade unions or other representatives of its staff in the process of setting objectives or making decisions, by (specifically):

a) consulting with them in the **early stage** of the process, and
b) including them throughout the process by:

i. providing **sufficient information** for them to be able to give due consideration to what is proposed, and

ii. providing **sufficient time** for them to consider what is proposed and respond appropriately.

According to **Section 18** of the Act:

1. A public body must prepare, for each financial year, a report of what it has done to comply with the duty.
2. The report must be **agreed with recognised trade unions** or include a statement explaining why it was not agreed.

DRAFT

3. The public body must **publish the report**, and submit it to the **Social Partnership Council**, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year.

2. Background

In addition to duties under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act, there are requirements within other Acts such as the Future Generations Act and the Local Government and Elections Act to consult with various cohorts (including staff).

Cyngor Gwynedd has established a Liaison Group between the Council and the trade unions for several years, to reinforce the healthy relationship that has largely existed for more than a decade. The aim of this group is to place emphasis on maintaining good working relationships between the Council and the Trade Unions, proactively discussing and resolving contentious employment issues, as well as handling and discussing the development of local working conditions and other employment initiatives. The meetings are chaired by the Human Resources Service Manager and include representation from the Council (HR Service Manager, Health, Safety and Well-being Service Manager, human resources officers) and representatives from the Trade Unions (GMB, UNISON and Unite).

The trade unions recognised by Cyngor Gwynedd are:

- GMB
- UNISON
- Unite

3. How we met/complied with the Social Partnership Duty

During 2025/26 Cyngor Gwynedd continued to develop and strengthen its social partnership arrangements with the trade unions, building on a constructive working relationship that has existed for a number of years. This relationship is based on open discussion, joint working in practice, and the common aim of supporting the Council's workforce and ensuring effective services for the residents of Gwynedd.

We usually meet as a Liaison Group on a monthly basis, and there is also an arrangement to meet the union officers individually each month, to try to resolve any situations that are unique to that union. There is also a strong link between the union officials and the management teams of some individual departments, although there is still scope to develop this further.

DRAFT

The social partnership arrangements were strengthened during the year by holding meetings between the Council's Chief Officers, including the Chief Executive and Directors, and the trade unions. These meetings were used to discuss strategic matters that are affecting the organisation and the workforce, including the Council's Plan and budget. There is now a programme of meetings in place twice a year, or as required, to maintain an ongoing dialogue and support the Welsh Government's aspirations in relation to the Social Partnership Duty.

As part of the process of producing the Council's Self-Assessment for 2025/26, the recognised trade unions were asked for their feedback and comments on the authority's performance and potential areas for improvement. Specifically, they were asked:

- Is the Council carrying out its duties effectively?
- Is the Council making the best use of available resources?
- Does the Council have robust arrangements in place to ensure effective performance?
- What suggestions do they have for improving staff engagement and well-being?

We did not receive a formal response to this request, but we will continue the discussion at the Liaison Group meetings and in the meeting with the Chief Officers.

Adopting *Twf – The Welsh Language at Work Charter* is a positive example of a social partnership in practice between Cyngor Gwynedd, TUC Cymru and the recognised trade unions which are Unison, GMB and Unite. By signing and adopting the Charter, Cyngor Gwynedd became the first workplace in Wales to do so, demonstrating a clear commitment to promoting and strengthening the Welsh language as a working language within the organisation.

Through this work, a shared commitment is reflected to ensure that employees' linguistic rights are respected, that inclusion is promoted, and that there is clear leadership and accountability in developing the use of Welsh in the workplace. In addition, it supports the principle that employees are able to access union representation in their preferred language, which strengthens the voice of staff and the working relationship between the Council and the unions.

A **Staff Equality Forum** has been established, which provides an important channel for staff to contribute to discussions on equality, inclusion, well-being and experience at work. The arrangement strengthens the voice of staff and enables the Council to use employees' experiences and feedback to inform the development of policies, employment

DRAFT

arrangements and working practices. This underpins the principles of social partnership by promoting open dialogue, staff participation and a fair and inclusive work culture.

As part of the review of working conditions, issues that directly affect the workforce are addressed, including working conditions, equality and inclusion, Whistleblowing arrangements, responding to sexual harassment, transparency and accountability, and relevant legislative changes.

By engaging with the trade unions on these issues, the Council can ensure that the views and experiences of the workforce are taken into account when developing policies and working practices. This endorses the principles of social partnership by promoting constructive dialogue, early participation, and working together on matters that have direct implications for staff.

Since April 2025 the Council has secured funding to enable us to support the unions in releasing staff to undertake union activities. This gives greater assurance that staff can be released from their posts in order to undertake their roles with the unions.

In future the Council will continue with efforts to embed the principle of social partnership and build constructive relations with the trade unions. During the coming year we will focus on the following areas:

1. **Social Partnership:** Further strengthen the constructive relationship with the trade unions and develop social partnership arrangements across the Council.
2. **Workforce Planning:** Develop a strategic workforce plan to support succession planning, skills development and ensure that the Council has the necessary capacity and expertise to deliver services in the future.
3. **Policies and Training:** Review employment policies and procedures in order to respond to legislative changes (e.g. Employment Rights Act) ensuring that managers receive the appropriate support and training to implement those changes consistently and effectively.
4. **Attendance, Health and Well-being:** Continue to develop arrangements that support positive attendance at work, with a particular focus on reducing long-term absences, supporting staff mental health and well-being, and ensuring that managers have the tools and confidence to manage cases effectively and sensitively.
5. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:**
   Implement the relevant actions from the Equality Plan 2024-28, ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion considerations are embedded in all aspects of the service's work and employment decisions.

DRAFT

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of item:	Recommendations arising from the Panel Performance Assessment – The Council's Response
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Nia Jeffreys
Relevant officer:	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive
Date of meeting:	10th November 2026

1. Decision Sought:

The Cabinet is requested to:

1. Welcome and accept in full the recommendations of the Panel Performance Assessment report and implement them as soon as possible.
2. Approve the draft response and Action Plan addressing the Assessment's recommendations, and recommend that the Full Council adopt them at its meeting on 3 December 2026.
3. Note that the Governance and Audit Committee reviewed the draft response on 22 October 2026 and recommended no changes.
4. Support the intention to present an update to the Governance and Audit Committee within 12 months on progress in implementing the recommendations.

2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision:

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 sets a duty on the Council to conduct a Panel Performance Assessment at least once within an electoral cycle, and to prepare a response to the assessment's conclusions and recommendations.

The report and draft response are submitted to the Cabinet to consider the findings and proposed actions before recommending their adoption by the Full Council. Under the Council's arrangements, responsibility for adopting the response to the Panel's report and recommendations rests with the Full Council.

3. Introduction and Rationale

3.1 Background

The Panel Performance Assessment forms part of the statutory framework for reviewing local government performance and governance arrangements in Wales. It is linked to the duty to undertake an annual self-assessment and considers the extent to which the Council:

- exercises its functions effectively;
- is using its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively; and
- has robust governance arrangements in place for ensuring the above.

The Panel Performance Assessment is not an audit or inspection. Its conclusions should be read alongside the Council's self-assessment, internal audit work, and external and regulatory audits. The report, however, provides a valuable independent challenge and notes the development areas that will strengthen the Council's ability to deliver its priorities in a sustainable manner.

The Council commissioned the Welsh Local Government Association to carry out the assessment. The Panel included 4 persons, including an independent Chair; a peer from the broader public, private or voluntary sector; a serving senior local government officer (CE or Director level), and a senior elected member (from outside the Council). A list of members for the Panel in Gwynedd can be seen below:

- Emlyn Dole – Chair (Former Leader of Carmarthenshire Council)
- Cllr Gwyneth Ellis - Elected Member (Denbighshire Council)
- Rob Thomas - Senior Officer (Chief Executive of the Vale of Glamorgan Council)
- Sian Elin Flint Freel – a peer from the broader, public, private or voluntary sector

The work was carried out on the site over four days, between 10 and 13 March 2026. The work included reviewing documents, data and external reports, as well as meetings and focus groups with elected members, officers, staff, trade unions, partners, businesses, residents and town and community council representatives.

The work focused on three themes that the Council had identified as areas where external insight would be particularly valuable:

- **Governance and Leadership:** To what extent do political leaders and senior officers set clear instruction and encourage change, and are the governance structures and decision-making processes robust enough to secure better long-term outcomes for residents?
- **Strategic Planning, Resources and Capacity:** Do we have the capacity and ability to deliver on our strategic priorities, and are the available resources effectively aligned with those priorities?
- **Monitoring, Measuring and Evaluating Performance:** Do we have suitable arrangements in place to monitor and assess the performance of the services provided to customers and residents, to ensure continuous improvement?

See **Appendix 1** for the week's programme, which demonstrates the breadth of the work and the wide range of opportunities the Panel had to challenge and observe during its time here.

3.2 Main findings

The Panel concluded that Cyngor Gwynedd discharges its performance duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

It was noted that there are robust governance arrangements in place, constructive relationships between members and officers, and a clear commitment to continuous

improvement. A strong sense of pride was also expressed in the County, a commitment to its cultural and social identity, and the Council's reputation as a reliable and cooperative regional partner.

At the same time, financial pressures and workforce challenges mean that there is a need to speed up the organisational transformation whilst building on progress already made. The Council should also better merge its performance management and risk arrangements, ensuring a clear link to the Corporate Plan and continue to support transparent decisions, firm scrutiny and constructive challenge.

A final copy of the Panel Performance Assessment Report was received in June 2026, and it includes 7 recommendations for the Council. A full copy of the Panel Performance Assessment Report can be seen in **Appendix 2**.

3.3 The Panel's Recommendations

In accordance with Section 93 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Council is required to prepare a response to the Panel Performance Assessment report, noting:

A. To what degree the council accepts the findings of the report regarding the extent to which it meets the performance requirements;

- It's recommended that we welcome and accept the findings and recommendations of the Panel Performance Assessment. A number of the recommendations relate to matters that had already been identified by the Governance Group, some of which are already being progressed.

- It was extremely valuable to have a Panel of experienced individuals here for a week, and their work was thorough and inclusive. The work of Members and Officers was observed and challenged, and a substantial volume of relevant documentation was considered. It was particularly valuable to receive independent views from individuals who have contributed and worked in leadership roles in Local Government across the country.

- The report's conclusions are positive and provide assurance that the Council is operating appropriately in fulfilling its duties. This is clearly to be welcomed, but the report also makes recommendations which, if adopted, would provide us with an opportunity to aim even higher and deliver better outcomes for the residents of Gwynedd.

B. To what degree the Council intends to implement any recommendations in the report; and

C. any steps that the Council intends to take to increase the degree to which it meets the performance requirements.

The recommendations of the Panel are as follows:

Recommendation	Details of the Recommendation
Recommendation 1a *Strategic Planning*	Cyngor Gwynedd should build on the current theme-based approach when preparing and developing the next Corporate Plan, with a focus on: • Long-term planning • Setting a vision for Gwynedd and the values that are essential to achieve it • Ensuring an approach that focuses on the key strategic priorities for the Council and Gwynedd as a place • Including staff, members and the wider community to develop and achieve a place-based Corporate Plan • Fully aligning with the Council's Medium-term Financial Plan and Transformation Strategy
Recommendation 1b *Strategic Planning*	Cyngor Gwynedd should review the capacity of its strategic leadership at an operational level to enable it to achieve its key priorities and plan for the long-term.
Recommendation 2a *Transformation*	Ensure that the workforce is at the core of strategic planning and transformational work in the future, bringing together the different areas of practice that already exist within the Council, in order to ensure a whole-Council approach to internal inclusion and engagement.
Recommendation 2b *Transformation*	Cyngor Gwynedd should develop a united transformational approach which clearly sets-out the organisation's general direction and priorities for change. This approach should: • Operate on a whole-organisation strategic level • Continue to realise and utilise the value of partners • Be integrated with the Medium-term Financial Plan, and be funded through this • Provide a firm foundation for securing the organisation's long-term financial resilience
Recommendation 3 *Resources and Working in Partnership*	In order to build capacity and strengthen collaboration with partners: • Bring the adopted economic strategy live on all levels across Gwynedd • Realise the potential for working in partnership with town and community councils • Increase the council's ability to achieve its economic/social ambitions • Ensure that the Mantell Gwynedd Agreement is implemented and monitored in full
Recommendation 4 *Risk*	Cyngor Gwynedd needs to develop and agree on a corporate risk strategy, which expresses the Council's risk appetite and: • Ensures an up-to-date corporate risk register and strategy • Defines the role of the leadership team, the governance and audit committee, the Cabinet, and the Full Council in supervising and monitoring the strategy and register regularly

	• Consider the training and development needs of members on supervising the council's risk
Recommendation 5 *Performance Management*	Cyngor Gwynedd should refine and merge its performance management arrangements, with a specific focus on showing contributions to: • Deliver the Corporate Plan • Link Corporate and departmental risks • Increase the opportunities for challenge by peers across and beyond the Council

In response, a draft Action Plan **(Appendix 3)** has been formulated, which outlines the actions and arrangements intended to be put in place to address the recommendations and support continuous improvement.

3.4 Consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee

The Panel Performance Assessment report and draft response were presented to the Governance and Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 October 2026.

The Committee resolved to accept the draft response to the report, recommending no changes. It also welcomed the intention to provide an update in 12 months on progress in implementing the recommendations.

The draft response is therefore submitted to the Cabinet with no changes recommended by the Committee.

4. Implications and Relevant Considerations

4.1 Resources and Finance

The Panel's recommendations emphasise the need to ensure that the Council's strategic priorities and transformation work align with the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The Panel's report does not identify the total cost of implementing the recommendations and associated Action Plan, nor does it include a specific request for additional funding. These matters will be considered as the individual plans within the Action Plan are developed.

4.2 Risks

The Panel has highlighted the need to respond to financial pressures and workforce challenges, and to strengthen the links between planning, performance and risk. The draft response and Action Plan seek to address these issues.

4.3 Equality, the Welsh Language and Well-being

The report does not specifically assess how adopting the response would affect equality, the Welsh language or well-being. The implications for all three areas will need to be considered as the individual plans within the Action Plan are developed.

5. Next steps and timescale

Following consideration by the Cabinet, the Panel Performance Assessment report and draft response, including the Action Plan and any amendments arising from the Cabinet's discussion, will be submitted to the Full Council on 3 December 2026 for adoption.

Following adoption of the response, arrangements will be made to publish the final Panel Performance Assessment report and the Council's response. Copies will be provided to members of the Assessment Panel, the Auditor General for Wales, Estyn and the Welsh Ministers in accordance with statutory requirements.

6. Views of the Statutory Officers

6.1 Chief Finance Officer

The Panel Performance Assessment offers useful recommendations for further strengthening the Council's governance arrangements. Finance officers will support the Council as necessary as it addresses the action plan.

6.2 Monitoring Officer

The Performance and Performance Assessments arrangements in Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 were established as a new regime which came into force between 2021 and 2022. The completion of the Performance Assessment by a Panel represents the implementation of the final part of the steps that need to be realised within the term of the current Council. It is therefore a significant step in that sense. The pathway to completion of the Panel Assessment is highlighted in the report. It will be a matter for the Full Council to accept the report and approve the response plan following the consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee. I am satisfied that the process has been implemented in accordance with the statutory requirements and within the timescale for the publication of the Councils response

Appendix 1 - The programme for the week of the Panel's visit

Appendix 2 - Cyngor Gwynedd Panel Performance Assessment Report: March 2026

Appendix 3 - Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from the Panel Performance Assessment

PERFORMANCE PANEL ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE - Cyngor Gwynedd

10 March 2026 - 13 March 2026

Day 1				
08:30 - 09.30	**Arrival, visitor passes and housekeeping, e.g. safety and a tour (30 minutes)**			
	Time before the meeting for the Peer Panel - (30 minutes) Base Camp (Chief Executive's Room)			
9.30 - 10.00	**Full introduction to the Panel (the Council to decide on attendees, including at least the Chief Executive and the Leader): Hywel Dda Chamber**			
10:00 - 11:30	Cabinet Focus Group [face-to-face] - Hywel Dda Chamber			
11:30 - 12:30	Chief Executive 1-to-1 Gwyrfai Room	Monitoring Officer 1-to-1, Iwan Evans's Room		
12:30 - 13:30	**Lunch (1 hour)**			
13:30 - 15:00	Aled Jones-Griffith, Chief Executive of Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai (virtual - Teams) (1:00-2:00pm). Leader's Room	Bethan Williams, Mantell Gwynedd Gwyrfai (face-to-face) (1:30-2:30pm)		Observe Cabinet Meeting in person/online
15:00 - 16:00	Focus Group: Opposition Group Leaders Virtual (Teams) - Gwyrfai	Corporate Director Catrin Thomas - Catrin Thomas's Office		
16:00 - 17:00	Youth Forum (Virtual - Teams) - Gwyrfai	Alwen Williams, Ambition Board (Virtual) - Teams - Leader's Room		
17:00 - 18:00	**Held for end-of-day feedback**			

Day 2				
09:00 - 10.30	Thematic Group: Leadership and Governance in person - Hywel Dda Chamber			
10.30 - 11.30	Statutory Director of Social Services Dylan Owen - Dylan Owen's Room	Chair and Vice-Chair of Governance and Audit - Virtual (Zoom) (Gwyrfai)		
11:30 - 12.00				
12:00 - 13:00	Residents' Panel Focus Group - Virtual (Zoom) - Gwyrfai	Staff [Focus Group] - Hywel Dda Chamber	**Individual Interview: Nia Wyn Jeffreys, Cabinet Leader. 12:30-1:30pm. Cabinet Leader's Room**	
13:00 - 14:00	**Lunch**			
14:00 - 15:00	Business Forum Focus Group - Virtual (Teams) - Gwyrfai	Reserve: Democratic Services Manager Vera Jones 1-to-1 - Vera Jones's Room in person	**Trade Unions Focus Group (UNISON) 2:00-2:30pm (in person) Desk 8, Old Clinic C-1011**	

15:00 - 16:30	Thematic Group: Strategic Planning, Resources and Capacity Hywel Dda Chamber	Scrutiny Focus Group - Chairs and Vice-Chairs 15:00-16:00 Virtual (Teams) Gwyrfai	
Held for end-of-day feedback			

Day 3

9.00 - 10.00	**Arm's-length Companies Focus Group (face-to-face)**	Thematic Group: Performance Monitoring, Measurement and Evaluation 9:00-10:30am Hywel Dda Chamber	
10.00 - 11.00	Trade Unions Focus Group - Virtual (Gwyrfai)	**Hold: Customer Service Lead - Joanne Parry and Catrin Love, Desk 8, Old Clinic C-1011**	**Individual Conversation: Llio Elenid Owen (Virtual) - Leader's Room**
11.00 - 11.15	**Break (15mins)**		
11.15 - 12.15	Heads of Service Focus Group Gwyrfai	Backbench Members Focus Group In Person / Hybrid, Dafydd Orwig Chamber 11:15-12:45	
12.15 - 1.15	Section 151 Officer 1-to-1 Dewi Morgan - Gwyrfai Room 1:00-2:00pm		
1.15 - 2.00	**Lunch (45 minutes)**		
2.00 - 3.00	Town and Community Council Representatives: Focus Group (virtual) - Gwyrfai		**Eryri National Park - Jonathan Cawley - Virtual - Nia Wyn Jeffreys's Room**
3.00 - 4.00	**Isle of Anglesey County Council and Wrexham Council - Virtual - Gwyrfai**	Youth Forum (Virtual) - Desk 8, Old Clinic C-1011	**Individual Conversation: Huw Wyn Jones (Virtual)**
04:00 - 05:00	**Held for end-of-day feedback**		

Day 4

9.00 - 12.00	**PREPARE FEEDBACK**
1.00 - 2.30	**FORMAL FEEDBACK SESSION - Hywel Dda Chamber** **Panel to the Council (invitees at the Council's discretion)**



Panel Performance Assessment Report
Cyngor Gwynedd: March 2026

Table of Contents

Introduction 2
Executive Summary 3
Panel……...5
Scope and Approach..... 5
Political Organisation 6
Corporate Organisation……7
National and Local Challenges..... 8
Strengths and Areas of Innovation 9
Performance Requirement: Is exercising its functions effectively……..10
Performance Requirement: The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively 11
Performance Requirement: Has effective governance in place 18
Acknowledgements 23

1.0 Introduction

1.1 In accordance with the performance duties under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Cyngor Gwynedd commissioned a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

1.2 The onsite assessment was completed over a four-day period concluding on 13 March 2026 with a feedback presentation provided to the Council outlining the key recommendations detailed within this report.

1.3 The assessment was undertaken based on the Council's agreed scoping document and the WLGA's PPA methodology, which was developed with the sector.

1.4 In accordance with the statutory guidance the PPA is not an audit or an inspection and does not seek to duplicate work undertaken by regulators and other bodies. Whilst the panel has undertaken a corporate assessment, this assessment should be considered alongside other sources of assurance such as the Council's own self-assessment, internal audit reviews, external audits and regulatory reviews.

1.5 To ensure the PPA addressed the issues most important to the organisation, the Council produced a scoping document that outlined a number of additional areas for the panel's consideration. These agreed areas of focus are outlined in paragraph 4.2.

1.6 This report provides a summary overview of the conclusions of the panel reported by exception.

1.7 As part of its preparatory work, the panel considered the publicly available findings and ongoing work relating to the independent Child Practice Review being undertaken in Cyngor Gwynedd, as part of the panel's pre-reading to ensure appropriate contextual awareness. However, recognising that the Council has established a separate and specialist panel to examine this matter in detail, the PPA panel was careful not to duplicate or stray into the remit, scope, or lines of enquiry of that work. Instead, the panel focused solely on the Council's broader corporate governance, performance, and organisational arrangements, ensuring clear distinction between the statutory PPA and the work of the Child Practice Review.

Executive Summary

2.0 Overall Conclusion

2.1 Overall, despite operating within a challenging economic and fiscal environment shared by councils across Wales, the panel found that Cyngor Gwynedd is fulfilling its performance duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Council demonstrates generally sound governance arrangements, constructive and respectful member–officer relationships, and a clear commitment to continuous improvement. Alongside these strengths, the panel identified areas where further development would enhance the Council's ability to deliver its priorities effectively and sustainably over the medium to long term. Taken together, the panel's findings highlight a number of interconnected themes relating to the Council's financial sustainability, organisational capacity, performance and risk management, and approach to transformation.

2.2 The panel noted the evident pride in Gwynedd shared by staff, elected members and local partners, alongside a strong collective determination to work together for the benefit of the county. This sense of place and shared purpose was consistently reflected in discussions across services and sectors, with stakeholders emphasising the Council's deep roots in its communities and its commitment to protecting and promoting Gwynedd's cultural and social identity.

2.3 Partners at both local and regional level expressed respect for the Council's leadership and its collaborative approach, recognising Cyngor Gwynedd as a constructive, reliable and trusted presence within regional structures. Many highlighted the Council's willingness to engage openly, share intelligence, work jointly on complex issues and, where appropriate, take a leading role on behalf of the sector and the region, including its contribution to the establishment and ongoing support of the Corporate Joint Committee. There was clear enthusiasm among partners to build on these relationships as challenges and opportunities continue to evolve.

2.4 However, the Council continues to face tightening financial pressures and persistent workforce challenges, reinforcing the importance of accelerating its organisational transformation efforts. By building on the progress already made and approaching this work with renewed momentum, the Council will be better positioned to strengthen its resilience, adapt confidently to fiscal constraints, and take forward emerging opportunities for long-term, sustainable growth.

2.5 As the Council begins to look ahead to the next iteration of its Corporate Plan, it will be important to consider transformation, workforce planning, and financial sustainability as interconnected priorities. Taking a holistic approach will help ensure that the organisation's future operating model is coherent, achievable, and aligned with the strategic direction the Council wishes to set for the coming years.

2.6 While Cyngor Gwynedd has established a range of performance and risk management arrangements, these are not yet operating as a fully unified corporate framework. Variations in departmental practice, the absence of a clearly articulated corporate risk strategy and defined risk appetite, and inconsistent links between

performance, risk and the delivery of the Corporate Plan limit the Council's ability to gain a coherent, organisation-wide view of delivery and emerging pressures, and to clearly demonstrate how these issues are being addressed at a corporate level.

2.7 The panel identified a number of positive developments, including structured performance challenge arrangements, improved reporting to Cabinet, and recent steps to strengthen the role of scrutiny in performance management, all of which were broadly welcomed by those who engaged with the panel. Addressing the remaining gaps by further unifying performance management arrangements and strengthening the Council's corporate approach to risk would enhance governance and support more informed decision-making.

2.8 The strong alignment between corporate and political leadership is underpinned by constructive and professional collaboration between the Cabinet and senior officers, providing a solid foundation for coherent decision-making and consistent delivery. This relationship is an asset to the organisation, supporting a shared sense of purpose across leadership tiers. As these close working relationships continue, it will be important that they continue to be supported by clear arrangements for transparency, appropriate professional distance and robust scrutiny, including feedback mechanisms that demonstrate how challenge and stakeholder engagement have informed decisions, so that the current constructive challenge remains visible and present governance standards are maintained.

3.0 Panel

3.1 The following peers were commissioned by the WLGA to undertake the assessment. Selection of the peers was agreed and at the discretion of the Council, based on suitability of skills and experience:

- Independent Chair: Emlyn Dole (Former Council Leader: Carmarthenshire County Council)
- Senior Member Peer: Gwyneth Ellis (Denbighshire County Council)
- Senior Officer Peer: Rob Thomas, (Chief Executive, Vale of Glamorgan County Council)
- Wider Public, Private, or Voluntary Sector Peer: Siân-Elin Flint-Freel (Consultant)

3.2 The panel were supported by Joseph Lewis (Senior Policy Officer: Improvement), and Sarah Evans (Senior Support Officer: Improvement).

4.0 Scope and Approach

4.1 The panel were required to assess the extent to which the Council:

- Is exercising its functions effectively;
- Is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- Has effective governance in place for securing the above.

4.2 The Council identified the following questions for the panel to consider as part of the assessment:

Leadership and Governance: To what extent is the political leadership and at the level of senior officers setting a clear direction and driving change, and are the governance structures and decision-making processes robust enough to ensure better long-term outcomes for residents?

Strategic Planning, Resources and Capacity: Do we have the capacity and ability to deliver on our strategic priorities, and are the available resources effectively aligned with those priorities?

Monitoring, Measuring and Evaluating Performance: Do we have suitable arrangements in place to monitor and assess the performance of the services provided to customers and residents, to ensure continuous improvement?

4.3 In undertaking the assessment the panel conducted a desktop review of the Council's documents, data, external reports and other relevant intelligence. The onsite stage of the review involved a series of individual meetings and focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Council Leader and Cabinet
- Chief Executive Officer, Corporate Directors, Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer
- Heads of Department and Key Officers of the Council
- Opposition Members
- Non-Executive Members

- Staff Representatives
- Trade Unions
- Business Forum
- Regional CEOs
- Chair/Vice Chair: Governance & Audit Committee
- Chair/Vice Chair: Scrutiny Committees
- Third Sector Representatives
- Residents
- Town and Community Council representatives
- Representatives of the Youth Council
- Representatives from the council's Arm's Length partners

5.0 Political Organisation

5.1 At the time of the Panel Performance Assessment, the makeup of the Cabinet was as follows:

Group Name	Number
Plaid Cymru	45
Independent	21
Gwynedd First	2
Individual Member	1
Total	**69**

5.2 At the time of the Panel Performance Assessment, the makeup of the Council's Cabinet was as follows:

Portfolio	Councillor	Political Affiliation
Council Leader	Nia Jeffreys	Plaid Cymru
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families	Menna Trenholme	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Legal and the Welsh Language	Llio Elenid Owen	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Education	Dewi Jones	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Finance	Huw Wyn Jones	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Environment	Craig ab Iago	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing	Dilwyn Morgan	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy	June Jones	Plaid Cymru

Cabinet Member for Housing and Property	Paul Rowlinson	Plaid Cymru
Cabinet Member for Economy and Community	Medwyn Hughes	Plaid Cymru

5.3 Cyngor Gwynedd has the following Scrutiny Committees:

- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- Communities Scrutiny Committee
- Care Scrutiny Committee

6.0 Corporate Organisation

6.1 Cyngor Gwynedd presented the panel with an initial scoping document setting out its corporate structure. This document explained that the Corporate Management Team constitutes the Council's most senior tier of management. Comprising of the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Heads of Department and the Monitoring Officer, the team is responsible for delivering the Council's strategic priorities and ensuring robust governance across the organisation.

6.2 Dafydd Gibbard is the Council's Chief Executive. He was appointed to his post in May 2021. The role of the Chief Executive includes:

- Leadership: Working with the Council's elected members to ensure strong and visible leadership and direction. Encouraging and enabling managers to motivate and inspire their staff to achieve objectives agreed by the Council.

- Strategic direction: Realising the strategic priorities set by the Council's Elected Members and stakeholders, by ensuring that staff understand these and follow them.

- Policy advice: Acting as the principal policy adviser to Elected Members of the Council.

- Partnerships: Leading and developing strong partnerships with other public services, businesses and voluntary groups across Gwynedd and beyond to improve the quality of life in the county.

- Governance: Overseeing and coordinating financial and performance management, risk management, and managing change within the Council.

6.3 The Chief Executive leads on strategic direction, operational effectiveness and policy advice to elected members, as well as on performance challenge arrangements in the following departments and fields:

- Education
- Economy and Community

- Digital Plan
- Corporate Services
- Legal Service
- Prioritising Resources
- Governance Arrangements
- Emergency Planning
- Corporate Joint Committee
- Workforce Culture

7.0 National and Local Challenges

7.1 Cyngor Gwynedd continues to operate within a challenging national and local context that provides important background to the panel's findings on performance, governance and value for money. Like many rural authorities in Wales, the Council faces a combination of demographic change, rising demand for services, and sustained financial pressure, all of which shape its operating environment and influence the choices available to the organisation.

7.2 Demographic trends present particular challenges for the county. Gwynedd has an ageing population, with projections showing a significant increase in residents aged 65 and over in the next decades, alongside population decline and a reduction in younger working-age cohorts. These trends are already impacting the demand for services, particularly in social care, health-related provision and housing, while also placing pressure on the Council's ability to recruit and retain a sustainable workforce.

7.3 These demographic pressures are closely linked to the Council's current financial position. The panel noted that while Cyngor Gwynedd has continued to set balanced budgets, this has been achieved against a backdrop of recurring overspends in several demand-led services, most notably Adults' and Children's Social Services, Waste and Emergency Accommodation. In recent years, departmental overspends have been mitigated through corporate underspends and one-off measures, supported on occasion by late in-year funding, allowing overall outturn positions to be broadly balanced. The Council has also delivered a total of £47m in efficiency savings and service adaptations since 2015.

7.4 Looking ahead, the Medium-Term Financial Plan highlights the scale of the challenge facing the Council. Despite a strong cumulative record of savings delivery, the plan identifies significant projected funding gaps over the next three years, reflecting ongoing demand growth, inflationary pressures and constrained funding assumptions. Although the Council holds relatively healthy levels of reserves, reliance on reserves and one-off solutions to mitigate structural pressures highlights the need to strengthen longer-term financial sustainability.

7.5 Taken together, these factors illustrate a demanding and uncertain operating context. Persistent demand growth, particularly in statutory services, coupled with financial constraints, increases the importance of clear prioritisation, effective risk management and robust performance oversight. This context underscores the scale of the challenge facing the Council as it seeks to deliver its Corporate Plan ambitions and maintain service resilience over the medium to long term.

8.0 Strengths and Areas of Innovation

8.1 While the fiscal and demographic challenges outlined in Section 7 remain significant, the panel also recognised positive and forward-looking responses across the Council, particularly in workforce planning, service innovation and long-term sustainability. The panel heard evidence of practical efforts to strengthen organisational resilience and respond to future pressures. Cynllun Yfory and Llechen Lân are examples of this broader approach, illustrating how the Council is both developing local professional capacity and using evidence-based planning to consider the future sustainability of key services.

Case Study:

Cynllun Yfory

Cynllun Yfory, the Council's apprenticeship scheme, represents a clear strength in Gwynedd's approach to workforce planning. The scheme is directly aligned to the Council's most pressing workforce challenges and provides a structured pathway for young people to develop professional skills while remaining in the county. It offers targeted opportunities in key professions such as Civil Engineering, Planning, Ecology, Environmental Health and Health and Safety, supporting the Council to build a sustainable talent pipeline in areas where recruitment across the sector has become increasingly difficult. The scheme reflects recognised best practice in developing future professional capacity and demonstrates a proactive, place-based commitment to nurturing local talent.

Llechen Lân

Llechen Lân (A Clean Slate) provides a clear, evidence-based approach to understanding and planning for the future sustainability of older people's social care in Gwynedd. It brings together demographic, workforce and financial modelling to forecast demand over the next 10–20 years, compares Gwynedd's current patterns of provision with other rural councils, and sets out practical levers to reduce pressure on traditional services. The work highlights the role of prevention and innovation, including strengthening community and strengths-based approaches, expanding technology-enabled care and direct payments, and increasing suitable accommodation options such as extra care housing, supported by clearer long-term planning, commissioning and workforce development.

It also highlights how the council is already using AI to support the council's delivery of its social care ambitions, and provides recommendations as to how this can be progressed further.

Overview of Findings

9.0 Performance Requirement: Is exercising its functions effectively

9.1 The panel's review of the regulatory reports from the past two years, and interviews onsite, concluded that there was evidence that the Council is exercising its functions effectively.

9.2 Cyngor Gwynedd has a Corporate Plan which sets out the Council's vision and priorities until 2028, aligning its work with the Well-being Goals, Ways of Working and Sustainability Principle of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It organises the Council's ambitions into seven priority areas, each supported by targeted projects aimed at improving outcomes for residents and strengthening long-term well-being. The plan reflects the county's distinct Welsh-speaking communities and recognises the need for place-based responses.

9.3 The panel engaged with several of Cyngor Gwynedd's key strategic partners, including Mantell Gwynedd, Coleg Menai, the North Wales Ambition Board / Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru (the Corporate Joint Committee), and the Chief Executives of Ynys Môn and Wrexham councils. These discussions highlighted the maturity of the Council's partnerships and the strength of the forums that support them. Partners reaffirmed their shared commitment to collaborative working and to ensuring that local priorities are addressed in a coordinated and effective manner. In many cases, partners also commented on the Council's enthusiasm and willingness to step forward, convene others and take a leading role where this adds value. These conversations underscored Cyngor Gwynedd's strategic contribution to the development of regional forums across both North-West Wales and the wider North Wales region, particularly when these forums were in a more formative stage.

9.4 The panel observed that the Council's corporate values, most clearly articulated through *Ffordd Gwynedd* as its core organisational ethos, were well understood across the authority and evident in the behaviours of staff at all levels, including operational managers and frontline teams. The panel also identified a number of specific outcomes delivered through *Ffordd Gwynedd* as having made a positive contribution to how the Council is meeting the performance duties considered by the panel, including initiatives such as the establishment of the Managers and Team Leaders' Network, the extension of apprenticeship and trainee schemes and establishing the Care Acadamy.

9.5 However, the panel also heard that *Ffordd Gwynedd* has lost some of its original clarity and impact. While staff at all levels recognised the strong name recognition of *Ffordd Gwynedd* and the positive intentions that underpin it, many felt that its purpose has become less clearly defined. The panel heard concerns that elements of "mission creep" have emerged, with *Ffordd Gwynedd* increasingly perceived as an additional internal strategy rather than a unifying way of working. In this context, some staff described a sense that it now sits alongside, and at times competes with, other key organisational strategies, such as the workforce development and transformation plans, rather than providing a clear cultural framework that consistently shapes delivery across the organisation.

9.6 The panel's assessment indicates good alignment between the senior executive officer team and the Council's political leadership. This alignment is evident in their shared commitment to the Council's priorities and a common understanding of the fiscal and demographic challenges it faces. Discussions with political leaders indicated that they are well supported by officers, while also retaining the space and confidence to provide clear political direction to officers.

9.7 The panel recognised that Cyngor Gwynedd's workforce planning emphasises developing a long-term employment pipeline through its apprenticeship, trainee and professional development programmes. These pathways help young people enter specialist public service roles, such as planning, environmental health, engineering, social care and regulatory services, at a time when the authority risks losing significant expertise as experienced staff retire. By investing in structured training routes, the Council supports local talent, addresses skills shortages and strengthens organisational resilience, ensuring it has the technical capacity required to meet current and future statutory responsibilities.

9.8 As the Council prepares for the next iteration of its Corporate Plan, there is an opportunity to build on the strengths of the current theme-based approach and develop a clearer, longer-term vision for Gwynedd and its communities. A more strategic focus on the Council's highest priorities, shaped and supported by meaningful involvement of staff, elected members, local residents and other council partners, would help ensure that the Corporate Plan reflects both the needs and aspirations of Gwynedd as a place. Aligning this work fully with the Medium-Term Financial Plan and the Council's Transformation Strategy will provide a coherent framework that links resources, strategic direction and outcomes, enabling the organisation to plan confidently for the future.

9.9 **Recommendations**

1a	Cyngor Gwynedd should build on the current theme-based approach when preparing and developing the next Corporate Plan with a focus on: • planning for the long-term; • articulating a vision for Gwynedd and the values which are fundamental to its delivery; • ensuring an approach which focusses on the key strategic priorities for the Council and Gwynedd as a place; • involving staff, elected members and the wider community to develop and deliver a place-based Corporate Plan; and • ensuring it is fully aligned to the Medium-Term Financial Plan and the Council's Transformation Strategy

10.0 Performance Requirement: The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively

10.1 Overall, the panel found that Cyngor Gwynedd is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively within a challenging financial and demographic context. However, the scale and persistence of pressures identified in the Medium-Term Financial Plan, particularly recurring overspends in key demand-led services and increasing reliance on one-off measures—underline the need for a clearer and more unified approach to strategic planning and organisational transformation. While the Council benefits from committed leadership, a strong cumulative record of savings delivery and well-established partnerships, these strengths are not yet being leveraged consistently across the organisation. The panel considered that the Council would benefit from articulating a clear, whole-organisation transformation approach that brings together existing improvement activity into a single, coherent framework. Such an approach should recognise and maximise the value of external partners, ensuring that transformation activity draws on the insight and capacity of Gwynedd's public, private and voluntary sectors, and is embedded within and supported by the Medium-Term Financial Plan to strengthen long-term financial resilience.

10.2 This section also considers one of the Council's additional areas of focus agreed for the assessment, relating to Strategic Planning, Resources and Capacity. In doing so, the panel has examined not only whether Cyngor Gwynedd has the internal capacity and capability to deliver its strategic priorities, but also whether it is making effective use of the full range of resources available to it. The panel noted that the Council cannot deliver on its ambitions in isolation and that resources should be understood more broadly than financial capacity alone, encompassing the contribution of partners across the public, private and third sectors. This section therefore explores the extent to which the Council recognises and mobilises these external partnerships as an integral part of delivering its priorities and responding to the scale of financial, demographic and service pressures it faces.

Financial Resources section

10.3 Cyngor Gwynedd's MTFP runs for three years and is recognised by the Council as a 'live' document. While the associated annual budget is refreshed each year and is supported by a detailed income and expenditure plan, the medium-term element of the MTFP remains a high-level assessment of the Council's financial position over a three-year period. This forward look is updated as new information becomes available, including changes to national and local funding assumptions, income projections, service pressures and savings plans.

10.4 The Council's medium-term financial outlook remains challenging, with the Medium-Term Financial Plan projecting a cumulative funding gap of £40m across 2026/27–2028/29 in the absence of further intervention. Although the 2026/27 budget has been balanced through a combination of Council Tax increases (5.32%), local service bids and prudent corporate budgeting, financial resilience is increasingly reliant on reserves and one-off measures. Pressures within social care, Emergency Accommodation and persistent overspending in waste services remain

structural in nature and, in the panel's view, will require transformational service redesign rather than incremental adjustments. The Council has established a number of plans and strategies to respond to these pressures, including the Housing Operational Plan and the Waste Strategy, which set out measures to alleviate current overspends.

10.5 The panel noted that the Council has a strong track record of delivery on savings when viewed cumulatively, with the Council having achieved 93% (£43m) of planned savings since 2015. However, despite this positive track record, the panel noted that recurring overspends have continued to emerge across several service areas in recent years, reflecting the growing impact of demographic change—particularly an ageing population and rising levels of complex need—which is placing sustained pressure on demand-led services and making reliance on short-term mitigation increasingly unsustainable.

10.6 Cyngor Gwynedd has maintained short-term financial stability, but continues to face significant structural pressures that will require sustained organisational transformation and stronger long-term financial planning. In recent years, recurrent departmental overspends, particularly within Children's Services, Adults' Services, Waste and Emergency Accommodation, have become an established feature of the Council's financial position, with a £6.6m overspend in 2024/25 mitigated only through exceptional corporate underspends and late Welsh Government grants. While the Council's cumulative savings delivery remains strong, with 93% of planned savings realised since 2015, service-level pressures continue to intensify, reflecting ongoing demand growth and inflation rather than short-term or one-off factors.

Transformation section

10.7 The panel recognised that both corporate and political leadership acknowledge the need for organisational transformation as a critical component of achieving long-term sustainability.

10.8 While the Corporate Plan includes a wide range of change-focused projects across its seven priority areas, most notably within *An Efficient Gwynedd*, the panel found that these initiatives are largely presented as individual service or thematic actions rather than as part of a single, coherent transformation programme. Evidence from the Council's 2025–26 Performance and Spending Report demonstrates that significant improvement activity is underway, including digital developments, efficiency measures, workforce initiatives and service redesign, supported by established performance and scrutiny arrangements. However, this activity is predominantly described and assessed on a project-by-project basis and would benefit from greater articulation of how individual initiatives collectively contribute to a shared transformation ambition or to addressing longer-term financial and organisational sustainability.

10.9 As a result, the panel concluded that the Council's current transformation ambitions appear fragmented, with change activity focused on delivering discrete projects rather than being framed within a coherent, whole-organisation programme of change. This limits the Council's ability to clearly demonstrate how improvement

activity is prioritised, sequenced and targeted in response to ongoing fiscal, demographic and operational pressures. The panel considered that establishing a more integrated and overarching transformation framework would help to clarify the Council's long-term intent, strengthen alignment across services, and provide clearer visibility of how individual projects contribute to a shared direction of travel. Crucially, such an approach should be fully aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Plan, ensuring that transformation activity is directly informed by the scale of the financial challenge and supported by a realistic assessment of the resources required to deliver sustainable change.

10.10 The panel felt the Council had a clear opportunity to make more effective use of *Ffordd Gwynedd* in shaping its future transformation priorities. While the ethos remains a valued and well-recognised part of the organisation's identity, the panel was less clear about how *Ffordd Gwynedd* currently contributes to the Council's forward-looking vision, noting that its strategic purpose has become less clearly defined over time.

10.11 Repositioning *Ffordd Gwynedd* within a refreshed, organisation-wide transformation framework would strengthen its relevance and enable it to act as a practical cultural anchor for change. Doing so would reinforce expectations around leadership behaviours, decision-making and service design, and ensure that the Council's cultural model is fully integrated with its long-term financial, workforce and operational challenges. This alignment would also support a more consistent application of the ethos across departments, enabling *Ffordd Gwynedd* to act as a unifying driver of the Council's future direction rather than a concept referenced unevenly across the organisation.

Staff

10.12 During the onsite assessment, the panel met with a range of staff from across the organisation. Staff expressed positive views about working for the Council, highlighting the advantages of being part of a Welsh-speaking authority, the strong work–life balance culture, and the generally open and accessible approach of the leadership team.

10.13 Staff highlighted the Managers and Team Leaders Network as a valuable forum for staff engagement. It provides an effective platform for sharing organisational insight, strengthening communication, and supporting consistent understanding of corporate priorities across departments.

Senior Leadership

10.14 The panel noted that the Chief Executive holds a wide strategic portfolio—this is outlined in 6.1 – 6.4, covering areas such as Education, Economy and Community, Digital, Corporate Services, Legal Services, governance, emergency planning, and workforce culture. While this reflects strong personal leadership, the scale of responsibility is substantial for one role. The panel considers that the Council now needs to strengthen and expand its senior strategic capacity to ensure the organisation can manage its modernisation ambitions, respond effectively to emerging pressures, and maintain resilience at the highest level.

10.15 The panel's overall conclusion is that Cyngor Gwynedd's senior leadership capacity is extremely lean given the scope and complexity of the organisation. The breadth of responsibilities and reporting lines to the Chief Executive, alongside the demands of large-scale transformation and change management, competing service pressures, sustainable financial management, risk management, workforce challenges, and the need to maintain delivery and performance, means that strategic leadership capacity is insufficient in terms of both coverage and distribution. This increases the risk of over-reliance on key individuals, reduces organisational capacity to progress cross-cutting priorities, and constrains the pace and consistency with which transformation can be planned, governed and delivered

1b	Cyngor Gwynedd should review the capacity of its strategic leadership to enable it to deliver on its key priorities and plan for the long term/future.
2a	Ensure that work on future strategic planning and transformation has the workforce at its core, bringing together the various strands of practise that already exists within the Cyngor to ensure a whole Council approach to involvement and internal engagement.

Partnerships

10.16 The panel noted that Cyngor Gwynedd recognises the importance of mobilising the collective resources of its partners to achieve its objectives. The panel highlighted the Council's strong and well-established relationship with the third sector through Mantell Gwynedd, alongside the ongoing renewal of the formal Compact Agreement with the sector.

10.17 The panel noted that this partnership has drawn down £24.4 million in UKSPF funding since 2021. The panel noted that Mantell Gwynedd has suggested that its Social Return on Investment (SROI) for every £1 of funding received is between £1.85 - £3.36 on specific projects.

10.18 While these partnerships represent a clear organisational strength, the panel emphasised the need to connect this collaborative potential more explicitly to the significant financial and operational challenges outlined within the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The panel considered that deeper alignment between partnership working, service redesign, and the Council's long-term financial planning would help

"To achieve the objectives of Gwynedd Council's Corporate Plan, effective collaboration and efficient use of local resources are essential. By working with the third sector, Gwynedd Council aims to ensure local benefit and value for money, while leveraging the added value that third sector organisations offer."

Compact Agreement (Draft) Cyngor Gwynedd and The Third Sector

ensure that the collective capacity of local partners is fully leveraged to meet these structural pressures and support a more sustainable future operating model.

10.19 However, the panel also observed that this level of strategic focus is not applied uniformly across all sectors; while partnership working with the voluntary sector is more developed and supported by clear structures, engagement with the business community appears less mature and is still evolving in terms of its coherence and strategic intent.

Business Community

10.20 The panel noted that the Council has a range of mechanisms in place to engage with businesses, and that these arrangements have evolved over time. The Council has also recently deployed additional resources to strengthen engagement with the sector, including a dedicated Engagement Officer, a Business Bulletin and an Annual Survey. While these developments are positive, the panel considered that the overall approach remains at a relatively early stage and is not yet as coherent or strategically developed as equivalent arrangements with the Council's other partners.

10.21 The panel heard from representatives of the local business community that, although relationships with the Council are improving, current engagement arrangements are still often experienced as informal and operational in focus. Some interviewees perceived there to be no clear or formal mechanism through which the wider business community could feed into Council decision-making or raise emerging concerns, suggesting there is more to do to strengthen the visibility, structure and reach of existing arrangements. At the time of the assessment, the Council did not operate a standing business forum; instead, officers convened an ad hoc group for the purposes of the assessment, comprising largely organisations already connected to the authority.

10.22 In this context, the panel welcomed the Council's commitment within its draft Gwynedd Economic Strategy, to establish a formal Gwynedd Economy Forum. A more systematic and inclusive approach would strengthen the Council's understanding of local economic needs, support evidence-based strategic planning, and reinforce its role as a place-based economic leader.

10.23 More broadly, the panel considered these issues to be closely connected to the Council's wider question about capacity and resources. Delivering the Council's strategic ambitions will require a more expansive understanding of the full range of resources available across the Council, recognising that local partners will be vital to achieving sustained change. The constructive and well-established relationships developed with the third sector provide a strong foundation for this work, offering a model that could be extended to other sectors and applied more widely across North Wales.

10.24 Interviewees also emphasised the need for a more proactive and outward-facing approach to promoting Gwynedd as a destination for investment. While the county benefits from strong national brand recognition, the Council's limited presence at major trade events and economic forums was seen as a missed opportunity to

position Gwynedd as a competitive location for new enterprise. Some businesses expressed uncertainty about the Council's wider approach to inward investment, including leadership responsibilities and engagement processes.

Arm's Length Companies

10.25 The panel observed strong and constructive relationships between the Council and *Byw'n Iach*, the arm's-length company responsible for delivering leisure services on behalf of the authority. Representatives from *Byw'n Iach* demonstrated a clear understanding of the Council's strategic aspirations and how Byw'n Iach's work aligns with those priorities. The Board was regarded as functioning effectively, with ongoing collaborative projects, reflecting a shared commitment to expanding the organisation's focus on wider wellness and wellbeing alongside traditional leisure provision.

10.26 However, the panel noted concerns regarding the financial sustainability of *Byw'n Iach*. The company does not currently operate on a break-even basis and continues to rely on supplementary financial support from the Council. This position has contributed to frustration within the organisation about limited resources and the constraints this places on its ability to deliver and grow its wellbeing offer. The panel considered that the Council should address these issues as part of its broader commitment to service transformation and the development of a financially sustainable future operating model.

Trade Unions

10.27 As part of the onsite assessment, the panel extended an invitation to all Trade Unions recognised by the Council to engage in discussions as part of the review. The feedback received reflected a generally positive and constructive working relationship with the Council, with Trade Union representatives describing an improving environment for open dialogue and engagement. In particular, the panel heard positive feedback about a recent meeting convened by the Chief Executive with Trade Union colleagues, which was welcomed as an opportunity for open and honest discussion, enabling issues to be explored constructively and in a spirit of transparency.

10.28 Trade Union feedback characterised the relationship with the Council as professional and constructive, noting that progress has been made in recent years to strengthen involvement and improve mutual understanding. The panel was provided with examples where steps have been taken to involve Trade Unions earlier in policy development, including in relation to the Drug and Alcohol Policy, which was viewed as a positive move towards more meaningful consultation.

10.29 Notwithstanding these improvements, the panel was advised that there remains scope to strengthen communication, particularly during periods of organisational change and restructuring. Feedback highlighted the importance of clearer and more consistent communication about the reasons for change, how views expressed through consultation influence decision-making, and the timing of key stages within

restructuring processes. Addressing these areas would help consolidate progress made to date and further embed the principles of effective social partnership across the organisation.

Residents

10.30 While on site, the panel met with local residents in a forum organised by the Council. The forum comprised members of the Council's Residents Panel, all of whom had received an invited to attend.

10.31 Residents described generally positive experiences of council services, particularly in relation to statutory frontline provision, which was widely regarded as responsive and effective. This was seen by the panel as an important strength, given the challenging operating context. Alongside this, residents expressed some uncertainty about the Council's overall direction, communication practices and the consistency with which its stated values are reflected across the organisation.

10.32 Several residents felt that the Council's strategic direction was not clearly communicated and described engagement and consultation processes as largely one-sided, with limited feedback on how their input influences decisions. Views on specific policy areas were mixed, with some questioning how consistently stated ambitions, such as Welsh language promotion, are reflected in wider policy and planning. Overall, residents expressed a desire for clearer communication, greater transparency around priorities, and more meaningful opportunities to influence local decision-making.

2b	Cyngor Gwynedd should set out a unified transformation approach that clearly articulates the organisation's overarching direction and priorities for change. This approach should: • operate at a strategic, whole-organisation level; • utilise the value of partners; • be integrated with, and funded through, the Medium-Term Financial Plan; and • provide a firm basis for safeguarding the organisation's long-term financial resilience.

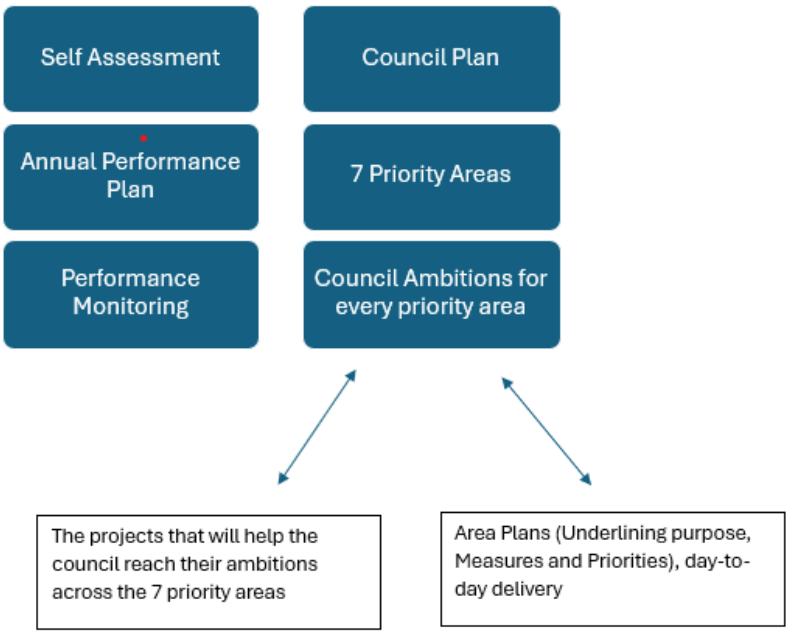
3	In order to build capacity and strengthen partnership working: • Bring adopted economic strategy to life at all levels throughout Gwynedd; • Realise the potential of partnership working with town and community councils; • Enhance the Council's capacity to deliver on its economic/social ambitions; and • Ensure that the Mantell Gwynedd Compact is fully implemented and monitored.

11.0 Performance Requirement: Has effective governance in place

11.1 Overall, the panel concluded that the Council has effective governance arrangements in place, with some identified areas for improvement relating to clarity of alignment of performance and risk management with the Council's key strategic objectives, risk appetite, and transformation priorities over the short, medium and long term.

11.2 The Council has a constitution and a scheme of delegation, which clearly outlines decision-making responsibilities. The Council also regularly evaluates its own performance against a framework of self-evaluation.

11.3 The Council provided the Panel with an overview of its governance structures, illustrated in the diagram below. The diagram sets out how the Council's self-assessment process, Council Plan, and annual performance reviews connect with the seven priority areas in the Corporate Plan. It also shows how these elements link to the Council's performance monitoring and challenge arrangements, and how they collectively support the delivery of priorities within each area.



11.4 The panel reviewed the Council's self-assessments and noted that they provide a broad, narrative overview of performance. The Annual Performance Report sets out the Council's intention to present a balanced picture of performance, highlighting both areas of success and those requiring further attention. While the panel recognised the value of this narrative approach, it also observed that the self-assessment places greater emphasis on descriptive and thematic commentary than on evaluative analysis, quantitative measures or clearly articulated assessments of impact.

11.5 While the self-assessment therefore meets statutory requirements, the panel considered that its value as an assurance tool would be strengthened through increased use of measurable data, clearer evaluative commentary and more explicit

conclusions. The introduction of a consistent RAG status across priorities and service areas would further enhance clarity, enabling performance trends, risks and areas requiring attention to be presented in a more transparent and accessible way.

Performance and Risk Management

11.6 The panel recognised that Cyngor Gwynedd has taken positive steps to strengthen its performance and risk management arrangements, supported by structured bi-monthly departmental meetings that consider progress against Council projects, day-to-day service performance, and the Council's Corporate Risk Register. Outputs from this process inform the regular performance reports submitted by Cabinet Members during the year, alongside the Annual Performance Report.

11.7 While the panel heard that most departments follow a broadly consistent approach to performance reporting, typically producing an overall dashboard supported by graphs and narrative, this approach is not yet applied consistently across the organisation. Variation remains in a small number of departments, particularly in the systems and methods used to compile and present performance information, resulting in differing levels of analysis, reporting and challenge. Taken together, these inconsistencies limit the Council's ability to gain a coherent, organisation-wide view of delivery, performance pressures and emerging risks.

11.8 Sector-led guidance highlights that a coherent, organisation-wide risk and performance framework, supported by clear accountability, consistent processes and a strong risk-aware culture, enables councils to make better-informed decisions, respond effectively to uncertainty and maintain focus on long-term priorities. Given the scale and complexity of the ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan, the panel considers that unifying performance management and strengthening corporate risk arrangements represent important areas for improvement.

11.9 The panel also noted efforts to enhance the role of scrutiny in performance management through the introduction of performance challenge opportunities from April 2025 onwards. Although this process along with broader changes to scrutiny is still embedding, this development was broadly welcomed by those who engaged with the panel.

11.10 The panel found that the Council benefits from constructive and professional working relationships between members and officers, supported by established scrutiny and governance arrangements. To maximise the effectiveness of these arrangements, the panel considers it important that scrutiny committees and other performance challenge mechanisms are used consistently and effectively, with clear feedback on how scrutiny challenge, recommendations and stakeholder engagement have informed decisions. This would help retain and reinforce confidence in governance processes and strengthen the visibility of constructive scrutiny across the organisation.

11.11 The panel noted that Cyngor Gwynedd's approach to scrutiny has evolved in response to recommendations from Audit Wales, including the strengthening of links

between Scrutiny's Forward Work Programme and the Council's Corporate Plan. Interviewees reported that, while the revised scrutiny arrangements are still embedding, they are contributing to improvements in scrutiny performance. However, some interviewees expressed a preference for the previous arrangements, underlining the importance of the Council maintaining a continued focus on strengthening scrutiny effectiveness.

11.12 The panel met with the Council's Governance and Audit Committee and found that, while the committee operates within a fundamentally sound governance framework, a number of factors were constraining its overall effectiveness. Interviewees highlighted that the frequency and length of meetings, combined with overloaded agendas and lengthy papers, can limit the time available for focused consideration of high-risk and strategic issues.

11.13 While officer support and lay member contributions were constructive, the panel identified opportunities to strengthen induction, training and the more systematic use of lay member expertise, particularly in agenda planning, report development and the preparation of key governance documents such as the Annual Governance Statement.

11.14 While the Council has an established risk strategy, some lay members indicated that more consistent and timely information on high-level risks, including reputational risks, would further support their assurance role.

11.15 The panel also noted that the relative large size of the committee, when compared with sector norms, may be contributing to these challenges, affecting efficiency, increasing training demands on both lay and elected members, and placing additional pressure on agendas. Taken together, these issues suggest that, while governance arrangements are adequate, refinements to committee size, meeting structure, training arrangements and the integration of lay member expertise would enhance the committee's overall efficacy and strengthen governance assurance across the Council. Given the central role of the Governance and Audit Committee in the Council's overall governance framework, it is important that these arrangements continue to be reviewed and strengthened to ensure the committee remains effective in providing independent and rigorous assurance.

11.16 More broadly, the panel also heard comments about the scope and balance of scrutiny arrangements across the authority, including the challenge of scrutinising both education and economic matters within a single committee. Given the scale and statutory importance of the education portfolio, some felt this can limit the depth of scrutiny afforded to economic issues

11.17 The panel identified a common theme from committee chairs and vice chairs they engaged with, who reported that there is scope to strengthen their connection to the wider governance process, including receiving more consistent information between meetings. Interviewees also noted that longer gaps between committee cycles can, at times, delay feedback on issues raised, and that the use of draft rather than final reports can limit the clarity and effectiveness of scrutiny.

11.18 The panel noted that scrutiny development is supported through annual committee workshops to agree forward work programmes, including refresher training on the principles of effective scrutiny.

11.19 Members suggested that training has tended to focus on process and the principles of scrutiny, rather than practical tools and techniques to support effective questioning. The panel emphasised that both are essential for high-performing scrutiny committees.

11.20 In 2025/26, this offer was adapted to support the introduction of the new performance challenge arrangements, with two training sessions delivered in May 2025. However, the panel saw evidence that take-up among members is variable.

11.21 **Recommendations**

4	Cyngor Gwynedd needs to develop and agree a corporate risk strategy, which articulates the Council's risk appetite and: • ensures an up-to-date corporate risk register and strategy; • defines the role of leadership team, governance and audit committee, cabinet, and full council in regular oversight and monitoring of the strategy and register; and • considers training and development needs of members on oversight of council risk.
5	Cyngor Gwynedd should unify and refine its performance management arrangements with a particular focus on demonstrating contributions to: • the delivery of the Corporate Plan; • linking corporate and departmental risks; and • increasing peer challenge opportunities across and beyond the Council

12.0 Acknowledgements

12.1 The Panel and the WLGA would like to extend their thanks to the Council, its members and officers for the support in coordinating documentation requests, responses to queries, arranging meetings and workshops and providing responsive onsite support.

12.2 The Panel would also want to extend their thanks to the organisations, partners and interviewees they met with whilst on site.

Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from the Panel Performance Assessment (10-13 March 2026)

Recommendation	Details of the Recommendation	Cyngor Gwynedd Actions	Responsible Officer(s)	Completion Date
Recommendation 1a **Strategic Planning for the future**	Cyngor Gwynedd should build on the current theme-based approach when preparing and developing the next Corporate Plan, with a focus on: • Long-term planning • Setting a vision for Gwynedd and the values that are essential to achieve it • Ensuring an approach that focuses on the key strategic priorities for the Council and Gwynedd as a place • Including staff, members and the wider community to develop and achieve a place-based Corporate Plan • Fully aligning with the Council's Medium-term Financial Plan and Transformation Strategy	• Establish clear arrangements and a project plan for preparing the next Corporate Plan, including the remit, time-frame, resources, who will be responsible and the quarterly progress reporting procedure.	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors, Head of Finance and Council's Business Support Service	March 2028 – Council to adopt new Council Plan
		• Review the existing Corporate Plan and evidence (performance, population data, impact assessments, well-being assessment, partner feedback), to identify long-term themes and strategic priorities.		
		• Develop a clear vision for Gwynedd and a set of values, with measurable success criteria and outcomes.		
		• Maintain structured engagement with staff and members (workshops/themes) and a broader consultation with the community and partners to refine "place-based" priorities.		

		• Ensure full alignment with the Medium-term Financial Plan and Transformation Strategy: map each priority in terms of costs, benefits, risks and milestones, and agree on monitoring and reporting arrangements.		
		• Collaborate early and continuously with the Cabinet following the 2027 elections in order to agree on priorities, a "place-based" approach, and ensure that the next Corporate Plan reflects the political direction of the new term.		
Recommendation 1b **Strategic Planning for the future**	Cyngor Gwynedd should review the capacity of its strategic leadership at an operational level to enable it to achieve its key priorities and plan for the long-term.	• Complete a review of strategic leadership capacity at an operational level, assessing whether the existing arrangements are sufficient to achieve the Council's priorities and support long-term planning.	Chief Executive	July 2027
		• Map strengths, gaps and risks within the current leadership structure, including resilience, succession and the Council's ability to lead corporate transformation.		
		• Compare leadership arrangements and management structures with		

		similar councils in order to identify good practice and relevant lessons.		
		• Develop costed options to strengthen strategic capacity, considering the implications in terms of corporate responsibilities, support arrangements and the ability to act.		
		• Present the findings and recommendations of the review to relevant Committees, with an action plan, time-frame and clear monitoring arrangements.		
Recommendation 2a Transformation	Ensure that the workforce is at the core of strategic planning and transformational work in the future, bringing together the different areas of practice that already exist within the Council, in order to ensure a whole-Council approach to internal inclusion and engagement.	Map and coordinate the existing arrangements, channels and internal engagement activities across the Council in order to identify strengths, gaps, duplication and improve coordination.	Head of Corporate Services	October 2027
		• Develop a united corporate approach to include and engage with the workforce, including principles, engagement standards, communication channels and the procedure for utilising staff feedback.		
		• Define roles, responsibilities and clear governance arrangements to ensure that the workforce is		

		regularly and meaningfully included in corporate priorities and change programmes.		
		• Establish regular communication and feedback mechanisms, including an annual engagement calendar, feedback gathering methods and a reporting procedure on how feedback has influenced decisions.		
		• Monitor and review the effectiveness of the new approach regularly, using participation data, staff feedback and examples of changes made to steer continuous improvement.		
Recommendation 2b **Transformation**	Cyngor Gwynedd should develop a united transformational approach which clearly sets-out the organisation's general direction and priorities for change. This approach should: • Operate on a whole-organisation strategic level • Continue to realise and utilise the value of partners	• Develop a united corporate transformational approach, noting the strategic direction, operational principles and the main priorities for change across the Council.	Chief Executive / Corporate Directors / Head of Finance	June 2027
		• Map each existing programme, project and transformation initiative, and place them within a coordinated framework that notes owners, outcomes, milestones and governance arrangements.		

	• Be integrated with the Medium-term Financial Plan, and be funded through this • Provide a firm foundation for securing the organisation's long-term financial resilience	• Agree on working arrangements with partners by March 2027, noting which partners contribute towards each transformation priority and how their value will be measured.		
		• Integrate the transformation framework with the Medium-term Financial Plan by costing the change priorities, noting the funding sources and defining the expected financial and non-financial benefits.		
		• Use the framework as a basis for strengthening the organisation's long-term financial resilience and monitoring progress against the expected outcomes.		
Recommendation 3 **Resources and Working in Partnership**	In order to build capacity and strengthen collaboration with partners: • Bring the adopted economic strategy live on all levels across Gwynedd	• Prepare an action plan to implement the adopted economic strategy, linking every priority with measurable outcomes, owners and milestones.	Chief Executive / Corporate Director / Head of Economy and Community	October 2027
	• Realise the potential for working in partnership with town and community councils	• Strengthen the arrangements for working in partnership with town and community councils, identifying practical opportunities for collaboration, sharing resources and achieving local priorities.		

	• Increase the council's ability to achieve its economic/social ambitions • Ensure that the Mantell Gwynedd Agreement is implemented and monitored in full	• Review the Council's capacity and resources to achieve economic and social ambitions, and present options to strengthen that capacity, where needed.		
		• Agree on arrangements for implementing, coordinating, monitoring and reporting for the Mantell Gwynedd Agreement, including work owners, milestones and progress reporting procedure.	
Recommendation 4 **Risk**	Cyngor Gwynedd needs to develop and agree on a corporate risk strategy, which expresses the Council's risk appetite and: • Ensures an up-to-date corporate risk register and strategy	• Complete and present the Corporate Risk Management Strategy and Policy (including a risk appetite statement) to be approved by the Cabinet, and an annual review from the Governance and Audit Committee.	Head of Finance	June 2027
	• Defines the role of the leadership team, the governance and audit committee, the Cabinet, and the Full Council in supervising and monitoring the strategy and register regularly	• Ensure that the Corporate Risk Register is up-to-date: standardise the risk register template, define the risk owners, and confirm that every risk includes Residual and Target scores, using the Council's 5x5 matrix.		
	• Consider the training and development needs of members on supervising the council's risk	• Impose governance, reporting and reviewing arrangements: (a) Corporate Management Team to review the Corporate Risk Register		

		every quarter and agree on escalating/degrading risks; (b) quarterly reporting to the Governance and Audit Committee; (c) Cabinet to set the Council's risk appetite, ensuring that decisions consider risks and stay within the limitations, whilst reviewing and improving the risk management arrangements regularly.		
		• Develop and provide a training and development programme on risk management for Members (including a supervisory role, risk appetite, reading the risk register and challenge controls), and for managers as "risk owners"; record attendance and conduct annual refresher sessions.		
		• Reinforce the process and the culture; establish a service risk register timetable (at least quarterly), use a "SMART" method of tracking mitigation steps, and record "lessons learnt" from incidents/audits to steer continuous improvement.		
Recommendation 5	Cyngor Gwynedd should refine and merge its performance management arrangements,	• Review and map the existing performance management arrangements across the Council in	Chief Executive / Council's Business Support Service	October 2027

Performance Management	with a specific focus on showing contributions to: • Deliver the Corporate Plan • Link Corporate and departmental risks • Increase the opportunities for challenge by peers across and beyond the Council	order to merge processes, reduce duplication and create a more coordinated corporate framework.		
		• Develop a core set of performance measures and indicators, which show the contribution of services and departments to the Corporate Plan priorities.		
		• Integrate performance reports and the corporate risk register and departmental risk registers in order to strengthen the link between progress, risks, mitigation steps and management decisions.		
		• Establish an annual programme of scrutiny and challenge by peers within and beyond the Council, recording feedback, recommendations and improvements steps deriving from the process.		
		• Strengthen arrangements for regular monitoring, reporting and reviewing to ensure that information and performance is used consistently to steer decisions, improve services and support corporate accountability.		

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet

Item Title:	**COUNCIL TAX: DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS AND/OR RAISE A PREMIUM ON SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY DWELLINGS**
Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Huw Wyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Finance**
Relevant Officer:	**Dewi Morgan, Head of Finance**
Meeting Date:	**10 November 2026**

1. DECISION SOUGHT

Recommend to the full Council on 3 December 2026 that the following is the favoured option of the Cabinet with regards to the level of Premium on the Council Tax of Second Homes and Long-Term Empty Dwellings for the 2027/28 financial year:

- **That Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount on class A second homes, under Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (i.e. no change).**
- **That Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount and RAISES A PREMIUM OF 150% on class B second homes, under Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (i.e. no change).**
- **That Cyngor Gwynedd allows NO discount on homes that have been empty for 6 months or more and RAISES A PREMIUM OF 150% on homes that have been empty for 12 months or more, under Section 12A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992) (i.e. no change).**

2. THE REASON WHY THE CABINET DECISION NEEDS TO MAKE A DECISION:

2.1. In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council must make an annual decision if it is to levy a Premium on the Council Tax on long-term empty dwellings and second homes ("periodically occupied dwellings"). Without a decision, there would be 50% discount on the Council Tax of such properties.

2.2. While the final decision on the Council Tax discount or premium, and the level of discount or premium, must be made by the full Council, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet needs to make a recommendation to the full Council.

2.3. For financial year 2026/27, the Council has raised a Council Tax Premium of 150% on both second homes and long-term empty dwellings, but legislation allows the Council to charge a Premium of up to 300%.

2.4. However, if the Council were to increase the Premium rate it will have to consider whether such a decision would be reasonable after considering statutory guidance, the result of research and legal advice which the authority has obtained.

2.5. A copy of the latest Statutory Guidance is found in Appendix 1.

3. INTRODUCTION AND REASONING

Background / Introduction

3.1. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides the Council with the discretion to charge full Council Tax, allow a discount of up to 50%, or to charge an additional Premium on the Council Tax of certain classes of second homes and long-term empty properties.

3.2. The Council has resolved annually since 1998 to allow NO discounts to second homes.

3.3. The Council has resolved annually since 2009 to allow NO discounts in respect of properties that have been empty for 6 months or more.

3.4. Section 139 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 added Sections 12A and 12B to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to include a discretionary right for Councils to raise an additional "Premium" of no more than 100% on dwellings that have been empty for 12 months or more (Section 12A) and relevant second homes (Section 12B).

3.5. On 8 December 2016, the Council resolved to raise a Premium of 50% on the Council Tax of relevant second homes and long-term empty dwellings, to be implemented from 1 April 2018. On 4 March 2021, the Council resolved to increase the Premium to 100%, which was the maximum level allowed by legislation, for the 2021/22 financial year and on 2 December 2021 it resolved to keep the Premium level at 100% for 2022/23.

3.6. The *Council Tax (Long-term Empty Dwellings and Dwellings Occupied Periodically) (Wales) Regulations 2022 (SI 2022/370 W.90)* have amended Sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act giving billing authorities the power to raise a Premium of up to 300% on the Council Tax of second homes and long-term empty dwellings for the 2023/24 and subsequent financial years.

3.7. In response to this legislative change, on 1 December 2022 the Council decided to increase the Premium on second homes to 150% and to keep the Premium on long-term empty properties at 100% for the 2023/24 financial year. This followed a comprehensive public consultation in autumn 2022. On 7 December 2023 the Council resolved to keep the Premium at the same level in 2024/25.

3.8. The Council's report of 1 December 2022, when the current Premium level was first set, is found here: Agenda for The Council on Thursday, 1st December, 2022, 1.00 pm This report explains the whole rationale for setting those levels.

3.9. In 2022 it was concluded:

"12.6. [Cabinet has made its recommendation concluding that currently], there is no way of establishing equivalent justification for increasing the premium above a 150% rate. A number of these further steps such as changes to the planning regime and to business rates have not yet become operational and therefore we have not had an opportunity to assess the impact of these policies in the face of a very significant change in the Premium, or the practical implications. "

3.10. This followed an extensive consultation process considering the range of increases open up to 300%. By now, several changes had been implemented and started to have an impact on the market. The business rates system has changed since 1 April 2023 increasing the requirements to allow holiday properties to be transferred to business rates, with actual letting needing to be for 182 days with availability of 282 days.

3.11. To be able to defend a decision to charge a Premium at a higher rate on second homes than it currently does, therefore, it will be necessary to be able to demonstrate **what has changed** since the current level was set in December 2022, and that sets a basis and rationale to review.

3.12. In December 2025, the Council resolved, based on a recommendation by the Cabinet, to increase the Premium on long-term empty dwellings to 150% so that it would be consistent with the Premium on second homes. This was as a result of statistics and information which highlighted the impact of the premium on the property of this particular type. At the same time, it was noted that the number of long-term empty properties had remained effectively unchanged since the decision in 2022. The assumption taken in 2022 as a result of the consultation was to set a particular level to achieve the intention of the premium. However, by 2025 the statistics led to the conclusion that the level needed to be revised. In consequence there was basis to continue to rely on the consultation and outcome when considering the latest information to review the long-term empty property premium level. Since there is no recommendation to change the Premium it is not considered – bearing mind the Statutory Guidnace – that there is currently a specific need for a consultation.

3.13. The decision sought proposes keeping the premium on second homes and long-term empty dwellings as they are.

4. RESEARCH WORK

4.1. When setting the current level of the Premium, the full Council requested research to analyse the impact the Premium was having on Gwynedd communities.

4.2. The result of this research work was presented to the Cabinet and the Full Council in November and December 2024, and is found here:

Evidence of the impact of the council tax premium on second homes and long-term empty properties in Gwynedd, November 2024

Appendices

4.3. Further work was commissioned for the 2025 decision. Once again, the Cabinet and Full Council considered the results:

Evidence of the impact of the council tax premium on second homes and long-term empty properties in Gwynedd, Update November 2025

Appendices

4.4. The conclusions of the research were that keeping the Premium rate for long-term empty properties at a level below the Premium on second homes did not have an impact on reducing the number of empty properties. The Council has a Empty Housing Scheme in place which aims to bring long-term empty properties back into use, but nevertheless it was found that the number of dwellings that had been empty for a number of years remained a concern and as the research indicated, a 100% Premium level was not seen to have had an impact on this.

4.5. It was decided, therefore, that it would be appropriate that the level of the Premium on long-term vacant properties be reviewed with the result that it increased to 150% from 1 April 2026 onwards.

4.6. It is too early at this time to be able to come to a definitive conclusion as to whether this increase has had the desired effect of bringing empty properties back into use.

Other considerations

4.7. The research showed that the number of second homes had increased since 2024/25 after several years of decline, with the change more pronounced than it was in the November 2024 research. This sudden change was as a result of a legislative change where properties must now be let for 182 days a year to qualify for the non-domestic rates list.

4.8. As a result of the change, the Valuarion Office Agency had transferred a number of properties within Gwynedd from the non-domestic rates regime to the Council Tax band and as there is no resident in the property these dwellings are also subject to a Premium.

4.9. However, between 1 April and 30 September 2026 the VOA has transferred 454 properties *back* to the non-domestic rates regime, either following an appeal by the taxpayer, further information has been submitted to them or that the letting now meets the 182-day threshold. This shows that the property status situation remains highly volatile and therefore there it cannot be seen that there is justification for changing the Premium scale on second homes (Section 12B of the 1992 Act) for 2027/28.

4.10. The Welsh Government has recently consulted on adjustments to the "182-day" rules and this may change the situation again in the coming year. This uncertainty is also an issue to consider and suggests that it would be premature to change the premium rate to second homes at this time.

5. USE OF THE PREMIUM

5.1. Since the introduction of the Premium at the start of the 2018/19 financial year, the money collected through the Premium has been placed in a dedicated fund, to fund specific projects that have been outlined in the Housing Action Plan. Since the 2023/24 financial year, £3m (increased with inflation) has been used in the revenue budget to fund the Homlessness service.

5.2. The Housing Action Plan will invest over £180m over the period of the Scheme, drawing on a number of financial sources, such as the Welsh Government's Housing Support Grant and Social Housing Grant, the Council's Asset Management Plan and of course the Council Tax Premium on Second Homes and Empty Houses.

5.3. The funding received from the Council Tax Premium fund is fully earmarked against several projects in the Housing Action Plan, such as supported accommodation schemes, building our own houses, contributing to residential elements in community schemes, bringing the county’s empty houses back into use, and ensuring disabled people can continue to live in their current homes.

5.4. Being able to include the Premium as a financial source has enabled the Department to attract several additional grants. Spending those grants first was prioritised because they had a time limit, which in turn has allowed the Council to prioritise premium spending and ensure that that benefits the people of Gwynedd the most.

5.5. Two reports on the use of the Premium were submitted in the last year, on 19 May 2026 and 7 July 2026. The Cabinet's decision at that time was to allocate additional income from the premium on empty properties and second homes to the priority areas identified in the reports.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

6.1. The Impact Assessment in Appendix 2 reflects recent requirements and developments, changing circumstances and the results of the comprehensive consultation that was undertaken in 2022.

6.2. The result of the Impact Assessment undertaken in 2022 when setting the current level of Premium is that there is some evidence that increasing the premium on second homes would be discriminate against a protected group, with data suggesting that second home owners tend to be older people and identify themselves as English. The policy in relation to Council Tax Premium is intended to recognise that long-term empty properties and second homes increase some of Gwynedd's social problems, and the owners should make a financial contribution to alleviate some of the disadvantages they cause.

6.3. The 2022 assessment also concluded that there will be a positive impact on the balance of communities as the premium yield funds the Housing Action Plan which supports local families to buy an affordable home. However, it is noted that this is the result of a number of positive and negative factors which affect the Language, which receive attention in several places in the report and appendices.

7. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

7.1. There is a duty to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle, which is to try to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. When acting in accordance with this general duty the Council needs to consider the importance of the long-term impact, being integrated and inclusive, collaboration and prevention in developing and implementing the proposal.

7.2. In accordance with the requirement of the Act, Cyngor Gwynedd has developed well-being objectives. These are:

- Communities which thrive and are prosperous in the long-term

- Healthy and independent residents with a good quality of life

7.3. The current Premium funds the Council's Housing Action Plan (and related additional administration costs), which is a proactive attempt to strengthen the sustainability of those communities within Gwynedd with a high number of second and long-term empty homes.

7.4. The Council's Housing Strategy sets out the vision of "Ensuring that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable Home of a high standard that is affordable and improves their quality of life".

7.5. The Strategy identifies five objectives that had to be sought if the Council was to achieve this vision:

1. No one is homeless in Gwynedd
2. Social housing available to all who need one
3. Everyone's home in Gwynedd is affordable to them
4. Gwynedd Housing are environmentally friendly
5. Homes having a positive influence on the health and well-being of the people of Gwynedd

7.6. The Housing Action Plan includes a number of projects that together set out to deliver these objectives.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1. The Cabinet's recommendation will be presented to the full Cabinet in its meeting on 3 December.

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

The arrangements for deciding and the steps taken to make the recommendation is consistent with the legal guidance which been provided previously.

Head of Finance:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

Council Tax on empty and second homes

Guidance for local authorities on council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes.

First published: 9 March 2023

Last updated: 9 March 2023

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Contents

Introduction

Part 1: implementation of the council tax premium on long term empty dwellings and dwellings periodically occupied in Wales

Part 2: administration and enforcement

Part 3: monitoring and reporting council tax premiums

Part 4: appeals

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Introduction

Since 1 April 2017, local authorities in Wales have been able to charge a premium of up to 100% of the standard rate of council tax on long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically (more commonly referred to as second homes) in their areas. From 1 April 2023, the maximum level at which local authorities can set council tax premiums will increase to 300%. The powers given to local authorities are discretionary so whether to charge a premium on long-term empty properties or second homes (or both) is, therefore a decision to be made by each local authority.

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure a fair and consistent approach is applied across Wales and assist local authorities:

- in their decisions to charge or amend a premium in their local area
- with the administration and enforcement of premiums
- the application of the exceptions
- monitoring and reporting the use of premiums

All local authorities in Wales must have regard to any guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when determining a premium on the standard rate of council tax as set out in sections 12A (3) and 12B (4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (‘the 1992 Act’) as inserted by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (‘the 2014 Act’).

This guidance should not be treated as an interpretation of the legislation. The interpretation of legislation is in the first instance a matter for the local authority, with definitive interpretation being the responsibility of the courts.

Part 1: implementation of the council tax premium on long term empty dwellings and

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

dwellings periodically occupied in Wales

Legal framework for the council tax premiums

This section sets out the legal framework which is common to both the premium on long-term empty dwellings and on dwellings periodically occupied. Specific requirements for long-term empty properties are set out in Section 12A, and those specific to dwellings periodically occupied are detailed Section 12B.

Sections 12A and 12B to enable a billing authority (a county council or county borough council) in Wales to disapply any discount granted to long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically and apply a higher amount of council tax (a premium).

The Council Tax (Long-term Empty Dwellings and Dwellings Occupied Periodically) (Wales) Regulations 2022 ('the 2022 Regulations') amended sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act increasing the higher amount of council tax a billing authority (a county council or county borough council) in Wales can apply to long-term empty dwellings and dwellings occupied periodically to 300% for the 2023 to 2024 financial year and for subsequent years.

Where a determination to charge a premium is made, a local authority must publish a notice of the determination in at least 1 newspaper circulating in its area within 21 days of the date of the determination.

A determination by a billing authority to charge a premium will also disapply any discount that is granted under section 11(2)(a) of the 1992 Act for dwellings in which there are no residents.

A billing authority can make, vary, or revoke a determination made under sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act, but only before the beginning of the financial year to which the determination applies. In using these powers, a billing

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

authority can also determine the types or classes of properties within the categories of long-term empty dwellings or second homes to which they will apply a premium. This enables each authority to tailor its determination to local circumstances.

The Welsh Ministers also have powers under section 12A(4) and 12A(5), and 12B(5) and 12B(6) of the 1992 Act to prescribe through regulations certain classes of dwelling which may not be subject to a premium. The Council Tax (Exceptions to Higher Amounts Wales) Regulations 2015 prescribe the exceptions and are detailed later in this guidance.

The council tax system already provides several specific exemptions from council tax. The exempt groups are set out in the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 (as amended). There are several exemptions in place for unoccupied dwellings, for example:

- where the resident is in long-term residential care or hospital
- where a dwelling is being structurally repaired (for up to 1 year)
- where the resident has died (for up to 6 months after the grant of probate or letters of administration)

A dwelling that is exempt from council tax is not liable for a premium. However, where a dwelling is no longer eligible for an exemption, but remains unoccupied, it will become liable for the premium where 1 is applied. In the case of an empty dwelling, it will become liable for a premium after it has been empty for a continuous period of 1 year, and this will include the period that any exemption has been applied.

Section 12A: higher amount for long-term empty dwellings

A long-term empty dwelling is defined for the purpose of this section as a

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

dwelling which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year.

The furnishing or occupation of a dwelling for 1 or more periods of 6 weeks or less during the year will not affect its status as a long-term empty dwelling. In other words, a person cannot alter a dwelling's status as a long-term empty dwelling by taking up residence or installing furniture for a short period.

Where a local authority makes a determination to charge a premium on long-term empty dwellings, it may specify different percentages for different dwellings based on the length of time for which they have been empty. This enables local authorities to take a stepped approach, with incremental increases applying over time.

Section 12B: higher amount for dwellings periodically occupied

A second home is defined for the purpose of this section as a dwelling which is not a person's sole or main home and is substantially furnished. These dwellings are referred to in the 1992 Act as dwellings occupied periodically but they are commonly referred to as 'second homes'.

For a premium to apply to dwellings occupied periodically, a billing authority must make its first determination under section 12B at least 1 year before the beginning of the financial year to which the premium relates.

From here on the guidance will refer to long-term empty properties and second homes.

Making a determination to charge the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and/or second

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

homes

The discretion given to local authorities to charge a premium is intended to be a tool to help:

- bring long-term empty properties back into use to provide safe, secure and affordable homes
- support local authorities in increasing the supply of affordable housing and enhancing the sustainability of local communities

Local authorities can apply premiums to long-term empty properties or second homes or both and can set different levels of premium for each class.

The powers were deliberately designed as discretionary powers to allow local authorities to tailor their use to address local priorities and reflect the different patterns of housing availability and need across Wales.

There are a range of factors which could help inform local authorities in deciding whether to charge a premium. Whilst some factors will be specific to either long-term empty properties or second homes, others will be common to both. A list of these factors is set out below to assist local authorities. It is not intended to be exhaustive.

- Numbers and percentages of long-term empty properties and/or second homes in the local area.
- Distribution of long-term empty properties and/or second homes and other housing throughout the authority and an assessment of their impact on property values in particular areas.
- Potential impact on local economies and the tourism industry.
- Patterns of demand for, and availability of, affordable homes.
- Potential impact on local public services.
- Potential impact on the local community.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

- Potential impact on the Welsh language.
- Other measures that are available to authorities to increase housing supply and the availability of affordable housing.
- Other measures that are available to authorities to help bring empty properties back into use.

The determination by a local authority to charge a premium under section 12A or 12B of the 1992 Act will usually be part of the budget-setting process as it is likely to affect tax-setting and spending decisions. It will therefore normally be a decision made by full Council. Prior to doing so, a local authority must give due consideration to its statutory duties to carry out equality impact assessments under the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh public sector equality Duty which came into force in 2011 and to all other relevant considerations. This will include consideration of how its policy meets the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and contribute specifically to the objectives of a prosperous Wales; a more equal Wales; and a Wales of cohesive communities.

Local authorities should also be mindful of the timing of any decisions to introduce or vary a premium for a financial year. Any change to a premium will alter an authority's revenue plans and should be taken into account in its budget-setting. A local authority is normally expected to reflect its proposed tax-base, including all discounts and premiums, by the end of December for the forthcoming financial year, so any decisions made after this point pose risks to the credibility of published data and could lead to criticism.

A local authority should consider how its engages and consults with key stakeholders, including the local electorate and second homeowners, before taking a decision to charge a premium.

Local authorities are strongly encouraged to consult before making a first determination to charge a premium. For second homes, the first determination to charge a premium must be made at least 12 months before the beginning of the

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

financial year to which the proposed premium relates. The same does not apply to empty properties but as a dwelling must be empty for at least 12 months before a premium can apply, the Welsh Government recommends that a first determination to apply a premium to long-term empty dwellings should be made at least 6 months before the beginning of the financial year to which the premium relates. A local authority should make a full assessment of possible impacts, including on the local population, its communities, and the local economy.

Any decision to vary or revoke a determination to apply a premium must be made before the beginning of the financial year to which it applies. Local authorities are also strongly encouraged to consult before making a determination to increase a premium to a level above 100% and to do so at least 6 months before the beginning of the financial year to which the proposed premium increase relates. This will enable the premium to be taken into account when setting council tax levels for the forthcoming year and allow taxpayers sufficient time to consider the impact of a higher premium on their own personal financial circumstances and make choices regarding their property.

Having decided to introduce or vary a premium, in addition to the requirement to publish a notice in a local newspaper within 21 days, a local authority should consider how its decision is communicated more widely, particularly to those who might be affected. This may be through the publication of press notices, providing information on website pages or via other avenues to raise awareness such as, for example, direct communication with council taxpayers who are likely to be liable for the premium. A local authority should also give consideration as to how they advise or inform those who may be affected but may reside outside the local area.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Exceptions to the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes

Sections 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act provide Welsh Ministers with powers to make regulations to prescribe 1 or more classes of dwellings in relation to which a billing authority may not make a determination to apply a premium. The Council Tax (Exceptions to Higher Amounts) (Wales) Regulations 2015 are made under these powers a premium may not be charged on a dwelling that falls within an exception. A local authority must have regard to these exceptions before deciding to implement a premium.

The regulations prescribe 7 classes of exempt dwellings. Classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 apply to both long-term empty properties and second homes. Classes 5, 6, and 7 apply only to second homes. The classes of dwelling are outlined below.

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale or where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted, time-limited for 1 year

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let or where an offer to rent has been accepted, time-limited for 1 year

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 3: annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

Class 4: dwellings which would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation

Application

Long-term empty properties and second homes.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Class 5: occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings

Application

Second homes.

Class 6: dwellings where by virtue of a planning condition, year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited or has been specified for use as holiday accommodation only or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence

Application

Second homes.

Class 7: job-related dwellings

Application

Second homes.

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

on second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for sale. It also covers dwellings where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted but the sale has not yet been completed.

To qualify for this exception a dwelling must be on the market for sale at a reasonable price for that dwelling. In considering whether a price is reasonable, regard should be given to the sale price of comparable dwellings in the area. Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After an exception has ended, a dwelling being marketed for sale will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been sold.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for let. It also covers dwellings where an offer to rent has been accepted but the tenant is not yet entitled to occupy the property because the tenancy has not yet started.

To be eligible for this exception, a dwelling must be on the market for let at a reasonable rent, that is, the rent the property would be expected to fetch having regard to the rent raised on comparable dwellings. Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After the end of the exception period, a dwelling being marketed for let will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been subject to a tenancy that was granted for a term or 6 months or more.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Class 3: annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and on second homes.

This exception applies where an owner has adapted their dwelling to provide an annexe and the annexe is now being used as part of the main dwelling.

Class 4: dwellings which would be someone's sole or main residence if they were not residing in armed forces accommodation

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and on second homes.

This exception applies to dwellings that would be a person's sole or main residence but which is unoccupied because that person resides in armed forces accommodation.

This exception is also intended to cover armed forces personnel whose homes are unoccupied because they are living in armed forces accommodation overseas.

Class 5: occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings

This exception applies to the second home premium. It covers dwellings that consist of a pitch occupied by a caravan or a mooring occupied by a boat where the caravan or boat currently has no resident, but when next in use will be a

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

person’s sole or main residence.

Class 6: seasonal homes or holiday lets where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited

This exception applies to the second home premium. It is applicable to dwellings that are subject to planning conditions that prevent occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 12 month period.

This exception is often applied to purpose-built holiday homes or chalets which are subject to planning conditions restricting year-round occupancy or to protect local features, for example where the site is near a fragile habitat which requires protection at particular times of year. The exception is based on the definition of the existing discretionary discount for seasonal homes (Class A) in The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998.

From 1 April 2023, Class 6 is extended to include every dwelling restricted by a planning condition which:

- prevents occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 1 year period
- specifies its use as a holiday let only
- prevents occupancy as a person’s sole or main residence

Class 7: job-related dwellings

This exception applies only in relation to the second home premium and applies to dwellings occupied by a person who is:

- a qualifying person in relation to the dwelling, but who is resident in another dwelling which is job-related (as defined in Schedule 1 to the Regulations)

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

- a qualifying person in relation to a job-related dwelling

A qualifying person is defined as:

- a person who is liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling on a particular day, whether or not jointly with another person
- a person who would be liable for the council tax in respect of a dwelling on a particular day, whether or not jointly with another person if that dwelling did not fall within Class O of the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 or Class E of the Council Tax (Liability for Owners) Regulations 1992

This exception applies where a person is required to reside in a job-related dwelling. It applies to a second home that is occupied periodically because a person is required to live in job-related accommodation elsewhere. It also applies where the job-related accommodation is a person's second home.

The definition of a job-related dwelling is given in the Schedule to the Regulations. Although this exception is similar to the job-related discount under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998, it differs because the discount only applies if the job-related dwelling is a person's sole or main residence.

Another difference from the job-related dwelling discount is that there is no requirement for the taxpayer to be liable for council tax in respect of 2 dwellings, meaning that a person who has either a main home abroad or a job-related dwelling abroad can also benefit from the exception.

Additional guidance is provided in Part 2 Administration and Enforcement to assist local authorities in the application of this exception.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Reducing liability for the council tax premiums on long-term empty properties and second homes

In exercising the power under section 12A and 12B of the 1992 Act, a billing authority may determine the particular types or classes of properties within the categories of long-term empty properties or second homes to which it will or will not apply a premium. In addition, under section 13A of the 1992 Act, billing authorities have discretionary powers to reduce council tax liability to such extent as the billing authority thinks fit. The power can be exercised in particular cases or by determining a class of cases. The power may be used to reduce council tax liability by any amount, including in circumstances where a local authority may otherwise charge a premium. Local authorities may use these powers for example to reduce or disapply a premium, and potentially as a means to target the use of premiums.

Some illustrative examples of where a local authority might consider using its powers include:

- where there are reasons why the dwelling could not be lived in as a permanent residence
- where there are reasons why a dwelling could not be sold or let
- where an offer has been accepted on a property but the sale has not yet been completed and the exception period has run out
- where the owner's use of a property is restricted by circumstances not covered by an exception from the premium
- where charging a premium might cause hardship

The above list is not exhaustive and billing authorities will want to consider all factors they think are relevant when deciding to reduce the council tax liability for a particular property or class of properties and to make an assessment of the potential impact.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Self-catering accommodation

From 1 April 2023, if a self-catering property does not meet the new letting thresholds established by the Non-Domestic Rating (Amendment of Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2022, it will be classified as a domestic property and will be liable for council tax. Where the local authority has determined to apply a premium to second homes, the owner will also be liable to pay the additional charge unless their property falls within an exception, or the local authority has determined not to charge a premium for the type or class of property.

There may be instances where some self-catering properties that would be considered unsuitable for permanent living will become subject to council tax and a premium because they do not fall within an exception. In such instances, local authorities are encouraged to consider using their discretionary powers to tailor a determination or to reduce council tax liability to moderate the impact, in effect, reducing the premium. Retaining liability for standard rate council tax, for properties which do not meet the letting criteria, would be consistent with the aim of ensuring all property owners ‘make a fair contribution’ to their local communities. Some illustrative examples of where a local authority might consider using these powers include:

- outbuildings or barns converted to holiday lets as part of farm diversification
- annexes or garage conversions that form part of an owner’s primary residence
- lodges, caravans or chalets

It is a matter for a local authority as to whether it uses the discretionary powers in sections 12A, 12B or 13A to reduce council tax liability in respect of a premium or to reduce the standard council tax liability, or both, as appropriate. This policy should cover a range of situations in which a local authority would consider using its discretionary powers, including properties which do not meet

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

the criteria to be classed as non-domestic. In the interest of fairness and transparency, a local authority should have a clear policy on whether, and how, these powers will be used. The authority should, however, consider each case on its merits having considered the circumstances of the case.

It should be noted that deliberations around the use of the discretionary section 13A powers are likely to be different when they are considered to reduce council tax liability resulting from a premium compared to reducing liability from the standard rate of council tax. This is because dwellings liable to a premium are already liable for the standard rate of council tax.

Use of additional revenue generated from the council tax premiums

A local authority will be able to retain any additional funds generated by implementing the premiums and amendments to the calculation of the council tax tax-base have been made to facilitate this. Adjustments will be made to allow for the increase in the maximum premium which may be applied from 1 April 2023. Authorities may use the additional revenue for any purpose, but they are encouraged to use it to help to meet local housing needs, in line with the policy intentions for the premiums.

Specific requirements in relation to reporting on any additional revenue generated and its subsequent use are set out in Part 3 Monitoring and Evaluation.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Part 2: administration and enforcement

Determining liability for the council tax premiums and eligibility for exceptions

In deciding to charge a premium, a local authority will need to identify whether a dwelling is a long-term empty property or a second home and whether it would therefore be liable for a premium.

It is reasonable for a local authority to request evidence such as utility bills showing use of services, a driving licence as proof of address, or receipts or other evidence of moving costs if a property is said to be occupied (not empty) or occupied as a sole or main home (not a second home). The process will be similar to existing practices used to assess eligibility for council tax exemptions and discounts.

The Welsh Ministers have prescribed certain exceptions to the council tax premiums and it will be a liable person's responsibility to apply to a local authority for an exception if they believe they are eligible, and to provide evidence in support of their application. Each local authority should clearly set out and explain the evidence required in the interests of transparency and fairness.

As with the monitoring and enforcement of existing council tax exemptions and discounts, it is expected that local authorities will take steps to verify the evidence provided in support of an application for an exception. A local authority may also conduct regular inspections or site visits to verify continued eligibility.

Local authorities will be aware that under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, civil penalties can be applied to a person who deliberately supplies false information.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

The following sections provide additional information to assist local authorities in applying the exceptions specifically for:

- dwellings being marketed for sale
- dwellings being marketed for let
- job-related dwellings

Class 1: dwellings being marketed for sale

This exception applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for sale. It also covers dwellings where an offer to buy the dwelling has been accepted but the sale has not yet been completed.

To qualify for this exception a dwelling must be on the market for sale at a reasonable price for that dwelling. A liable owner must demonstrate to the satisfaction of a local authority that they are actively marketing their property for sale at a reasonable price, ie what it would reasonably be expected to fetch on the open market.

In considering an application for an exception, a local authority may wish to consider a range of factors relating to the sale of dwellings, such as the following:

- how long properties in the area have been available for sale
- the average price and time on the market of similar properties in the local area
- whether unduly restrictive conditions, such as the price, are being placed on the dwelling to impede its sale
- any other reasonable factors

To determine whether a dwelling is genuinely on the market for sale a local

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

authority may wish to consider different types of evidence which could include the following:

- listing on advertised websites, for example estate agent websites, Rightmove and Zoopla, or evidence of other ways in which the property is being marketed
- a contract with an estate agent
- estate agent listings or sales particulars if privately marketed
- an Energy Performance Certificate (required when a property is built or sold)

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception but can be extended should the property sale have been agreed but not completed beyond the 1 year anniversary of the exception period commencing. The exception would end on the date of the sale of the property. After an exception has ended, a dwelling being marketed for sale will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been sold.

Class 2: dwellings being marketed for let

This exception also applies to both the premium on long-term empty properties and second homes. It excepts dwellings that are being marketed for let. It also covers dwellings where an offer to rent has been accepted but the tenant is not yet entitled to occupy the property because the tenancy has not yet started.

To be eligible for this exception, a liable owner must demonstrate to the satisfaction of a local authority that they are actively marketing the property for let at a reasonable price, ie the rent the property would reasonably be expected to fetch having regard to the rent raised on comparable dwellings.

In considering whether the exception applies, a local authority may wish to consider a range of factors relating to the letting of dwellings, such as the following:

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

- how long properties in their area have been available for rent
- the average rent and time on the market for similar rental properties in the local area
- whether unduly restrictive conditions such as the rent is being placed on the property to impede its letting
- any other reasonable factors

For a local authority to determine whether a liable owner is actively or genuinely marketing their property for let, a local authority may wish to consider different types of evidence which could include the following:

- a contract with a letting agency
- estate agent listings or letting agent brochures
- registration and licensing of a landlord and agent for a dwelling being marketed for let, via Rent Smart Wales
- housing lists of properties being offered for rent provided by Registered Social Landlords
- an Energy Performance Certificate (required when a property is built or let)
- a valid gas safety certificate required for homes being let

The exception period runs for up to 1 year from the granting of the exception. After the end of the exception period, a dwelling being marketed for let will not be eligible for a further exception period unless it has been subject to a tenancy that was granted for a term of 6 months or more.

Exceptions 3 to 6 are more specific classes and are not covered further in this part of the guidance.

Class 7: job-related dwellings

This exception applies only in relation to the second home premium and applies to dwellings occupied by a qualifying person. The criteria for a qualifying person

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

are set out under Class 7 in Part 1.

In considering eligibility for this exception, a local authority may request certain types of evidence, to prove that a liable person is required to live in a job-related dwelling. This could include the following:

- a contract of employment
- a council tax demand notice (to show liability in respect of another property if the main or second home is in the UK)
- tax returns or pay statements
- Denomination Letter (in respect of a Minister of Religion)
- Ministry of Defence letter or written contract (in respect of the Armed Forces)

Part 3: monitoring and reporting council tax premiums

During the summer of 2021, the Welsh Government consulted on local taxes for second homes and self-catering accommodation. This considered the effectiveness of the discretionary powers given to local authorities to apply council tax premiums to second homes and long-term empty properties. Many responses called for local authorities to be more transparent about how they spend the funds raised from the premium.

To assess the effectiveness of the premiums and ensure information on their use is clearly made available to local council taxpayers, the Welsh Government expects local authorities to report on the implementation of the premiums and the additional revenue generated.

In having regard to this guidance, local authorities should also give due consideration to publishing information to assist members of the public and must provide information to the Welsh Ministers when requested.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Local authorities already report through the existing statutory CT1 (Council Tax Dwellings) Return the following information relating to premiums. This informs the annual statistical releases on council tax collection:

- number of properties liable for the premiums
- percentage of premium applied to long-term empty homes
- percentage of premium applied to second homes

From 1 April 2023, local authorities will be encouraged to publish on their websites, details relating to the income generated from charging a premium for the previous financial year.

As a minimum this should include the following:

- the total numbers of (i) long-term empty properties and (ii) second homes
- the numbers of properties liable for each premium (i) long-term empty properties and (ii) second homes
- the amount of income generated from charging a premium on long-term empty properties
- the amount of income generated from charging a premium on second homes
- how the additional income raised has been used to tackle the problems caused by long-term empty properties and second homes, or to address other local housing issues

Part 4: appeals

If a person is dissatisfied with their local authority due to a decision made regarding the calculation of their council tax liability, including their liability to pay a premium, they should, in the first instance, contact their local authority to discuss the decision.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

If a person remains dissatisfied after a discussion with their local authority, they may make an appeal to their local authority.

If a person disagrees with the outcome of the local authority appeals process or if the local authority does not provide a decision within the required timescales, the person may instigate an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal for Wales. A person may only do this only after they have exhausted the local authority's appeals process and complied with any processes required by the VTW before an appeal may be instigated.

This document may not be fully accessible.
For more information refer to our **accessibility statement**.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.
Go to **https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-empty-and-second-homes-html** for the latest version.
Get **information on copyright**.

Integrated Impact Assessment

This document assesses the impact that the policy, procedure, plan etc will have on the population of the county and operates on the basis of a number of laws.

- **The Equality Act 2010**. It places a duty on public organisations to pay due attention to the impact of any new policy, procedure, scheme etc (or in adapting them) on people with protected characteristics. We are required to
    - abolish unlawful discrimination, harassment and persecution and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
    - promote equal opportunities between people who share a relevant protected feature and those who do not.
    - foster good relationships between people who share a protected trait and those who don't.

  In Wales the specific duty sets out the need to carry out an impact assessment following specific guidelines to consider the impact that a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on people with protected equality characteristics. A timely assessment must be made before a decision is made on any relevant change (i.e. which has an impact on people with a protected characteristic).

- **Socio-Economic Duty.** Wales has now implemented this duty which is part of the Equality Act 2010 giving a duty to address socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

- **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.** The Council is required to consider the impact that a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure) will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.

- **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.** The Council has a duty to implement the five ways of working, and to respond to the 7 national well-being goals.

- **The Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must have due regard to the impact of this proposal on those serving or having served in the Armed Forces, along with their families.

Council Tax Premium on Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes

Author : Dewi Aeron Morgan

Job Title: Head of Finance

Date: 29/10/2026

Version: October 2026

STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

- Decisions affecting service users, employees or the wider community including commissioning/decommissioning or reviewing services

2. What are the goals, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

Between April 2018 and March 2021 the Council had been charging a 50% premium on Council Tax on second homes and long-term empty properties, and since 1 April 2021 the level of the Premium has been increased to 100%. From 1 April 2023 the legislation has changed and the Council has the right to increase the level of the Premium to 300%

From 1 April 2026 the Premium on both second homes and long-term empty properties is 150%

The full Council will need to make its decision on the Premium level for the 2027/28 financial year at its meeting on 3 December 2026 on the basis of a recommendation to be decided by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 November.

The last public consultation took place in 2022. At its meeting on 27 September 2022, Cabinet agreed to undertake a public consultation on how it should respond to the change in legislation enabling the Council to increase the level of the Premium beyond the 100% that existed at the time, to 300% from 1 April 2023.

3. Who are the main advisory groups (stakeholders)?

The Council has the power under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) to adjust the level of the Premium by up to 300% from 1 April 2023, following amendments to the Act by the Council Tax (Long-Term Empty Dwellings and Periodically Occupied Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 2022 (SI 2022/370 W.90). The previous maximum was 100%. However, it is an explicit expectation for us to consult with the public and key stakeholders. A public consultation was undertaken, with coverage in the local press and on social websites, and the Council wrote to property owners subject to the Premium.

The key partners and stakeholders were:

- Residents of Gwynedd
- Taxpayers on empty properties and second homes

There have been collaborations with a number of internal partners, e.g.:

- Finance Department
- Corporate Services Department
- Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet Members
- Full Council

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Impact Assessment

4. Has an attempt been made to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has sufficient information been gathered to proceed?

Yes

Details of engagement. Please note any consultation or engagement you have made or intend to do

Activity	Dates	Information
Public Consultation	September / October 2022	We have endeavoured to identify individuals with protected characteristics as the public consultation asks respondents to inform us of any protected characteristics so that these can be taken into account in the development of the policy. The consultation was public and the questionnaire was available to anyone to complete online. Two press releases raising awareness of it were issued, and social media was used to raise awareness. The Council wrote to all households subject to the Premium with a letter drawing their attention to the consultation. Where the different correspondence address was

		recorded in the Council Tax system, this was used. The letter referred to the Council's website and the opportunity to complete the questionnaire there, but the Council's website stated that anyone could contact the Council if they wished to receive a paper copy of the consultation.

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the features and topics below?

	Relevant Evidence, Information and Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	The Premium is charged on all second homes and long-term empty properties without discrimination in any way on where the owners live or what their race or nationality is. However, we recognise that the public consultation shows that a significant proportion of second home owners identify themselves as English and therefore the policy is likely to have a negative financial impact on this cohort. Nevertheless, the money will be used to develop the housing market for local people, which is a positive outcome.	The premium charging policy is intended to address the situation of housing not being available to local people, and the impact is positive on this cohort. The policy will affect people from outside Gwynedd and some respondents to the public consultation claim that the Policy would be racist as it targets people from outside Wales. However, there is no consideration of the race of the property owners when a premium is charged on second homes and long-term empty properties.

Disability	Insignificant Impact	There is a slight possibility of indirect disability-based discrimination if a disabled person keeps a modified property in Gwynedd as they are unable to have a holiday elsewhere.
Gender	None	No effect known
Age	Positive	A study in 2013 showed that the demographic make-up of the communities with high proportions of second homes is different; in general, the residential population is 'older'. This affects the balance of the communities and will have an impact on the resilience and sustainability of these areas in the future. It went on to note that the profiles of second home owners themselves suggest that they are generally middle-aged or retired, and wealthier than the national average. Shelter (2011) (Taking Stock, an assessment of under utilisation of housing stock in England) estimated that 60% of second home owners nationally are aged between 45 and 60 compared to 40% across all owner-occupancy in this age group. Responses to the current public consultation have suggested the same. Therefore, there is evidence that those who will lose out financially are older, but it is expected that the older people living in the relevant areas throughout the year will gain as the local society will be more resilient and sustainable. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence that care providers are facing urgent recruitment difficulties. Ensuring a community balance is crucial in order to have enough young people to protect and care for

		older people, and the policy of raising a Premium is intended to help young people stay in the local area by being able to provide them with local homes. Overall, therefore, the policy will have a positive impact as it helps young families to find a home. This will then have a more positive than negative impact on community balance
Religion and belief	None	No effect known
Sexual Orientation	None	No effect known
Gender reassignment	None	No effect known
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	No effect known
Pregnancy and Maternity	None	No effect known
Welsh Language	Positive	There will be an indirect impact on the language as the purpose of charging a premium is to encourage owners of long-term empty properties and second homes to return the property to the local housing stock, or to pay additional Council Tax. The Premium product has so far been used to meet local housing needs. Supporting the Welsh language, therefore, is a core part of this policy. In particular, there will be a positive impact on the balance of communities as the premium product funds the Housing Action Plan which supports local families to buy an affordable home.
Socio-Economic Considerations	Positive	In deciding in February 2021 to recommend to the full Council that the level of the Premium be increased to

		100%, Cabinet members noted that there was a housing crisis within the county. The principle was emphasised that the Council wanted residents to have homes in their communities, to ensure communities that are thriving. It was reiterated that housing was a priority and that additional resources needed to be secured in order to implement the Housing Strategy. The power to charge a premium has been introduced through the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the statutory guidance states: The discretion given to local authorities to charge a premium is intended to be a vehicle to assist local authorities to: • restoring the use of long-term empty homes in order to provide safe, secure and affordable homes; a • Assist local authorities in increasing the supply of affordable housing and improving the sustainability of local communities.
Those who serve or have served in the armed forces, together with their families	None	No effect known
Human Rights	None	The policy relates to adjusting Council Tax levels based on being a second home owner or being vacant in the long term. The assessment does not see that this will breach the human rights of any individual or cohort of people.
Other	None	None

6. Are there any data or information gaps and if so, what are these and how are they intended to be addressed?

A wide range of data has been collected over a number of years now and we are satisfied with the robustness of the information.

7. When considering other key decisions affecting these groups, is there a incremental effect (cumulative effect)?

We don't believe so.

8. What does the proposal include to show that you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equal opportunities; help to eliminate discrimination, harassment or unlawful victimisation and foster good relationships and wider community cohesion) as covered by the 3 aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

The Policy gives an equal opportunity to local people who are currently unable to afford a home. The current housing situation is unequal and the decision is intended to stabilise and rectify this situation

The policy of raising a Premium can promote good relationships with people within the communities of Gwynedd if the Policy gives them the opportunity to have a better home, or a first home, as the number of holiday homes and empty dwellings is found to have an adverse effect on the ability of local people to find a place to live. A policy of raising the Council Tax Premium on second homes and empty dwellings can improve the relationships if Gwynedd residents feel that the policy helps them to have a better chance of having a home in their local area.

Some second home owners have claimed in their response to the consultation that increasing the level of the Premium will cause community ill feeling, but there is no evidence to support this claim. The current inequality is more likely to create ill feeling.

9. How does the proposal demonstrate that due attention has been given to the need to tackle inequality in the cause of socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this is about closing inequality gaps rather than just improving outcomes for all)

The Council adopted a Housing Action Plan in December 2020 which includes a range of projects in place to make use of Premium products in order to address situations of socio-economic disadvantage. The basic principle is that those who can afford multiple properties support the most vulnerable in society who are unable to access homes at all. The projects in the Housing Action Plan that make use of Premium funding are:

- Supported housing schemes for the homeless
- Supported accommodation for homeless youth
- Self-sustaining units for individuals with profound social needs
- Support packages for private landlords
- Extra accommodation and support in Arfon
- Build more social housing than can be funded through the social housing grant
- Developing our own housing in order to increase the opportunities for Gwynedd residents to compete in the housing market.
- Consultation with communities to establish their housing needs
- Self-build plots
- First Time Buyers Grants to renovate empty homes
- Council Tax exemption on empty homes for first time buyers
- Purchase assistance scheme
- Buying building land for the future

- A residential element in community regeneration schemes
- Establish a new Energy Conservation service for homeowners to contribute towards our ambition to tackle the climate crisis
- Innovative Housing Pilot
- Funding the financial shortfall in innovative housing business cases
- Supported Housing – Youth
- Extended care housing – elderly
- Supported housing – adults with profound needs
- Homes suitable for children with intense physical needs
- Frondeg, Caernarfon
- Interest-free loans to improve housing condition
- One stop shop for housing issues

10. How does the proposal demonstrate action in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, and to ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh? Also how will it be acted upon in accordance with the Council's language policy and strategy to take advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond the provision of services bilingually) and to increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

The Policy relates to property use, not the nationality of the owner. However, there will be a positive impact on the balance of communities as the premium product funds the Housing Action Plan which assists local families to buy an affordable home.

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and responding to the 7 national well-being goals including creating a More Equal Wales?

There is a duty to act in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, which is to seek to ensure that the needs of the present are met without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. In acting in accordance with this general duty the Council needs to consider the importance of long-term impact, being integrated, inclusive, collaborative and preventive in the development and implementation of the proposal before it.

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, Cyngor Gwynedd has adopted well-being objectives. Particular attention is drawn to the following objectives:

- Communities that thrive and thrive for the long term
- Healthy and Independent Residents with a Good Quality of Life

The current Premium funds the Council's Housing Action Plan, which is a proactive attempt to strengthen the sustainability of those communities within Gwynedd that have a high number of second homes and long-term empty homes.

The Council's Housing Strategy sets out the vision of "Ensuring that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable and quality, affordable home that improves their quality of life".

The Strategy identifies five objectives that had to be met if the Council was to achieve this vision:

- 1. Nobody is homeless in Gwynedd
- 2. Social housing available to everyone who needs one
- 3. Everyone's home in Gwynedd is affordable for them
- 4. Tai Gwynedd is environmentally friendly
- 5. Cartrefi have a positive influence on the health and well-being of the people of Gwynedd.

The Housing Action Plan includes a number of projects which, taken together, deliver on these objectives.

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be carried out in whole or in part by contractors or in partnership with other organisation(s)?

No

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice

13. In considering proportionality, does the policy or practice cause a significant positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:
The policy of raising the Premium is intended to protect the communities of Gwynedd through the Housing Action Plan. This is likely to have a significant positive impact.

Significant Negative Impact:
Owners of second homes and long-term empty properties will need to pay more Council Tax. A "Section 13A Policy" is in place to support and provide discretionary support to mitigate the impact on those experiencing hardship as a result of the Policy.

14. Any intentional negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for such action (for example, on the basis of improving equal opportunities or fostering good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not or because of objective justification or positive action

When making a decision on the Premium one must be aware of the possibility that indirect discrimination exists. Although it is the use of a property that determines whether or not a Premium is payable on it, not its ownership, the outcome of the consultation suggests that the owners of such properties tend to be English and older people and need to be aware of the risk of indirect discrimination against these cohorts.

However, the Equality Act 2010 states that this is legal if the policy is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, and in this case it is a means of realising positive action, which is to address the housing crisis for local people.

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful but unavoidable discrimination (e.g. reduction of funding)?

No

Please note the reason for saying so and the justification for continuing

This is considered to be an illegal action. The Premium has been in place since 2018 now and no legal basis has been proposed against it.

16. What other measures or changes could be included in order to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to promote equal opportunities; to help eradicate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation and to foster good relationships and wider community cohesion; as addressed in the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010?

Two specific cohorts of the population will be subject to the premium, namely second home owners, and owners of long-term empty homes.

It should be noted that responses to the consultation, along with national studies strongly suggest that second home owners tend to be older people. A number of the responses to the consultation suggest that some of these older owners are "asset rich / cash poor". That is, they have bought the property for several years or inherited it, but their income is not necessarily high. This ultimately raises a grain of doubt as to whether the Council is fulfilling its statutory duties, but that must be weighed against the poverty, unemployment and homelessness that exists in rural Gwynedd. According to the Housing Action Plan, 59% of Gwynedd residents have been priced out of the market in Gwynedd.

The Premium is charged on all properties that are second homes or long-term vacant properties without regard to ownership.

One of the main outcomes of the Premium is the funding of the Housing Action Plan. This plan will address social inequality within Gwynedd. The Equality Impact Assessment completed in the preparation of the Housing Action Plan identifies the very positive actions that will result from the implementation of the Plan, with the financial support of the Premium:

The Premium aims to reduce inequality within Gwynedd's communities, and contributes to that by funding specific projects.

17. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to the need to reduce unequal outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?

Further action is not believed to be necessary.

18. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the Welsh language?

Further action is not believed to be necessary.

19. Is there enough information to form a balanced view and move forward?

Yes

STEP 5 - Decide to Go Ahead

20. Given the information gathered in Steps 1-4, is it possible to proceed with the policy or practice, and if so, on what basis? Choice of:

Continue with the plan because any detrimental impact can be justified

STEP 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Results and Reviewing Data

The IIA process is an ongoing one and does not end when the policy/practice and the IIA have been agreed and implemented. There is a specific legal duty to monitor the impact of the policies/practices on equality on an ongoing basis to identify whether the outcomes have

changed since you introduced or modified this new policy or practice. If you do not have the relevant data, you should be taking action to correct this in your action plan. To view the EHRC's guidance on data collection you can review their Measurement Framework

21. What actions identified in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work will assist in monitoring the policy/practice when implemented:

Operation	Dates	Timeline	Lead Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Data monitoring	2027/28	Yearly	Head of Finance	No

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or exercise will be implemented, including timescales for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Review Arrangements (including where the results will be recorded)	Timetable and Frequency	Lead Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Report to Cabinet and Council	Yearly	Head of Finance	No

CYNGOR GWYNEDD –Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet

Subject:	**Savings Overview:** **Progress Report on Realising Savings Schemes**
Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Huw Wyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Finance**
Contact officer:	**Ffion Madog Evans, Assistant Head of Finance** **- Accounting and Pensions**
Date:	**10 Tachwedd 2026**

1. The decision sought

1.1 To accept the information in the report and to note the progress towards realising the savings schemes for 2026/27 and previous years.

1.2 Approve the removal of savings worth £925,600 by using the specific provision that was set aside in the budget to fund it.

2. The reason why it is necessary that the Cabinet makes the decision

2.1 Realising the individual schemes is the responsibility of relevant members of the Cabinet, who challenge the performance of the departments including the progress of the savings schemes. It is the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Finance to keep an overview of the whole picture.

3. Introduction and Rationale

Background / Introduction

3.1 This report provides an overview of the Council's savings' situation for 2026/27 and previous years following a review of the situation at the end of August 2026.

3.2 In the 2026/27 Budget report to the Full Council on 5 March 2026, it was reported that savings of £583k were profiled for the 2026/27 budget. Savings to the value of £240k was approved by the Cabinet on 11 February 2025, whilst £343k are savings schemes approved in previous years, but related to the 2026/27 financial year.

4. Rationale and justification for recommending the decision

Reassessing savings

4.1 The Council has financial planning arrangements in place that have already identified significant efficiency savings over recent years to minimise service cuts for Gwynedd residents. However, in recent years there have been difficulties in realising savings in some areas, most evidently seen in the Adults, Health and Well-being Department and in the Waste area.

4.2 Following the inability of some departments to realise savings in some areas, a corporate savings provision of £1.3m was put in place when setting the budget, to enable the removal of savings schemes should the need arise and to respond to the risk of failure to deliver certain savings schemes.

4.3 Following a recent review of savings schemes to assess which ones were no longer achievable, it is recommended that part of the provision be used to delete the savings. A programme has been drawn up to delete £925,600 worth of schemes that could not be delivered.

4.4 **Appendix 1** lists the schemes worth £925,600 which are to be deleted, and Table 1 below summarises the savings per Department.

Table 1: Savings to be deleted per Department

Department	Savings to be deleted £	No of schemes
Highways, Engineering and YGC	190,000	*2*
Adults, Health and Well-being	535,600	*4*
Environment	200,000	*3*
Total	**925,600**	***9***

4.5 The report will focus on the savings situation following the deletion of the savings schemes in part

5. Departmental Savings Schemes 2025/26

5.1 Based on the position of the August 2026 review for the 2025/26 financial year, a total value of £3.1m has been profiled for the year. Of this, a **total of nearly £2.6m or 83%, has**

been realised. There has been a slippage in the realisation of two schemes worth £40k, while there are some risks of achieving savings totalling £486k.

6. Departmental Savings Schemes 2026/27

6.1 Of the schemes with a total value of £533k profiled for 2026/27, **£242k or 45% has already been realised**, and a further £91k on track to be realised on time. The Environment Department anticipates some risks regarding the realisation of one scheme in the Waste area, which is worth £200k.

7. Historical Departmental Savings Schemes 2015/16 – 2026/27

7.1 **Appendix 2** summarises each department's achievement against their savings targets of **£34.037 million** for the period 2015/16 – 2026/27 based on the August 2026 review. **It can be reported that £34.018 million, or 99.9% of these schemes have been realised**, but the risk of realising one of the savings' schemes remains.

7.2 The one scheme that has not been realised by the Economy and Community Department which is at risk to be delivered (£20k), the income target for the Neuadd Dwyfor scheme has been reduced from £100k to £20k on a temporary basis for 2025/26 and 2026/27, to allow time to identify opportunities for implementation. A sum of £80k per year, for a period of two years, will be covered by the Council's Savings Provision.

8. Departmental Savings Schemes 2023/24 – 2026/27

8.1 **Appendix 3** summarises each department's achievement against the savings target for the period 2023/24 - 2026/27 **which totals almost £15.7 million,** based on the August 2026 review. **It can be reported that £14.6 million, or 93% of these schemes have already been realised, with a further £91k, or 0.6% on track for full and timely delivery.**

8.2 Two schemes, with a total value of £91k are on track to be fully realised and on time, while there is a slippage on three schemes totalling £86k which were scheduled to be realised during 2024/25 and 2025/26, but the departments do not foresee any problems to realise. At present, there are some anticipated risks regarding the realisation of savings schemes worth nearly £856k which includes one scheme from the Education Department (£25k), four schemes from the Environment Department (£760k), and one scheme from the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department (£71k).

9. Departmental Savings Schemes 2027/28 onwards

9.1 With only one scheme worth £98.5k from the Education Department profiled for 2027/28, it is premature to report on the status of this scheme at this time.

9.2 The Medium-Term Financial Plan will be presented to the Cabinet in due course, which will consider the financial gap for 2027/28 and the intention in terms of responding to the financial situation facing us as a Council, with the aim of setting a balanced budget for 2027/28.

10. Conclusion

10.1 It can be reported that a total of over £49 million of savings have been realised since 2015/16, which is 98% of the £50 million required over the period. Realising the savings has inevitably been challenging, and I am grateful to all the departments and the Cabinet Members for ensuring this success.

10.2 The table below summarises the latest position of the savings schemes since April 2015 with 98% of all schemes realised.

Table 2: Summary of the status of all savings schemes since April 2015

Status of Savings	Portal	£m	%
Have realised	1	48.6	97.9
On track to achieve savings in full and on time	2	0.1	0.2
Slippage/Delay, but moving forward	3	0.1	0.2
Some risks to achieve - slip or fail	4	0.9	1.7
Significant risks to realise in full or partially	5	0.0	0.0
Total savings		**49.7**	**100**

10.3 Since the start of the period for the Council to find savings back in 2010/11, it can be reported that a total of nearly £72.5 million in savings has been realised, which is 98.4% of the £73.6 million required over that period.

10.4 I therefore ask the Cabinet to note the achievement outlined in this report towards realising the savings schemes. Further to this, delete the savings schemes worth a total value of £925,600.

11. Next steps and timetable

11.1 Implement the recommendations stated in this report and submit a follow-up report to the Cabinet following a review of the situation at the end of November 2026.

12. View of the Statutory Officers

12.1 Head of Finance

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

12.2 Monitoring Officer

No observations to add in relation to propriety

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Savings Schemes to be deleted per Department

Appendix 2 - Overview of Historical Savings Schemes 2015/16 - 2026/27 per Department

Appendix 3 - Overview of Savings Schemes 2023/24 - 2026/27 per Department

APPENDIX 1

SAVINGS SCHEMES TO BE DELETED PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Scheme	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Highways, Engineering and YGC	Improving efficiency/rationalising highways depot sites						60,000			60,000
	Restructuring the Highways Service							130,000		130,000 *
Highways, Engineering and YGC Total		-	-	-	-	-	**60,000**	**130,000**	-	**190,000**
Adults, Health and Well-being	Integrating and transforming Older People's Services	185,600								185,600 *
	Residential and Nursing Homes: Helping 20 individuals to continue living in the community (rather than in a residential care home) over time							50,000	50,000	100,000
	Developing 3 further Extra Care Housing projects in Gwynedd (Pwllheli, Ffestiniog, and South Meirionnydd areas)							200,000		200,000
	Older People's Homes: Looking at arrangements for preparing second choice meals in care homes							50,000		50,000
Adults, Health and Well-being Total		**185,600**	-	-	-	-	-	**300,000**	**50,000**	**535,600**
Environment	Rationalisation of departmental support arrangements						50,000			50,000 *
	Waste Service - Allow certain types of commercial companies to use the recycling centres						50,000			50,000
	Waste Services - Better management of debts from commercial customers, marketing Commercial Services - increasing income and Increasing income through the collection of Commercial Waste from holiday accommodation						100,000			100,000 *
Environment Total		-	-	-	-	-	**200,000**	-	-	**200,000**
Total Savings to delete										**925,600**

** partial deletion*

APPENDIX 2

OVERVIEW OF HISTORICAL SAVINGS SCHEMES FOR 2015/16 TO 2026/27 PER DEPARTMENT

TABLE 1
SCHEMES THAT HAVE REALISED

Department	Total Savings 2015/16 to 2026/27 £	Schemes that have realised £	Percentage of schemes that have realised
Education	1,659,740	1,659,740	100%
Schools	4,331,620	4,331,620	100%
Environment	2,972,463	2,972,463	100%
Corporate Services	2,569,218	2,569,218	100%
Finance	1,881,636	1,881,636	100%
Economy and Community	2,916,422	2,896,422	99.3%
Adults, Health and Well-being	6,409,381	6,409,381	100%
Children and Supporting Families	2,318,908	2,318,908	100%
Highways, Engineering and YGC	6,531,580	6,531,580	100%
Corporate Management Team and Legal	403,240	403,240	100%
Housing and Property	843,230	843,230	100%
Sub-total	**32,837,438**	**32,817,438**	100%
Managerial Savings	1,200,360	1,200,360	100%
TOTAL	**34,037,798**	**34,017,798**	99.9%

TABLE 2
SCHEMES YET TO BE REALISED

Department (no. of schemes)	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
Economy and Community (1 scheme)	20,000	0	20,000

Head of Finance's comments:

Due to the risk of not being able to implement the savings of the Neuadd Dwyfor scheme, it was decided to reduce the income target from £100k to £20k for 2025/26 and 2026/27, in order to give time to identify opportunities to implement.

APPENDIX 3

OVERVIEW OF NEW SAVINGS SCHEMES FROM 2023/24 TO 2026/27 PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total of new savings from 2023/24 to 2026/27		Realised Schemes		Schemes on track to be completed on time		Schemes slipping and schemes with some risks of achieving the savings		Head of Finance's comments
	£ - *number*		£ - *number*		£ - *number*		£ - *number*		
Education	1,555,010	*35*	1,530,270	*34*	-		24,740	*1*	The department anticipates some risks of realising the savings of 1 scheme namely *Transfer of Maesgeirchen Youth Center to Maes NI Community Hub* (£25k).
Schools	1,966,100	*1*	1,966,100	*1*	-		-		The one scheme for the period has been achieved.
Environment	2,147,380	*36*	1,387,380	*32 **	-		760,000	*4*	The department anticipates some risks of realising the savings of 4 schemes worth a total of £760k which includes *Rationalisation of departmental support arrangements* (£100k), *savings in Waste services* (2 schemes worth a total of £330k) and *Commercial Waste services* (£330k).
Corporate Services	865,620	*30*	865,620	*30*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Finance	873,430	*21*	833,430	*19 **	-		40,000	*2*	There has been a slippage on 2 schemes namely *Restructuring of the Income Unit,* with a balance of £20k yet to be realised and *Setting an income target for the Payroll Unit to reflect work undertaken for other agencies* , worth £20k.
Economy and Community	648,780	*41*	648,780	*41*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Adults, Health and Well-being	2,491,860	*19*	2,491,860	*19*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Children and Supporting Families	308,140	*8*	308,140	*8*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Highways, Engineering and YGC	1,459,940	*23*	1,251,940	*19*	91,000	*2*	117,000	*2*	Two schemes, with a total value of £91k, are on track for a full and timely delivery this year. The department anticipates risks of realising one scheme namely *Reducing resources by combining the Ground Maintenance Service with the Street View Service scheme* (£71k). There has been a slippage from 2024/25 regarding one scheme: *Changing the order for rural upland/frequency/vertical cutting and the timing relative to the growing season* (£46k).
Corporate Management Team and Legal	161,190	*8*	161,190	*8*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Housing and Property	780,350	*14*	780,350	*14*	-		-		The schemes for the period have all been achieved.
Managerial Savings	2,400,000	*1*	2,400,000	*1*	-		-		The one scheme for the period has been achieved.
TOTAL	**15,657,800**	***237***	**14,625,060**	***226***	**91,000**	***2***	**941,740**	***9***	**In financial terms (£), 93% of the 2023/24 to 2026/27 savings schemes have already been realised and nearly a further 1% are on track to be delivered on time by the end of the financial year.**

** schemes with different status splits in the years they have been profiled*

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Item title:	Revenue Budget 2026/27 – End of August 2026 Review
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Huw Wyn Jones, Cabinet Member - Finance
Relevant officer:	Ffion Madog Evans, Assistant Head of Finance Department - Accountancy and Pensions
Date of meeting:	10 November 2026

Summary

- *A budget deficit of £9.8 million is forecast for the 2026/27 financial year.*
- *Four of the Council's departments are suffering from a budget deficit above the £100,000 threshold with expenditure in the fields of children's extra-county placements, waste, residential and domiciliary care, post-16 care and the Derwen service, above their allocated budget.*
- *Parking and highway income targets are not being met.*
- *Council tax yield and council tax premium £5.3 million below this year's budget.*
- *The Chief Executive has already held an urgent meeting with all relevant heads of department to gain a better understanding of the issues in the departments and a clear programme to respond including continuing to push to achieve savings. However, a deficit in demand is the obvious reason for the vast majority of the budget deficit and managing that is beyond the Council's ability.*
- *It is anticipated that the Council's reserves will need to be used at the end of the financial year to fund the almost inevitable financial deficit. The Cabinet will then need to decide which funds will be appropriate to use, based on the recommendations of the Statutory Finance Officer. This year, particular attention will have to be paid to the significant impact of housing transfers from tax and premium paying properties to properties subject to non-domestic rates.*

1. The decision sought

That the Cabinet:

1.1 Accepts the report noting that there are forecasts of a significant budget deficit for 2026/27 in the Children and Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, with a deficit to a lesser extent in the Environment and Highways Departments as well.

1.2 Approve additional financial support above the contractual payment to Cwmni Byw'n Iach to be funded from the transformation fund, delegating the right to the Cabinet Member for Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Chief Executive and

the Head of Finance to agree on the amount of the final financial support above the contractual payment with Byw'n Iach at the end of the financial year.

1.3 Approve funding of the £1.006 million above budget expenditure in the field of Waste using £1.006 million from the Producer Extended Responsibility Fund for packaging materials.

2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

2.1 The purpose of this report seeks to provide a trajectory of the revenue position by the end of the financial year. Therefore, the amounts noted below are an estimate of what we are projecting by March 2027 and they are not amounts that represent the deficit in today's budget.

2.2 It is the Cabinet's responsibility to take action, as necessary, to secure appropriate control over the Council's budgets (e.g. approval of significant virements or supplementary budgets).

3. Introduction and Rationale

Background / Introduction

3.1 This report presents the end of August 2026 review of the Council's revenue budget for the 2026/27 financial year, and a summary of the situation per Department is outlined in **Appendix 1**. The current projections suggest that four of the departments will have a significant budget deficit by the end of the year. The main deficit is anticipated in:

- Adults, Health and Well-being Department - Residential Homes and Domiciliary Care
- Children and Families Department – Out-of-county placements, Post-16 and Derwen
- Environment Department - Waste and Parking
- Highways, Engineering and YGC – Highways and Municipal

3.2 Below, and in **Appendix 2,** further details are provided relating to the main issues and headings where a budget deficit is projected, as well as specific recommendations, where appropriate.

4. The reasoning and justification for recommending the decision

The Savings Situation

4.1 In the 2026/27 Budget report to the Full Council on 5 March 2026, it was reported that £583k worth of savings had been profiled for the 2026/27 budget. The budgets have been reduced by this amount; therefore, the situation is reported upon after considering the savings.

4.2 Regular reports, twice a year, are submitted to the Cabinet and the Governance and Audit Committee providing an update on the realisation of savings, and over the past few years we have reported on risks to achieving savings. Following a recent review of the savings schemes, it is recommended that £925,600 worth of savings be erased as they are no longer achievable.

4.3 The latest on savings is that £242k – which is 45% of the relevant £533k to the 2026/27 financial year – has already been realised, with a further £91k on track to be realised in a timely manner. This means that almost £49 million, which is 98% of all revised savings schemes since 2015, have now been realised, which is a total of £72.5 million savings since 2010/11.

5. Council Departments

5.1 Adults, Health and Well-being Department

Over £3.3 million in additional permanent funding was allocated to the Department for the 2026/27 budget onwards. Latest projections suggest that if there is no change during the year, there will be a budget deficit of £2.3 million by the end of the financial year. There have been increasing pressures on residential and nursing care and also on domiciliary care. Staff costs above budget levels are issues in the provider services. Following a review of the department's savings, £536k worth of unrealised problematic savings were erased, while several other savings schemes have recently been realised by the department.

The increase in demand continues to follow what was predicted and warned in Llechen Lân and is likely to continue for years to come.

5.2 Children and Families Department

There has been a further increase in the number of individuals needing specialist care both within and outside the county and that care is costly, which is £5.7 million above budget. Further to this, there has been an increase in the provision of care for children with disabilities in the county through the services of Derwen and Hafan y Sêr and also by the Post-16 service. It is anticipated that there will be a budget deficit of around £6.5 million by the end of the financial year if there is no change in what is provided during the year.

5.3 Education Department

Pressures in the field of school transport on the additional learning needs element, but its impact is reduced by underspending including grant receipt in other fields. The Department intends to balance the department's financial position by the end of the year by making use of funds from a departmental reserve.

5.4 Byw'n Iach

Over the last few years, the Byw'n Iach company has received financial support from the Council above the contractual payment of the provider contract to enable them to maintain their services. This additional support has decreased over the years with the amount being £550k in 2022/23, £308k in 2023/24, £281k in 2024/25 and £269k in 2025/26. It is anticipated that the demand for financial support will continue in 2026/27 but that the amount required will have reduced to £115k by the end of the year. This movement in the right direction is to be welcomed.

5.5 Highways, Engineering and YGC Department

A budget deficit of £329k is anticipated by the department by the end of the year. A reduction was seen in the work being commissioned by external agencies which is having a negative impact on the income of the highways services. In the Municipal Service, there is a combination of factors, including additional pressure on the budgets of cleaning public toilets. While income losses are issues for land maintenance and public toilets. Unrealised savings contribute to the financial position.

5.6 Environment Department

A budget deficit of around £467K is forecast by the end of the year, including an income deficit on parking income whilst the annual trend of overspending in the waste field continuing and responsible for £1 million of the departmental financial pressure. The Department has several schemes in place to address the financial position, but in order to achieve the final step over the next year there will be a need to complete a restructure of the Waste Service and further operational changes. Unrealised savings worth £760k contribute to the department's financial position and timely decisions will be needed if some of these are to be achieved and the financial burden on the department is to be reduced.

The department intends to make use of new income to make up for any shortfall in this year's waste budget, with the money deriving from a levy on packaging materials for producers and retailers, to promote recycling by the companies that create this waste.

5.7 Housing and Property Department

It is anticipated that the department as a whole will underspend (£49k) at the end of the financial year. Following years of significant pressure on the emergency accommodation service, all deliberate interventions by the service have resulted in a reduction in expenditure on the field, down to £5.4 million this year compared to £6.1 million in the last two years. While an additional one-off allocation of £800k was earmarked for emergency accommodation in 2026/27, it is not anticipated that there will be further demand for the provision and therefore the funds can be returned on a corporate level.

The council tax premium funded £4.2m of the emergency accommodation budget in 2026/27.

5.8 Corporate

The latest forecasts suggest that council tax yields and council tax premiums will be £5.3 million lower than the budget this year. The Valuer's Office allowed a significant number of properties to transfer from council tax to non-domestic rates during the year, with 361 properties transferred to the end of August (283 in 2025/26). There was also a decrease of 246 in the number of premium second homes to the end of August (74 in 2025/26). There has also been a decrease of 185 in the number of properties transferring from non-domestic rates to council tax (618 in 2025/26). The loss is further intensified in 2025/26 as applications are backdated by a few years, so the impact of several years goes against the financial situation this year. In light of the recent reduction in tax yields, the impact of this will soon receive consideration in the context of funding the commitments from the council tax premium.

Contrary to this picture, there are better forecasts on other Corporate headings including higher income and grant receipts, favourable impact of historic loan repayment, return of bid funds that are not fully utilised this year, reduction in overall capital costs along with less pressure on a number of various budgets. Considering Corporate as a whole, pressures are forecast to be £408k above budget.

It is anticipated that the Council's reserves will need to be used at the end of the financial year to fund the financial deficit.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Following a review at the end of August, a budget deficit of £9.8 million is forecast in order to continue to meet the increasing demand for services for the rest of the year based on the information that we currently have. The figure is based on a budget deficit of £9.4 million by the departments and a further £0.4 million on corporate budgets.

69%, which is £6.5 million of it, derives from the increasing demand for children's services, mainly on out-of-county placements.

It is anticipated that four of the Council's departments will be spending significantly above budget by the end of the year, with an increase in demand seen in several other fields including adult care and transport in the field of additional learning needs in schools.

The Chief Executive has already held an urgent meeting with all relevant heads of department to gain a better understanding of the issues in the departments and a clear programme to respond including continuing to push to achieve savings.

Given the latest overspending forecasts, it is recommended that it is appropriate that action to freeze unavoidable expenditure be implemented for the remainder of the financial year. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that the Council's reserves will need to be used at the end of the financial year to fund the almost inevitable financial deficit. The Cabinet will then need to decide which funds will be appropriate to use, based on the recommendations of the Statutory Finance Officer. This year, particular attention will have to be paid to the significant impact of housing transfers from tax and premium paying properties to properties subject to non-domestic rates.

7. Next steps and timetable

7.1 A report outlining the situation at the end of November will be submitted to the Cabinet in January 2027.

8. Observations of the Statutory Officers

8.1 Chief Finance Officer

I have worked with the Cabinet Member to prepare this report and I confirm the content.

8.2 Monitoring Officer

No comments to add from a propriety perspective.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Summary of departmental budgets' net positions

Appendix 2 - Details of budgets and the significant variances

Revenue Budget 2026/27 - Summary of the position per Department

	End of August Review			
	2026/27 Proposed Budget	Gross Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27	Recommended Adjustments	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults, Health and Well-being	91,344	2,273	0	2,273
Children and Families	28,239	6,499	0	6,499
Business Service and Care Commissioning	3,067	(101)	0	(101)
Education	130,326	0	0	0
Economy and Community	6,635	170	(115)	55
Highways, Engineering and YGC	19,554	329	0	329
Environment	19,297	1,473	(1,006)	467
Housing and Property	15,440	(49)	0	(49)
Corporate Management Team and Legal	2,742	11	0	11
Corporate Support	13,593	(70)	0	(70)
Finance	5,489	(17)	0	(17)
Corporate Budgets *(Differences only)*	*	408	0	408
Totals (net)	341,215	10,926	(1,121)	9,805

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Adults, Health and Well-being Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults Services						
Management	649	542	(107)		(107)	(117)
Learning Disabilities Services	33,778	33,740	(38)		(38)	(414)
Mental Health Services	7,495	7,380	(115)		(115)	558
Older People's Services including Physical Disabilities						
Residential and Nursing - Homes	27,065	28,862	1,797		1,797	455
Domiciliary Care	13,434	13,692	258		258	(21)
Direct Payments	3,371	3,018	(353)		(353)	(334)
Others	3,846	3,939	93		93	224
	47,716	49,511	1,795	0	1,795	324
Adults Services Total	**89,638**	**91,173**	**1,535**	**0**	**1,535**	**351**
Provider Services (shows net budget)						
Residential Care	515	1,068	553		553	821
Community Care	1,191	1,395	204		204	211
Others	0	(19)	(19)		(19)	(2)
Provider Services Total	**1,706**	**2,444**	**738**	**0**	**738**	**1,030**
Closure of 2025/26 Accounts Adaption					0	(1,281)
Adults, Health and Well-being Total	**91,344**	**93,617**	**2,273**	**0**	**2,273**	**100**

Adults, Health and Well-being

Over £3.3 million in additional permanent funding was allocated to the Department for the 2026/27 budget onwards. Latest projections suggest that if there are no changes in the actions during the year, there will be a financial deficit of £2.27 million by the end of the financial year.

Department Management - underspend on staff costs as well as a grant receipt.

Learning Disability - the service received an additional budget allocation of £1.4 million in 2026/27. An underspend of (£38k) is reported, which includes a mixed situation within the services with increased pressure on the nursing home element, day services and support schemes but a decrease in pressure on direct payments. The work of reviewing care packages continues and is bearing fruit.

Mental Health - £1.2 million of additional funding was allocated to the field for 2026/27. There was less pressure on direct payments as a complex case came to an end earlier in the year and no increase was seen in residential and nursing numbers so far this year, which means that an underspend of (£115k) is forecast.

Older People - increasing demand on Residential and Nursing provision and therefore forecasts of a budget deficit of £1.8 million, with an increase in the number of cases during the year.

A £258k budget deficit on domiciliary care is forecast, with an increase in spending on private domiciliary care seen in the Porthmadog and Tywyn areas. In terms of direct payments, the numbers of cases vary between areas but ensuring the efficiency of the payments assists with the picture. In 'Others', a complex case in supported accommodation commenced during the year.

Provider Services - staff costs above budget levels are issues in residential and domiciliary care, with the use of agency staff seen in residential care.

Savings - following a review of the savings, £536k worth of unrealised problematic savings were erased, while several other savings schemes were recently realised by the department.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Children and Families Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	812	794	(18)		(18)	0
Operational	3,356	3,500	144		144	478
Placements						
Out-of-County Placements	6,916	12,605	5,689		5,689	2,011
Small Group Homes	312	480	168		168	80
Fostering through an Agency	2,014	1,996	(18)		(18)	(138)
Fostering - Internal	3,215	3,271	56		56	95
Support Services and Others	2,390	2,409	19		19	241
	14,847	20,761	5,914	0	5,914	2,289
Post-16	1,895	2,267	372		372	437
Derwen Service	3,969	4,239	270		270	443
Youth Justice	283	281	(2)		(2)	(11)
Early Years	150	20	(130)		(130)	(186)
Workforce Development Unit	245	245	0		0	0
Others	2,682	2,631	(51)		(51)	(54)
Closure of 2025/26 Accounts Adaption	0	0	0		0	(3,296)
Children and Families Total	**28,239**	**34,738**	**6,499**	**0**	**6,499**	**100**

Children and Families

An additional £791k of permanent funding was allocated to the Department for the 2026/27 budget. The latest forecasts suggest that the department will have a budget deficit of £6.5 million by the end of the financial year.

Management - one-off additional staffing costs but which are counterbalanced by the use of grants towards establishing an information system.

Operational - an additional £212k of funding was allocated for support schemes in 2026/27 but pressure remains, staffing above budget levels is seen on field workers.

Placements - a further increase was seen in the average number of out-of-county placements again this year to 41 (37 in 2025/26, 34.3 in 2024/25, 32.5 in 2023/24, 25.7 in 2022/23), with the average cost of placements now increased to £317k. There are 8 exceptional cases that cost an average of £720k a year. One new permanent case has started since the beginning of the financial year.

In In-house Fostering, the contribution from the Home Office for the unaccompanied asylum seekers receiving a service is not sufficient given the costs.

Small Group Homes - the homes are currently being established in Gwynedd with two homes now operational, and the third becoming operational during 2026/27. This in-house provision means that children can be placed in-house instead of with out-of-county external providers. The Council received grants to establish the homes as well as a contribution towards the costs of running the homes this year, but it is anticipated that the employment costs will exceed the funding available.

Post-16 - additional pressure on the service after two exceptional cases were transferred from the out-of-county service. Pressure also on the over 18 year old asylum seekers element, as the Home Office contribution is not enough to meet the costs. Staffing above the social worker budget also contributes to the over-budget spending.

Derwen - over-budget pressures on the employee element in the Short Respite Unit, grants could be used towards the costs in previous years but the source of funding is not available this year.

Early Years - grants available to fund core spending, leading to a projected underspend.

Others - staff turnover and vacant posts in the edge of care team and on the administrative side, but over-budget legal costs reduce reported underspending.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Business and Care Commissioning Service	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Support and Commissioning	1,271	1,145	(126)		(126)	(22)
Income and Finance	1,497	1,471	(26)		(26)	(57)
Preventative Services	299	350	51		51	(20)
Business and Care Commissioning Service Total	**3,067**	**2,966**	**(101)**	**0**	**(101)**	**(99)**

Business and Care Commissioning Service

Support and Commissioning - grant receipt towards the time of a number of staff associated with the significant work to implement care cases software across north Wales. It is anticipated that there will be less pressure on the budgets of supplies and services which is also contributing to the situation.

Income and Finance - a combination of underspend on staff costs in preparation for restructuring, as well as a grant receipt towards the time of staff associated with the work to implement care cases software across north Wales. For a period, two care information systems will run concurrently. The underspend is being reduced by unrealised savings schemes.

Preventative Service - additional investment in preventative equipment but the financial impact is reduced by the receipt of higher income fees for the service.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Education Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Leadership and Management	2,453	2,109	(344)		(344)	53
Devolved Schools	108,440	108,440	0		0	0
Schools Quality Service	(2,128)	(2,318)	(190)		(190)	(55)
Infrastructure and Support Services						
Transportation	8,436	8,992	556		556	0
Ancillary Services	1,512	1,575	63		63	(253)
Others	4,322	4,313	(9)		(9)	109
	14,270	14,880	610	0	610	(144)
Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion	6,102	6,093	(9)		(9)	122
Youth Service	1,114	1,122	8		8	0
Use of the Department's Underspend Fund	75	0	(75)		(75)	0
Education Total	**130,326**	**130,326**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(24)**

Education

Leadership and Management - one-off spend on implementing a new information management system for schools to be funded from a reserve budget plus a smaller contribution to a fund than what was budgeted.

Schools Quality Service - combination of attracting grants in the field of Early Years and the Welsh Language, success in attracting income from the Business Centre and expenditure within budget.

Transport - following substantial financial pressures on transport in recent years, a budget of £896k was allocated on a permanent basis to address the pressures on the school bus and taxi field, £939k was also received on a one-off basis in 2025/26; therefore, as the funding is not available in 2026/27, pressures are anticipated on the field and specifically in the field of additional learning needs, with an above-budget expenditure objective of £556k by the end of the year.

Infrastructure and Support Services - Ancillary Service - sickness in the field of cleaning, care and catering continues, while there is a reduction in financial pressure on the care element of the breakfast clubs following the receipt of a bid for 2026/27.

Infrastructure and Support Services - Others - mixed position on the various headings including one-off costs which are reduced by underspending on other budgets.

Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion - the joint additional learning needs and inclusion service between Gwynedd and Anglesey came to an end at the end of August 2026, therefore, the service is in a transitional period during 2026/27. One-off costs are funded within the financial position per year.

To remove the reported overspend, the department uses £75k from the departmental fund.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Economy and Community Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	410	415	5		5	(11)
Community Regeneration and Support Programmes	666	658	(8)		(8)	(3)
Maritime and Country Parks	(170)	(143)	27		27	101
Byw'n Iach and Other Leisure Contracts	2,530	2,657	127	(115)	12	34
Economic Development Programmes	(79)	(79)	0		0	(4)
Marketing and Events	270	270	0		0	0
Gwynedd Libraries	1,888	1,814	(74)		(74)	(29)
Gwynedd Museums, Arts and Archives	1,120	1,213	93		93	9
Use of the Department's Underspend Fund	0	0	0		0	(49)
Use of the Department's Other Fund	0	0	0		0	(48)
Economy and Community Total	**6,635**	**6,805**	**170**	**(115)**	**55**	**0**

Economy and Community

Maritime and Country Parks - In Maritime, above-budget expenditure forecasts of £71k at Victoria Dock, Caernarfon, while the Beaches have a net income deficit of £37k, but more promising income forecasts for Hafan, Pwllheli (£54k) and Harbours of (£26k). A balanced situation in the country parks as it is intended to use any underspend on the field to fund capital schemes which are mainly funded by a grant.

Byw'n Iach and Other Leisure Contracts - the leisure provision was transferred to the Byw'n Iach Company in April 2019, but responsibility for the running costs of properties remained with the Council. Over the past few years the company has received annual financial support from the Council which was £550k in 2022/23, £308k in 2023/24, £281k in 2024/25 and £269k in 2025/26, which was above the contractual payment in the delivery contract, to enable them to maintain their services. It is projected that the financial support will continue this year and the required amount is £115k by the end of the year.

Furthermore, an overspend of £12k on the Economy and Community Department budget to run leisure facilities.

Gwynedd Libraries - underspend on staff coupled with the financial impact of the closure of two libraries for part of the year whilst significant refurbishment works take place at Caernarfon and Tywyn Libraries.

Museums, Arts and Gwynedd Archives - overspending mainly because electricity costs and lack of income account for an overspend of £52k at Neuadd Dwyfor, while above-budget staff costs coupled with a lack of income are issues at Storiel £36k and at the Lloyd George Museum £13k.

It is recommended that the Cabinet approves additional financial support for the Byw'n Iach Company at the end of the year if overspend continues, with the existing projections estimating support of £115k.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Highways, Engineering and YGC Department (including Trunk roads	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Services:						
Highways (including Trunk roads)	12,595	12,750	155		155	318
Engineering	423	441	18		18	(76)
Municipal	6,480	6,631	151		151	180
Gwynedd Consultancy	56	61	5		5	(15)
Closure of 2025/26 Accounts Adaption	0	0	0		0	(307)
Highways, Engineering and YGC Total	**19,554**	**19,883**	**329**	**0**	**329**	**100**

Highways, Engineering and YGC (including Trunk roads)

Highways Services - forecast of reduced income in an agreement by an external agency while underspending is anticipated in the field of lighting and county road management.

Engineering Services - savings to be found in the field of sewage and water pipes and minor overspend on several headings on Pont yr Aber, Caernarfon.

Municipal Services - a mixed picture which is a combination of factors including pressures on the costs of cleaning supplies and on public toilet cleaning staff, and a failure to realise £117k savings in open lands. Income losses remain as issues for land maintenance and public toilets. Underspending on wages in street enforcement, street cleaning and tidy teams reduces reported overspending.

Gwynedd Consultancy - forecasts of exceeding income from external organisations such as other councils and the Welsh Government in the field of roads and engineering whilst a shortfall in income is anticipated in the Building Service.

Savings - it is anticipated that departmental savings of £117k will not be realised and therefore contribute to the financial position.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Environment Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	854	953	99		99	172
Planning and Building Control Service	762	772	10		10	(225)
Street Care and Transport Services						
Network Management (Transportation)	308	(73)	(381)		(381)	(445)
Parking and Parking Enforcement	(2,745)	(2,243)	502		502	474
Integrated Transport	2,250	2,517	267		267	250
	(187)	201	388	0	388	279
Markets	8	14	6		6	5
Countryside and Access	887	891	4		4	18
Public Protection	2,020	1,980	(40)		(40)	(127)
Waste	14,953	15,959	1,006		1,006	1,256
Environment Total	**19,297**	**20,770**	**1,473**	**0**	**1,473**	**1,378**
Use of Parc Adfer Refinance Gain Share Reserve						**(786)**
Use of Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging Reserve				**(1,006)**	**(1,006)**	**(470)**
Closure of 2025/26 Accounts Adaption						**(22)**
Total	**19,297**	**20,770**	**1,473**	**(1,006)**	**467**	**100**

Environment

Department Management - a delay in realising savings schemes to the value of £100k as well as over-budget spending on vehicle costs.

Planning and Building Control Service - a mixed picture including lack of income remains as issues in Development Control, Building Control and Land Charges but staff turnover and vacant posts are assisting the financial situation.

Network Management (Transport) - exceeding the streetworks fees income, as well as vacant posts and further underspend on many of the budget's headings.

Parking and Parking Enforcement - following the rise in parking fees in April 2025, parking income was expected to improve but an income deficit of £529k is forecast compared to £464k in 2025/26. Vacant posts and underspending on a works budget are helping to improve the reported situation.

Integrated Transport - there was an increase in contract costs over the years and the grants received do not cover all the costs associated with transport contracts. Underspend on staff costs and on other budgets reducing the reported overspend.

Public Protection - vacant posts and less expenditure on a number of the budget headings, including on vehicle costs. Trade standards and food safety income are forecast to exceed the target but there will be a shortfall in taxi licence income.

Waste - several matters are responsible for the projected over-budget expenditure of £1.006 million, including an income deficit of £374k on commercial waste collection and an over-budget spend of £445k on several budget headings by the Waste Collection and Recycling Service. It is anticipated that spending will be above the budget of £217k at the Caergylchu treatment plant, Caernarfon.

There has been a slippage in the restructuring and introduction of changes to the field with a number of steps involved in the process. The first steps have already been implemented with the next steps to follow and as a result there is a slippage in the associated savings schemes and therefore, it is not projected that £660k worth of waste savings schemes will be realised by the end of the year.

Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging materials - new income receipt for councils which derives from a levy on packaging for producers and retailers, to promote recycling. £1.006 million is to be used in 2026/27 to meet the deficit in the waste service, with the remainder being prioritised for the waste field.

Savings - savings to the value of £760k are not being realised and are therefore contributing to the above-budget expenditure position.

It is recommended that the above-budget expenditure of £1.006 million projected by the waste service is funded by using the Extended Producer Responsibility Fund for packaging materials.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Housing and Property Department	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	735	716	(19)		(19)	(216)
Housing Services						
Homelessness	6,008	5,958	(50)		(50)	280
Private Sector Housing	486	507	21		21	17
Others	657	675	18		18	(124)
	7,151	7,140	(11)	0	(11)	173
Property Services						
Property	7,565	7,540	(25)		(25)	22
Caretaking, Catering and Cleaning	(11)	(5)	6		6	1
	7,554	7,535	(19)	0	(19)	23
Housing and Property Total	**15,440**	**15,391**	**(49)**	**0**	**(49)**	**(20)**

Housing and Property

Management -underspend on staffing costs as well as an underspend on services and supplies.

Homelessness - following years of significant pressure on the emergency accommodation service, following all deliberate interventions by the service, a reduction in expenditure is anticipated on the field, down to £5.4 million this year compared to £6.1 million in 2025/26 and 2024/25, with the current forecasts projecting an underspend of (£149k).

A permanent budget of £4.1 million has been allocated from council tax premium to emergency accommodation. Although the service received a one-off additional allocation of £800k for the additional pressures anticipated on emergency accommodation in 2026/27, it is no longer anticipated that this provision will be in demand during the year, with the funding therefore being returned on a corporate level.

Private Sector Housing - it is anticipated that there will be a shortfall in housing income fees with a number of residents, but that the financial impact will be reduced as there is staff turnover in the Enforcement field.

Housing Services, Others - one-off costs by the one-stop-shop result in forecasts of above-budget expenditure.

Property Services - staff turnover but its impact is reduced by pressures on the services and supplies budget.

Caretaking, Catering and Cleaning - additional costs on the costs of cleaners and on cleaning goods but exceeding income that assists the financial position.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Central Departments	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management Team and Legal	2,742	2,753	11		11	(39)
Finance	5,489	5,472	(17)		(17)	(38)
Corporate Services	13,593	13,523	(70)		(70)	(20)
Central Departments Total	**21,824**	**21,748**	**(76)**	**0**	**(76)**	**(97)**

Central Departments

Corporate Management Team and Legal - forecasts of the Coroner's service costs £19k above budget, but general underspending and a vacant post for part of the year in the Corporate Management Team means that the reported financial pressure is being reduced.

Finance - a combination of staff turnover and receipt of additional income and grants assists the department to deal with software price increases above inflation levels along with the additional costs of the department's financial systems.

Corporate Services - vacant posts and staff turnover in several fields including Information Technology, with Translation and the Democratic Service projected to exceed income whilst a reduction in income is projected by the Registration service and the Print-room.

REVENUE BUDGET 2026/27- END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Corporate (Reflects variances only)	2026/27 Proposed Budget	2026/27 Estimated Position	**Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	**Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2026/27**	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2025/26
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Tax and Council Tax Premium	*	*	5,277		5,277	0
Council Tax Reductions	*	*	(198)		(198)	0
Capital Costs	*	*	(289)		(289)	0
Savings Provision	*	*	(398)		(398)	0
Budgets / Bids Returned	*	*	(858)		(858)	0
Others	*	*	(3,126)		(3,126)	0
Corporate Total	*	*	**408**	**0**	**408**	**0**

Corfforaethol

Council Tax and Council Tax Premium - the latest forecasts suggest that council tax yields and council tax premiums will be £5.3 million lower than the budget this year due to several factors, which include:
- the Valuer's Office allowed a significant number of properties to transfer from council tax to non-domestic rates to the end of August 2026, namely 361 properties, which is 35% higher than last year's figure (283 in 2025/26, 189 in 2024/25, 193 in 2023/24).
- there was a decrease of 246 in the number of premium second homes to the end of August 2026, (a decrease of 74 in 2025/26, an increase of 387 in 2024/25).
- there was a decrease in the number of properties transferring from non-domestic rates to council tax compared to previous years, namely 185 properties to the end of August 2026 (618 in 2025/26, 692 in 2024/25, 381 in 2023/24).

The loss has been intensified as the applications are backdated by a few years, therefore the impact of several years goes against this year's financial position.

In 2026/27, £14.5 million of council tax premium was earmarked, of which £8.1 million is for the Housing Strategy, a further £4.7 million for the Homelessness field along with £1.7 million for other commitments.

Council Tax Reductions - following a campaign to target different groups to increase the number of applications, an increase was seen in the number who claim the reduction in Gwynedd compared with the trend in previous years, but it is anticipated that it will be within the budget position.

Capital Costs - reduction in capital costs as there was no need for external borrowing, therefore avoiding the associated costs.

Savings Provision - corporate provision has been established following the inability of some departments to realise savings in certain fields. A recent review saw £926k worth of problematic savings erased, namely £536k in the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, £190k in the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department and £200k in the Environment Department.

Budgets / Bids Returned - bids that had not been used in full this year were returned by the departments, including £800k from the emergency accommodation field.

Others - a combination of reasons including the favourable impact of historic loan repayment, exceeding income and grant receipt, including the additional element of teacher inflation from September 2026 onwards as it is expected to be funded by the Government. Furthermore, the demand on the provision is not anticipated to be as high as what was projected when setting the budget.

MEETING	Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet
DATE	10 November 2026
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr R.Medwyn Hughes
CONTACT OFFICER	Roland Evans Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department
TITLE	Our Culture, Our Future: A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd

Decision sought

1. To accept the report and acknowledge the research into the Value of Culture in Gwynedd
2. To approve Our Culture, Our Future: A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd (Appendix A)
3. To approve the implementation and monitoring arrangements as outlined in the report and Plan.

The reason for the need for a decision

4. Cyngor Gwynedd has no vision or plan for supporting Culture or the culture sector in the County. This has been highlighted as an opportunity to be prioritised in the Council Plan.
5. Research into the value of culture in Gwynedd shows the importance of the sector economically and socially (Appendix C).
6. By working with the culture sector, a statement, vision, principles and action plan have been co-developed in Our Culture, Our Future.
7. This report summarises the process that has been followed, presents the statement, vision and principles and provides an overview of the content of Our Culture, Our Future: A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd.

Introduction

8. Culture has experienced a challenging period over the past few years. According to the A Decade of Cuts report by Senedd Cymru's Culture Committee, Wales ranks second from bottom among European countries in terms of expenditure per head on cultural services.
9. The Senedd Committee's report makes a number of key recommendations and calls on the Welsh Government to provide more funding, recognise the importance of culture as a preventive expenditure and calls for strategic support to fund culture and sport across departments in order to achieve the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales 2015) Act.
10. The Programme for Government for Wales 2026-2030 highlights the following relevant priority areas:
    - 1.a. Work with the sector, including our creative industries, to develop and deliver a targeted Culture and Sport Strategy to create a healthier, richer and more resilient Wales.
    - 1.b. Prioritise equal access to the arts, culture, heritage and sport for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, considering how our access policies can support this.

1.c. Invest in the preventive role of culture, heritage and sport to promote good health for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

11. The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' recent priorities include placing culture at the heart of Wales' well-being, developing clearer cultural rights for citizens, and exploring the case for a Culture for Wales Bill which would give public bodies a stronger basis to protect, promote and invest in culture as part of their long-term responsibilities.
12. Culture is important to Gwynedd, and Gwynedd is important to Welsh culture, but nevertheless, budget challenges have directly impacted the sector within the County due to savings and cuts.
13. The priority of a Prosperous Gwynedd within the Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028 includes: *Promoting our Culture and a Sustainable Visitor Economy*. Within this priority, considering the Development of a Culture Plan for Gwynedd is an operational priority.
14. In terms of 'culture' the cultural sector is broadly defined, in line with Welsh Government practice, to include the arts, museums, libraries, archives, the historic environment and the Creative Industries.

Rationale and justification for recommending the decision

15. Given the recent challenges and the fact that Cyngor Gwynedd does not have a culture strategy or plan, we brought together the culture sector within the County to promote networking and seek views on establishing a vision and culture plan/strategy for the County. This was made possible through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity funding via the *'Diwyllesiant'* project and later through funding from the Welsh Government via its revenue support for local cultural sectors in Wales.
16. Many within the sector as well as the Council's culture services felt that there was a clear gap in Gwynedd without a culture plan or strategy – particularly when applying for funding and competitions such as the UK City or Town of Culture.
17. The first ever conference and workshops for the sector were held on 18 February 2025 in Nyth, Bangor via a commission to Cwmni'r Frân Wen. Nearly 70 people attended that conference.
18. In light of the conference, there was a strong view that the sector did not want to see a detailed strategy or plan developed, but there was a genuine desire and enthusiasm to establish a vision and principles for the future of the sector with 'action' as a priority rather than 'words' on a shelf.
19. It was agreed to formulate a vision and principles for culture in Gwynedd supported by a relevant Action Plan.
20. A workshop was held on 15 October 2025 to progress the development of the work. Over 80 people were invited with over 30 attending the workshop at Neuadd Dwyfor, Pwllheli.
21. On the basis of the group discussions and following further consultation with the facilitators, the Council's culture services and the wider sector, a draft vision and principles were agreed upon.
22. A 'Gwynedd Culture: For Everybody's Well-being' event was held in Portmeirion on 4 March 2026 where there was an opportunity to share the vision and principles, as well as an opportunity to hear about the SPF project – *'Diwyllesiant'*, which had supported so much cultural activity in Gwynedd over two years. It was also an opportunity to hear examples of how culture supports well-being here in Gwynedd and to share information about the

intention to establish a new Culture Network for Gwynedd and introduce the members of the Network's Shadow Steering Board.

23. Below is the draft statement, vision and principles which have been co-developed with the sector for Gwynedd's culture and which takes into account the comments made in the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee:

    Statement:

    "Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities, the Welsh language and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world.

    Vision:

    Our culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and alive. Rooted in the Welsh language and belonging to everyone, together we want to promote, celebrate and support our culture – today and into the future.

24. Originally, 10 principles for supporting the statement were identified, but following further discussions on 7 July 2026 with the Shadow Steering Board, it was agreed to seek to reduce this number to 6:

    i. Proud of our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh language
    ii. Culture at the Root of Life
    iii. Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected
    iv. Ambitious, Challenging and Bold
    v. Enriching People and Places
    vi. Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations

The Value of Gwynedd Culture

25. To support this work, a commission has been set up by the Council with Welsh Government funding which has enabled us to appoint experts to assist us in supporting our understanding of the culture sector in Gwynedd and to develop an action plan. (Appendix C)
26. This research strengthens the case for ensuring that we continue to invest in culture in Gwynedd and highlights the economic and social value of the cultural sector.
27. The analysis shows that the cultural sector in Gwynedd generates an estimated annual economic contribution of £316.07 million.
28. Culture accounts for approximately 11% of Gwynedd's total economic output, placing it alongside other major sectors in the county's economy.
29. In addition to its economic strength, culture produces £178.02 million of social value each year including health and well-being, social cohesion, education and skills, identity and sense of place.
30. These findings show that investing in culture provides benefits that extend far beyond just economic activity, supporting individual well-being, community resilience, skills development, the Welsh language, and the county's unique cultural identity.

Action Plan for Culture in Gwynedd 2027 - 2035

31. By considering the research into economic and social value, the agreed vision and principles, as well as the feedback from the sector that action is the most important thing rather than 'words'; an action plan for culture in Gwynedd was developed. (Appendix B)
32. A workshop of the Gwynedd Culture Shadow Steering Group to develop an Action Plan was held virtually on 9 June 2026 and in person at Storiel on 7 July 2026.
33. The draft Action Plan highlights areas of action to be adopted to support and develop the culture sector in Gwynedd.
34. 34 actions are highlighted that have been divided into foundational, short term, medium term and ambitious implementation periods. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly.
35. It is expected that the Culture Steering Board will take ownership of monitoring the implementation and delivery of the Action Plan once arrangements have been confirmed.

Resources and funding

36. It should be noted that additional resources will not derive from the formulation of Our Culture, Our Future – but it will be a way of pulling together the culture sector in Gwynedd and a means of applying for financial resources from external funding sources.
37. In parallel with the Plan, it is also intended to establish the Gwynedd Culture Network for the first time - as a forum that will share good practice, support networking and own the vision and principles. A Shadow Board has already been set up and membership has been agreed for 2026.
38. This network will be an evolution of the Creative Gwynedd network already established as an arts network in the county, and will build on the success and learn from the operation of that network and adapt it into a cultural network for Gwynedd.
39. It is suggested by the culture sector that these are visions and principles that could be adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd, but with support and ownership from the sector to be realised through the new culture network and culture steering board.

Next Steps

40. It is intended to celebrate the value of the sector and launch Our Culture, Our Future – A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd; at a special event in Bangor on 19 November 2026.
41. Following this, the Shadow Culture Board will be formalised evolving the arrangements and composition of the current Creative Gwynedd committee.
42. The Culture Board and the Culture Network will immediately implement the Action Plan and monitor its implementation.

Consultation

43. Extensive consultation was carried out in the development of the Plan through representatives from the culture sector in Gwynedd as well as Cyngor Gwynedd's culture services.
44. Members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee had the opportunity to scrutinise the framework at their meeting on 8 October 2026.

45. Comments were made that the Welsh language needed to be more prominent in the work and the importance of culture to sustain the Welsh language, that the Action Plan needed clear measures and that it is ambitious. The Committee's decision was to:
    45.a. Consider revisiting the wording of the vision to include a specific reference to the Welsh Language, wording the vision to note an ambition/aim An alternative vision was provided by the Chair of the Committee for further consideration, namely: "*As the Welsh language is at its strongest in Wales in Gwynedd and therefore the county is expected to lead in enriching and forming the Welsh civilisation and thus to contribute to the cultural diversity of humanity, we aim to make and keep the Welsh language an integral part of the life of the county.*"
    45.b. Request for the service to report on data that compares the outward migration in similar areas (such as the Lake District) to compare with Gwynedd's situation to see whether this culture anchors people to the County.
46. The vision proposed by the Chair and the comments made in the Committee were considered and discussed by the Culture Network Shadow Board:
    46.a. The statement and vision have been adapted to include the Welsh language in order to highlight this link more clearly and the importance of culture to support the language.
    46.b. While agreeing on the importance of having ambition, there were strong feelings that the statement and vision were important as they had been co-created, and that the ambition of achieving the statement would be entirely dependent on the resources that might be available.
    46.c. It was felt that elements of the alternative vision by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee were important to be included within the narrative of the Plan and that has been done within the introduction.
    46.d. The Action Plan includes potential measures as well as one action relating to the identification of common measures across the sector.
47. The Department will gather information from other areas to consider whether culture is responsible for anchoring people more in Gwynedd than in other rural areas.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

48. This work addresses each of the 7 well-being goals and this is highlighted in the agreed vision and principles.
49. Residents and service users have been **included** by holding a public culture event at the beginning of the process for anyone who had an interest in culture in Gwynedd.
50. **Collaboration** has taken place throughout the process of developing a vision and principles for Culture in Gwynedd, as well as the Action Plan. This ensures joint-ownership of the work when looking to the future and establishing a Culture Network for Gwynedd will ensure that the collaboration will continue in the future as we implement and support the culture sector.
51. Establishing the Gwynedd Culture Network with a Steering Board will ensure that we **prevent** problems from arising or being able to respond to them in partnership before they worsen. Regular networking and collaboration will ensure that we prevent problems from arising.
52. It has been agreed for the vision and principles to be for the **long-term** in order to draw the sector together. The Action Plan which will be reviewed regularly sets out priorities for

action over the short, medium and long term and there will be an opportunity to add to it in review.

53. To ensure **integration**, other public bodies were invited to attend the events to develop the vision, the principles and the Action Plan, including: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Arts Council of Wales, Welsh Government, Eryri National Park Authority, Cyngor Gwynedd Cultural Services and other cultural partners from North Wales.

Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-economic Duty

54. A Composite Impact Assessment has been prepared and can be found in Appendix D.
55. The Assessment highlights the opportunities that exist through the development of this work to collaborate to ensure that everyone benefits from Gwynedd's culture.
56. The Plan will ensure that Culture in Gwynedd collaborates towards a single vision and principles and action plan that will ensure the best for the people of Gwynedd.
57. It highlights how implementation is planned to be monitored and assessed and the structure proposed to be established through the Gwynedd Culture Network supported by a Strategic Board to promote collaboration, the implementation of the Action Plan and to monitor the success of the plan.

Observations of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer

“The adoption of this Strategy provides an opportunity for Cabinet to set the direction and priorities in this key area. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought”.

Chief Finance Officer

"I am satisfied that the adoption of the decision sought will not create a new financial commitment. Nevertheless, from a financial point of view I support the plan as it will contribute to creating a solid foundation for prioritising resources within the cultural sphere in the future."

Appendices

Appendix A – Our Culture, Our Future: A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd 2035
Appendix B – Our Culture, Our Future: Action Plan
Appendix C – Assessment of the value of Culture to Gwynedd
Appendix D – Composite Impact Assessment

Our Culture, Our Future

A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd

culture

Culture consists of activities such as the arts and philosophy, which are considered to be important for the development of civilization and of people's minds.

Collins Dictionary

Culture is a concept that encompasses the social behaviour, institutions, and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, attitudes, and habits of the individuals in these groups

Wikipedia

A word from the Cabinet Member for Economy and Community

On behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd, I am honoured to present this plan, Our Culture, Our Future: A Plan for Culture in Gwynedd.

Culture is important to Gwynedd, and Gwynedd is important to the culture of Wales and the world. The County has been a furnace of creativity for centuries and sustaining this flame is vital to the continuation of our identity, the Welsh language and our rich and diverse traditions into the future.

What is special about this work is that it is not a plan drawn up by Cyngor Gwynedd on its own - it has been co-developed with partners across the County.

Over the past two years we have held conferences, workshops and public events across Gwynedd in order to gather views and build consensus. Well over a hundred people have been involved in this process.

The clear message that came from the discussions that took place was that partners did not want another strategy to gather dust on a shelf. They wanted a clear statement and vision, agreed principles and a practical action plan that would lead to decisive action. That is what we have here.

The research commissioned and seen here estimates that the culture sector contributes over £316m a year to Gwynedd's economy. In addition, the social value created is estimated to be worth over £178 million every year. Those figures are confirmation that investing in culture makes economic as well as social sense.

We are all aware of the financial challenges we face, but this is not just a matter of supporting culture activities. It's about supporting jobs, developing skills, strengthening communities, protecting the Welsh language, improving health and well-being, and creating opportunities for people to live, work and thrive here in Gwynedd.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the co-development. Collaboration through the new network will be absolutely essential to the success of the delivery of this plan; and I wish all partners well as we move to deliver the plan together in order to maintain, celebrate, support and grow our culture for our future.

Cllr R.Medwyn Hughes

Introduction

We are all aware of the cultural wealth of Gwynedd and the significant contribution that our culture makes to Welsh civilisation, to the Welsh language and to the diversity of our world.

In light of this, an opportunity has been identified to formally recognise and declare the value and importance of culture, affirming its key role in enriching the lives of the people of today, securing its legacy for the future and highlighting its contribution to the cultural diversity of humanity.

By bringing our partners together to co-develop this Plan and to promote collaboration for the benefit of our culture and for the future benefit of all, we are celebrating and recognising its importance.

A statement, vision and principles were co-developed with partners from across Gwynedd and an action plan has been developed with members of the Gwynedd Culture Network Shadow Steering Board with input from a dedicated questionnaire for partners.

Our partners' desire was not to create a 'strategy' to gather dust or agree on an 'ambition' beyond our reach. It was the partners' desire to co-create a statement and vision that clearly set out our perspective and aspiration for a culture supported by clear principles and an action plan that is easy to measure and owned by all.

What is our definition of culture?

In this plan, 'culture' is broadly defined, in line with Welsh Government practice, to include the arts, museums, libraries, archives, the historic environment and the Creative Industries.

Culture in Gwynedd

Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities, the Welsh language and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world.

Vision

"Our culture is vibrant and alive. Rooted in the Welsh language and belonging to everyone, together we want to promote, celebrate and support our culture – today and into the future".

Principles

1. **Proud of Our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh Language**

   Culture celebrates and promotes Gwynedd's unique identity, heritage, creativity, and the Welsh language, sharing them confidently with Wales and the wider world.

2. **Culture at the Heart of Life**

   Culture is an essential part of the health, wellbeing, education and happiness of the people of Gwynedd, enriching everyday life and creating opportunities to have fun, learn and socialise .

3. **Community-Led, Inclusive, Kind and Connected**

   Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging.

4. **Ambitious, Challenging and Bold**

   Culture inspires new ideas, embraces or challenges change, sets high standards and makes the most of opportunities and investment to realise and measure the impact of ambitions.

5. **Enriching People and Places**

   Culture enhances wellbeing, develops skills and talent, and contributes to a strong local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.

6. **Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations**

   Culture protects and enriches resources, the environment, and the special qualities of Gwynedd, ensuring long-term benefits for future generations.

The Value of Gwynedd Culture

The culture sector is a significant part of Gwynedd's economy, much larger than many people realise, and is driven by the work of creative professionals across the county.

Although the main focus of the 'Value of Culture' report is the economic impact, the magnitude of the wider social value identified reinforces the conclusion that culture makes a significant contribution not only to the economy of Gwynedd, but also to the quality of life of its residents and the strength of its communities.

Key finding:

*"The analysis shows that the culture sector in Gwynedd generates an estimated annual economic contribution of **£316.07 million**."*

This includes:

- **£121.98m direct impact** - activity produced by cultural organisations and creative businesses.
- **£135.54m indirect impact** - spending across the supply chain.
- **£58.55m incentive impact** - expenditure on salaries in the local economy.

Culture accounts for approximately **11% of Gwynedd's total economic output**, placing it alongside other major sectors in the county's economy.

Where does the value come from?

- **Creative industries and cultural businesses:** £77.63m
- **Heritage, museums and archives:** £28.62m
- **Performing arts and events:** £6.51m
- **Applied crafts and arts:** £6.62m
- **Libraries and literature:** £1.42m
- **The visual arts and galleries:** £1.18m

These figures show a culturally diverse and interconnected economy, where creatives contribute at all levels, from freelancers and artists to producers, volunteers and organisations.

In addition to its economic strength, culture produces **£178.02 million social value every year**.

This includes:

- **£44.51m** health and well-being benefits
- **£71.21m** impacts on employment, the visitor economy and the supply chain
- **£26.72m** value derived from social and community cohesion

- **£17.78m** value in education and skills
- **£9.41m** value associated with cultural identity and the Welsh language
- **£8.39m** environmental value and value derived from a sense of place

Culture strengthens communities, supports mental health and well-being, builds confidence, connects generations, and reinforces Gwynedd's unique identity. This is often achieved through creative work, workshops, performances and practitioner-led projects across the county.

The evidence is clear: **culture is a vital infrastructure, not just a "nice to have".**

It:

- Supports local jobs and businesses
- Attracts visitors and investment
- Strengthens towns and communities
- Promotes the Welsh language and local identity
- Improves well-being and quality of life
- Contributes to education, skills development and opportunities for young people

As stated in the report:

"Culture should be understood as an important part of Gwynedd's economic infrastructure, rather than as an optional or marginal activity."

For creative professionals, this recognition is important. It places cultural work at the heart of Gwynedd's future and highlights the value of creative labour, skills and creative practice. It also recognises the significant contribution that artists, freelancers, creative practitioners and cultural organisations make to the county's economy, communities and well-being.

Action Plan

Given the agreed statement, vision, principles and research into economic and social value as well as the feedback from partners that action is the most important thing rather than 'words'; an Action Plan has been developed.

The Gwynedd Culture Action Plan currently sets out 34 practical, funded and measurable actions designed to strengthen culture across the county.

Every action is linked to one or more of the six agreed principles, making the plan easy to navigate and ensuring that all elements contribute directly to Gwynedd's culture statement and support the people who provide cultural activity at grassroots level.

The plan is structured entirely around these six principles. Every action clearly shows how it contributes to them, from grassroots participation and creative health work to large opportunities, fair pay, sustainability, advocacy and long-term ambitions. The principles provide a common direction for the sector and a practical way to track progress over time.

Every action specifies:

- Lead organisation or clear partnership
- Realistic timetable
- Resources needed
- Simple methods of measuring progress

The plan balances ambition with practicality, combining high-impact opportunities with practical actions that we can start to deliver immediately. It provides a collaborative delivery pathway for organisations, freelancers, communities and Cyngor Gwynedd to work together, ensuring that culture continues to enrich people and places across the county.

For creative practitioners, the plan offers clearer pathways to support, stronger networks, and new opportunities to inform and shape the future of Gwynedd's culture.

This will be a live document that adapts, evolves and develops over time as the Culture Network is established and matures and as collaboration bears fruit.

It is planned to review the priorities for implementation and progress in delivering at least once a year at the Network and Steering Board meetings.

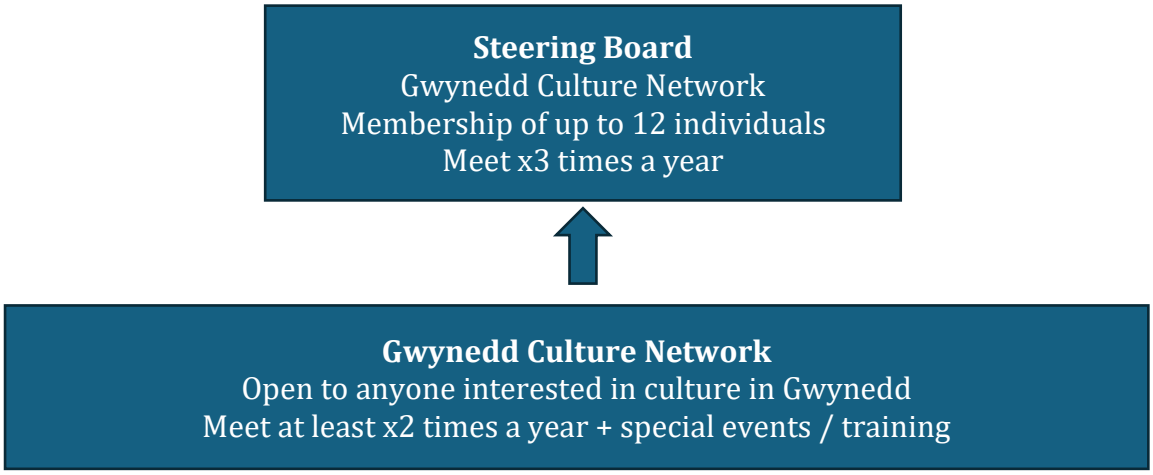
Gwynedd Culture Network and monitoring of implementation

It is planned to establish the Gwynedd Culture Network as a new forum that will share good practice, support networking and own Plan.

This network will be an evolution of the 'Creative Gwynedd' network already established as an arts network in the county, and will build on the success and learn from the operation of that network and adapt it into a cultural network for Gwynedd.

The Culture Steering Board will take ownership of monitoring the implementation and delivery of the Action Plan once arrangements have been confirmed. When active, it is anticipated that up to 12 members of the Culture Steering Board with a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected from among the members of the Board.

A clear proposal from the cultural partners is that the statement and principles are ones that should be adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd but with support and ownership from the sector to be realised through the new Culture Network and Culture Steering Board.



Resources and funding

The evidence gathered will help Cyngor Gwynedd and its partners to make informed decisions about where to focus efforts, investment and collaboration, including the support provided to artists, freelancers and creative organisations.

No additional budget or resources will result directly from the adoption of this Plan, but the work will be used to:

- **Guide future decisions about culture in Gwynedd**, ensuring that culture is recognised as an essential element of the county's well-being, identity and economy.
- **Strengthen funding applications and investment cases**, by using robust evidence to demonstrate the magnitude and impact of cultural activity.
- **Support collaboration across the sector**, with a Culture Network and co-ordination to support the delivery of the plan.
- **Improve the way data is collected and monitored**, by using common and consistent measures that help track progress against the six principles.
- **Prioritise actions that deliver the greatest benefit**, balancing ambition with practical work that can be started immediately.
- **Build a resilient and confident cultural ecosystem**, where creative practitioners, organisations and communities can thrive together.

Together, the value assessment and the Action Plan set a clear direction for long-term cultural development in Gwynedd.

This direction is evidence-based, co-created with the sector, and designed to make a meaningful and lasting impact for people and places across the county. It provides a solid foundation for maximising the contribution of culture to Gwynedd's economy, communities, well-being and identity for years to come.

Strategic Background

According to the A Decade of Cuts report by the Senedd Cymru Culture Committee, Wales ranks second from the bottom among European countries in terms of expenditure per head on cultural services.

The report makes a number of key recommendations and calls on the Welsh Government to provide more funding, preventative spending and strategic support.

The Programme for Government for Wales 2026-2030 highlights the following relevant priority areas for culture:

a. Work with the sector, including our creative industries, to develop and deliver a targeted Culture and Sport Strategy to create a healthier, richer and more resilient Wales.

b. Prioritise equal access to the arts, culture, heritage and sport for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, considering how our access policies can support this.

c. Invest in the preventive role of culture, heritage and sport to promote good health for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives clear priority to culture as one of the well-being goals - a Wales with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. The Commissioner recently highlighted placing culture at the heart of Wales' well-being as one of his priorities.

The priority of A Prosperous Gwynedd within the Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028 includes *Promoting our Culture and a Sustainable Visitor Economy*. Within this priority, considering the Development of a Culture Plan for Gwynedd is an operational priority.

Culture is given a central place in a number of plans and strategies by Cyngor Gwynedd and other local organisations, including the following:

- Gwynedd and Eryri 2035: Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan
- Gwynedd 2035: An economy that works for all
- Our Area Plans
- The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales World Heritage Site Management Plan
- Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy
- Gwynedd Schools Strategy 2026-2036
- Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan
- Gwynedd Libraries Scheme: Living Libraries
- Eryri Plan

Contact us

Our Culture, Our Future

Community Arts Team, Cyngor Gwynedd, Stryd y Jêl,

Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH

07765 652742

post@gwyneddgreadigol.com

Our Culture, Our Future: Action Plan

Summary

Code	Principle	Description	Actions linked	Main fit
P1	Proud of Our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh Language	Culture celebrates and promotes Gwynedd's unique identity, heritage, creativity, and the Welsh language, sharing them confidently with Wales and the wider world.	8	5
P2	Culture at the Heart of Life	Culture is an essential part of the health, wellbeing, education and happiness of the people of Gwynedd, enriching everyday life and creating opportunities to have fun, learn and socialise.	10	3
P3	Community-Led, Inclusive, Kind and Connected	Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging.	13	7
P4	Ambitious, Challenging and Bold	Culture inspires new ideas, embraces or challenges change, sets high standards and makes the most of opportunities and investment to realise and measure the impact of ambitions.	11	8
P5	Enriching People and Places	Culture enhances wellbeing, develops skills and talent, and contributes to a strong local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.	14	8
P6	Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations	Culture protects and enriches resources, the environment, and the special qualities of Gwynedd, ensuring long-term benefits for future generations.	5	3

Actions linked = actions that list the principle anywhere. Main fit = actions that list it first.

Ref	Action / Initiative	Principle (s)	Geography	Artforms / Subsectors	Scale	Lead / Partners	Timescale	Status	Resources / Cost	Metric – quantitative	Metric – qualitative
A01	Coordinated, well-organised collaboration across artforms, culminating in public exhibitions and events	P3, P2	County-wide	Visual arts, craft, multi-artform	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; freelance artists	2026–27	Proposed	Coordination time; small project funds	Collaborations formed; exhibitions/events held; artists taking part	Quality of collaboration; artist feedback
A02	Community-created public art that brings different groups together (e.g. older people and primary schoolchildren)	P3, P2	County-wide (community-based)	Public art, mosaics, installation; could extend to pop-up music / readings; archives, museums and heritage	Small	Freelance artists, schools; care/day settings; Cyngor Gwynedd	2026–28	Proposed	Project funds; materials	Installations created; participants across generations	Intergenerational connection; community pride
A03	Fund seasonal community events that celebrate Welsh folk and village culture	P1, P2	Villages county-wide	Folk, music, performance, seasonal customs	Small	Community organisations; freelancers, Cyngor Gwynedd	Ongoing / annual	Proposed	Seasonal event grants; Council's events pot	Events held; attendance; volunteers	Community cohesion; celebration of local culture
A04	Sustain grassroots, low-cost rural participation (ages 5–adult) with volunteering and progression pathways	P3, P5, P2	Rural Gwynedd	All culture forms — circus skills, music, drama, dance, participatory arts	Small	Community partners, freelancers, Cyngor Gwynedd	Ongoing	Underway	Core/volunteer support; worker training & safeguarding	Weekly participants; volunteers; progression to training/careers	Access on the doorstep; young people's pathways

A05	Inclusive outreach through non-digital channels to reach older and rural audiences (not online-only)	P3, P2	County-wide; rural	Cross-artform	Small	libraries; community workers and arts organisations; Cyngor Gwynedd	Ongoing	Proposed	Print, postage and distribution funding (cost & environmental trade-off noted)	Reach across geographies; non-digital contacts	Audiences reached who are not online
A06	A coordinated cultural programme working with and towards the two Eisteddfods: National (Aug 2027) and Urdd (May 2028)	P1, P4	County-wide	Multi-artform	Big	Cyngor Gwynedd; Eisteddfod Genedlaethol; Urdd Gobaith Cymru	2026–28	Proposed	TBC — seek external funding	Events delivered; audiences reached	Community pride; legacy
A07	Commission a flagship, transformational creative event in the spirit of the 2017 Hedd Wyn centenary	P4, P1	County-wide	Performance, music, multi-artform	Big	TBC; Eisteddfod partners	2027–28	Idea	High — needs funding	Attendance; media reach	Sense of transformation for the area
A08	Explore a UK City of Culture 2033 bid for Bangor, capturing the ambition, milestones and challenges	P4, P5	Bangor (the bid city); county-wide impact if successful	All	Big	Cyngor Gwynedd; Board	2026–33	Idea	TBC	Bid milestones met	Long-term ambition articulated
A09	A small fund for 'off the wall' / experimental commissions: bold ideas, not necessarily costly	P4	County-wide	All / experimental	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network	2026 onwards	Idea	Small pots; not necessarily costly. Workshop: pool a shared pot — consider the ACW fund at A24	Commissions funded	Distinctiveness; inspiration

A10	Connect the plan to the Slate Landscape World Heritage Site and Amgueddfa Cymru's National Slate Museum refurbishment	P1, P6	Slate valleys; Llanberis	Multi-artform — heritage, interpretation	Mixed	Amgueddfa Cymru (National Slate Museum); Cyngor Gwynedd	2026–27	Idea	TBC	Linked activities delivered	Heritage relevance to communities
A11	A 'Slate Art' strand: new creative work rooted in slate heritage and landscape	P1, P4	Slate areas; county-wide	Visual arts, craft, sculpture; widen to literature, music and other forms	Small	Freelance artists; heritage partners	2026–28	Idea	Project funds	Artworks / commissions; artists involved	Heritage expressed through new work
A12	Put the Welsh language at the heart of cultural branding, interpretation and communications across venues and events	P1	County-wide	All	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; venues and partners	2026–27	Proposed	Existing resources / staff time	Venues adopting bilingual best practice	Welsh-language visibility and confidence
A13	Support capital works (and ongoing maintenance) that safeguard special cultural buildings and improve access and sustainability	P6, P1, P3	County-wide	All forms of culture; multi-use venues	Big	Various organisations	2026–29	Proposed	Capital and maintenance — external grants (e.g. NLHF). Workshop: Welsh Government support seen as essential	Capital projects supported; access improvements	Special places safeguarded; welcoming spaces

A14	Develop the cultural relationship with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board — including social prescribing — with specific projects sitting under it (e.g. Theatr Cynefin's "Dod nôl i'n Coed")	P2, P5	County-wide; BCUHB	All artforms; nature-based creative practice	Mixed	Cyngor Gwynedd; Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; Theatr Cynefin; Gwynedd Culture Network	2026–28	Proposed	Staff time to build the relationship; project funding to follow (health + arts)	Relationship established; joint priorities agreed; social prescribing routes opened; projects delivered	Culture recognised as part of health provision
A15	Grow creative-health, reminiscence and dementia work with health & social care partners	P2, P3	Libraries county-wide (e.g. Tywyn, Porthmadog, Caernarfon, Cricieth)	Music, reminiscence, craft	Small	Llyfrgelloedd Gwynedd (Eifion Parry); Dementia Actif Gwynedd; freelancers	Ongoing	Underway	Small grants (e.g. Darllen yn Well / Reading Well)	Sessions; attendees; venues	Reminiscence and wellbeing; participant feedback
A16	Support artists and practitioners across all artforms working in health and wellbeing	P2, P5	County-wide; health settings	All artforms	Small	Literature Wales; Arts Council of Wales; Betsi Cadwaladr UHB; health partners	2026–28 establish need; 2027–28 embed	Underway	Project funding	Practitioners trained; projects delivered	Health/wellbeing impact; lived-experience voice
A17	Review and relaunch Creative Gwynedd as an independent Gwynedd Culture Network (committee, officers, website, membership), and	P3, P5	County-wide	All	Small	Creative Gwynedd; Cyngor Gwynedd (Community Arts Service)	2026 (pilot year; secretariat funding sought)	Underway	Council staff coordination; membership model to sustain; funding sought in 2026 for a secretariat role (currently c.5 paid hours a week)	Members; meetings; training sessions; secretariat funding secured	Quality of collaboration; sector ownership

	seek funding in 2026 for it to act as secretariat for the Action Plan										
A18	Guarantee freelancer voice and representation, and fair pay — agree and publish a county-wide baseline day rate for artists' time, and encourage longer, more continuous contracts so freelancers can plan ahead	P5, P3	County-wide	All	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network	2026 onwards	Agreed	Policy/commitment; capacity to agree and publish rates; fees budgeted into projects. Workshop: Real Living Wage as a floor	Freelancer representation; artists paid	Freelancer confidence; fair treatment
A19	A training and professional-development offer (safeguarding, H&S, tax/accounts, DBS, fundraising, project management)	P5	County-wide	All	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; partners (e.g. Literature Wales)	2026 onwards	Proposed	Training budget; partner delivery	Training sessions; participants	Skills and confidence gained
A20	Develop the offer of stable, affordable creative spaces — first understanding why current provision is not fully taken up, then working	P5, P3	County-wide	All	Mixed	Cyngor Gwynedd; sector partners	2026 (understand take-up); 2027–28 (develop the offer)	Proposed	Scoping capacity in 2026; then space costs: Cyngor Gwynedd, Tai Gwynedd, empty shops, existing hubs	Take-up of existing space understood; spaces available and occupied; young people accessing space	Spaces that match what people actually need; stepping-stone routes for young people

	towards an offer that matches need, including stepping-stone and shared professional-level space for young people										
A21	A talent pipeline for young creatives (young writers/artists 16–25, laureate and schools work)	P5, P2	County-wide; schools	Writing; broader creative	Small	Literature Wales (National Writing Squad); Criw Celf; schools; Network	2026–28	Underway	Programme funding	Young people supported; mentors	Craft development; creative community
A22	Targeted support for visual artists — studio space, exhibition and commission opportunities	P5	County-wide	Visual arts, printmaking, applied arts	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; Cyngor Gwynedd	2026–28	Proposed	Studio/exhibition support; commissions	Artists supported; exhibitions/commissions	Sustained visual-arts practice
A23	Streamline and standardise cultural data collection — agree 2–3 shared metrics	P4	County-wide	All	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; sector partners	2026	Proposed	Staff time	Common figures (tickets sold, attendance)	In-the-moment quotes and feelings
A24	Submit a ~£20k Arts Council of Wales application to fund data capacity across the county	P4	County-wide	All	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; Arts Council of Wales	2026	Idea	~£20k sought	Funding secured; days/posts supported	Capacity gap addressed
A25	Develop mechanisms that make environmental sustainability and	P6	County-wide	All	Mixed	All partners; Cyngor Gwynedd	2026 (develop criteria); ongoing	Proposed	Staff time to develop and agree criteria; existing resources; some capital for venues	Criteria agreed and adopted; proposals assessed against them	Sustainability treated as a condition of support, not an add-on

	Welsh Language key criteria in assessing and supporting creative and cultural proposals across the county						thereafter				
A26	Align the plan with the National Park LDP (under review), the Well-being of Future Generations Act and other local and national policy (e.g. the Gwynedd Plan, culture priorities)	P6	County-wide; National Park	All	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; Eryri National Park Authority	2026 (LDP under review)	Proposed	Counterculture	Alignment points mapped	Coherence with wider plans
A27	Coordinate a funding strategy to deliver the plan — a pipeline of bids	P4	County-wide	Targeted — archives, heritage, visual arts, literature, language	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; Gwynedd Culture Network	2026 onwards	Proposed	Staff time; bid-writing	Bids submitted; funding secured	Plan resourced and delivered
A28	Agree governance and an annual review cycle, reporting progress against the six principles	P4	County-wide	All	Small	Cyngor Gwynedd; Gwynedd Culture Network	Annual from 2026	Proposed	Staff time	Actions progressed; annual review held	Accountability against the principles
A29	Meanwhile use of empty commercial spaces: work with property owners to open empty units across the	P5, P6	County-wide; town centres	All	Mixed	Cyngor Gwynedd; Gwynedd Culture Network; Tai Gwynedd;	2027–28 (after A20 has worked out why existing	Idea	Brokering time; meanwhile-lease templates; insurance; light fit-out	Units opened; occupancy; artforms using the space	Whether users find the space fits their needs; whether they move on to

	county as short-term, affordable creative space across all artforms					commercial landlords	space isn't being taken up)				longer-term space
A30	Career development: make the most of Arts Council of Wales training and professional development funding both by signposting and supporting applications, including evidence of local demand. Develop a county-wide training bid to the ACW organisational strand (could help deliver A19).	P5, P4	County-wide	All	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; Arts Council of Wales; Cyngor Gwynedd; Literature Wales; Criw Celf	Signposting and application support from 2026; county-wide training bid 2026–27 (via A27)	Proposed	Network time; help with bid-writing; a small local pot, if needed, sought through A27; fees at the A18 rate	Gwynedd applications to and awards from ACW (individual and organisational); value of training brought into the county; local awards and paid placements, if the fund goes ahead	Whether careers moved on and what the opportunity led to next
A31	Lobby and advocate on the issues culture can't fix alone: Possible issues include (1) fair pay, with the Real Living Wage as a floor; (2) duration: longer contracts/continuity so freelancers can plan ahead; (3) transport: cost and	P5, P3	County-wide	All	Small	Culture Board; Gwynedd Culture Network; Cyngor Gwynedd (incl. transport and economic development teams); Welsh Government; Arts Council of Wales	Agree the agenda in 2026; review each year through A28	Proposed	Board and Network time	Issues raised; meetings held and submissions made	Whether partners change policy or practice as a result

	availability of travel.										
A32	An advocacy register: the Network keeps a shared register of evidence from members (case studies, film, publications, quotes and the issues they're facing). Gives advocacy (A31) something to draw on and used to build new partnerships outside the sector	P4, P3	County-wide	All	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; Cyngor Gwynedd; members	2026 onwards	Proposed	Network time; a simple shared format; some film or documentation budget	Entries logged; case studies and films published	Whether the evidence gets used in bids, advocacy or partner conversations
A33	Regular in-person sector gathering: well-publicised event for the whole sector every 1-2 years. Open to everyone, including people who don't usually come to Network meetings.	P3, P2	County-wide; venue changing each time	All	Small	Gwynedd Culture Network; Cyngor Gwynedd; host venue changing each time	First gathering 2027; then annually or every two years	Proposed	Venue, speakers, access and travel support	Attendance, including first-time attendees	How inspiring and useful people found it; what connections it led to

A34	As Creative Gwynedd develops distinguish public-facing and network-facing roles: (1) a public-facing bilingual directory of Gwynedd's artists and organisations, based on the Wales Writers directory model; (2) a network-facing single place for opportunities, funding, tenders, collaborations and space	P3, P5, P1	County-wide; North Wales for opportunities	All	Small	Creative Gwynedd / Gwynedd Culture Network; Cyngor Gwynedd	2026–27, as part of the A17 relaunch	Proposed	Web development; ongoing time to keep it up to date (secretariat role under A17)	Directory listings; opportunities posted; users	Whether people still feel they "miss things"

Deyton Bell Limited

ASSESSMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VALUE OF THE CULTURAL SECTOR IN GWYNEDD

Economic Assessment

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Background and aims of the study

3. Scope of the study

4. Report Findings

5. Methodology

6. Data sources and proxy values

7. Conclusions

8. Appendix 1. Sources and proxy measures used in the assessment

Assessment of the economic value of the cultural sector in the Gwynedd area

Executive Summary

This report assesses the economic and wider social value of the cultural sector across Gwynedd and provides an evidence base to inform future investment, policy development, and the implementation of the Gwynedd Cultural Action Plan. The assessment has been prepared to demonstrate the contribution that culture makes to Gwynedd's economy through employment, organisational activity, visitor expenditure, supply chains, and wider local economic resilience, while also recognising the broader wellbeing and community benefits generated by cultural participation and investment.

The analysis finds that the cultural sector in Gwynedd generates an estimated total annual economic contribution of £316.07 million. This comprises £121.98 million of direct economic activity generated by cultural organisations and cultural businesses themselves, £135.54 million of indirect impact through supply-chain expenditure, and £58.55 million of induced impact generated by the spending of wages and earnings within the wider regional economy. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that culture is a significant economic sector within Gwynedd and one that supports activity well beyond the organisations directly delivering cultural provision.

The direct contribution of the sector reflects the breadth and diversity of cultural activity taking place across the county. The largest element of direct economic value is generated by the Creative Industries and wider cultural business sector, estimated at £77.63 million per annum. Heritage attractions, museums, and archives contribute a further £28.62 million, underlining the importance of Gwynedd's distinctive historic environment and internationally recognised cultural assets. Performing arts and events, craft and applied arts, libraries and literature, and visual arts and galleries each make additional contributions, demonstrating that the sector functions as an interconnected cultural economy rather than a set of isolated activities.

The analysis also shows that the cultural sector has strong multiplier effects across Gwynedd's wider economy. Indirect effects are generated as cultural organisations purchase goods and services from businesses in areas such as maintenance, transport, marketing, retail, construction, and professional services. Induced effects arise when those employed directly and indirectly through the sector spend their income locally. These wider impacts are substantial and show that the economic value of culture extends beyond immediate organisational income to support broader business activity, jobs, and expenditure across Gwynedd.

A further finding of the report is that the cultural sector generates significant wider social value. Using HM Treasury Green Book-aligned wellbeing valuation methods, the

assessment estimates that cultural activity in Gwynedd generates £178.02 million of social value annually. This includes value associated with economic outcomes, health and wellbeing, social and community cohesion, education and skills, environmental stewardship, and cultural identity. While the main emphasis of this report is economic, the scale of wider social value reinforces the conclusion that culture contributes materially to Gwynedd's quality of life as well as to its economy.

The report has been developed using a robust and proportionate methodology designed to reflect the characteristics of Gwynedd's cultural economy. The assessment combines national and local datasets, evidence from cultural organisations, visitor economy information, case study material, and established multiplier techniques. Direct effects are estimated from observed turnover, expenditure, attendance, and organisational activity where data are available, while indirect and induced effects are modelled using recognised economic relationships and assumptions on local capture, leakage, and household expenditure. Social value is treated as a separate analytical strand, using recognised proxy measures and wellbeing valuation approaches to estimate outcomes that are not directly priced in markets.

Overall, the evidence demonstrates that culture should be understood as an important part of Gwynedd's economic infrastructure rather than as a discretionary or peripheral activity. The sector supports local employment, attracts visitors, sustains supply chains, strengthens towns and communities, and contributes to the attractiveness of Gwynedd as a place to live, work and visit. The findings provide a clear basis for continued investment in cultural infrastructure, programming and organisational capacity, and they establish an evidence base from which future priorities can be identified and progress monitored over time.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by Deyton Bell and Counterculture on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd to assess the economic and social value of the cultural sector across Gwynedd.

The study has been commissioned as part of Cyngor Gwynedd's wider programme to support and strengthen culture across the county, following successful funding secured through the Welsh Government's *Priorities for Culture – Extended Local Support for the Museums, Archives and Libraries Sector* programme. The commission responds to a growing recognition of the importance of culture in supporting thriving communities, economic resilience, wellbeing, identity, and the Welsh language throughout Gwynedd.

The cultural sector, as defined by Welsh Government, encompasses the arts, museums, libraries, archives, the historic environment, and the Creative Industries. Collectively, these activities and organisations make a substantial contribution to the quality of life of Gwynedd residents, support employment and local businesses, attract visitors, safeguard heritage, and create opportunities for participation, learning, and creativity.

The purpose of this assessment is to establish a robust evidence base demonstrating the current contribution of culture to Gwynedd's economy and society. The findings are intended to support future investment, inform decision-making, strengthen advocacy for the sector, and be a foundation for the development of the Gwynedd Cultural Action Plan.

The report examines both the measurable economic impacts generated by cultural activity and the wider social value created through participation, engagement, volunteering, wellbeing, community cohesion, cultural identity, and the promotion of the Welsh language. The assessment draws upon national and local datasets, evidence provided by cultural organisations and partners, stakeholder engagement, and a series of case studies highlighting examples of good practice from across the county.

This work has also been informed by discussions already undertaken through the Gwynedd Cultural Network and the development of a shared vision for culture in Gwynedd. That emerging vision recognises culture as a vital and innovative force rooted within communities, enriching wellbeing, strengthening identity, supporting economic prosperity, and celebrating the Welsh language and the unique heritage of Gwynedd. The objectives of this report are to:

- Assess the economic value of the cultural sector in Gwynedd.
- Assess the social value and wider community benefits generated through cultural activity.
- Identify examples of effective practice and innovation within the sector.
- Highlight current strengths, challenges, and opportunities.
- Provide an evidence base to inform the Gwynedd Cultural Action Plan and future investment priorities.

- Support the continued development of a connected and resilient cultural sector across Gwynedd.

The report should be viewed as both an assessment of the sector's current contribution and a strategic resource to support the future development of culture in Gwynedd.

2. BACKGROUND AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

2.1 Background

Culture plays a significant role in the economic life of Gwynedd. The county is home to a diverse range of cultural organisations, activities, venues and practitioners, including museums, libraries, archives, heritage sites, arts organisations, festivals, creative practitioners, and community-led cultural initiatives. Together, these contribute to local employment, support tourism, attract external investment and generate spending across a range of sectors.

Cyngor Gwynedd has undertaken significant work in recent years to strengthen collaboration across the cultural sector, including the establishment of the Gwynedd Cultural Network and engagement with cultural organisations throughout the county. These discussions have highlighted the importance of culture not only as a social and community asset, but also as an economic driver that contributes to the vitality and resilience of Gwynedd's communities.

The cultural sector also plays a key role in supporting wider policy objectives, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Welsh Government cultural priorities, economic development ambitions, and the promotion of the Welsh language. Culture contributes directly to employment and business activity while also supporting tourism, place-making, community confidence, and the attractiveness of Gwynedd as a place to live, work and visit.

Despite this importance, there has not previously been a comprehensive assessment of the economic value generated by the cultural sector across Gwynedd. This study seeks to address that evidence gap and provide a clear understanding of the contribution culture makes to the local economy.

2.2 Aims of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to assess the economic value of the cultural sector within Gwynedd and to establish a robust evidence base to support future decision-making and investment.

The study seeks to:

- Quantify the direct economic contribution of the cultural sector within Gwynedd.
- Assess the indirect and induced economic impacts generated through cultural activity, employment, and supply chains.
- Examine the contribution of culture to visitor expenditure and the wider visitor economy.
- Identify the economic value generated through publicly funded cultural activity and investment.
- Demonstrate the contribution of culture to local economic resilience, employment, and creative business growth.

- Provide evidence to support future funding applications, policy development, and strategic planning.
- Inform the development and implementation of the Gwynedd Cultural Action Plan.

The assessment is intended to provide both a snapshot of the current economic contribution of culture and a framework that can support future monitoring and evaluation of the sector.

3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This assessment examines the economic contribution of the cultural sector within Gwynedd. The study considers the broad definition of culture adopted by Welsh Government, encompassing the arts, museums, libraries, archives, and the historic environment, and the Creative Industries.

3.1 Areas of Analysis

The assessment focuses on the following dimensions of economic impact:

- Employment and workforce impacts, including jobs directly supported by cultural organisations and activities.
- Organisational expenditure and local supply chain impacts arising from the purchase of goods and services.
- Income generation through cultural activity, including ticket sales, admissions, memberships, commissions, grants, and commercial activity.
- Visitor expenditure associated with cultural participation, including spending on accommodation, food and drink, transport, retail, and other local services.
- Indirect and induced economic effects generated through spending by cultural organisations, employees, and visitors.
- The wider contribution of culture to economic development, place attractiveness, and the visitor economy.

3.2 Exclusions

This report focuses solely on the economic contribution of culture within Gwynedd.

The study does not seek to provide a detailed assessment of social, cultural, educational or wellbeing impacts, which are considered separately within the wider commission. Similarly, the assessment does not quantify environmental impacts, carbon reduction benefits or wider societal outcomes generated by cultural activity.

3.3 Limitations

The findings presented within this report should be interpreted in the context of several limitations.

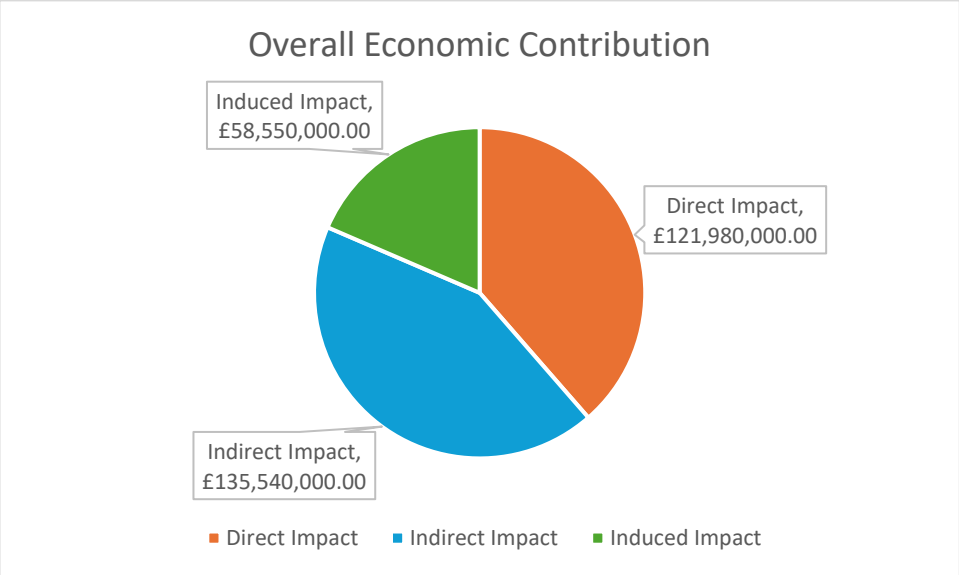
The availability and consistency of data across the cultural sector varies significantly between organisations and activities. In some cases, estimates and assumptions have been applied using recognised economic modelling approaches where complete local data is unavailable.

The assessment is intended to provide a robust estimate of economic value rather than an exact measure of all economic activity generated by culture.

4. REPORT FINDINGS

4.1 Overall Economic Contribution

The assessment estimates that the cultural sector generates a total annual economic contribution of **£316.07 million** for Gwynedd. This comprises direct, indirect, and induced impacts generated through cultural organisations, visitor expenditure, supply chains, and employee spending. The findings demonstrate that culture is a significant contributor to Gwynedd's economy, supporting businesses, employment, and wider economic activity across the county.



Component	Value (£m, p.a.)	Comment
Direct impact	£121.98m	GVA/output generated by cultural organisations in Gwynedd
Indirect impact	£135.54m	Additional Supply-chain effects
Induced impact	£58.55m	Wage-spend effects in the Gwynedd / regional economy
Total economic benefits	**£316.07m**	**Overall economic contribution**
Social value	**£178.02m**	**Monetised wellbeing and wider social outcomes (Green Book-aligned)**

Direct impacts account for approximately £122 million of economic activity generated by cultural organisations themselves. A further £135.5 million is generated through supply chain activity, while employee expenditure contributes an estimated £58.6 million through

induced effects. This demonstrates that the benefits of cultural investment extend well beyond the organisations delivering cultural activity.

4.2 Direct Economic Contribution

Direct economic impacts represent the value created through the operation of cultural organisations, attractions, and creative businesses within Gwynedd. This includes employment, organisational expenditure, admissions, trading income and associated economic activity.

Activity	Benefits	Comment
Heritage, Museums & Archives	£28.62m	Includes Castles, Slate, Railways, Portmeirion etc.
Libraries & Literature	£1.42m	
Performing Arts and Events	£6.51m	Includes; Theatres and cultural events
Visual Arts & Galleries	£1.18m	
Craft & Applied Arts	£6.62m	
Creative Industries & Wider Cultural Business	£77.63m	Includes the Creative Industries (e.g. design, media, publishing, music and the audio-visual sector) and other cultural and creative businesses operating across Gwynedd
Total Direct Benefits	**£121.98m**	

The largest direct contribution comes from the Creative Industries and wider cultural business sector (£77.63 million), reflecting the breadth of creative enterprises operating across Gwynedd. Heritage attractions, museums, and archives contribute £28.62 million, underlining the importance of Gwynedd's internationally recognised heritage assets to the local economy. Performing arts, festivals, craft industries, libraries, and visual arts all make important contributions despite their comparatively smaller scale.

4.3 Indirect and Induced Effects

The analysis demonstrates that the cultural sector has substantial multiplier effects throughout the wider economy. Organisations purchase goods and services from local suppliers, creating indirect impacts estimated at £135.54 million. Staff employed within the sector also spend their earnings within the local economy, generating a further £58.55 million in induced economic activity.

4.4 Social Value

Although this report focuses primarily on the economic contribution of the cultural sector in Gwynedd, the analysis also identifies substantial wider social value generated through cultural participation and investment. Using HM Treasury Green Book-aligned wellbeing valuation methodologies, the assessment estimates that the cultural sector generates approximately £178.02 million of social value annually.

The greatest proportion of this value is associated with economic outcomes, including employment opportunities, visitor spending, and supply chain activity. Significant additional value is generated through improvements in health and wellbeing, strengthened community cohesion, volunteering, education and skills development, environmental stewardship, and the preservation and promotion of Gwynedd's unique cultural identity and Welsh language.

These findings reinforce the view that investment in culture delivers benefits well beyond direct financial returns. Cultural organisations and activities contribute to healthier communities, stronger local identity, increased civic participation and improved quality of life, while also supporting broader public policy objectives across health, education, regeneration, and community development.

Component	Value	Comment
Economic	**71.21m**	Jobs, GVA, visitor economy, supply-chain effects
Health and wellbeing	**44.51m**	Wellbeing valuation, avoids NHS/mental health costs communities
Social and community	**26.72m**	Social capital, reduced isolation, volunteering communities
Education and skills	**17.78m**	Attainment, creative skills, Welsh language skills
Environmental/place	**8.39m**	Heritage asset condition, sustainable practices
Cultural and identity	**9.41m**	Pride in place, cultural distinctiveness, language
Total	**178.02m**	

A separate companion report considers the wider social, community and wellbeing impacts generated by culture across Gwynedd.

4.5 Economic Significance

The analysis reveals that the sector supports strong levels of local employment, sustains supply chains, attracts visitors, and contributes to the vitality of towns and communities across the county. The scale of economic activity identified within this assessment

reinforces the importance of continued investment in cultural infrastructure and programming.

4.6 Wider Economic Context

To help place these findings in context, this section compares the scale of the cultural sector's economic contribution against the size of the wider Gwynedd and Welsh economies. According to Office for National Statistics Regional Accounts data published via StatsWales, Gwynedd's total economic output, measured as Gross Value Added (GVA), was estimated at £2,842 million in 2023, the latest year for which figures are available (provisional). Wales' total GVA over the same period was estimated at £81,458 million.

On this basis, the cultural sector's total annual economic contribution of £316.07 million represents approximately 11% of Gwynedd's entire economic output – a substantial share for a sector that is sometimes perceived as a discretionary or peripheral part of the local economy. Even considering only the direct economic activity generated by cultural organisations and cultural businesses themselves (£121.98 million), culture accounts for over 4% of Gwynedd's GVA, placing it on a scale comparable with other recognised sectors of the local economy. At a national level, Gwynedd's cultural sector contribution of £316.07 million is equivalent to approximately 0.4% of the total GVA of Wales as a whole, reflecting the fact that Gwynedd accounts for a relatively small, though economically significant, share of the wider Welsh economy.

Metric	Value	Source / Basis
Gwynedd total economic output (GVA), 2023 [p]	£2,842m	ONS Regional Accounts, via StatsWales
Wales total economic output (GVA), 2023 [p]	£81,458m	ONS Regional Accounts, via StatsWales
Cultural sector total economic contribution as a share of Gwynedd GVA	**~11%**	£316.07m ÷ £2,842m
Cultural sector direct economic contribution as a share of Gwynedd GVA	**~4%**	£121.98m ÷ £2,842m
Cultural sector total economic contribution as a share of Wales GVA	**~0.4%**	£316.07m ÷ £81,458m
Total jobs supported in Gwynedd (workplace-based)	69,000	ONS Jobs Density estimates (Nomis)

These comparisons illustrate that culture is not a marginal contributor to Gwynedd's prosperity, but one of the county's significant economic sectors, generating economic activity on a scale that stands alongside other core parts of the local economy. For further context on the scale of Gwynedd's wider economy, the county supported an estimated 69,000 jobs (workplace-based) according to the latest available ONS labour

market statistics, providing an additional benchmark against which the scale of cultural sector activity identified in this assessment can be understood, even though a directly comparable employment headcount specifically for the cultural sector falls outside the scope of the data available for this report. As with the other estimates in this report, these comparative figures should be treated as broad indicators of scale rather than precise measures, given differences in the base years, methodologies and revisions between datasets.

5. METHODOLOGY

The methodology set out an analytical approach to calculate the economic value of Gwynedd's cultural sector and should be read as the technical underpinning to the main report. The report defines the cultural sector broadly, in line with Welsh Government practice, to include the arts, museums, libraries, archives, the historic environment, and the Creative Industries, and it assesses direct, indirect, and induced effects within Gwynedd alongside the contribution of culture to the visitor economy.

The assessment is designed to provide a robust estimate of economic value rather than a precise census of every transaction generated by culture. This reflects the report's stated use of mixed evidence sources, including national and local datasets, information supplied by organisations, visitor economy evidence, case studies, and recognised multiplier-based economic impact techniques.

5.1 Analytical framework

The methodology is built around a standard local economic impact model with four main components: direct effects, indirect effects, induced effects, and social value. In the main report, these were brought together to estimate a total annual economic contribution of £316.07 million, comprising £121.98 million of direct impact, £135.54 million of indirect impact and £58.55 million of induced impact, with a separate social value estimate of £178.02 million.

For economic assessment purposes, the direct effect captures the activity generated by cultural organisations and cultural businesses themselves, including turnover, operational expenditure, employment, and visitor-related income directly attributable to cultural activity. The indirect effect captures the supply-chain activity generated when those organisations purchase goods and services from other businesses, while the induced effect captures the additional household expenditure supported by wages and salaries associated with direct and indirect employment.

5.2 Sector definition and scope

The main report adopts a deliberately broad cultural definition so that the assessment reflects the structure of Gwynedd's local cultural economy rather than a narrow arts-only model. The sector therefore includes heritage attractions, museums, archives, libraries, literature activity, performing arts and events, visual arts and galleries, craft and applied arts, and the Creative Industries and wider cultural business base operating in Gwynedd.

The geographic core of the assessment is Gwynedd local authority area. However, the report recognises that some economic effects extend beyond the county boundary, especially where cultural activity attracts visitors from elsewhere in Wales, the wider UK and overseas, so the method distinguishes between impacts that occur locally within Gwynedd and broader spillover effects where evidence allows.

5.3 Evidence base and data collection

The methodology draws on both primary and secondary evidence. The report states that evidence was assembled from national datasets published by Welsh Government, the Office for National Statistics and other public bodies; monitoring and performance information from cultural organisations and projects; financial and operational information from organisations where available; visitor economy and tourism datasets; case study evidence; and multiplier techniques commonly used in economic impact assessment.

In practical terms, this means the model combines bottom-up evidence with top-down benchmarking. Bottom-up evidence is used where organisations can provide actual figures on employment, expenditure, turnover, admissions, participation, ticket sales, memberships, commissions, grant income, or visitor numbers, while top-down assumptions are used where local information is incomplete, inconsistent, or unavailable.

5.4 Estimating direct effects

Direct effects are estimated by identifying the gross economic activity generated by cultural organisations, venues, sites, events, and related cultural businesses within Gwynedd. This includes organisational turnover or output, employment supported directly by cultural activity, operating expenditure, admissions and earned income, and other forms of directly attributable commercial or grant-supported activity.

The direct model is structured by sub-sector to reflect the composition of Gwynedd's cultural economy. In the report, direct contributions are presented for heritage, museums, and archives; libraries and literature; performing arts and events; visual arts and galleries; craft and applied arts; and the Creative Industries and wider cultural business sector, which together sum to £121.98 million per annum.

5.5 Direct impact construction

The direct estimate is a synthesis of several evidence streams. Where audited or management accounts are available, turnover and expenditure data can be used directly; where attendance data exist for venues, attractions or events, these can be translated into expenditure effects using visitor-spend assumptions; and where only partial local data are available, benchmark relationships between employment, turnover and output can be applied using sector averages or comparable cultural evidence.

Care is required to avoid double counting within the direct estimate. For example, income received by one cultural organisation from another cultural organisation within Gwynedd should not be counted twice if both bodies are already included in the study population; similarly, grants and transfers should be treated carefully so that the methodology measures economic activity generated, rather than merely tracing the movement of funding between institutions.

5.6 Visitor economy effects

A central element of the methodology is the treatment of visitor expenditure associated with culture. The report explicitly identifies visitor spending on accommodation, food and drink, transport, retail, and other local services as part of the economic contribution being assessed, and it recognises culture's role in supporting the wider visitor economy of Gwynedd.

In methodological terms, visitor impacts have been estimated by applying an attribution approach. This involves identifying visitor volumes linked to cultural activity, distinguishing between residents and visitors from outside Gwynedd, and estimating the proportion of expenditure that can reasonably be attributed to the cultural offer rather than to general tourism demand.

Where survey evidence is available, the preferred method is to use locally observed expenditure and motivation data. Where this is has not available, regional, or national tourism spend benchmarks have been applied to visitor counts, adjusted for trip purpose, origin, length of stay and the share of spend that is additional to Gwynedd rather than displaced from elsewhere in the county.

5.7 Estimating indirect effects

Indirect effects are estimated using expenditure patterns and multiplier relationships to show how cultural organisations support activity in their supply chains. The report describes this as the additional supply-chain effect generated by organisational spending and estimates it at £135.54 million per annum.

In practice, this stage requires the classification of organisational expenditure into broad input categories such as professional services, maintenance, utilities, catering, marketing, transport, retail supply, production services and construction or facilities-related spending. Local retention assumptions are then applied to estimate what proportion of this spending is captured by businesses within Gwynedd, after which multipliers are used to trace the additional rounds of business-to-business activity supported in the local economy.

5.8 Local capture and leakages

A key methodological issue is the treatment of leakages. Not all spending by cultural organisations remains within Gwynedd, particularly where specialist goods or services are procured from outside the county, so the model has applied realistic assumptions about local sourcing rather than assuming full local retention. A figure of 7.5% has been used in line with Green Book guidance.

This is especially important in a county economy such as Gwynedd, where some procurement may flow to suppliers elsewhere in North Wales, the rest of Wales or beyond. The indirect model therefore needs to estimate the proportion of expenditure captured locally, the share leaking outside the area, and the share that represents imports into the county economy.

5.9 Estimating induced effects

Induced effects measure the household-spending impact arising from wages, salaries and self-employed earnings supported by the cultural sector. In the Gwynedd report, this element is estimated at £58.55 million per annum and represents the spending of employees and workers whose income is supported directly or indirectly by cultural activity.

The induced model begins with labour income associated with the direct and indirect effects. A proportion of this income is then assumed to be spent within Gwynedd on consumer goods and services, with adjustments made for taxation, savings, commuting patterns, and spending leakages outside the county. Appropriate household expenditure multipliers are then applied to estimate the additional output or income supported in local retail, hospitality, transport, and service sectors.

5.10 Gross and net additionality

To ensure that the estimates are decision-useful, the methodology moves from gross effects towards net additional impacts wherever evidence allows. This requires explicit consideration of additionality factors including deadweight, displacement, leakage, and substitution.

- Deadweight considers the extent to which the identified activity would have happened anyway without the cultural organisation, asset, or intervention.
- Displacement considers whether spending or employment supported by culture simply diverts demand from other businesses or places within Gwynedd.
- Leakage considers the share of expenditure that leaves the Gwynedd economy.
- Substitution considers whether consumers or organisations are replacing one form of local activity with another rather than creating additional value.

In a strategic sector-wide study such as this, some estimates may remain closer to gross contribution than to fully net impact because of evidence limitations.

5.11 Treatment of employment, turnover and GVA

The report refers to economic value in broad terms and presents the main headline as total annual economic contribution. The methodology uses Turnover or output measures total business revenues or production value, whereas GVA measures the value generated after subtracting intermediate inputs and is the most appropriate measure for comparing sector contribution to the local economy.

For consistency, the approach used has built the model from observed turnover or expenditure and then convert to GVA and employment using sector-relevant ratios where direct GVA data are unavailable. This allows sub-sector estimates to be combined into a coherent framework and avoids double counting intermediate transactions.

5.12 Social value interface

The social value estimate of £178.02 million has been calculated using Green Book-aligned wellbeing valuation methods. Social value is therefore treated as a separate analytical strand and is not added into direct, indirect, or induced economic benefits until the reporting stage, to prevent conceptual overlap.

Social Value has been calculated by:

- Identifying a set of outcome domains (e.g. health and wellbeing, social and community, education and skills, environmental/place, cultural identity, economic outcomes).
- For Gwynedd, the report groups Social Value into six components with associated values: Economic, Health and wellbeing, Social and community, Education and skills, Environmental/place, and Cultural and identity.

We then established specific indicators and beneficiary groups

- For each outcome, identify measurable indicators (e.g. number of participants, volunteers, events, learning opportunities, heritage assets maintained, Welsh language use).
- Define who experiences each outcome: residents, visitors, volunteers, participants, organisations, specific communities.

We applied wellbeing valuation or proxy values

- Using HM Treasury Green Book-aligned wellbeing valuation and/or recognised social value proxies to convert outcomes into monetary values.
- Typical approaches include:
    - Wellbeing valuation (linking changes in life satisfaction to equivalent income changes).
    - Social Value Bank or similar proxy libraries for outcomes like “improved confidence,” “relief from anxiety/depression,” “frequent arts participation,” “feeling belonging to a community.”
    - Project-specific valuations for outcomes such as improved educational attainment or reduced health service use.

This approach underpinned the calculation of Social Value generated by the Gwynedd Cultural sector.

6. DATA SOURCES AND PROXY VALUES

This section sets out the data sources and proxy measures used to assess the economic and social value of the cultural sector in Gwynedd. The approach has been designed to provide a robust and proportionate evidence base, drawing on official statistics, local organisational information, recognised economic modelling techniques and established social value valuation frameworks. In line with the wider report, the findings should be understood as robust estimates of value rather than precise measures of every effect generated by cultural activity. The full list of Sources used to develop this report are detailed at Appendix 1.

6.1 Data sources for the economic assessment

The economic assessment has been informed by a combination of national, regional, and local evidence sources. These include official datasets published by the Office for National Statistics, Welsh Government evidence relating to the culture and creative sectors in Wales, local and project-level information supplied by organisations operating within Gwynedd, and economic studies previously undertaken for the arts, culture, and heritage sectors.

At a national level, Office for National Statistics sources provide the core evidence base for employment, turnover, gross value added and input-output relationships across relevant cultural and creative industries. In particular, the Annual Business Survey and the Business Register and Employment Survey provide benchmark data on the scale and structure of economic activity, while Supply-Use Tables and input-output modelling provide the basis for estimating indirect and induced effects.

At a Wales level, the assessment draws upon Welsh Government reviews of the culture sector evidence base and wider economic evidence relating to culture, creativity, and heritage. These sources provide context on the Welsh cultural economy and help to ensure that assumptions used within the Gwynedd model are grounded in the most relevant national and regional evidence available.

Sector-specific studies have also informed the assessment. These include economic impact work undertaken for Arts Council Wales and wider UK studies on the contribution of the arts and cultural sector to the economy. Such studies provide methodological benchmarks, ratios and parameters that can be adapted to the Gwynedd context where complete local data is unavailable.

Alongside these published sources, the model has been informed by local evidence supplied by cultural organisations, partners, and stakeholders in Gwynedd. This includes, where available, information on organisational expenditure, staffing, earned income, grants, attendance, participation, visitor activity, and wider operational performance. Local visitor economy evidence and relevant heritage and destination studies have also

been used to inform assumptions on visitor expenditure and the relationship between culture and the wider Gwynedd economy.

6.2 Sources used for social value assessment

The social value assessment has been developed using recognised wellbeing valuation and social value frameworks that are compatible with HM Treasury Green Book principles. These sources are used to assign monetary proxy values to outcomes that are not fully captured through market transactions, such as improved wellbeing, reduced isolation, increased community participation, educational gains, strengthened identity, and pride in place.

The Green Book provides the overarching framework for the treatment of non-market outcomes in appraisal and evaluation. It supports the use of wellbeing valuation and wider cost-benefit techniques to estimate the value of social and community outcomes generated through public investment.

To support the practical monetisation of outcomes, the assessment draws on recognised proxy frameworks including the National TOMs approach and the National Social Value Standard. These frameworks provide proxy values for a wide range of outcomes relevant to the cultural sector, including employment, volunteering, community cohesion, skills development, environmental improvements, and wider social benefits.

The assessment is also informed by wellbeing valuation sources such as the Social Value Bank and related outcome libraries, together with wider research on the creation and measurement of social value in the cultural sector. These sources help to identify suitable proxies for outcomes such as improved mental wellbeing, confidence, belonging, social connection and participation in arts and cultural activity.

In addition, culture-specific guidance and case study material has been used to sense-check the application of proxy values within the Gwynedd context. This includes good practice material on the social value of culture, heritage, and community projects, as well as guidance focused specifically on social value measurement in the cultural sector.

6.3 Use of proxy measures

Proxy measures are used where outcomes generated by cultural activity are real and significant but are not directly traded in markets and therefore do not have an observable price. In these instances, a monetary proxy is used as a reasonable estimate of the value created, drawing on established national frameworks and recognised valuation practice.

Within this assessment, proxy measures have been applied across the principal social value domains identified in the report. Economic proxies relate to outcomes such as employment, income generation, visitor expenditure, and local business effects. Health and wellbeing proxies relate to improved life satisfaction, reduced anxiety, reduced

isolation, and better mental wellbeing. Social and community proxies capture outcomes such as volunteering, stronger social capital, and increased participation. Education and skills proxies reflect learning, attainment, employability, and language development. Environmental and place proxies reflect stewardship, heritage condition, and place quality, while cultural and identity proxies relate to pride in place, cultural distinctiveness, and the Welsh language.

The choice of proxy in each case has been guided by relevance, comparability, and proportionality. Where more than one proxy may be applicable, the approach has been to select values that are credible, conservative, and appropriate to the nature and scale of the outcome being assessed. This is intended to ensure that the social value estimates remain robust and defensible within a strategic county-wide assessment.

6.4 Treatment of additionality and limitations

As with the economic assessment, the monetised social value estimates should not be interpreted as exact measures. They represent robust estimates based on the best available evidence and on the use of recognised valuation frameworks. In applying proxy measures, it is important to consider the extent to which outcomes are genuinely additional, the proportion that can be attributed to cultural activity, and the extent to which benefits may overlap across outcome categories.

Accordingly, the assessment has been guided by the principles of deadweight, displacement, leakage, attribution, and proportionality. While not every outcome can be observed directly at local level, the use of established frameworks and careful sense-checking against local evidence provides a sound basis for estimating the scale of social value generated by the cultural sector in Gwynedd.

Taken together, these data sources and proxy measures provide the evidence base underpinning the assessment of Gwynedd’s cultural sector. They support a combined understanding of how culture contributes to economic activity, employment, visitor expenditure, wellbeing, identity, and community resilience across the county.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This assessment demonstrates that the cultural sector makes a substantial contribution to the economy of Gwynedd. The analysis estimates that cultural activity generates an annual economic impact of £316.07 million, comprising direct, indirect, and induced effects across the county. These findings demonstrate that culture is not only an important part of Gwynedd's identity and heritage, but also a significant economic sector that supports employment, businesses, visitor expenditure, and wider economic resilience.

The assessment highlights the diversity of Gwynedd's cultural economy. Heritage attractions, museums, archives, performing arts, creative businesses, visual arts, libraries, and craft industries each make important contributions, collectively supporting a vibrant and interconnected cultural ecosystem. The sector's economic benefits extend well beyond individual organisations, generating additional value through local supply chains, employee spending, and increased activity within the visitor economy.

Alongside these economic impacts, the wider assessment identifies considerable social value arising from cultural participation, including improvements in wellbeing, education, community cohesion and the preservation of Gwynedd's distinctive cultural identity and Welsh language. Together, these findings reinforce the importance of culture as a cross-cutting contributor to the county's economic, social, and environmental ambitions.

The evidence presented within this report provides a robust foundation for future decision-making and investment. It demonstrates that continued support for the cultural sector represents an investment in Gwynedd's wider economy, helping to sustain jobs, attract visitors, strengthen local businesses, and enhance the county's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit.

The findings will also inform the development of the Gwynedd Cultural Action Plan, providing an evidence base from which priorities can be identified, investment targeted and progress monitored over time. As the Cultural Network continues to develop and organisations work together across the county, there is a significant opportunity to build on these strengths, maximise economic impact and ensure that culture continues to play a leading role in Gwynedd's long-term prosperity.

APPENDIX 1: SOURCES AND PROXY MEASURES USED IN THE ASSESSMENT

Overview

This appendix sets out the principal sources used in the assessment of the economic and social value of Gwynedd's cultural sector. It is intended to provide a transparent reference point for the evidence base underpinning the report, including the data sources used in the economic assessment and the frameworks used to select and apply proxy measures within the social value assessment.

Economic evidence sources

The economic assessment draws on a combination of official statistics, Wales-specific evidence, sector studies, and local organisational information. These sources have been used to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced economic effects generated by cultural activity in Gwynedd.

Official statistics and national economic datasets

- **Office for National Statistics (ONS), Annual Business Survey (ABS).** Used to provide benchmark evidence on turnover and approximate gross value added across relevant arts, culture, and creative industry activities.
- **Office for National Statistics (ONS), Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES).** Used to inform assumptions on employment levels and workforce structure across relevant sectors.
- **Office for National Statistics (ONS), Supply–Use Tables and input-output relationships.** Used to support the estimation of indirect and induced multiplier effects through supply chains and household expenditure.
- **StatsWales / Office for National Statistics (ONS), Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by local authority.** Used to provide wider economic context in Section 4.6, benchmarking the cultural sector's contribution against total Gwynedd and Wales GVA (2023, provisional).
- **Nomis, Official Labour Market Statistics, Labour Market Profile - Gwynedd.** Used for the total workplace-based employment figure for Gwynedd cited in Section 4.6.

Wales-specific evidence

- **Welsh Government, Review of the Culture Sector Evidence Base in Wales.** Used to provide a Wales-specific overview of available data on the arts, museums, libraries, archives, and heritage sectors, and to identify the most relevant evidence sources for the assessment.

- **Alma Economics, Review of the Culture Sector Evidence Base in Wales.** Used as supporting material on the scope, structure, and evidence gaps within the Welsh cultural evidence base.
- **Welsh Government culture and creative sector evidence.** Used to provide contextual information on the wider Welsh cultural and creative economy and to ensure the Gwynedd assessment is aligned with national evidence and policy understanding.

Sector studies and benchmark reports

- **Arts Council of Wales, Economic Impact Report.** Used as a Wales-based benchmark on the economic contribution of arts and cultural activity and as a methodological reference point for the structure of the assessment.
- **Arts Council England / Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr), Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the UK economy.** Used as a benchmark source on the treatment of direct, indirect, and induced economic effects and on the wider contribution of culture to economic output, employment and value added.
- **Additional sector evidence on culture and place.** Wider cultural economy and heritage studies have been used as sense-checking sources where relevant to visitor economy assumptions, place impacts and the broader relationship between culture and local economic performance.

Local and organisational data

- **Financial and operational data supplied by cultural organisations in Gwynedd.** Used, where available, to inform estimates of employment, turnover, expenditure, attendance, participation, admissions, grants, and other aspects of operational activity.
- **Cyngor Gwynedd and partner monitoring information.** Used to support the understanding of local cultural activity, project performance, and the reach of cultural provision.
- **Visitor economy and heritage evidence for Gwynedd.** Used to inform assumptions relating to tourism, visitor behaviour, cultural attractions, and associated expenditure within the local economy.

Social value and proxy valuation sources

The social value assessment applies recognised valuation frameworks and proxy measures to estimate the monetary value of outcomes that are not directly priced within markets. These include outcomes relating to wellbeing, participation, identity, volunteering, education, community resilience, and place.

Core appraisal and valuation frameworks

- **HM Treasury, The Green Book, and associated appraisal guidance.** Used as the overarching framework for the treatment of non-market outcomes, proportionality, additionality, and valuation within public sector appraisal.
- **Wellbeing valuation approaches.** Used to support the monetisation of outcomes such as improved wellbeing, reduced isolation, increased confidence, belonging, and participation, where no direct market price exists.

Social value proxy frameworks

- **National TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures).** Used as a recognised framework for measuring and monetising social value outcomes, including employment, volunteering, skills, community cohesion, and environmental impacts.
- **National Social Value Standard (NSVS).** Used as a contemporary measurement and proxy framework to support the selection of values for a range of social outcomes relevant to the cultural sector.
- **Social Value Bank and related wellbeing valuation libraries.** Used to identify suitable proxy values for outcomes such as mental wellbeing, social connection, confidence, reduced isolation, and broader quality of life improvements.

Culture-specific social value guidance

- **Social value of Culture, Heritage, Sports, and Community Projects.** Used as good practice guidance on the application of social value measurement in cultural and heritage settings.
- **Future Trends: Social value creation and measurement in the cultural sector.** Used as supporting guidance on the treatment of cultural participation, identity, wellbeing, and other sector-specific outcomes.
- **Research on social value creation and measurement in the cultural sector.** Used to inform the conceptual approach to cultural social value, including the valuation of belonging, community benefit, identity, and wider non-market cultural outcomes.

Proxy measure categories used in the assessment

Proxy measures have been applied across the principal domains of social value identified within the Gwynedd assessment. These categories are summarised below.

Domain	Indicative proxy areas	Principal source types
Economic	Employment, local business activity, visitor expenditure, supply-chain effects	National TOMs, NSVS, economic benchmark studies local.gov+2
Health and wellbeing	Improved wellbeing, reduced anxiety, reduced isolation, confidence, life satisfaction	Green Book, wellbeing valuation, Social Value Bank rics+2
Social and community	Volunteering, participation, social capital, cohesion, belonging	National TOMs, NSVS, culture-specific guidance local.gov+2
Education and skills	Learning, attainment, employability, language development	Green Book, NSVS, social value proxy frameworks rics+1
Environmental and place	Heritage stewardship, environmental quality, place condition, sense of place	Culture and heritage guidance, proxy valuation frameworks culturehive+1
Cultural and identity	Pride in place, cultural distinctiveness, Welsh language, identity and belonging	Culture-sector social value guidance and research ukri+2

Composite Impact Assessment

This document assesses what impact the policy, procedure, plan, etc. will have on the county's population and will be implemented based on a number of legislations.

- **Equality Act 2010**. It places a duty on public organisations to give due attention to the effect of any new (or amended) policy, procedure or plan, etc. on persons with protected characteristics. We are required to
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment and unlawful victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
  - promote equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

  In Wales, the specific duty identifies the need to undertake an impact assessment following specific guidelines to consider the effect that any changes in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on persons with protected equality characteristics. A timely assessment must be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

- **Socio-economic Duty.** Wales has implemented this further duty which is part of the Equality Act 2010 and places a duty to address socio-economic disadvantages in strategic decisions.

- **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.** The Council is required to consider the impact that any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use of the Welsh language.

- **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.** The Council has a duty to implement the five ways of working and to respond to the seven national well-being goals.

- **Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must give due attention to the impact of this proposal on those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, as well as their families.

Assessment 21/09/2026: Gwynedd Culture Plan

Author: Roland Wyn Evans (ECON A CMND)

Job Title: Assistant Head Economy and Community

Date: 10/29/2026

Version: Draft 1

STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)

2. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

Developing a Vision, Principles, Network and Action Plan for culture in Gwynedd. The Plan will ensure that Culture in Gwynedd collaborates towards a single vision and principles and action plan that will ensure the best for the people of Gwynedd.

The draft vision that has been co-produced is:

"Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world.

Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future".

The six co-produced draft principles are:

i. **Proud of Our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh Language**
Culture celebrates and promotes Gwynedd's unique identity, heritage, creativity, and the Welsh language, sharing them confidently with Wales and the wider world.

ii. **Culture at the Heart of Life**
Culture is an essential part of the health, wellbeing, education and happiness of the people of Gwynedd, enriching everyday life and creating opportunities to have fun, learn and socialise.

iii. **Community-Led, Inclusive, Kind and Connected**
Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging.

iv. **Ambitious, Challenging and Bold**
Culture inspires new ideas, embraces or challenges change, sets high standards and makes the most of opportunities and investment to realise and measure the impact of ambitions.

v. **Enriching People and Places**
Culture enhances wellbeing, develops skills and talent, and contributes to a strong local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.

vi. **Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations**
Culture protects and enriches resources, the environment, and the unique qualities of Gwynedd, ensuring long-term benefits for future generations.

3. Who are the main consultative groups (stakeholders)?

Extensive consultation was held with the Gwynedd culture sector, including representatives from several communities and some with protected characteristics. An open invitation was extended to interested parties to attend a public meeting to celebrate the success of Gwynedd and identify future priorities.

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Assessing the Impact

4. Has there been an attempt to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has enough information been gathered to move forward?

Yes

Details of the engagement. Please note any consultation or engagement you have undertaken or intend to undertake.

Action	Dates	Information
Gwynedd Culture Event + Workshop	18 February 2025	A one-day event was held to obtain an initial view on how to develop a Culture Plan for Gwynedd.
Workshop to refine the vision and principles	15 October 2025	A workshop was held in Neuadd Dwyfor to discuss the draft vision and principles. Agreed to establish a Steering Committee.
Gwynedd Culture Event: For Everyone's Wellbeing	04 March 2026	An event for the sector to share information about the vision and principles.
Meetings of the Gwynedd Culture Steering Group	07 July 2026	On-line and in person meetings at Storiel to discuss and agree on a prioritised Action Plan.

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the following characteristics and topics?

	Evidence, Information and Relevant Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	96.2% of the people of Gwynedd identify themselves as White. 66.6% state that they were born in Wales, and 59% state that they identify as Welsh. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	The sector is proactive in supporting activities between ethnic groups and providing opportunities to celebrate and recognise racial diversity. This is achieved, for example, through activities in our museums, galleries and venues such as theatres, libraries, cinemas, and others. Culture contributes to community cohesion and brings people together. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: "Culture in Gwynedd is essential, innovative and rooted in our communities. It adds colour to life, promotes wellbeing, and confidently reflects our diverse identity, the Welsh language, and our Welshness to Wales and the world." "Our culture is vibrant and alive. Rooted in the Welsh language and belonging to everyone, together we want to promote, celebrate and support our culture, today and for future generations. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected**

		Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Disability	Nearly one in five people (19%) identify themselves as disabled, and there is almost a 10% higher rate of disability among women than among men. Seventy-four per cent of non-disabled people in Gwynedd are in employment, compared with 43% of disabled people, a figure that is similar to that of the rest of Wales. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	The culture sector is a leader in supporting disabled people and in delivering activities that promote inclusion, community cohesion and social connectedness. Examples include activities in drama, music and literature, which provide opportunities for disabled people to participate, engage and thrive within their communities. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places**

		Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Gender	More than 51% of Gwynedd's population are women, and 96% of lone-parent families in Gwynedd are led by women. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	The sector delivers a wide range of activities targeted at women, young men and other groups, and seeks to promote confidence, inclusion and social cohesion. It is intended that these activities will continue to be supported and developed. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Age	Gwynedd has a higher proportion of people under the age of 25 than any other county in North Wales (28.7%). The proportion of people aged over 65 is slightly below the average for North Wales; however, this age group is growing, with an increase of 8.6%	Cultural activities across Gwynedd are delivered for a wide range of age groups and also seek to bridge generations. These activities encourage participation and interaction between people of different ages, helping to strengthen community connections and foster mutual understanding across generations.

	between the 2011 and 2021 censuses, while the overall population has declined (unlike in most parts of Wales). Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Religion and Belief	46.2% of people in Gwynedd identify themselves as Christians, representing the lowest proportion in North Wales. Meanwhile, 44.2% stated that they have no religion, the highest proportion in the region. The percentage of people who did not answer the question was also the highest in North Wales, at 7.5%. Around 1% of the population identify as Muslim. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the	A range of activities are delivered across the sector to promote understanding and awareness of religion and belief, including exhibitions, drama performances, dance and music events. These activities help to foster interfaith and intercultural relationships, strengthen mutual understanding, and enhance social cohesion within communities. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected**

	sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Sexual Orientation	Fewer people in Gwynedd identify themselves as heterosexual or straight than in any other county in North Wales (87.3%, compared with a North Wales average of 89.4%). There is a higher proportion of people who identify as bisexual (1.6%, compared with 1% across North Wales). The proportion of people who identify as gay or lesbian is similar to the average for North Wales, at 1.3%. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	As with groups possessing other protected characteristics, the cultural sector is well known for providing a platform to celebrate diversity in sexual orientation. Examples include inclusive and LGBTQ+ book clubs, Pride Month activities, and a variety of other events. These activities help to promote visibility, understanding, inclusion and a sense of belonging, while also strengthening social cohesion within communities. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by

		creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Gender reassignment	91.7% of people in Gwynedd state that their gender identity is the same as the sex registered at their birth. The proportions of people who identify as trans men, trans women, and all other gender identities are the same as those across North Wales, with each group representing 0.1% of the population. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	As with groups with other protected characteristics, the cultural sector is well known for providing a platform to celebrate diversity. Examples include inclusive and LGBTQ+ book clubs, Pride Month activities, and a variety of other events such as theatre productions. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	A higher proportion of people in Gwynedd have never married or entered into a civil partnership (40%) than in the other counties of North Wales. Consequently, there are lower proportions of people who are married (41.5%), separated (1.7%), or	The sector delivers activities that acknowledge and explore the themes of marriage and civil partnership through, for example, theatre productions, literature and exhibitions.

	divorced or have had a civil partnership dissolved (9.2%). Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: "Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world. Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future". There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected**

		Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
The Welsh Language	Culture and the Welsh language are an integral part of each other in an area like Gwynedd - but again, there is no Plan drawing the sector together and emphasising the link that currently exists. Gwynedd's culture maintains the Welsh language within our communities, creates opportunities to celebrate, use and hear the Welsh language in natural situations and promotes liveliness and creativity. A specific discussion about the Welsh language took place during consultation at our events, and Welsh was identified as a clear priority for any future plan. Translation services were provided at our meetings and workshops to ensure that everyone could follow the discussion and	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: "Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world. Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future". There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Proud of our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh language** Culture celebrates and promotes the unique identity of Gwynedd, its heritage, creativity and the Welsh language, and they are shared confidently with Wales and the world. Through this work, there are opportunities to improve the opportunities available to people living in Gwynedd and to

	contribute in their language of choice. All documents are published bilingually.	raise awareness of these opportunities in order to encourage the use of the Welsh language. There is also potential to reduce out-migration from Gwynedd by increasing and promoting employment opportunities, as well as the diversity of opportunities within the cultural sector through the medium of Welsh in Gwynedd.
Socio-economic Considerations	The cultural sector is a significant part of Gwynedd's economy, far more substantial than many people realise, and it is driven by the work of creative professionals across the county. Analysis of its economic value shows that the cultural sector in Gwynedd generates an estimated annual economic contribution of **£316.07 million** and creates **£178.02 million in social value** every year. Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	The cultural sector is highly aware of the need to broaden access for all parts of the community, particularly for those in less favourable social and economic circumstances. Examples include discounted admission schemes, bursaries for self-employed individuals, and activities specifically targeted at disadvantaged communities. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Culture at the root of life** Culture is an essential part of the health, well-being, education and happiness of the people of Gwynedd, enriching everyday life and creating opportunities to enjoy, learn and socialise. **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places**

		Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services supports access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	Specific activities are delivered for members of the armed forces and their families. In the past, for example, archaeological excavation days and vegetation-clearing projects at designated heritage sites have been undertaken with military veterans. A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.
Human Rights	Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: "Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes

	sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world. Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future". There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd. **Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations** Culture protects and enriches resources, the environment and the special features of Gwynedd, ensuring long-term interests.
Other	Culture can touch people from all backgrounds and by implementing it inclusively, the Council's cultural sector and services support access, participation and inclusion that is open to all. Currently, there is no single vision or principles that bind the sector together and state our mission and objectives. These, as well as a new Action Plan and network, will ensure effective	A new vision, principles, action plan and network ensures that we collaborate effectively in the future for the well-being of people from all backgrounds. The vision clearly states: "Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world.

	collaboration and cooperation for the well-being of everyone from all backgrounds.	Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future". There are firm principles - particularly in terms of equality, including: **Proud of our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh language** Culture celebrates and promotes the unique identity of Gwynedd, its heritage, creativity and the Welsh language, and they are shared confidently with Wales and the world. **Culture at the root of life** Culture is an essential part of the health, well-being, education and happiness of the people of Gwynedd, enriching everyday life and creating opportunities to enjoy, learn and socialise. **Community, Inclusive, Kind and Connected** Culture belongs to everyone. It is welcoming and accessible, fostering strong networks, confidence, respect and a sense of belonging. **Ambitious, Challenging and Bold** Culture inspires new ideas, welcomes or challenges change, sets high standards and takes advantage of opportunities and investment to realise and measure the impact of ambition. **Enriching People and Places** Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.

		Sustainable and Responsible for Future Generations Culture protects and enriches resources, the environment and the special features of Gwynedd, ensuring long-term interests.

6. Are there any data or information gaps, and if so, what are they and how do you intend to address them?

Data on the attendees of cultural events and activities are often collected by the Gwynedd cultural organisations as evidence for Cyngor Gwynedd grant funds, as well as the Arts Council of Wales.
By collaborating on an Action Plan and establishing a Culture Network for Gwynedd, we intend to identify specific measures to measure the impact of culture and this collaboration. Some of these measures will specifically measure the impact of equality and language.

7. When considering other key decisions that affect these groups, is there an increasing impact (cumulative impact)?

I am not aware of any negative accumulative impact, but the collaboration to implement one vision and six clear principles for the culture sector will have a positive accumulative impact on protected characteristics, the Welsh language and the local economy.

8. What does the proposal include to show that you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equality of opportunity; help eliminate discrimination, harassment or unlawful victimisation and foster good relationships and wider community cohesion) as covered by the 3 aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

Culture brings people together, celebrates diversity, encourages dialogue and connections, and fosters healthy social relationships. Through shared cultural experiences, people from different backgrounds can engage with one another, build mutual understanding, and strengthen community cohesion.

The vision, the principles and Action Plan have all been drawn up to remove unlawful discrimination, harassment or persecution. Promoting equal opportunities is explicitly clear within the principles and the new network will ensure that good relationships are being developed and nurtured between all of the different groups. Please also see the information under Socio-Economic Disadvantage in Question 5.

9. How does the proposal show that due regard has been given to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this relates to closing inequality gaps, rather than just improving outcomes for everyone.)

The vision and principles clearly highlight the need to be inclusive for all and also highlights the need to create economic opportunities in terms of people, skills and places in Gwynedd through the Plan. Specifically, this principle addresses this:

Enriching People and Places

Culture improves well-being, develops skills and talent, and contributes towards the local economy by creating opportunities for people to live, work, create and succeed in Gwynedd.

10. How does the proposal demonstrate action in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to not treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, and to ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh? Also, how does the proposal operate in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Welsh Language Strategy and Policy to take advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

By co-developing this vision and principles, the Welsh language is highlighted as an essential element of the work and when looking towards the future. The vision is clear:

"Culture in Gwynedd is vital, innovative and rooted in our communities. It gives colour to life, promotes well-being, and reflects our diverse identities and our Welshness confidently to Wales and the world.

Culture in Gwynedd is vibrant and vivid and together, we want to maintain, support and grow a culture that belongs to everyone - today and in the future".

In addition, the first principle relates to the Welsh language and its importance to the culture of Gwynedd:

Proud of our Identity, Heritage and the Welsh language

Culture celebrates and promotes the unique identity of Gwynedd, its heritage, creativity and the Welsh language, and they are shared confidently with Wales and the world.

All events, meetings and workshops that have been held have included simultaneous translation and bilingual documentation. The final Plan will include bilingual case studies showcasing good practice. Our principle of sharing our culture and language with Wales and the wider world will further enhance the status of the Welsh language beyond Gwynedd alone.

The requirement to operate bilingually formed a core part of the commission to appoint consultants to work collaboratively with us in identifying and recognising the value of Gwynedd's culture.

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and respond to the seven national well-being goals, including creating a More Equal Wales?

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 sets out clear well-being goals to ensure the well-being of future generations. This work addresses each of the 7 well-being goals and this is highlighted in the agreed vision and principles.

Recently, the Future Generations Commissioner's Office has been prioritising the field of 'A Wales with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language', and a representative from Cyngor Gwynedd attended a study visit to Bradford where they had placed Culture at the centre within their corporate plans. We received a presentation from a representative of the Future Generations Commissioner's Office during our event at Portmeirion in March 2026, highlighting the importance of culture to the act and highlighting the Office's priorities, and we have kept in touch with the Office when developing this work.

Residents and service users have been **included** by holding a public culture event at the beginning of the process for anyone who has an interest in the culture field in Gwynedd. Over 70 people attended that meeting at Nyth, Bangor. The vision, the principles and the Action Plan were all developed following this initial meeting. A second public meeting was held in Portmeirion to present and receive feedback on the work.

Collaboration has taken place throughout the process of developing a vision and principles for Culture in Gwynedd, as well as the Action Plan. This ensures joint-ownership of the work when looking to the future and establishing a Culture Network for Gwynedd to ensure that the collaboration will continue in the future as we implement and support the culture sector.

Establishing the Gwynedd Culture Network with a Steering Board will ensure that we **prevent problems** from arising or that we can respond to them in partnership before they develop or get worse. Regular networking and collaboration will ensure that we prevent problems from arising.

It has been agreed for the vision and principles to be **long-term** in order to draw the sector together. The Action Plan which will be reviewed regularly and sets out priorities for action over the short, medium and long term and there will be an opportunity to add to it in review.

To ensure **integration**, other public bodies were invited to attend the events to develop the vision, the principles and the Action Plan, including: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Arts Council of Wales, Welsh Government, Eryri National Park Authority, Cyngor Gwynedd Cultural Services and other cultural partners from north Wales.

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or in partnership with another organisation(s)?

Yes.

What actions will be taken to comply with the General Equality Duty, Human Rights and Welsh language legislation and the Socio-Economic Duty in relation to procurement and/or partnerships?

Procurement:

Plans may be developed as a part of the Action Plan over the coming years which will result in service procurement or support. Any procurement will comply with Cyngor Gwynedd's procurement policies, giving due attention to the equality duty, human rights, the Welsh language and the socio-economic duty.

Partnership:

The Plan is leading to creating a new culture network for Gwynedd. The network will be an evolution of the Gwynedd Greadigol forum, and it will adopt clear policies in terms of equality, the Welsh language, procurement and human rights, as it is being established.

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice

13. When considering proportionality, does the policy or practice have a significantly positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:
By collaborating on implementing a new vision and principles for culture in Gwynedd and by establishing a culture network for Gwynedd that is open and accessible to all; we trust that this policy will have a significant positive impact.

The cultural sector already makes a key contribution to equality across all protected groups. By working collaboratively to realise the vision and implement the principles and action plan, identifying potential sources of funding, and encouraging co-production and partnership working, the sector can ensure that significant positive impacts are achieved.

Significant Negative Impact:
It is not anticipated that any significant negative impacts will derive from this plan.

14. Any intentional negative impact and why it is believed there is justification for acting in this way should be explained (for example, on the grounds of improving equal opportunities or developing good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not or because of objective justification or positive action)

It is not anticipated that any intentional negative impact will derive from the Plan.

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful but unavoidable discrimination (e.g. funding reduction)?

No

Note the reason for stating this and the justification for proceeding

No unlawful discrimination will derive from the Plan.

16. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to equal opportunity; helping to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation; and fostering good relations and wider community cohesion; as covered by an improvement aim of the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010?

An annual review will be carried out on the implementation of the Action Plan to ensure that we continue to act transparently and fair, promoting equal opportunities and promoting good relations through the network and its events.

Establishing relevant measures will ensure that we monitor implementation across the Plan and the Network.

Establishing a network and clear governance arrangements, supported by events, activities and training, will ensure that we operate in an inclusive manner and for the benefit of all.

17. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to reduce inequality of outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?

An annual review will be carried out on the implementation of the Action Plan to ensure that we continue to act transparently and fair, promoting equal opportunities and promoting good relations through the network and its events.

Establishing relevant measures will ensure that we monitor implementation across the Plan and the Network.

Establishing a network and clear governance arrangements, supported by events, activities and training, will ensure that we operate in an inclusive manner and for the benefit of all. It will also allow us to identify potential projects to targed those facing socio-economic disadvantage, such as discount schemes, targeted activities and participation programmes – subject to additional funding.

18. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to not treat the

Welsh language less favourably than the English language, in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the Welsh language?

An annual review will be carried out on the implementation of the Action Plan to ensure that we continue to act transparently and fair, promoting equal opportunities and promoting good relations through the network and its events.

Establishing relevant measures will ensure that we monitor implementation across the Plan and the Network.

We will continue to represent Gwynedd through the medium of Welsh when communicating with other public organisations in Wales, in accordance with the Council's Language Policy.

19. Is there enough information to make a balanced judgement and move forward?

Yes

STEP 5 - Decision to Proceed

20. Considering the information gathered in Steps 1–4 above, is it possible to move forward with the policy or practice or not, and if so, on what basis? Choice of:

Continue with the policy or practice in its current form

STEP 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Outcomes and Reviewing Data

The EqIA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqIA is agreed and implemented. There is a specific legal duty to monitor the impact of policies/practices on equality on an ongoing basis to identify whether the outcomes have changed since you introduced or amended this new policy or practice. If you do not have the relevant data, you should be taking action to correct this in your action plan. S ee the EHRC guidance on data collection and you can review their Measurement Framework

21. What actions identified in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work would help to monitor the policy/practice when implemented:

Action	Dates	Timetable	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Establish the Gwynedd Culture Network	18 February 2025	Annual Meeting	Roland Evans	Yes
Establish a Shadow Steering Board	February 2026	Quarterly meeting	Ffion Strong / Corrie Zarach	Yes
Review the implementation and measure performance	April	Annually	Roland Evans	Yes
Elections to the Strategic Board	April	Annually	Roland Evans	Yes
Review and confirm the Action Plan	April	Annually	Roland Evans	Yes

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or practice will be implemented, including timelines for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Reviewing Arrangements (including where outcomes will be recorded)	Timetable and Frequency	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Review the Action Plan	Annually	Roland Evans	Yes
Review performance data	Annually	Roland Evans	Yes

Elect to the Steering Board	Every 2 years	Roland Evans	Yes
Collect monitoring data	Quarterly / Annually	Ffion Strong / Corrie Zarach	Yes