



Complete Agenda

Democratic Services
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Meeting

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, THURSDAY, 4TH JUNE, 2026

Location

Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH

*** NOTE**

This meeting will be webcast

https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en_GB/portal/home

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(DISTRIBUTED 27/05/26)

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (18)

Plaid Cymru (12)

Councillors

Menna Baines
Linda Morgan
Meryl Roberts
Jina Gwyrfai
Berwyn Parry Jones
Geraint Wyn Parry

Rheinallt Puw
Gwynfor Owen
Einir Wyn Williams
Sian Williams
Elin Walker Jones
Beca Roberts

Independent (5)

Councillors

Elwyn Jones
Beth Lawton
Wendy Cleaver

Anwen J. Davies
Angela Russell

Gwynedd First (1)

Councillor

Gareth Coj Parry

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

AGENDA

1. ELECT CHAIR

To elect Chair for 2026 / 2027.

2. ELECT VICE CHAIR

To elect Vice Chair for 2026 / 2027.

3. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

6. MINUTES

5 - 14

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meetings of this committee held on the 13/01/26 be signed as a true record. (attached)

7. SAFEGUARDING PANEL ANNUAL REPORT

15 - 32

To present the report on the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel for the year 2025/26.

8. SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW

33 - 51

To present the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy to the Scrutiny Committee, giving members the opportunity to review the content and provide comments before the policy is formally adopted.

9. CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES PERFORMANCE REPORT

52 - 83

For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

A lunch break is intended from 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

10. ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PERFORMANCE REPORT

84 - 114

For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

11. HOUSING AND PROPERTY PERFORMANCE REPORT

115 - 148

For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, 13 JANUARY 2026

Attendance:

Councillors:

Elwyn Jones (Chair), Jina Gwyrfai, Beth Lawton, Eryl Jones-Williams, Sian Williams, Rheinallt Puw, Gwynfor Owen, Angela Russell, Meryl Roberts, Einir Wyn Williams, Elin Walker Jones, Menna Baines, Geraint Wyn Parry, Berwyn Parry Jones and Anwen J. Davies

Officers present:

Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor), Courtney Leigh Jones (Democracy and Civic Services Officer).

Present for item 4:

Councillor Nia Jeffreys (Council Leader), Menna Trenholme (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families), Dewi Jones (Cabinet Member for Education), Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Dylan Owen (Corporate Director), Ffion Mai Jones (Senior Executive Officer), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education Department), Alison Halliday (Assistant Head - Schools Support), Aled Gibbard (Acting Head of Children's Services), Catrin Love (Assistant Head of Corporate Services), Ian Jones (Head of Corporate Services Department)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Jina Gwyrfai.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor Elin Walker Jones. This was not a prejudicial interest and therefore she did not withdraw from the meeting.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. RESPONSE PLAN TO THE OUR BRAVERY BROUGHT JUSTICE REPORT

The report was submitted by the Council Leader, who thanked the members of the committee for the opportunity to bring the Response Plan to the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report to scrutiny, before it was formally adopted by the Cabinet. She apologised again to all victims affected by the heinous crimes of Neil Foden, she

acknowledged that the Council had failed, and that the voices of the children had not been heard. She emphasised the Council's commitment to act and ensure that things changed. She said that the Council prioritised the vow to learn and change, to ensure that such failures would never happen again. It was highlighted that the Response Plan was a step on a long journey ahead to restore the confidence of the public, residents and staff, and it was noted that transparency was critical to this end. It was noted that the Response Plan was a live and public document. She noted that the minutes of the programme board meetings were also public, therefore it would be possible to monitor the progress that was happening. It was acknowledged that this was not an easy matter to discuss, and she acknowledged that the report's findings were atrocious. She thanked members for their preparedness to scrutinise this difficult subject, and for contributing to the improvement of child safeguarding procedures, in order to ensure that this would never happen again here in Gwynedd. She extended her gratitude to Professor Sally Holland, Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board, for her remarkable leadership.

She noted that progress could be seen in many sections of the Plan, and it was noted that this was an example of cross-departmental collaboration to reach the same goal; i.e., improve the safeguarding arrangements in Gwynedd. It was expressed that the Council acknowledged that protecting and safeguarding children from harm was a responsibility for all, and comments, suggestions and any criticism from members were welcomed, in order to build on and improve the Plan and to ensure that the Council provided a comprehensive and thorough response. The importance of having member input into strengthening the Response Plan and to help draw up a safer future for the children and young people of the county, was emphasised.

The Chief Executive elaborated on the Response Plan. It was noted that the first Response Plan had been published over a year ago, way before the publication of the child practice review. It was noted that there had been many attainments during this period, noting that approximately 42 to 43 various work tasks had been achieved over the past year, in an attempt to address what the Council was facing. It was explained that there had been acknowledgement from the outset that there would be a need to revisit the Response Plan following the publication of the Child Practice Review, in order to act on the appropriate recommendations.

Reference was made to Appendix 2 which included reports that provided an overview of the work of responding to the review, summarising what had changed and highlighting the important things that were in the pipeline. Members' attention was drawn to appendix 3, which included the content of the live work programme in progress by the Council to monitor the progress happening in every department in response to the recommendations. The work programme was detailed, noting that it included every recommendation in the Child Practice Review, and further recommendations and work streams that had been added in order to deliver. It was noted that there were 27 recommendations in the Child Practice Review, and that there were 74 work streams in the Response Plan. It was noted that definitive timetables had been included, in order to monitor the work thoroughly and ensure attainment.

It was noted that the Plan had already been challenged by several experts and agencies, including the Children's Commissioner, Wales Safeguarding Board, Welsh Government, ESTYN, the Care Inspectorate and several other bodies. It was

explained that this had been beneficial, with the regular challenging and monitoring of the Plan and ensuring that they built the best possible Plan. It was explained that the Response Plan was being scrutinised by members at this Committee, as well as the Governance and Audit Plan, Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Full Council, before being formally adopted by the Cabinet.

The members were guided through the report. Reference was made to the Plan which had been structured per work stream, noting the designated officer who was responsible for ensuring attainment and success in the field. The discussion was held per work stream, in order to respond to every theme appropriately and comprehensively.

Work Stream 1 - Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims

It was noted that the Head of Education Department led this stream, which ensured that the voice of the child was central in matters relating to children, and that this was embedded through all activities. It was noted that the stream ensured that children were listened to and were believed and taken seriously, by giving children and young people a voice in processes that had been planned to keep them safe. It was highlighted that this stream ensured that the Council supported the victims and survivors and establishing a caring relationship with them.

By referring to point 1.4, which detailed the Personal Support Plan, it was acknowledged that not all victims in the case had accepted the support offered to them at the time. It was asked whether there was an opportunity for them to accept this support in the future, and whether the door remained open for them to obtain support from the Council, should they need support in years to come? It was asked whether the victims were aware of where to obtain this support and whether there were clear instructions for them.

In response to the question, it was confirmed that the Council acknowledged that the trauma caused to victims was permanent, and that they welcomed victims to come forward to receive support at any time. It was confirmed that regular meetings were conducted with the probation service, IDVA, ISFA to offer a regular service for victims. It was elaborated that the Council also worked closely with RASA to ensure that more support was available. Furthermore, it was noted that the Council had commissioned more services to prioritise the support when needed.

By referring to point 1.8 in this stream, the fact that an external member of the governing body was being highlighted to provide support for children in school, was welcomed. The importance of ensuring that an external officer was available for children to contact, if they were concerned, was emphasised, and to ensure that this provision was clear for children in schools.

It was confirmed that the Lead Safeguarding and Welfare Quality Officer was the designated officer who acted as a point of contact for children if they had concerns. It was suggested it should be ensured that a female designated officer was also available as a point of contact for children, and that her contact details should also be included on the series of posters. It was expressed that there was a desire to see these contact details on every school website and on the Council's website, so that people from outside the schools could also contact the external person.

Assurances were given that the Council encouraged schools to display contact details in a visible, clear place, so that children could access the information in their own time. It was explained that the information was available in toilets, and that developments were in place to ensure that this was more accessible. Assurances were given that staff communicated regularly with the children by asking them whether they knew who to contact, if they had any concerns. It was elaborated that the Voice of the Child was key to the Recovery Plan, therefore the Council and schools made every effort to ensure that they assisted with the recovery process.

It was ensured that an Audit was being carried out in the children's department to monitor the processes, and it was confirmed that firm changes had been implemented. It was explained that every part 5 referral had been reviewed by the Council to discover some cases that raised concerns, in an attempt to tighten systems. It was explained that the Council no longer made decisions on safety matters as a sole agency. It was elaborated that the Council would now deal with safeguarding matters by working very closely with different agencies, such as the Health Board and the Police, and would hold regular meetings to make decisions and to monitor the progress of the case.

Reference was made to the work progressing in the Education Department with the development of the Youth Forum. It was explained that the Forum provided a platform and power to young people between 13-21 to discuss matters and influence policies affecting young people in Gwynedd. It was noted that the forums acted on an area level at present and was in the process of developing into a county forum, with complete membership across the county. It was hoped that the Forum would be able to evolve into a Youth Council in the future. It was explained that a specific Officer had been commissioned to develop the forums in the long-term. In response to an enquiry, it was ensured that representation from young people across the county was a part of the Forum, and that there was a firm structure to it. It was noted that there was an intention to elaborate on the engagement to include looked-after children, organisations such as Derwen, in order to ensure that the voices of various children were included. It was elaborated that this was key to the Council's priorities in being a Child Friendly County. It was acknowledged that children were often more comfortable sharing concerns with other children, so it was hoped that the Forum provided an additional way for them to share and raise any concerns.

A desire to scrutinise the Whistleblowing Policy was expressed. It was noted that substantial work had been done to review and reinforce the Policy, and associated training arrangements. It was confirmed that an amended version of the policy was being discussed by the Cabinet next week. A training and awareness raising programme would follow, before implementing and monitoring the new policy. It was explained that a Policy for Council staff was in question here, and it was explained that a different policy applied to schools. It was ensured that all Gwynedd schools would adopt the policy. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that there was a different policy for Council members, and the Corporate Services Department would raise awareness of this with the members. It was highlighted that an appendix had been included, outlining different methods of raising different types of concerns within this, and summarised the information in a single document.

It was asked how the Recovery Plan considered ensuring that the voice of the family was given thorough attention and acknowledgement, as well as the voice of the

child. A desire to see a framework in place to listen to the voice of the child was expressed, as well as ensuring that the family were involved in the safeguarding processes when appropriate. In response, it was ensured that it was possible to draw clearer attention to this in the Response Plan, in order to show clearly that the voice of the family was an integral part of the work. This was seen to be an important part of the culture change in the Council and at grass roots level, which would be a tribute to the victims.

Work Stream 2 - Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children

It was noted that the Corporate Director was responsible for this stream, which ensured that the Council's safeguarding arrangements were robust and of the best possible standard. It was emphasised that child protection was at the root of the stream, by ensuring that concerns could be taken seriously and implemented swiftly. It was noted that it ensured that Part 5 arrangements supported a consistent and firm multi-agency response to allegations and concerns about adults who worked with children.

Reference was made to point 2.2 of the Plan, which noted that the Lead Safeguarding Officer in the Education Department had held Monitoring the Safeguarding Arrangements in Gwynedd, since April 2023.

By referring to point 2.9 in the Plan, which details the Section 47 and Part 5 enquiries of the Wales safeguarding procedures, it was asked whether the recommendations had been implemented and how the developments were evolving. In response, it was confirmed that this had been implemented in part, and that other developments were in progress.

It was confirmed that the Council had introduced measures to ensure that decisions on referrals did not fall on individuals and that the Council would pilot new processes for referrals relating to people in positions of trust. It was explained that the Council had been collaborating with the Police to consider the practicality of the resources that were needed to act on this. It was noted that a vast number of referrals were submitted every year. It was elaborated that changes had already been introduced to Part 5 discussion arrangements so that all information on children's records were reviewed when they were risk-assessed. References were made to the amendments made to the referral forms, and it was explained that a Safeguarding Officer had been commissioned by the Council to carry out the work and ensure an arrangement for multi-agency conversations.

Reference was made to the number of failures that had occurred in the case of Ysgol Friars, and enquiries were made about who was responsible to decide whether or not the concern reached the safeguarding or child protection threshold. It was acknowledged that there was a need to strengthen and standardise the process of reporting on low-level concerns, across the services. It was explained that the Council ensured that records were kept of any member of staff who had been the subject of concern under Part 5, and a flagging system would ensure that the concerns were identified and considered. It was reiterated that there was more to do, such as formalise meetings with the Police. It was explained that discussions were

progressing with the Welsh Government officers to develop policies and national implementation on this.

Members expressed a desire for Estyn to conduct unannounced visits to schools, so as to assess the schools' ability based on a valid visit.

A Member referred to a positive quotation from Estyn in the report, which praised the quality of part 5 action prior to Foden's arrest. It was suggested that it was not appropriate to include it, considering the context and that the text should be amended. It was reiterated that this was an example of a defensive culture and that the Council needed to move to remove the defensive culture when carrying out the implementation of recommendations in the Review to ensure that there was an actual change in culture in all aspects. It was ensured that this was a Council priority and a genuine commitment. It was acknowledged that this would take time to alter over the years to come as new policies were adopted.

Work Stream 3 - Training and Policies

It was confirmed that the Head of Corporate Services Department was responsible for this stream, ensuring that training packs were appropriate and that staff had received training that was suitable for their role. It was noted that the aim of this stream was to ensure that the county's schools adopted and implemented policies and ensured that staff were trained "to think the unthinkable" and understand that "it could happen here".

It was highlighted that the Council was committed to encourage staff to "think the unthinkable" and understand that it could happen here. It was believed that staff should be trained and to tackle the mindset where individuals tended to put people in 'respectable' jobs on a pedestal. It was noted that substantial progress had been made to promote and raise awareness of the safeguarding duties of Council staff. It was noted that an officer had been appointed as a Safeguarding Promoter and that work was progressing to encourage staff across the Council to complete safeguarding training. It was noted that amended training packs had been provided to all staff, which included amended information on child protection, safeguarding and abuse. It was confirmed that the arrangements were supervised by the strategy panel.

A desire to see more external training being offered to staff and members was expressed. It was ensured that this would be possible and that it was possible to conduct external training with external experts. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that this training could also be offered to School Governors. It was ensured that the training already being provided was standard training that had been designated by Cymru Care. Praise was expressed on the training that was already being provided in-house in the Council. It was reiterated that the training modules being provided to members covered a broad range of worthwhile issues.

It was acknowledged that the staff of the Children's Department had suffered huge pressure at work due to what had happened. Consideration was given to the substantial challenges facing them and the impact this had on frontline staff. Enquiries were made about how the hard work seen on the ground was being reflected in appreciation and support. In response, it was confirmed that support was being given to staff regularly and staff were thanked for their commitment and professionalism throughout. A special tribute was paid to the staff of Ysgol Friars,

and it was acknowledged that it had been very difficult for them to continue to provide a service. It was ensured that systems were in place to confirm that staff were able to cope with the pressure and challenges, and reference was made to the provision available by the Safeguarding and Well-being Team. It was noted that the Team's additional capacity would provide better support for the schools.

It was enquired whether it would be possible for all Council staff, Council members, school Governors and pupils to receive training on grooming. In response, assurances were given that the Council had been working on a cross-departmental project to create a training pack to address grooming behaviour and for this to be shared with the appropriate stakeholders. It was noted that they were working quickly to a tight timetable in order to provide promptly and timely and the Council would be adopting the Welsh Government's training when it would come in due course. Assurances were given that regular and ongoing discussions were progressing between the Council and Welsh Government to achieve the national recommendations. Reference was made to the Assurance Board which had been established, and it was noted that the Council took guidance from the Government and reported on the progress on the commitment to turn every stone and act.

The Council was trauma-informed. The opportunity to discuss how the Council had been designated as a Trauma-informed Council was welcomed.

Work Stream 4 - School Governance

It was noted that the Reporting Officer was to be confirmed for this stream. It was noted that the priority of this stream was to provide school Governors the best possible support to equip them to step-up in their roles. Assurances were given that governing bodies understood their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and that there were systems in place which measured the broader culture of schools.

A desire to establish and provide training to improve the culture in the Education Department to promote collaboration between the Education Department and Governors and School Staff, was expressed. Consideration was given to providing training to define and explain the role and responsibilities of each entity clearly and provide guidance and leadership to governing bodies. It was acknowledged that there was a lot of work to do to provide support to Governors and assurances were given that work was progressing under the guidance of the Welsh Government. It was reiterated that the Council supported the work and made a substantial contribution to ensure clarity. The Council's commitment to excel in the field, moving forward, was reiterated.

It was acknowledged that a School Governor's job was not attractive and not always easy. Gratitude was expressed to School Governors across the County and Wales for their commitment as volunteers to work for their community. Consideration was given to whether these volunteers were placed under too much pressure, and it was noted that there was a need to look at the model and relationship between the Governing Body and the wider agencies. A desire to call on the Government to act on this was expressed. It was emphasised that the culture change was essential to effective Governance and this could be implemented directly through the Council. The work progressing to ensure support to Governors was appreciated. Assurances

were given that the Department would give members regular updates on the progress happening in a structured manner, such as through the members' bulletin.

Concern was expressed that the number of staff within the education department had been reduced and that they were expected to take more on. It was acknowledged that the role of a school governor was not easy and that it needed to be simplified in order to make the job easier. It was noted that it was essential to ensure that Local Government had the resources it needed to provide robust support to schools and it was noted that the guidance was clear in the Response Plan to be implemented by the Council. Members were reminded that the work of a School Governor could also be a rewarding role, with much satisfaction, as members had the chance to work for their residents and children in their community. A suggestion was made that the Council should correspond with the Welsh Government to express concern about the challenges and risks surrounding the role of school governors.

The direct support available for Governors in Gwynedd was detailed. An overview of the support already being provided was given, and it was noted that they were working on a model agenda for meetings. Confirmation was received that a handbook for governors had been distributed this year, detailing the role and providing information on the support available to governors. An explanation was given that a mandatory training programme was available for governors and that it was operational across the county and that ongoing advice and support was available for governing bodies through the Assistant Education Support Officer. It was highlighted that there was support and guidance for clerks to governors and stabilised arrangements at Ysgol Friars.

Work Stream 5 - Reasonable Force

It was noted that the Reporting Officer was to be confirmed for this stream. It was noted that the priority in this stream was to ensure that all schools did everything to ensure that all schools implemented practices on the use of reasonable force in an appropriate manner. It was noted that the reasonable force policy of individual schools was being checked during quality visits by the Safeguarding Team and that training was being provided to Schools by the inclusion service. It was confirmed that an additional Safeguarding and Well-being Officer had been appointed to the Team recently in order to be able to complete the annual quality visits. Assurances were given that the authority would continue to review the content of the policy to reflect what the Government would publish and would communicate any relevant change to the schools and governing bodies.

Work Stream 6 - Crisis Planning and Crisis Response

It was highlighted that the Assistant Head of Corporate Services would lead on this work stream. It was elaborated that the aim was to ensure that the arrangements for planning and responding to an emergency were appropriate and that all staff were aware of how to respond in a situation of safeguarding crisis. It was noted that it supported school staff to respond to the challenging situation to raise a complaint against the leadership, if needed.

Work Stream 7 - Supporting and stabilising Ysgol Friars

It was noted that the priority in this stream was to ensure that the current education standards continued to be maintained, that staff were confident and that the leadership of the school's Governing Body was stable and effective. It was explained that much had changed at Ysgol Friars over the past two years, and that the Council acted to support the staff, governors and acting headteacher.

A Member asked whether children were happy at Ysgol Friars. In response, it was acknowledged that this was a difficult question to answer and that the school had gone through a hellish time. Nevertheless, assurances were given that the Council had faith in the current senior management team at Friars and they visited the school regularly to monitor the progress. It was emphasised that the relationship of staff with children at the school was essential to ensure that it was a healthy, thriving and positive environment. It was confirmed that good work was progressing to promote well-being and inclusion at the school and assurances were given that there were developments in the fields of trauma-awareness at the school. It was believed that this gave confidence that the school prioritised the welfare of children and it was hoped that the children felt pride that they were able to express any concerns to staff if necessary.

It was hoped that the school was starting to move on from what had happened through the support of the Council, and that lessons had been learnt. It was expressed that the school should be praised for being able to cope and continuing to succeed. Pride was expressed that it was a successful school and it was noted that there had been a positive change to build and promote a new, positive and safe culture at the school. It was explained that the school's management team and governing body had changed, and that the team continued to build on the progress and culture change. It was noted that the post of permanent headteacher had been advertised and that an individual had been appointed. The appointment was praised and it was noted that the person was a person of calibre who would continue to profess the principles seen at the school. Gratitude was expressed for all the excellent co-working which supported the school and ensured that it went from strength to strength and entered a new and exciting chapter in the school's history. It was acknowledged that holding public meetings to scrutinise the matter re-ignited a lot of stress for the Ysgol Friars community. There was a wish to note this, sympathise with them and thank them for continuing to succeed. Praise was expressed for the work that was going on at the school to create new plans.

The importance of welfare and inclusion for children at the school was emphasised and priority was given to reflecting this in the Response Plan. A member asked whether the word 'well-being' could be added in the description of the purpose of this stream (7), in order to refine the purpose of the stream and to draw attention to the importance of the pupils' health and well-being.

It was asked whether there was full capacity on the board of governors at Ysgol Friars. In response, it was confirmed that several new members had joined the body a year ago. It was acknowledged that the governing body was in its early days, and that it would develop over the coming period to realise the School's vision. It was explained that there were several exciting things in the pipeline. It was acknowledged that there were a few empty seats on the board, and it was explained

that it was challenging to fill every seat. It was elaborated that this was an ongoing battle and the hope was that the situation would improve soon. It was enquired whether it would be possible for Council members to be informed of the number of governors' empty seats at the County's schools. In response, it was confirmed that clerks could highlight the number of empty seats in every governing body, per school. It was confirmed that the education department would be happy to share this information in due course.

It was asked whether the members of the Committee could receive an update on the progress at the next meeting of the Care Scrutiny Committee in March. It was proposed that regular updates should be received on the progress every 6 months, in order to be able to fully monitor the situation.

DECISION

1) To note the work programme

2) To request a progress report in 6 months on the work programme including information on the whistleblowing policy and its implementation

3) To request a report on securing a Child Friendly County status and becoming a Trauma-Informed Council

4) To ask Cabinet to consider

- **adding an external female contact name to the poster to share information about concerns and ensure contact details are available on school websites and the Council website**
- **addressing the voice of the family as well as the voice of the child in work stream 1**
- **amending the text under the heading '2.3 – Estyn inspection of the Council's Education Department' on page 18 of the Response Plan to include a sentence reflecting the context that, despite the commendation by Estyn, a school head was arrested a few months later**
- **ensuring that grooming training is available to all who need it**
- **providing external specialist safeguarding training for members and governors**
- **adding the "well-being of children and young people" to the description of work stream 7 - Supporting and Stabilising Ysgol Friars**
- **corresponding with Welsh Government to express concern about the challenges and risks surrounding the role of school governors**

The meeting commenced at 10:30 and concluded at 13:00

Chair

GWYNEDD COUNCIL – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Scrutiny

Item title:	Strategic Safeguarding Panel Yearly Report 2025/26
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Dewi Jones, Cabinet Member for Education and Chair of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel
Relevant Officer:	Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services
Meeting date:	4 June 2026

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

1.1 The purpose of this item is to present the report on the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel for the year 2025/26.

2. What exactly needs to be scrutinised?

2.1 Although this report is based on factual information from the previous year, it is being presented to the Scrutiny Committee due to the importance of the subject, in order to provide members with an opportunity to scrutinise the work, challenge where necessary, and gain assurance regarding the Council's arrangements and performance.

3. Background / Context

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on what has been achieved by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel during the period. It is considered that the report provides an accurate and fair summary of the Panel's work, whilst also including references to reports or observations made by external auditors on this work.

3.2 The Report will be presented to the Cabinet and subsequently to the Full Council as an item for information.

Attachment List:

Appendix 1 – Strategic Safeguarding Panel Yearly Report 2025/26

STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL REPORT

2025/26

A SNAPSHOT OF THE YEAR 2025/26



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. It has been an incredibly disturbing and challenging period for Cyngor Gwynedd in the safeguarding field, with the need to improve and strengthen safeguarding systems being central to the work this year and it will remain so for the year to come.
- 1.2. This report presents an overview of the work of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel over the period from April 2025 to March 2026. The report highlights the work achieved by the Council, as well as the work done in partnership with others, seeking to provide a fair, balanced and transparent picture of the progress and challenges.
- 1.3. The aim of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel is to ensure that appropriate arrangements and procedures are in place at a corporate level across the Council to ensure the safety of children, young people and adults. Since 2017/18 the Panel is also responsible for maintaining an overview of wider safeguarding issues across Gwynedd, such as Community Safety.
- 1.4. The Panel in turn is accountable to the Statutory Director of Social Services, who has the final accountability for safeguarding issues.
- 1.5. The term of the Chair of the Panel is two years. Up to June 2025, Councillor Menna Trenholme, Cabinet Member for Children and Family Support, was the Chair. At the meeting held on 25 June 2025, Councillor Dewi Jones was elected as Chair for the 2025-2027 period.
- 1.6. A Safeguarding Operational Group supports the Strategic Panel to implement its priorities and to deal with practical issues in its remit. This is an internal group of officers, with the Designated Safeguarding Person of each department serving on it, to ensure whole-Council ownership of safeguarding issues.
- 1.7. During the year, the terms of reference of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and Safeguarding Operational Group were reviewed, making minor changes to ensure that they were current and fit for purpose.

2. REVIEWING THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 2.1. A review of the Council's Safeguarding Policy is carried out on a two-year cycle. This policy notes how the Council intends to achieve its statutory responsibilities to safeguard children and adults who are at risk, in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

- 2.2. Between January and March 2026, a comprehensive review of the Policy was carried out. A sub-group was established to lead the review, including the Director of Social Services, Safeguarding Children and Adults Managers, Learning and Development Manager, Head of Adults Department, Community Safety Officer, and Senior Executive Officer.
- 2.3. Several changes were made to the Safeguarding Policy following the review, including strengthening the clarity and usefulness of the document. More emphasis was placed on explaining the pathway for raising concerns, highlighting it clearly at the beginning of the document. More practical procedures were developed for reporting and recording concerns, including a detailed, new section, noting the information that should be recorded when seeing or hearing about a safeguarding matter.
- 2.4. The accountability and lead role of senior officers was strengthened, and the roles and responsibilities of individuals and different groups of staff were also made clearer.
- 2.5. The training requirements were explained more explicitly, emphasising the mandatory and regular (every three years) training expectations for staff and elected members, as well as strengthening the compliance monitoring arrangements.
- 2.6. Further steps were taken to strengthen accountability across the Council in the safeguarding field. The Policy now includes the following requirements:
- Including data (%) on the number who have completed safeguarding training and domestic violence training as a part of the Performance Challenge process in each department.
 - Establishing safeguarding as a permanent item on the agenda of the Corporate Management Team.
 - Asking every department to include safeguarding as a standing item on the agendas of our departmental management team.
 - Continuing with the procedure of submitting the Annual Report to the Care Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet and the full Council.
- 2.7. Input was received from the members of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and the broader Safeguarding Operational Group, which contributed to improving the document further. The amended policy will be submitted before the Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet before it was adopted formally. It will also be submitted for information to the Full Council.

3. OUR BRAVERY BROUGHT JUSTICE REPORT

- 3.1. Following the publication of the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board's report, *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, in October 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd drew up a comprehensive response to address the recommendations, as well as broader matters noted in

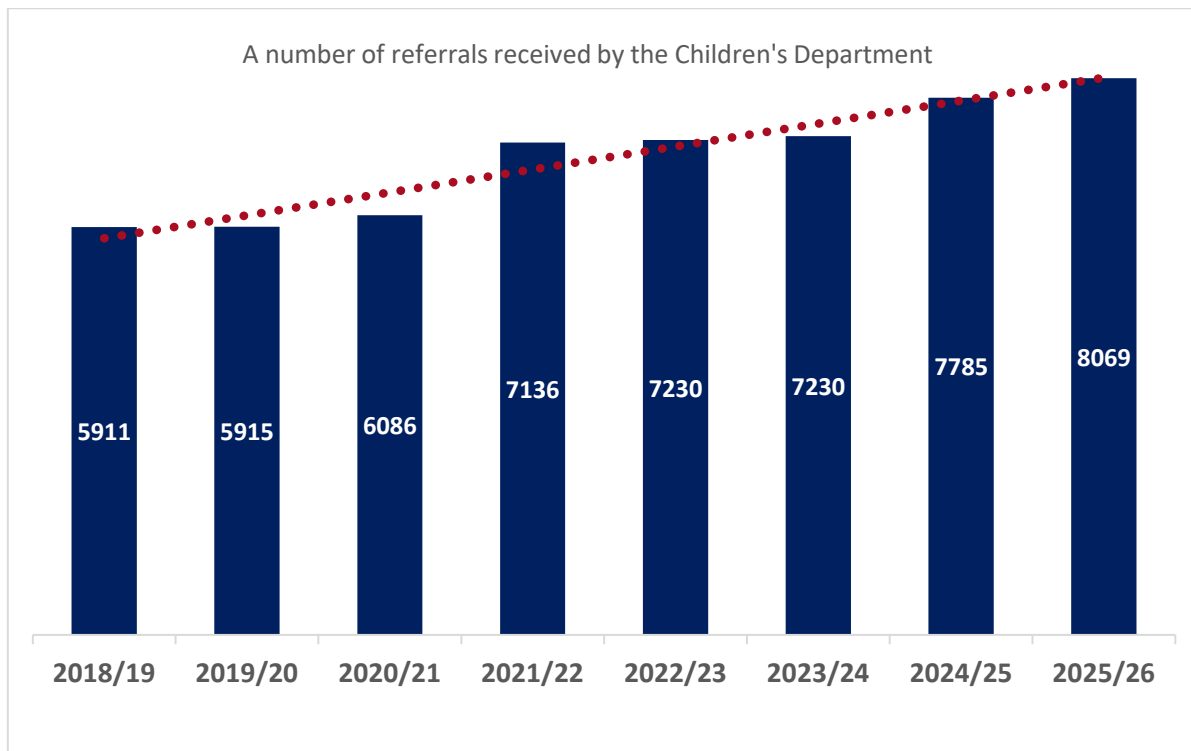
inspections and associated investigations. This was a challenging and damning report, and the Council acknowledged that there were important lessons to learn.

- 3.2. A Response Board was established to supervise the work, chaired by Professor Sally Holland, the previous Children's Commissioner for Wales. The aim of the Board is to ensure firm progress and give assurances to the Council, elected members and stakeholders that definitive steps are being taken to strengthen safeguarding arrangements and to improve the experiences of children and vulnerable adults in Gwynedd.
- 3.3. Since then, the board has met regularly and have benefited from the input and guidance from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Estyn and Welsh Government. Also considered was the learning from the CIW and Estyn joint-inspection in November 2025. Sally Holland reports every quarter to the Council Cabinet, whilst the Welsh Government's Ministerial Assurance Group also monitors progress against the recommendation.
- 3.4. 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 the learning and ensure continuous improvements.
- 3.5. The Safeguarding Strategic Panel plays a key role in terms of scrutinising progress, including monitoring the levels of safeguarding training across the Council. He will have a stronger role in the future in terms of providing a strategic overview of the progress against the recommendations.

4. PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS IN THE SAFEGUARDING FIELD

4.1. Safeguarding Children

- 4.1.1. **8,069** referrals to children's services were received in 2025/26. This is an increase of **3.7%** in the number of referrals compared with 7785 last year.



4.1.2. Once again, the pressure on the service has been substantial, with the workforce incredibly busy supporting children and families across the county. It is noted that the nature of the cases seen now is much more intensive and complex than in the past. During 2025-2026, referrals for families with several children, high levels of neglect, substance misuse, domestic abuse and new families, were brought to our attention, adding to the operational challenges.

4.1.3. An increase is also seen in the number on the Child Protection Register this year. On 31 March 2025, the number of children on the register was **106**, and this year, the number is **126**. Emotional abuse continued to be the main reason for including children on the register and it can be seen that children tend to stay on the register for longer periods by now. Similar patterns were seen in several Local Authorities, and it is intended to consider alternative methods of supporting children over the year to come.

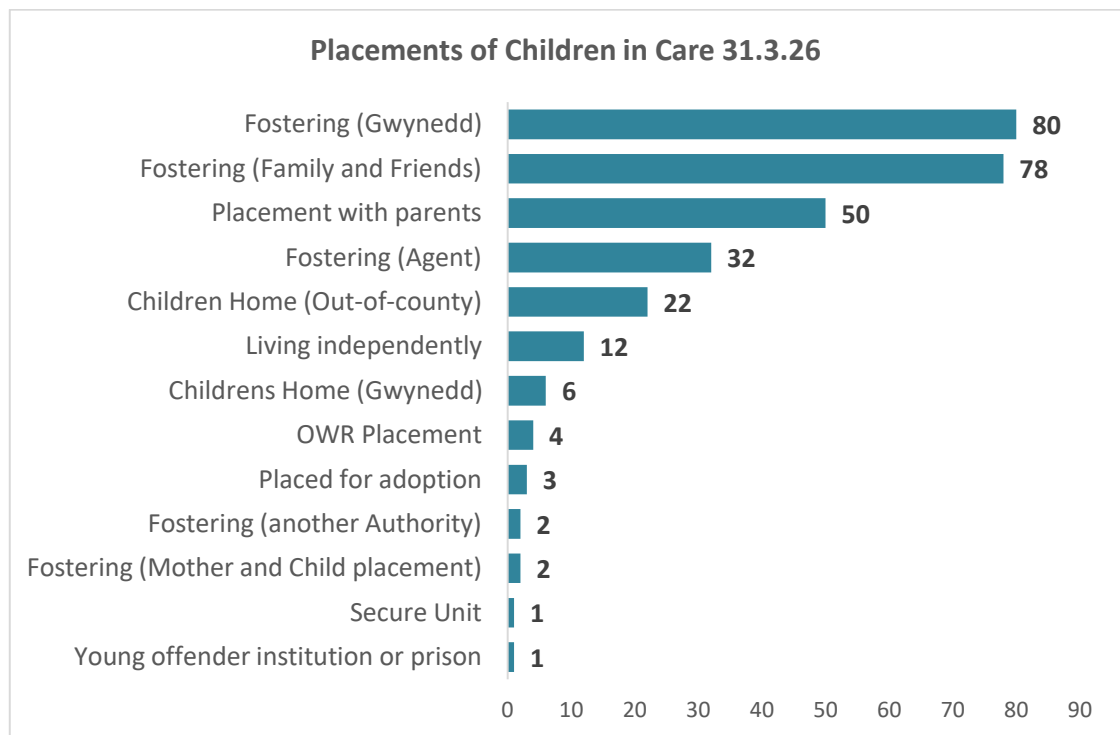
4.1.4. **84% (↑2%)** child protection reviews were held within the statutory timetable during the year. The percentage of risk assessments submitted to Case Conferences which were considered as exhibiting quality in decision making remained high at **100%**.

4.1.5. The Part 5 work of the Wales safeguarding procedures has increased again this year. Part 5 relates to safeguarding concerns about practitioners and those in posts of trust, and these procedures identify arrangements for responding to safeguarding concerns about those whose work, whether employed or voluntary, brings them

into contact with children or adults at risk. The intention is to increase capacity by creating additional posts within the Safeguarding Unit early in 2026/27.

4.1.6. Gwynedd Children’s Services now take a proactive approach to ensuring that the voice of the child is heard when responding to concerns relating to individuals working with children and young people. Some challenges remain as a result of parental refusal, meaning that individual assessments are required to determine the appropriate course of action.

4.1.7. At the end of March, there were **293 (↑12)** looked after children. Of the total number of looked after children, **66%** are in foster placements, **28 (10%)** are in residential placements and **50 (17%)** are placed with their parents. There were **3** children in adoptive placements at the end of the year, with **12** young persons living independently with support.



4.1.8. During 2025/26, unregistered placements arrangements (OWR) were used for **4** young people in care. However, the situation nationally is much more serious by now, with the majority, if not all authorities having to ensure that such an arrangement is available due to the lack of registered placements across the United Kingdom.

4.1.9. When a looked after child needs to be placed, the wish is to keep them close to their family and home area. We therefore focus on finding ways of accommodating and providing care to children and young people closer to home, so that they can continue to be part of the community and maintain their support networks.

Developing the residential provision through the Small Group Homes Scheme was a priority in the Council Plan 2023-28.

- 4.1.10. Two homes are already operational in Morfa Bychan and Deiniolen, with the children settling well into the placements. Renovation work on the home in Edern is now nearing completion. A third property was purchased in Cricieth last year, with the registration process with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) ongoing. Work also commenced during the year on the property, with the hope that it will be completed early in 2026/27.
- 4.1.11. The high cost of out-of-county specialist placements places substantial pressure on the budget, with some costs arising unexpectedly and difficult to anticipate in advance. Although some placements of this type were unavoidable, this pressure has led the Council to speed-up the work of developing small group homes to strengthen the local provision and reduce the dependency on a costly out-of-county provision. This also coincides with the children's non-profit agenda of the Welsh Government, which is seeking to ensure that children's care and accommodation is provided based on the needs of children, instead of profits. A specific role was created to support and speed-up the programme in 2026/27.

4.2. Safeguarding Adults

- 4.2.1. **792** Adults reports were received in 2025/26, and this was an increase from the **750** reports received in 2024/25. On average, **94.4% (↑2.3%)** of the initial s.126 enquiries safeguarding referrals were completed within the statutory 7-day period.
- 4.2.2. From the reports of Adults at Risk received, the risk was managed in **100%** of the cases.
- 4.2.3. Although the department appointed an additional part-time Safeguarding Officer, the capacity remains challenging due to long-term sickness within the team. As a result, the additional workload has fallen on the leaders of the Community Resources Teams and the Social Work Teams to complete the safeguarding work. In order to manage the risk, a temporary post has now been advertised; however, recruitment has been challenging, meaning that the post has had to be readvertised.
- 4.2.4. The officers carry out regular monitoring and respond promptly to any concerns, ensuring that safe and high-quality care is commissioned. The data shows that regular visits are held in residential homes. A pre-monitoring form was submitted, which assisted officers to prepare more effectively for visits and to focus on potential risk areas.

- 4.2.5. The team also meets every fortnight with the Medications Team and in-house managers to discuss medication errors and preparing appropriate support. This work makes a direct contribution to the safety of residents within the provision.
- 4.2.6. One provider continues under the Escalating Concerns system, and an embargo on new admissions has been in place since October 2025. This embargo affects the ability of services to place individuals in that area, and ongoing efforts are being made to collaborate with the provider in order to ensure that necessary improvements are implemented in full.
- 4.2.7. Concerns around the DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Arrangements) continue. At the end of March 2026, **319** individuals were awaiting a DoLS assessment, compared with **356** at the end of March 2025. It is necessary to prioritise cases according to the level of risk, paying particular attention to individuals living in supported accommodation, where an application needs to be submitted to the Court of Protection for authorisation to the deprivation of liberty.
- 4.2.8. A successful bid was made during 2024/25 to employ two Best Interest Assessors on a permanent basis. Whilst two individuals were appointed to the roles, they did not have the qualifications or experience to start straight away. By now, they have both completed their training, have qualified and have started on their workload.

4.3. Education

- 4.3.1. During 2025-2026, the Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team has conducted visits to 89 schools to review and ensure the quality of safeguarding arrangements, policies and procedures. Since January 2025, every school receives an annual visit to assess the quality of their safeguarding arrangements, ensuring consistency and compliance across the county.
- 4.3.2. Almost every school visited in 2025/26 complied with the appropriate safeguarding arrangements. From these visits, **4 schools** which have received a second visit to check aspects such as arrangements for recording attendance / absences and the content of Safeguarding posters.
- 4.3.3. An Annual Safeguarding Review is completed by every school annually. The latest findings demonstrate:
- **95% (↑1%)** of the "Main Safeguarding Persons" in schools had received specific safeguarding training during the past two years;
 - **85% (→remains the same)** of Designated Governors in Gwynedd's schools had also received the relevant training for their role in the last two years;

- **100% (↑ 3%)** of Gwynedd Schools had introduced Basic Safeguarding Training to all staff before the end of the Winter term;
- **100% (remains the same)** of Gwynedd Schools noted that they were confident that all school staff and volunteers know what to do if a child should disclose information on abuse.

4.3.4. Since April 2025, the Safeguarding and Well-being Service has conducted:

- **3** Safeguarding training sessions for designated Safeguarding Governors and Chairs
- **14** Designated Safeguarding Person training sessions with a total of **161 individual** in attendance.

In addition, the Designated Lead officer has held training sessions for supply teachers, early years staff, the education modernisation team and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) staff.

4.3.5. In February 2026, an additional member was appointed to increase the capacity of the Education Safeguarding and Well-being Team. The team has already developed new resources to strengthen the response of schools to safeguarding matters, including simple flow charts for the safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff, as well as quality posters to display in the schools and their websites. The materials include the details of the designated safeguarding persons and chairs, details of the Education Safeguarding and Well-being Team and supporting clarity and accessibility of information for staff, governors and parents.

4.3.6. Every school has adopted the 'Promoting measures and practices leading to the use and reduction of restrictive intervention' exemplar policy. This is checked during the annual safeguarding quality visits. An external evaluation has been commissioned to ensure compliance with the national guidance as well as further developing training arrangements and provisions. The recommendations of the evaluation leads to developing and strengthening training and support for schools, empowering them to respond safely in cases of restrictive intervention, listening to the voice of the pupil and being reflective of any such intervention.

4.3.7. At the end of March 2026, there was a total of **282 (↑7.63%)** children receiving their education at home, through parents' choice. This figure includes **158** children who are historically on the register and **124** new children since September 2025. Not all children on the register have registered at a school previously, with some moving into the County but not wishing to register at a school and others making the decision very soon to home educate from statutory school age.

4.3.8. The main reasons for a parent's choice to home educate is lifestyle/ideology, but anxiety and mental health problems are also increasing. We managed to maintain contact with most of these families, with a small number refusing any contact (in line with their rights).

4.4. **Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)**

4.4.1. The Council is working in partnership to prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, raising awareness, providing support to victims and improving the response of services.

4.4.2. Following an application prepared by officers from the Corporate Support Department, the Council received a 'White Ribbon' accreditation in May 2022. The White Ribbon is an organisation that works to raise awareness and encourage people, particularly men, to act against violence against women and domestic abuse.

4.4.3. We also worked with the Police to develop an initiative called 'Safe Zones' in Bangor and Caernarfon. The method is simple, but effective, focusing on improving natural surveillance, lights and using existing CCTV systems in key locations. A successful application was made to the Home Office for finance to support the project, and further work is progressing.

4.4.4. **11.1 in every 1000 of the population** in Gwynedd experience domestic violence annually (1.1%). This compares with 10.4 in Anglesey, 17.5 in Denbighshire and 16.5 in Conwy. During 2025/2026, the Council has commissioned Gorwel (through Grŵp Cynefin) and DASU (Domestic Abuse Support Unit) to provide support services for victims, including practical and emotional support, housing and refuge for individuals in crisis, safety advice, advocacy and guidance to steer the justice system.

4.4.5. The Council has also made a successful application through the Welsh Government's VAWDASV Capital Grant to purchase 100 security cameras to support the survivors of domestic abuse in the area. The cameras will be distributed through key partners, including the Police, DASU and Gorwel, in order to provide practical support for at-risk individuals.

4.4.6. In addition, following discussions with Women's Aid Wales about supporting deaf domestic abuse survivors, the Partnership arranged British Sign Language (BSL) training through Coleg Llandrillo for Siop Gwynedd staff and local domestic abuse organisations. Feedback will be collected from participants to assess the impact of the session and note any further needs, with the possibility of arranging additional sessions in line with the demand.

- 4.4.7. The Housing Department, through Housing Support Grant funding, has commissioned a comprehensive assessment of the Domestic Violence services in order to strengthen collaboration and facilitate joint commissioning for the future. It was agreed that the current services and arrangements had been too fragmented, and that it would be beneficial to establish a specific working group on domestic violence within the Council.
- 4.4.8. Currently, the Welsh Government is holding a national consultation to review the Domestic Violence services. It is noted that there is substantial differences in the funding models and provisions across regions. For example, in the north, funding is channelled through the Police and Crime Commissioner, whilst in other areas, it goes directly to Local Authorities. The consultation therefore is an opportunity for the Welsh Government to reconcile operational methods across the country.
- 4.4.9. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership is responsible for commissioning Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) in Gwynedd. One DHR review has been approved by the Home Office and is about to be published, and a first draft of another DHR review has been submitted before Christmas.
- 4.4.10. By now, this statutory duty is achieved through a Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR), which incorporates Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) within the same reviewing process now used for every safeguarding review in Wales. The first review to follow this procedure has begun, with the first meeting of the Panel held in March 2026.
- 4.4.11. By now, the Domestic Abuse (VAWDASV) e-module is statutory for all members of staff. It is vital that the workforce receives the training to ensure that the Council is doing everything within its ability to support individuals and to raise awareness. 'Ask and Act' training is also promoted to give staff confidence to help individuals experiencing violence, domestic abuse or sexual violence. On 31 March 2026, **74.7%** of Council staff (including Permanent, Casual and Fixed-term staff) have completed the training.
- 4.4.12. More 'Bystander Intervention' training sessions were held for Council staff. This was provided by Welsh Government, with the aim of helping individuals to deal with potentially harmful situations such as sexual harassment, giving them confidence to have discussions with friends and colleagues about these matters.
- 4.4.13. This year, a series of training sessions for staff were commissioned by Men at Work, an organisation established by Michael Conroy, in order to give professionals more confidence and practical resources to conduct constructive conversations with boys and young men on a range of sensitive and important topics. This included healthy

relationships, on-line influences, gender stereotyping, self-image, dangerous behaviours, impacts of pornography, and well-being. The training offers a practical, open and considerate method of supporting staff to engage effectively with young people on these matters, and very positive feedback was received from those attending.

4.5. Crime

- 4.5.1. The Council is collaborating with the Police through the Community Partnership Board, and a regular overview of crime levels across Gwynedd is received. In 2025/26, **a small increase of 3.6%** was seen in the number of offences in Gwynedd, compared with the previous year.
- 4.5.2. The level of Sex Offences recorded to date in 2025/26 in Gwynedd saw **a reduction of 1.5%** compared with 2024/25. There can be significant variations in crimes reported from week to week, partly because of reporting on historical offences.
- 4.5.3. Acquisitive crimes include the categories of Residential Burglary, Business and Community Burglary, Theft, Vehicle Crime and Thefts and Handling. Residential Burglary and Business and Community Burglary have reduced this year, but an increase was seen in the number of Vehicle Crimes and Thefts and Handling.
- 4.5.4. Anti-social behaviour in Gwynedd has seen a reduction to date of **0.7%** in 2025/26, compared with the same period in 2024/25. Collaborative work is being done with Town and Community Councils, the Highways Department and the Police, for example by installing CCTV cameras where the biggest need arises.
- 4.5.5. The Serious Violence Duty came into force nationally in January 2023. The duty makes it a requirement for specified authorities to work together to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area. The North Wales final Strategy was published in January 2024. The Council has been part of this work since the beginning and continues to be part of the Regional Steering Group to implement the Duty.
- 4.5.6. As part of the duty, the Partnership received £65k of funding for preventative and early intervention projects to reduce serious violence by children and young people. Several projects were completed by April 2026, including:
 - 'Don't Steal My Future' sessions held by RASASC Wales (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre) to raise awareness of sexual violence with pupils and to influence attitudes and behaviours.
 - An awareness campaign around selling illegal vapes and child exploitation, with a focus on increased reporting and sharing of intelligence.

- Increase the youth provision over the summer holidays and half-term, with activities targeted for young people aged 11-25 years in areas at high risk of crime and violence.
- A schools project led by the Education Department to prevent serious violence, including training, mentoring and group work to reduce exclusions and keeping pupils safe and in education.

4.6. **Modern Slavery**

4.6.1. Modern slavery spans several types of exploitation, namely labour, criminal, sexual exploitation and domestic slavery. In North Wales, Modern Slavery cases in the area mainly relate to drugs exploitation, where the victims are often young males who are forced to sell drugs, usually through county lines. Regionally, promoting contextual safeguarding to work with children and young people at risk of exploitation and/or modern slavery is a priority within the North Wales Serious Violence Strategy.

4.6.2. The Police is raising awareness of Modern Slavery amongst authorities and businesses across the region, and conducting regular visits to hotels and holiday sites, as well as providing literature in sexual health surgeries and clinics.

4.6.3. Between January and December 2024, North Wales Police received 112 referrals relating to modern slavery, human trafficking or exploitation through the National Referral Mechanism, with 13 of these relating to Gwynedd. A further 6 reports were received through the Duty to Notify process, with 1 relating to Gwynedd.

4.6.4. In 2025, the number of referrals fell to 95, with 9 relating to Gwynedd. Two reports were received through the Duty to Notify process during the year, none of which related to Gwynedd.

4.7. **Counter Terrorism**

4.7.1. Cyngor Gwynedd holds a Public Places Group: Preparedness to Protect and Safeguard and is also a member of the equivalent regional groups, e.g., Contest Board. The aim of the group is to strengthen safety in public spaces, improving preparedness to respond to events, and raising awareness amongst stakeholders to keep communities safe.

4.7.2. In 2025/26, preparations were continued to ensure compliance with Martyn's Law, which is expected to come into force in 2027; the Group also considered the venue Hire Policy during the year, as well as specific safety issues raised by the North Wales Society for the Blind in relation to cycle lanes.

4.7.3. In 2024/25, the Council undertook a quality assurance process with the Home Office in order to meet the statutory requirements under the Prevent duty. Strengths were identified such as the efforts for regional collaboration and the work of managing risks in relation to radicalisation.

4.7.4. As a result of this process, two further recommendations were received, namely: developing a venue Hire Policy and develop a prevent training strategy. As above, the Hire Policy has received attention during the year, and once the Welsh training will be available, the new "prevent" training plan can be implemented.

4.8. **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

4.8.1. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is responsible for processing criminal checks. The purpose of DBS checks is to help employers make safer recruiting and licensing decisions, although the check is only one part of the recruitment process. When the check has been processed and completed by the DBS, the applicant will receive a DBS certificate.

4.8.2. The Operational Group has undertaken some significant work to check, challenge and revisit the corporate procedure in respect of the DBS. As a result, Departments now have greater ownership of the DBS procedures, and this has transformed how the Operational Group reports on its conformity on departmental disclosures.

4.8.3. The DBS situation has stabilised during the year, with most departments achieving 100% compliance, i.e., that every member of staff requiring a DBS for their role has a current certificate. Where individuals have no current DBS, a clear explanation is provided for the Group, mainly associated with long-term absences or maternity periods. The departments continue to monitor the situation on an ongoing basis in order to ensure continuous compliance and manage any gaps in a timely way.

4.9. **Corporate Safeguarding Training**

4.9.1. During the year, a substantial effort was made to increase awareness and safeguarding training completion rates across the organisation. This work has led to the increase in the number of staff completing the mandatory training.

4.9.2. On 31 March 2025, **36.4%** of Council staff had completed the safeguarding e-module. By 31 March 2026, this percentage had more than doubled, with **75.9%** of Council staff had now completed the e-module. It should be noted that this increase is partly due to a change in the way the data is reported, with the 2025 figures including school teachers while the 2026 figures exclude them.

- 4.9.3. Every Councillor is encouraged to attend safeguarding training (specific training - Group F). **87% of Councillors** have completed the training and a further session will be held early in 2026/27.
- 4.9.4. Although completing the training is important, ensuring an appropriate level of understanding and awareness amongst staff and members, is more important. Following a request by the Safeguarding Operational Group, an internal inspection was carried out to assess the Council's field workers' awareness level of the Safeguarding Policy. The inspection highlighted that more work needed to be done to ensure consistent understanding of the Policy and associated procedures.
- 4.9.5. A Corporate Safeguarding Promoter was appointed to ensure that every member of Cyngor Gwynedd staff is aware of their responsibilities in terms of safeguarding. The role will promote key messages that safeguarding is everyone's business and educate staff to be more aware and promote confidence when reporting on concerns.
- 4.9.6. The Corporate Safeguarding Promoter is working to increase the number of staff who complete the mandatory safeguarding training. Although office staff have been directed to use the e-learning platform, the challenge is to reach members of front-line staff who have no access to the Council's Information Technology systems. To overcome this challenge, a comprehensive video was prepared that will be presented to the workforce in easily accessible and easy to understand collective sessions.
- 4.9.7. The Corporate Safeguarding Promoter is also collaborating with the Safeguarding Operational Group to develop a central page on the intranet with all promotional/associated information to the workforce regarding safeguarding. This includes the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, details of the Designated Safeguarding Officers, mandatory training and contacts for support.
- 4.9.8. A further internal audit is intended to be held during the autumn 2026 in order to assess the effectiveness of the current arrangements and level of understanding across the organisation. This will also be an opportunity to evaluate whether the new interventions have increased awareness amongst staff, and to identify any further gaps where support or additional guidance will need to be provided.

5. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1. Although the Safeguarding Strategic Panel focuses on the corporate responsibilities relating to safeguarding matters within Gwynedd, collaboration also happens on a regional level through the **North Wales Safeguarding Board** for Children and Adults

Safeguarding. These are Statutory Boards with cross-agency membership and specific statutory and legal responsibilities. Further information regarding the work of the Boards can be seen here - <https://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales/>

5.2. During the year, the Welsh Government conducted a review into safeguarding governance and supervision arrangements. This national review focuses on how suitable the current structures are, investigating the roles of the Regional Safeguarding Boards and National Independent Safeguarding Boards, how these bodies are collaborating with regulators and inspectorates, and what improvements are needed to strengthen accountability and governance. The final report is expected in the spring 2026.

5.3. The **Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership** has also shown that working in partnership across county borders is proving to be a success. Several organisations have a statutory duty to be part of the partnership, including Local Authorities, Police, Probation Services, Fire and Rescue Service and the Health Board. Information on all aspects of community safety that the Council deal with is available on our [website](#).

6. THE FUTURE

6.1. In terms of the Panel's priorities for the coming year, the intention is to focus on the following priorities:

- Implement and monitor the Council's response to the recommendations of the *Our Bravery Brought Justice* report, ensuring that the necessary improvements are embedded across the organisation.
- Strengthen the corporate safeguarding awareness, understanding and culture across all services, including increasing the completion of training and ensuring that staff are confident to act on concerns.
- Publish a safeguarding video to make it easy and accessible for field workers to complete the mandatory training.
- Increase capacity within the safeguarding services, particularly in relation to work on Part 5, adult safeguarding and DoLS arrangements.
- Further develop the regional and local partnership work with the Police, schools, the Health Board, Welsh Government and other partners in order to respond more effectively to complex safeguarding risks.
- Continue to strengthen the arrangements for corporate governance, accountability and scrutiny in the field of scrutiny, including the role of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and Safeguarding Operational Group.
- Conduct further internal audits to assess the efficiency of new arrangements and identify any further gaps in awareness, training or practice.

GWYNEDD COUNCIL – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Scrutiny

Item title:	Safeguarding Policy Review (2026)
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Dewi Jones, Cabinet Member for Education and Chair of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel
Relevant Officer:	Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services
Meeting date:	4 June 2026

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy to the Scrutiny Committee, giving members the opportunity to review the content and provide comments before the policy is formally adopted.

2. What exactly needs to be scrutinised?

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider whether the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy is clear, up to date, and appropriately reflects the Council's safeguarding responsibilities. Members are also asked to consider whether there are any gaps, risks, or issues that should be addressed prior to adoption of the policy.
- 2.2 The key changes introduced as part of this review are outlined within the report below.

3. Background / Context

- 3.1 A review of the Council's Safeguarding Policy is carried out on a two-year cycle. This policy notes how the Council intends to achieve its statutory responsibilities to safeguard children and adults who are at risk, in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 3.2 Between January and March 2026, a comprehensive review of the Policy was carried out. A sub-group was established to lead the review, including the Director of Social Services, Safeguarding Children and Adults Managers, Learning and Development Manager, Head of Adults Department, Community Safety Officer, and Senior Executive Officer.
- 3.3 Several changes were made to the Safeguarding Policy following the review, including strengthening the clarity and usefulness of the document. More emphasis was placed on explaining the pathway for raising concerns, highlighting it clearly at the beginning of the document. More practical procedures were developed for reporting and

recording concerns, including a detailed, new section, noting the information that should be recorded when seeing or hearing about a safeguarding matter.

- 3.4 The accountability and lead role of senior officers was strengthened, and the roles and responsibilities of individuals and different groups of staff were also made clearer. The review also further highlight the safeguarding responsibilities of organisations commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 3.5 The training requirements were explained more explicitly, emphasising the mandatory and regular (every three years) training expectations for staff and elected members, as well as strengthening the compliance monitoring arrangements.
- 3.6 Further steps were taken to strengthen accountability across the Council in the safeguarding field. The Policy now includes the following requirements:
- Including data (%) on the number who have completed safeguarding training and domestic violence training as a part of the Performance Challenge process in each department.
 - Establishing safeguarding as a permanent item on the agenda of the Corporate Management Team.
 - Asking every department to include safeguarding as a standing item on the agendas of our departmental management team.
 - Continuing with the procedure of submitting the Annual Report to the Care Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet and the full Council.
- 3.7 An informal consultation on the revised Policy was held with members of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and members of the Safeguarding Operational Group, and a number of valuable comments were received as part of the process.
- 3.8 The adoption of the new Policy will ensure that the Council has a robust safeguarding procedure in place, and fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children and adults at risk.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 The Policy will be presented to the Cabinet in July. If the Policy is approved by Cabinet, a copy for information will go before the next Full Council meeting. It is felt that this is an important step in order to raise the awareness of elected members.

Attachment List:

Appendix 1 - Draft Safeguarding Policy (2026 Review)

Cyngor Gwynedd

Policy and Guidance for Safeguarding Children and Adults who are at Risk of Abuse and Neglect

(Referred to as the Safeguarding Policy for Cyngor Gwynedd)



Reviewed May 2026

Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents, or works on behalf of, the Council. Everyone has a responsibility to report any concern or suspicion that a child or adult is at risk of being abused and/or neglected.

PROCEDURE FOR REFERRING ANY CONCERN

1. The Police (999) should be contacted immediately and without delay if a child or adult is in imminent danger.
2. Any member of staff or Councillors who have concerns about the safety of a child or adult should contact the following immediately:

the Referrals Admission Team on 01766 772577

Select option 1 = Children

Select option 2 = Adults

For any concerns about the safety of a child or adult outside normal office hours, **after 5:00pm Monday to Friday and on weekends and Bank Holidays**, you should contact:

the Social Services Out of Hours Team on 01248 353551

3. Any member of staff who is unsure whether there is a child or adult safeguarding issue should discuss with the Department's Designated Safeguarding Person or their line manager. If they are not available, then the matter should be immediately referred to the Teams stated above.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Cyngor Gwynedd's main priority is to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from abuse, neglect, radicalisation, slavery, domestic abuse and exploitation.

- 1.2. Everyone in Cyngor Gwynedd has a responsibility to create an environment that ensures that children and adults are less likely to be abused. These safeguarding arrangements are outlined in this policy and are the responsibility of all services within Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 1.3. Social Services hold the leading responsibilities to protect children and adults who may be suffering from harm and neglect.
- 1.4. Employees of Cyngor Gwynedd and Councillors are expected to act in accordance with the principles set out in this policy at all times, whether during working hours or otherwise.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **"Safeguarding"** is broader than protecting children and adults. It means preventing abuse or harm, and promoting well-being, including encouraging:
 - mental, physical and emotional health
 - protection from harm and neglect
 - education, training and leisure
 - constructive contribution to society
 - social and economic well-being.
- 2.2. **"Protection"** responds to the concerns about the likelihood of significant harm to an individual, meaning a person who is at risk of abuse and neglect. The arrangements for the protection of children and adults at risk of abuse are outlined in the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#), and are implemented by Social Services and the Police.

3. LEGISLATION

- 3.1. [Section 28 of the Children Act 2004](#):
Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that it undertakes its functions to safeguard and promote children's well-being.
- 3.2. [Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#):
Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to protect adults and prevent crime and disorder when undertaking its functions.
- 3.3. [Section 7 of the Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#):
Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to promote the well-being of children and adults who need care and support. Well-being is defined in the Act as having eight common aspects, one of which includes protection from abuse and neglect.
- 3.4. [Section 2 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020](#):
Cyngor Gwynedd employees and volunteers have a duty to report any child or adult deemed to be at risk of abuse, neglect and/or harm.
- 3.5. [Children's Rights](#):
The principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provide the foundation for children's safeguarding by recognizing that every child has the right to be

protected from harm, abuse and neglect, and they impose a clear duty on adults, organisations and the State to promote their well-being, listen to their opinions, and act in their best interest at all times. Article 19 relates specifically to safeguarding.

3.6. [Human Rights:](#)

Under the United Nations human rights framework, every individual is entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms that the State must respect, protect and fulfil. Article 3, Article 6 and Article 8 are specifically relevant to safeguarding.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents, or works on behalf of, the Council.
- 4.2. Every child and adult has the right to be protected from harm, exploitation and abuse.
- 4.3. Cyngor Gwynedd places the safeguarding and well-being of children and adults at the heart of our policies and procedures.
- 4.4. All children and adults (whatever their background) have the right to participate in a safe society free from any violence, fear, abuse, exploitation, grooming, bullying or discrimination.
- 4.5. Cyngor Gwynedd operates in partnership with children, their parents, carers and adults, as well as other agencies to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and adults.
- 4.6. Cyngor Gwynedd recognises the importance of preventative work and early intervention to reduce the likelihood of abuse or harm occurring.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1. All Councillors, members of staff, volunteers and contracted service providers are responsible for following the guidelines set out in this Policy.

5.2. THE FUNCTIONS OF OFFICERS AND KEY COUNCILLORS

5.2.1. Statutory Director of Social Services

Name:	Phone Number:	E-mail Address:
Huw Dylan Owen	01286 679387	DylanOwen@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

- 5.2.1.1. The Director of Social Services has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding matters. He will ensure that the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures and arrangements and is responsible for reporting on these arrangements regularly to Councillors.

- 5.2.1.2. The Director must be aware of any potential conflict of interest between his role and the responsibility for corporate protection matters. Should such a conflict arise, the Director

should remove himself from one of the roles for the duration of that position, and the responsibility will transfer to the Chief Executive.

5.2.2. Councillors

5.2.2.1. All Councillors should act in accordance with the procedures of this Policy and follow the guidelines and procedures attached to the Policy to safeguard children and adults from harm and abuse.

5.2.2.2. All Councillors are expected to undertake training on safeguarding children and adults every three years. A register is kept of those who have completed the training, and this is reported as part of the performance monitoring arrangements coordinated by the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.2.3. Cabinet Members

Name:	E-mail Address:
Councillor Menna Trenholme <i>Cabinet Member - Children and Families</i>	Cynghorydd.MennaTrenholme@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Councillor Dilwyn Morgan <i>Cabinet Member - Adults</i>	Cynghorydd.DilwynMorgan@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Councillor Dewi Jones <i>Cabinet Member - Education</i>	Cynghorydd.DewiJones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

5.2.3.1. The Cabinet Members for Adults, Education and Children and Families will keep an overview of safeguarding matters across the Council.

5.2.3.2. These Cabinet Members will be standing members of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel. The Cabinet Members will report annually on the work of the Strategic Panel to the Care Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet and the Full Council.

5.2.4. Care Scrutiny Committee

5.2.4.1. Members of the Care Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise and receive information about the Strategic Panel's work programme through the Annual Report.

5.2.5. The Full Council

5.2.5.1. Each Councillor will receive an Annual Report on the work of the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel.

5.3. FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL'S DEPARTMENTS, MANAGERS AND STAFF

5.3.1. All Departments within the Council should take full ownership of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote procedures to report any concerns to the Social Services and/or the Police.

5.3.2. All Members of Staff

5.3.2.1. All members of staff and volunteers have a responsibility to exercise their duties in a manner that safeguards and promotes the well-being of children and adults.

5.3.2.2. All staff must undertake training on safeguarding children and adults **every three years**. A register is kept of those who have completed the training, and this is reported as part of departmental performance monitoring arrangements and the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.3.3. Heads of Department

5.3.3.1. Responsibility for safeguarding and implementing this Policy within each Department rests with the Head of Department.

5.3.3.2. Every Head of Department should ensure that all members of staff in relevant posts are vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and that their staff comply with this Policy. Compliance in this area will be recorded and scrutinised by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.

5.3.3.3. Safeguarding will be on the agenda of every Corporate Management Team meeting.

5.3.3.4. All Heads of Department should ensure that safeguarding features regularly on the Departmental Management Team agenda.

5.3.4. Line Managers

5.3.4.1. Every Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that their teams have received at least the mandatory safeguarding (Group A) training they require and that the training is up-to-date and relevant to their responsibilities.

5.3.5. Designated Safeguarding Person

5.3.5.1. Each Council Department has nominated a "Designated Safeguarding Person" who is responsible for:

- familiarising themselves with this Policy and with the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#);
- acting as the primary source for safeguarding advice and support for other staff in the Department;
- ensuring that there are effective internal procedures for dealing with concerns within the Department;
- attending the relevant training for a "Designated Safeguarding Person";
- maintaining an overview of staff compliance with the relevant training within their Department.

5.3.5.2. The Designated Safeguarding Person for each department will be a member of the Safeguarding Operational Group, which is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.3.5.3. Each Department has a responsibility to ensure that all Members of Staff are aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Person is.

5.3.6. Organisations commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd

5.3.6.1. All organisations commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd are required to:

- Arrange and carry out appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all relevant members of staff.
- Ensure that their staff comply fully with the principles and requirements of Cyngor Gwynedd's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults.
- Ensure that all members of staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and regular refresher training, so that they understand their roles, responsibilities and the expectations.
- Promptly inform the relevant Council managers of any safeguarding concerns or protection matters that arise.

5.3.6.2. It is the responsibility of the contract manager to ensure that the organisation complies with all the above requirements.

5.3.6.3. The requirements set out in paragraph 5.3.6.1 must be included in all:

- tender documents
- service agreements
- relevant contracts

6. THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Strategic Safeguarding Panel

6.1.1. Responsibility for maintaining an overview of child and adult safeguarding arrangements has been delegated by the Cabinet to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

6.1.2. The Panel's main responsibilities are to ensure that:

- there are robust corporate and departmental arrangements in place to safeguard children and adults in Gwynedd.
- there are clear and unambiguous communication arrangements in place across the organisation, including information on the key officers in each service who are responsible for child and adult safeguarding matters.
- elected members have a clear understanding of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.

6.1.3. The Panel meets three times a year. See further information about the Safeguarding Strategic Panel in its terms of reference (**APPENDIX 1**).

6.2. Safeguarding Operational Group

6.2.1. The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and operates in accordance with that Panel's guidance and requirements, and independently.

6.2.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group will monitor performance across the services from a child and adult safeguarding perspective. The Safeguarding Operational Group reports to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel at each panel meeting, clearly outlining any concerns or barriers.

6.2.3. The Safeguarding Operational Group will ensure that:

- There is clear understanding in the Council's workplace, and amongst those working on behalf of the Council, of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.
- Members, staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely information and training on safeguarding.
- Safe recruitment takes place and that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is used consistently.

6.2.4. See further information on the Safeguarding Operational Group in its terms of reference (**APPENDIX 2**).

7. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING

7.1. The Annual Report of the Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults reports on the Council's performance in complying with the Safeguarding Policy and Guidance. The Annual Report is presented to the Corporate Management Team, the Cabinet and the Full Council.

7.2. This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every two years or if changes are made to the legislation or when considering changes in working practices that may arise from incidents or allegations.

APPENDICES

- **APPENDIX 1:** Terms of Reference of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.
- **APPENDIX 2:** Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding Operational Group.
- **APPENDIX 3:** Recording a Concern.

USEFUL LINKS

- **Signs of Abuse:** [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#)
- **Workforce Code of Conduct and Practice:** [Document](#)
- **Mandatory Safeguarding Training (Group A):** [E-learning Portal](#)
- **Disclosure of Offences and Checking Criminal Records:** [Recruitment and Appointment Procedure](#)
- **Departmental Designated Safeguarding Person:** [Who's who](#)
- **Referral Form:** [Document](#) (for professional/agency person only)
- **Safeguarding Role for Councillors:** [Welsh Local Government Association \(WLGA\) website](#)
- **Dealing with Allegations in Positions of Trust:** [Wales Safeguarding Procedures \(Section 5\)](#)

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Safeguarding children and adults is a priority for Cyngor Gwynedd. To ensure that suitable and appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place, the Statutory Director of Social Services convenes a Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults, which represents Members and senior management from all Council departments.
- 1.2. The Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel is expected to lead and advise on the safeguarding requirements contained in paragraphs 64-69 of Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 1.3. All agencies must also establish internal arrangements for ensuring that the counter-terrorism agenda, prevention of radicalisation and community safety matters are given the appropriate attention.
- 1.4. For the purpose of this Panel, the term 'safeguarding' applies to adults, children and young people and it means preventing them from being abused or neglected and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers. Safeguarding, and promoting individuals' well-being, is a broader term than 'protecting' individuals from being abused. It's about individuals and services identifying the risk factors and taking steps to prevent vulnerable individuals from being abused. Protection is part of the work of safeguarding and promoting well-being. It refers to the activity of protecting children, young people and adults who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC PANEL

- 2.1. The aim of the Panel is to provide assurance to Members and to the Statutory Director of Social Services, as the senior officer within the Council with full and ultimate accountability for safeguarding children, young people and adults, that suitable arrangements and procedures are in place at a corporate level to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. The Panel will exercise 3 statutory duties, namely:
 - a general corporate duty to safeguard,
 - Social Services statutory duty,
 - community safety duty.
- 2.2. In order to fulfil these duties, the Panel is expected to:
 - Identify any gaps in relation to safeguarding at a corporate level and approve work programmes to respond to these. Work with the Safeguarding Operational Group to respond to any gaps identified.
 - Identify lessons to be learned, at a corporate level, from serious case reviews and from other relevant reviews and ensure that these are implemented. (Adult Practice Review, Child Practice Review and Domestic Homicide Review).
 - Identify lessons to be learned from external and internal audits and ensure that these are implemented.

- Notify the relevant lead members of key matters/developments in the area of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Act as a medium for raising awareness among all Council staff and all elected members of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Be a means of ensuring that members of staff and elected members receive appropriate training (for example the two mandatory VAWDASV and Prevent) in a timely manner and to monitor attendance at this training.
- Ensure inter-departmental working relationships and effective communication within the Council in the area of safeguarding.
- Ensure that the Council's arrangements comply with the legal requirement to ensure that staff are qualified to work in regulated posts.
- Ensure an overview of broader Safeguarding matters including counterterrorism, modern slavery, domestic violence and community safety.

3. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

3.1. The Safeguarding Strategic Panel will have a responsibility to monitor and challenge performance relating to the area of Safeguarding.

4. CHAIRMANSHIP

4.1. The Panel will appoint a Chair and Vice-chair every two years.

5. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

5.1. The Panel will meet three times a year.

6. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6.1. The Safeguarding Strategic Panel is accountable to the Cabinet. An Annual Report will be presented to the Cabinet every year. That Report will also be submitted to the Full Council annually.

6.2. Business management [i.e. drawing up a work programme, meeting agendas, the secretariat, a central point of communication, arranging additional professional advice if required]] is the responsibility of the Corporate Support Department.

7. MEMBERSHIP

Title
Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being
Cabinet Member for Education
Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Chief Executive
Corporate Director

Statutory Director of Social Services
Head of Children and Supporting Families Department
Head of Education Department
Head of Adults Department
Head of Corporate Services Department
Chair of the Safeguarding Operational Group
Head of Legal Service
Manager of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Safety Partnership
Senior Manager for Quality and Safeguarding, Children and Supporting Families
Senior Manager for Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Mental Health

APPENDIX 2

Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding Operational Group

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Safeguarding children and adults is a priority for Cyngor Gwynedd. To ensure that suitable and appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place, the Statutory Director of Social Services convenes a Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults, which represents Members and senior management from all Council departments.

1.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and works to its guidance.

1.3. For the purpose of this Group, the term 'safeguarding' applies to adults, children and young people and it means preventing them from being abused or neglected and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers. Safeguarding, and promoting individuals' well-being, is a broader term than 'protecting' individuals from being abused. It's about individuals and services identifying the risk factors and taking steps to prevent vulnerable individuals from being abused. Protection is part of the work of safeguarding and promoting well-being. It refers to the activity of protecting children, young people and adults who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SAFEGUARDING OPERATIONAL GROUP

2.1. The Safeguarding Operational Group operates in accordance with the guidance and requirements of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

2.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group will monitor performance across the services from a child and adult safeguarding perspective. The Group will report to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel at each meeting, clearly outlining any concerns or barriers. The Panel will work with the Group to respond to any gaps identified.

2.3. The Safeguarding Operational Group will ensure that:

- There is clear understanding in the Council's workplace, and amongst those working on behalf of the Council, of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.
- Each department in the Council has its own safeguarding procedures, which are properly documented and used and are compatible with the Council's Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely information and training on safeguarding.
- Safer recruitment takes place and that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is used consistently and effectively.

2.4 The Designated Safeguarding Person will undertake the role of raising awareness within their departments.

3 CHAIRMANSHIP

3.4 The Panel will appoint a Chair and Vice-chair every two years.

4 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

4.4 The Group meets four times a year.

5 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.4 The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.5 Business management [i.e. drawing up a work programme, meeting agendas, the secretariat, a central point of communication, arranging additional professional advice if required]] is the responsibility of the Corporate Support Department.

6 MEMBERSHIP

6.4 The Membership of the Operational Group is the Designated Safeguarding Person for safeguarding children and adults in every Department within the Council.

6.5 A list of the Designated Safeguarding Person for each Department can be found on the staff self-service.

APPENDIX 3

Recording a Concern

If there is an immediate danger ...

If you believe an individual is in immediate danger of harm, **call 999 immediately.**

If there is concern but no immediate danger...

If you are concerned that a child (under 18) or a vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected, you should record the concern immediately.

If it is easier, call **01766 772577** for a conversation. It would be desirable for you to record this on paper in writing, or the easiest way to record it would be to e-mail your manager / senior employee or the Designated Safeguarding Person with the following information:

- **The names and addresses of the individuals you are concerned** about. If additional details are available (date of birth for example) you should note them, but you are not expected to go and enquire about these.

You should note...

- **What happened?**
- **What did you see?**
- **What did you hear?**
- **What were you told?**
- **Where and when did the incident happen?**
- **Why are you concerned?**

Keep the record factual, without including personal opinions. The exact words used can be cited if you remember them.

You should also note...

- **Your name and role**
- **Date and time of the record**

You should sign the record if it is on paper, this is not necessary if it is an e-mail to your manager/senior employee or the Department's Designated Safeguarding Person.

What will happen next?

- Your manager/senior worker or the *Department's Designated Safeguarding Person* will consider whether the information should be forwarded immediately to the social services referrals admission team.
- This is done through a [Safeguarding Referral Form](#), which is available on the Council's intranet.

This information should be treated confidentially and only shared with the appropriate individuals.

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	4 June, 2026
TITLE	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
REASON TO SCRUTINISE	For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.
AUTHOR	Sharron Williams Carter, Head of Children and Supporting Families Department
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Menna Trenholme

1. Why it needs scrutiny

For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

2. Background / Context

2.1 Background / Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the area for which I am responsible as the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families. This includes outlining the latest regarding the pledges in the Council Plan; the Department's day-to-day work; as well as the latest in terms of the savings scheme and cuts.

We are implementing the Council Plan for 2023-28, and here I report on the progress made up to the end of March 2026 for an autism scheme and residential provision for looked after children in small group homes. All matters have been the subject of discussion and have been challenged by me at a performance challenge meeting, and I am satisfied with the performance of the Department.

2.2 Rationale and justification

Performance of Projects in the Council Plan

The Children and Supporting Families Department has two projects in the Council Plan, namely the Autism Plan and a Plan for developing a residential provision for looked after children in small group homes.

Autism Plan

The Autism plan is continuing to thrive, with an increasing demand for service. The needs and complexities of autistic individuals and their families are complex to analyse especially if there is a cross-section of needs such as trauma, poverty, neurodivergent parents, Looked after children, Child protection cases, so social workers need to be able

to consult, discuss cases and seek the direct input of a key worker who specializes in the field - this has proven to be successful with a number of cases, which has resulted in a decrease in need and status (from Child Protection to a Care and Support Plan) and a number of cases have closed following intervention. There is now a short waiting list for direct support from a key worker.

The staff training programme is continuing and developing with different levels of training, depending on the job. From basic training for all the workplace through to advanced training for specialist jobs such as social care workers and team managers. The team now trains workers to facilitate and run support and educational groups and programmes for parents and carers as well as identity groups for autistic young people. A training programme for foster parents is also underway.

Groups such as 'Paned a Sgwrs' for parents and carers who have guest speakers to attend to discuss specific issues and a Neuro club for young people continues to be successful. The joint-working with the Education Department, the Neuro-developmental service, internal and external staff and engagement with the third sector is also continuing.

The Neuro Wales App developed by Autism Gwynedd for providing Information, Advice and support to the ND community and professionals continues to be very successful. Use of the App is on the rise and other counties regionally are interested in using the App.

Transition age work is increasing, and more cases are being identified to prepare and plan and collaborate with adult services to ensure that if there are needs then these are addressed by one of the post-18 teams. Vulnerable adult case group re-established, role for the autism team to support adult statutory services to address needs and look at cases through the ND lens and to prevent individuals from falling between services.

We trust that there are no current concerns as a result of this scheme at this time. Concern arises about next year where funding for the scheme will expire in March 2027 and therefore will cause instability about the continuity of the service and the impact this resource would have on a service user.

Residential provision for looked after children in small group homes

The Plan for developing residential provision for looked after children in small group homes has now progressed significantly. The home in Morfa Bychan has been operational with 2 children living there since 2025 and we have received a registration from Care Inspectorate Wales. For the home in Deiniolen, it is now operational with 2 children living in it. We are still awaiting registration from Care Inspectorate Wales as a piece of building control work needs to be completed but we hope that the registration will have reached us before the summer. We are in constant contact with Care Inspectorate Wales about the registration application.

The third house we have in Edern continues to undergo refurbishment to ensure that the requirements of the regulations are met to receive a registration from Care Inspectorate Wales. This is already the case for the house in Criccieth. We are hopeful that these 2 houses will be operational before the end of the year.

The detailed search for a suitable house in the Meirionnydd catchment area has been carried out for many months, however due to the standard of the houses on the current market they are not suitable and do not meet the standard within the regulations for Care Inspectorate Wales registration. Perhaps in the future it will be necessary to look at places outside this catchment area to ensure that Gwynedd has adequate provision to be able to provide residential care for the children of Gwynedd through the Government's plan to remove profit from care by 2030.

The Department's day-to-day work

There are currently 293 looked after children in Gwynedd which is an additional 10 children compared to last year. Positive news received over the last year is that 7% of children have left care and have returned home. Another positive percentage that should be highlighted is the number of case conferences where the child's voice/opinion (5+ years) was heard. That percentage was 96%, which is higher than the previous quarter, we're still working hard to make sure that the child's voice is heard. The percentage of assessments completed using the child's language has now increased to 100% which is good news for families. In the Youth Justice Service the number of people entering the service for the first time fell to 20 (-17%), which is welcomed given the efforts made by the service and the Board of Management over the past two years. The Out of Hours Team is also doing excellent work ensuring that every call is responded to before the shift ends. The Early Years Service has been doing excellent work over the year with families. 39 fun sessions were held during 25-26 with 1,142 children attending those sessions. In addition, 706 children and 323 parents attended 34 Play Trailer sessions during the year. During the year Families First Service was granted a green RAG status from the Government, which is good news.

This year has been very challenging for the Department with the workload having risen significantly in the last 2 years. Concern must be noted about the number of referrals to the admissions team which has reached the highest they have ever received which is over 8,000. As the number of referrals has risen, this raises the numbers of initial strategy discussions which have risen from 548 for the year 23-24 to 759 this year. This has then raised the numbers moving from initial strategies to Part 47 from 369 for the year 23-24 to 628 cases this year which had almost doubled in two years. With this all the teams are feeling the pressure with the number of referrals but also with the complexity of the cases. Each team has stated that cases every year are getting more complex with more children falling into the child protection category. This is evident in the day-to-day work with the number of child protection reviews having risen by 156 in the last 2 years with an additional 82 children having been on the child protection register in the last 2 years. The 16+ Team also continues to report that demand for services is at its peak, with 251 cases currently open to them. This is the highest the cases have been since establishing the team. A high number of cases and staff shortages causes concern and high work pressure. We see a clear pattern that the demand on the Children and Supporting Families Department is rising and hence the pressure on our staff.

We must emphasise that we have acknowledged this increasing work pressure on our workforce. In light of the increasing work pressures, we as a department have submitted bids and there are several successful bids for 2025-2026. This includes 5 bids in total. £400,000 for 7 posts in the operational teams. £300,000 for a specialist residential service in 1 house. £500,000 for out-of-county placements. £200,000 for Derwen Direct

Payments. £800,000 for Derwen Support Workers. These bids total £2.2 million. Several bids were made because the number of referrals had risen significantly and the complexities of cases had also become more complicated. As well as the fact that more families need the input of the Children's teams. By being successful with the bids this provides consistency to services and gives the best to children and families. We know that it will be challenging to attract staff, especially experienced and qualified staff, but with time we hope that these additions will bring some relief to our conscientious workforce.

External Auditors' Reports

The Child Practice Review 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' was published on Tuesday 4 November. We as a department are currently working with the Education Department to respond fully and promptly to the recommendations. The Department provides an update on the recommendations that have emerged from the review to response plan meetings. In addition to this, we have been successful in bids to create jobs for the 26-27 financial year arising from the recommendations of the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' Child Practice Review.

There are a number of inspections for the Department of Children and Supporting Children and Families during the year. We had a joint inspection with the Education Department by Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn the week commencing 10th of November which focused on safeguarding. Following the inspection, it was noted that there was positive work in both departments and there were 4 areas for improvement that needed attention. Consistency needed to be ensured with the child's voice, quality assurance arrangements in place and strengthening safeguarding training in the Council. The fourth area set out what the Authority had to do, namely responding to a referral in 7 days, engage with the child when they declare a risk of harm/abuse/neglect, strengthen commissioning arrangements and monitor service agreements and ensure the regular contribution of key practitioners to strategy discussions. Work is already underway to strengthen the relationship between the Education Department and the Children's Department. We are in the process of creating a child's voice strategy for the child's voice to be core in our current processes. The Children's Department now has a Quality Assurance Framework which has derived from the recommendations.

In the last 3 months we have been extremely busy with inspections of the Adoption Service, Derwen Service and the Fostering Service. All Services have had positive results following the inspections with recommendations which are being addressed by the Department to strengthen the services. With the Adoption Service a great deal of this work is covered regionally. Following the inspection the report was very positive for the Derwen Service. Everything in the report indicates a good standard from the Service. We have not yet received the full report for the Fostering Service inspection as the inspection was very recent.

3. Consultation

The report has been created based on the information and content of a recent meeting to challenge and support the performance of the Department for Children and Supporting

Families, with the Director, Head of Department, Assistant Heads, Service Managers, Senior Executive Officer and myself attending this meeting.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress reports on milestones of projects in the Council Plan

Appendix 2: The Department's Performance Measures

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 - Year 3 Actions

A Caring Gwynedd: Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities

Department and Project	Overview	What we want to achieve during the THIRD year 2025-26 (milestones):	Has the milestone been completed	What has been achieved during the year and the impact (or likely impact) on the people of Gwynedd Information or evidence should also be included to confirm this (measures or confirmation data, etc.)
Children and Families – Autism Plan	Children, young people and adults with autism find it difficult to obtain the specialist support they require. We will therefore improve our provision and make it easier for individuals and their families to transfer between different services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with the training programme for front-line staff. Ensure that staff undertake Level 1 and 2 Autism training and ensure that figures are increasing. Ensure specialist posts undertake Level 3 training and the Autism Team also provides bespoke training for Level 4. 2. Train staff to conduct specialist autism groups, such as CYGNET to be able to give a wider provision across the county. 3. Continue to develop groups and consult with stakeholders regarding what groups need to be held and spread these across the county, e.g. neuro club, identity group, etc. This will then inform the Gwynedd 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes – and is ongoing; a broader training programme has been developed. 2. Completed and being expanded to become a local programme for Gwynedd/North Wales Region. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training figures increased, 2163 from Social Services completed levels 1 and 2. Wider training taking place across the workplace, e.g. social work through a neuropositive lens, neurodevelopmental profile, neurodiversity in the workplace, 'enhanced' training numbers increasing. The team has also adapted the Cygnet programme for foster parents, to ensure a level of specialist support for our children in care and their carers. As well as 2. The Cygnet train the trainer programme runs quarterly; the number trained has increased significantly. Following parents' feedback and development in the team's expertise, we have developed a parent support programme ourselves through the medium of Welsh that is relevant and reflects the voice of parents/carers, current research with a neuro-positive ethos and approach. The Youth Identity Programme has been running well but we need to look at changing

autism stakeholders group which meets every quarter.

3. Continue to work with Gwynedd's Education Department, Neurodevelopmental Team (NDT), Integrated Autism Service (IAS) and statutory services to ensure that Gwynedd's children, young people and adults have access to the services and support they need.

4. Consult with internal and external staff. Create a community of practice scheme for professionals to get access to the team's expertise.

3. Completed and developing.

4. Continuing and developing.

how we deliver it. We are working closely with the Education Department to run a pilot within Gwynedd schools and are developing a programme that school support staff will be able to implement more widely (similar to the ELSA programme).

This work is linked to the work of the stakeholder group – as well as this we have embarked on a project creating a friendly space in our leisure centres (initial steps, with the intention of expanding), a safe space for Gwynedd residents to access if they need support, respite or a quiet space in which to recover.

3. We continue to work closely with the Neurodevelopmental team and the Education Department. CAMHS and the team of specialist school nurses are also now involved in the meetings to ensure collaboration and an understanding of the priorities of each service.

4. The team's schedule is always packed, consisting of progress consultation enquiries as well as hands-on work with families and adults. The complexities of the cases we support are profound and require the active expertise of the team. We also hold advisory surgeries and community of practice sessions when the need arises.

		5. Continue to develop resources and create various workbooks to be shared with workers for use in their day-to-day work.	5. Continuing and developing.	5. A very extensive library of resources is available for the workplace. Digital resources and a sensory library, resources such as games and educational books.
Children and Families – Develop a residential provision for children in care in small group homes	We wish to improve the experiences of children in the care of the Council who have profound and complex needs, who currently have to leave the county or Wales in order to get a suitable provision. We will develop registered residential homes for small groups of up to two children, which will allow them to be looked after in Gwynedd, attend local schools, and participate fully in the lives of their communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Placement of second child at Morfa Bychan at the beginning of April 2025. 2. Appoint staff to the second and third house, i.e. Deiniolen and Edern. 3. Make modifications to both houses, Deiniolen and Edern, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Second child placed. 2. Successful appointment of staff to the Deiniolen house, appointment of staff for the house in Edern has not started. 3. The renovation of the 2 buildings continues. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The young person is happy in the new location. 2. Staff for the house in Deiniolen have been appointed in full and have received training for the role. We have not appointed to the Edern posts at present because there is significant work that needs to be done on the house and we feel that the renovation work for CIW registration needs to be completed first before appointments to roles can be made. 3. Deiniolen is almost complete; CIW have enquired about building control information for Deiniolen and therefore it is

to ensure they meet CIW requirements.

4. We will then work to secure a CIW registration for both houses in Deiniolen and Edern.

5. We hope to open both houses in Deiniolen and Edern and get them up and running.

4. Not completed. Renovations still need to be carried out to the Edern house. Building control information is expected for Deiniolen.

5. The Deiniolen house is in use. The Edern house is not at present.

not possible to obtain registration until the alterations have been made. Significant alterations have already been made to the house at Edern and work is continuing to renovate the property.

4. Deiniolen had been completed but an additional application for building control work was required and therefore registration is still awaited. We provide CIW with a regular update because children live in this house. With the Edern house, the renovation work continues but there are no children living here yet. We are currently working on the CIW application for Edern to ensure the application is ready once staff have been appointed.

5. Deiniolen is operational, although there is currently no CIW registration. There are constant discussions with CIW to give updates on the situation until the work and building control information have been completed.

		6. We intend to look for a potential location in the south of the county to get an additional small home.	6. Ongoing	6. We have looked for a suitable location in the south of the county but due to CIW requirements, a suitable location in the south of the county has not been identified.
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Performance Challenge and Support

Children and Supporting Families Department

Period : April 2025 – March 2026

Exceptions

Purpose: Report on any data or exception in performance that causes concern or is something to be proud of.

Number of Looked After Children

293 (31/03/26)

Number of children who have entered care

68

Initial Conferences within the statutory timetable

55%

Initial Strategy Discussions held

23/24 – 548
24/25 – 580
25/26 - 759

Strategy Discussions moving on to S47

23/24 – 369
24/25 – 423
25/26 - 628

Number of looked after children reviews

23/24 – 226
24/25 – 237
25/26 – 382

Number of children on the register during the year

23/24 – 206
24/25 – 226
25/26 - 288

Completed assessments

914

Department Overview - Looked After Children

Purpose: I want you to ensure me that I am kept safe, safeguarded from harm, have a stable life and have every opportunity and help to reach my potential.

Number of Looked After Children

293 (31/03/26)

Number of Court cases

31 (31/03/26)

Percentage of Looked After Children who have had three or more placements during the year (cumulative)

5%

Percentage of looked-after children who have returned home (out of care) during the year (cumulative)

7%

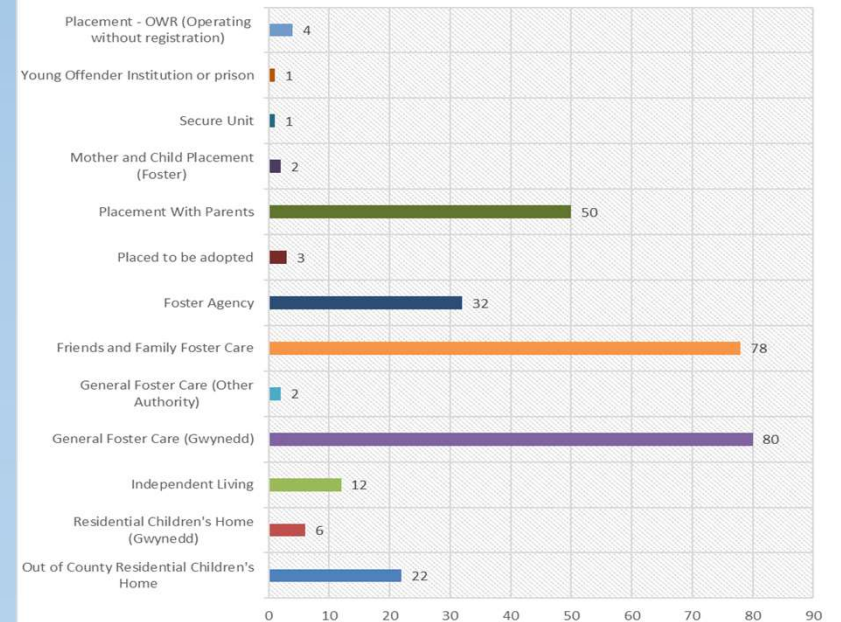
Average Workload

18

Number of children who have entered care

68

Children's Placements in Care 31/03/2026



Department Overview - Child Protection

Percentage of registered children discussed at initial child protection conference (Cumulative)

93%

Percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child (5+ years old) were heard

96%

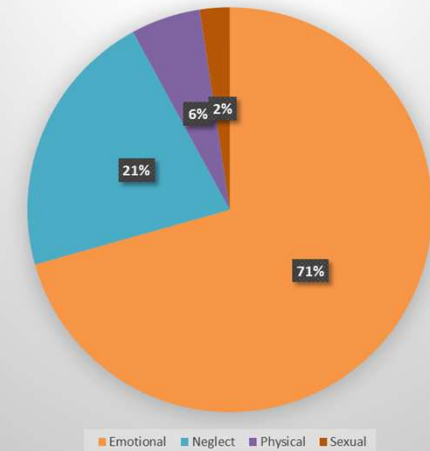
Number of children on the Child Protection Register

126
(31/03/26)

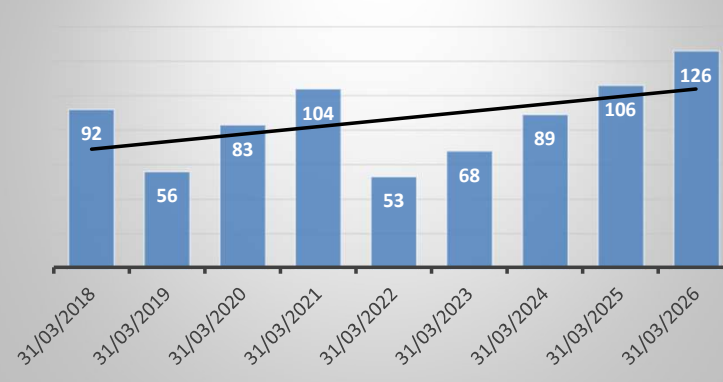
Average number of days the children had been on the child protection register

228

Main Categories of Children on the Register 31/03/26



Children on the Child Protection Register



Number of registered children
184

Keeping Families Together: Referrals Team

Number of referrals
(Information, Advice and
Assistance (IAA))

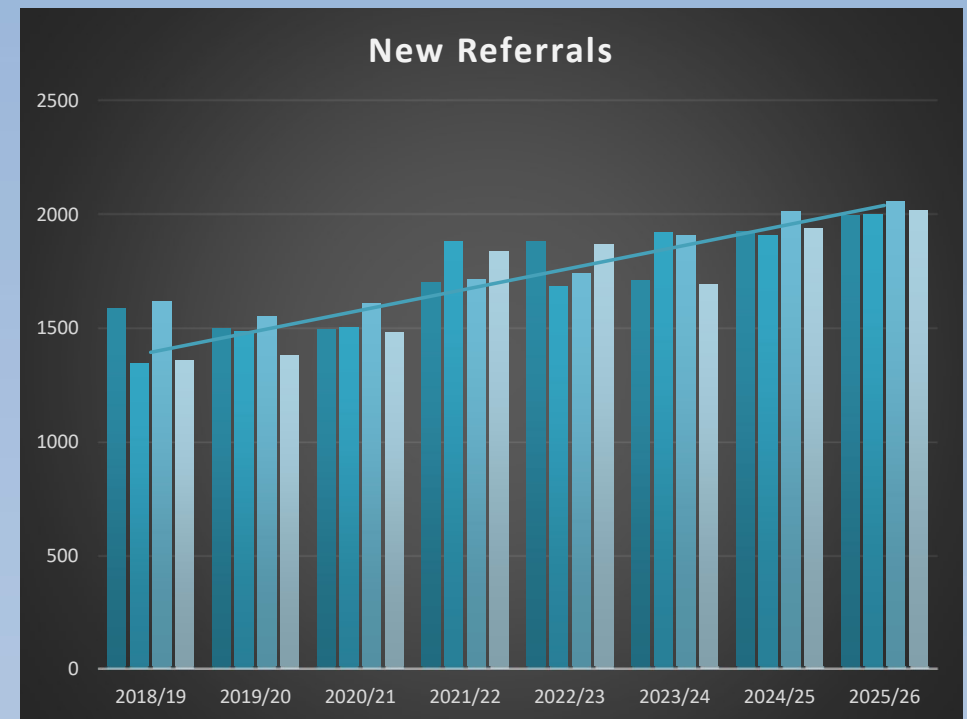
8069

Referrals Source

Police - 3694
Education - 673
Health - 543

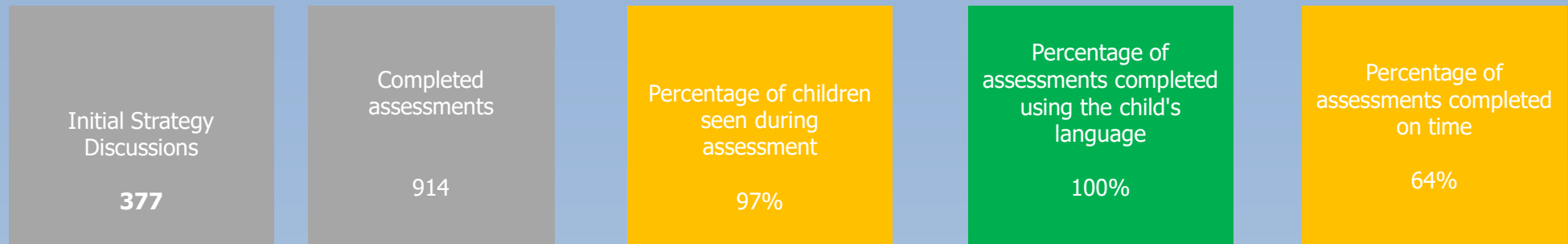
Performance Overview:

- Staffing situation placing additional pressure
- Complex cases on-going
- Recent change in manager



Leader: Steph Dabernig

Keeping Families Together: Referrals Team (Assessments)



Performance Overview:

Assessment within 42 days has fallen as there are vacant jobs within the team, assessments are often complex and often an incident/new information comes in that means that it is necessary to revisit and discuss; those completed beyond the 42 days do not raise safeguarding concerns.

Children not seen during an assessment = 3

2 were Team Around the Family assessments

Child not wanting to leave their bedroom/not wanting to be a part of the assessment

Parent refusing a visit, telephone assessment only. Health Visitors having access to the house/baby regularly

As there has been no permission to see the child, a strategy discussion was held and escalated to s47 for access without parental consent.

Leader: Steph Dabernig

Gwynedd Families First Grants Programme 2025/26

Purpose - That Gwynedd children and families are happy and are thriving.

The purpose of the programme is to provide early support to families, with the aim of preventing issues from getting worse and to prevent them being in a situation where costly rehabilitative care is required via statutory services in the future.

An overview of some of the needs of families referred for early intervention support :

- Challenging behaviour of children and young people at home and/or school and parents and carers asking for help to address the underlying problem.
- Families of children and young people who are on a waiting list for an ASD/ADHD assessment requesting help while waiting to be seen.
- Families of children and young people diagnosed with ASD/ADHD who don't know what help is available next.
- Concern about children and young people's low attendance or children refusing to attend school.
- Concern about the mental health of children and young people who do not meet the threshold for CAMHS support.
- Concern about the mental health of parents and carers and the impact this has on the children.



Gwynedd Families First Grants Programme 2025/26

National performance measures have been established to inform people how well the programme is performing within local authorities.

Performance Overview: Overview of Performance - number of referrals has raised to 150 since 2023-24 (+37.5%)

Gwynedd Families First RAG Status designated by the Government - Green

Leader - Caren Brown

**Number of new referrals
April 2025 – March 2026:
553**

**Number of Family Assessments and Plans April
2025 - March 2026:
Total number of Assessments: 117 230
Total Number of Family Plans: 25**



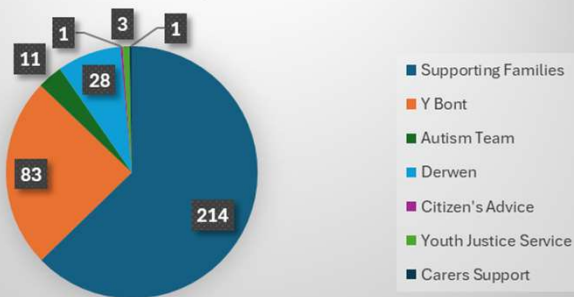
Training

Every Coordinator attending Neuro-developmental Profiling Tool training, which will help support the families of children who are on a waiting list for an assessment

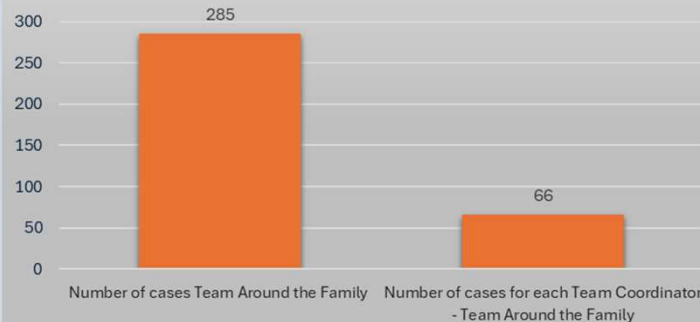
Quotes/Family Feedback:

"Using this service has been life changing for me and my family - because as a family we had so many issuesand that's when I reached out to the service and met such a wonderful person... she has changed our lives for the better and we owe her so much" (25.03.26)

Number of families that have been referred to services April 25 - March 26



Team Around the Family Cases April 25 - March 26



Keeping Families Together: Trobwynt

Purpose: I want you to ensure me that I am kept safe, safeguarded from harm, have a stable life and have every opportunity and help to reach my potential.

Number of children
open to the team on
31/03/26

73

Percentage of cases where an
increase is seen in
accordance with the
intervention purpose

85%

Performance overview:

- 17 children fully out of care following a court hearing to revoke the care orders.
- 10 Parents receiving support after the children were adopted or permanent care to break the cycle (The post was vacant from January to July 2025).
- 77 children were in child protection processes at the beginning of the intervention, with the purpose of keeping them at home. This was successful with 64 of the children.
- A number of step-down cases (i.e., young person in a secure unit, moving children to Gwynedd small group homes, and returning to the families), continue to receive support.

Leader: Gwenan Hughes

Fostering

Comment from child / foster carer:



I chi beidio meddwl bod chi ar ben eich hun, achos 'da chi byth ar ben eich hun efo Maethu Cymru. Mae 'na bob tro rhywun pen arall y ffôn, pan 'da chi angen nhw.

Steve, Gofalwr Maeth ers 24 mlynedd

April 2025 – March 2026

Enquiries = 60

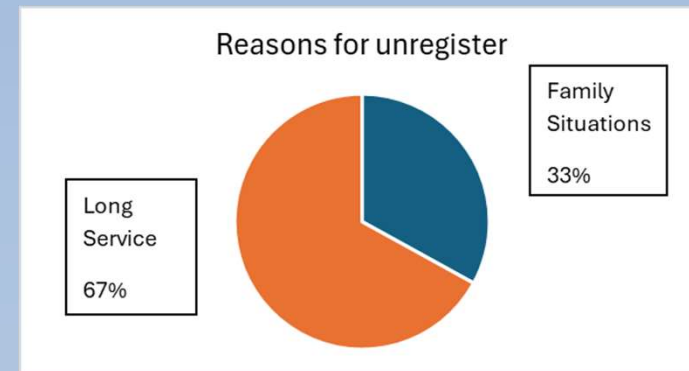
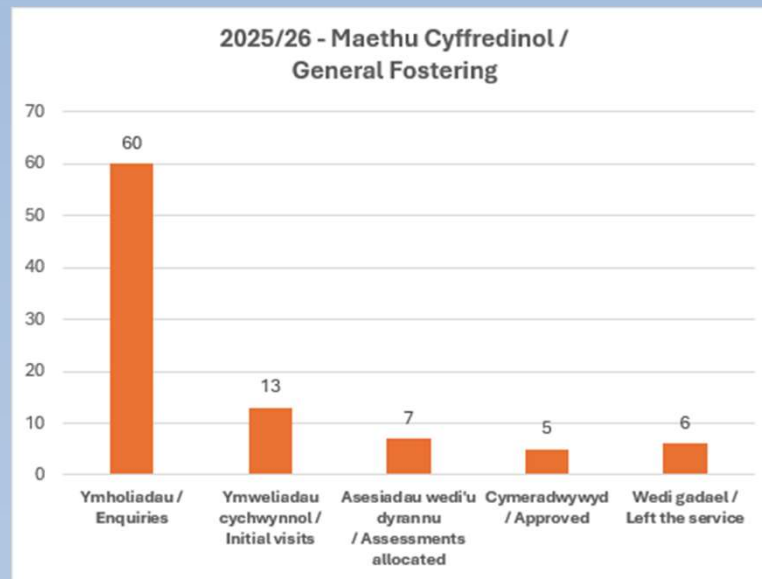
Initial visits = 13

Households approved (target, 9) = 5*

Not approved (returning to Fostering Panel) = 2

In an assessment = 5

Households who have left = 6



Performance Overview:
Leader: Mel Panther

Council Plan Project :- Autism Plan 25/26

Purpose: Promote autistic individuals and their families to thrive and to live life to their full potential.

Performance Overview: -

- The number of staff across the Council who have completed training in the field of Autism / ND has increased substantially over the past year.
- CARE Conference (Cardiff University) - Neuro-diverse futures event. Guest speakers to discuss good practice and the vision of Gwynedd in the field of Autism/ND
- A Network of workers who are familiar and confident in the ND field is being developed across Social Services' teams. And they are trained and guided to act and work within a new model of developing ND profiles for children who are awaiting an assessment or who have received a diagnosis.
- There was a waiting list for direct support for families with complex needs. The team's work capacity is currently full between cases, training, consultation, groups and IAA.
- The number of applications for direct support for Child Protection cases is increasing; more families being identified as ND or with an official diagnosis. Awareness of ND increasing across the department and workers thinking about cases through a slightly different lens, which is positive.
- Cygnet Programme being transferred to the operational teams such as supporting families, TAF, edge of care with support (long arm) from the autism team. There is a waiting list for the programme.
- Autism team have completed specific Cygnet training for Foster Carers.

Numbers accessing the service
496

Number of new cases receiving direct and indirect intervention
56

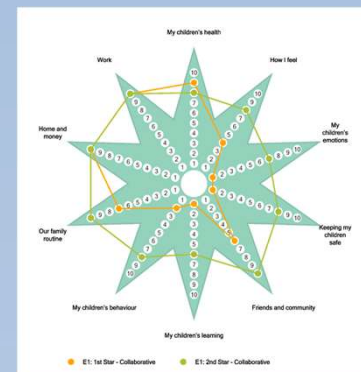
Number completing Autism/ND training
1130



CARE Conference



All foster carers should complete the course, it's been invaluable to my learning and understanding of the children's needs in relation to neurodiversity and trauma. (Foster Parent)



Example of work with a family on the Child Protection register. Following a period of direct work with the parents and the team around them, the case is about to close to services.

Council Plan Project :- Small Group Homes

Purpose: To be developed

Performance Overview: -

MEASURES

to be developed
for 2026-27

- 2 houses already operational, Morfa Bychan and Deiniolen.
- Children have settled well in both placements.
- A house was bought last year in Cricieth, and this house is almost ready too. We are awaiting registration from CIW, but additional information dealing with building control will be required.
- Work on the house in Edern has commenced; has still not been completed to date, but not far from being finished.
- CIW have asked for Deiniolen that building control information is needed to obtain a registration.



Keeping Families Together: After-care Team (16+)

Purpose: "I want to be independent and get help when I need it".

Percentage of after-care young people who have been homeless

8%

Team Cases 31/03/26

Care and support - 47

Category 1 (A 16 or 17 year old who is looked after by Children and Family Support under a Statutory or Voluntary arrangement and have been looked after for a period of more than 13 weeks.) - 38

Category 2 (A 16 or 17 year old who has chosen not to be looked after anymore by Children and Family Support under a Statutory or Voluntary arrangement but still want support from Leaving Care) - 2

Category 3 (Any Care Leaver over 18 who still wants support from Leaving Care.)- 164

Number of asylum seekers

3 (aged 16-17)
29 (18+)

Performance overview:

- The Team's staffing situation is now stable and enables us to provide better consistency in the services for young people and families. Historically, there have been difficulties with the changes in the GISDA Personal Adviser posts, but those have also stabilised a little.
- The Team's cases remain a challenge with a few Care and Support (CASP) cases proving very challenging. There is a level of high complexity with a few cases, particularly for those with additional needs and where there is a high risk of relationships breaking down in the home, etc.
- Further discussions taking place with the Housing Department on how we can respond to the needs of individuals presenting as homeless when 16/17 years old. Lack of housing options in an emergency for this age-group and looking at what we could put in place to respond to the need.
- After-care Workers continuing to look at opportunities for young people to come together, to socialise and receive additional support. In May, there will be an opportunity for those who are young parents to come together and an individual from the Care Academy will join to discuss the opportunities available to them in the field.

Leader: David Owen

DERWEN Service

Purpose: - I want to be accepted as I am and have the same opportunities as any other child.

Number of
assessments
completed
55

Children and
Young People
open to the
service
473

New Referrals 132
Internal referrals 152

31/3/26
Looked After Children: 12
Children on the Protection
Register: 0

Performance overview:

- **Overview of the Occupational Therapy Service** - One Occupational Therapist has continued to work through the substantial waiting list, prioritising cases as needed. She is becoming more confident and more skilful with every new case. The second part-time Occupational Therapist has returned to work very recently, and she has already started to visit families and take on new cases, which helps reduce the waiting list.
- The Adults Services Occupational Therapy Leader continues to provide very valuable support and supervision to the two Occupational Therapists in Derwen.
- **Social Work Team Performance and Capacity** - Every member of staff who were offered work in other teams have now left the service. This has left the social work team in a very weak position. Despite many weeks of advertising, it has not been possible to recruit competent social workers. As a result, we have decided to appoint Social Care Workers to the vacant posts on a temporary basis, until it is possible to appoint competent staff. Also, one new Social Care Practitioner has been appointed very recently, and this strengthens the team. We are also in the process of moving on with up to three other temporary appointments. At the same time, work is progressing to develop a programme that will aid staff without qualifications to gain a social work qualification, to build a more stable and stronger workforce in the future. These steps help keep the service going, support work continuity, and respond to the current recruitment challenges.

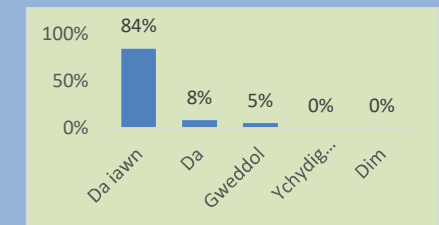
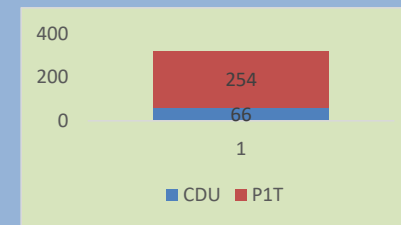
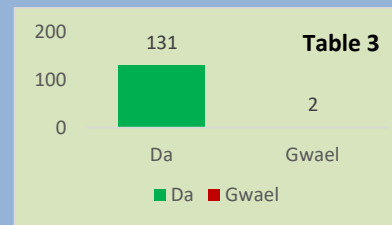
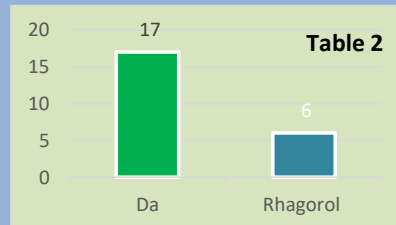
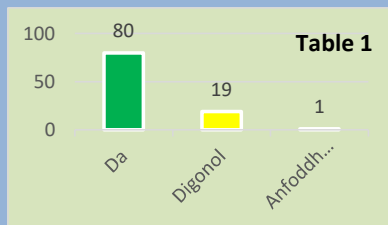
Leader: David Lewis

Gwynedd Family Service

Early Years Advisory Teachers 25-26



PURPOSE: Ensure a quality childcare and nursery education for early years children in Gwynedd



Performance overview:

- High percentage of settings score green on the quality evaluation document **Table 1** (Green = Good, Yellow = Adequate, Red = Unsatisfactory)
- 8 settings have received a good or better CIW/ESTYN inspection - 4 reports published. **Table 2** show the view out of 23 Themes. (6 Excellence Themes (purple) and 17 Good (green))
- High percentage noting that the quality of training is good -- **Table 3**
- High percentage of the children staying on 1PP and no need for further intervention/IDP when following the Measure provision map process - **Table 4:** (out of 320 1 Page Profiles - 66 DCU)
- Teachers' Team Satisfaction Questionnaire - **Table 5**
- **100%** of practitioners passing Level 1 Makaton - training from the Early Years Team.
- Attachment Theory Training, Loose Parts and Friendly Communication, The Three Facilitators, Back to Nature and Makaton Level 1, ACE's and Tatty Bumpkin, Senori as well as training for IDP children's key workers and Forest School training offered to practitioners in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.
- Visit/meeting with settings and schools to discuss extending Nursery Education and extending Childcare for two-year-olds.
- Two members of the team wit MAKATON expertise attending MAKATON training in the early years.
- One team member has completed a Trauma Informed Schools Diploma and two members with TIS responsibility attend Community Based Worker training.
- Professional Development from Longworth Education for all team members - Play Pedagogy using P-BLOT (Play Based Learning Observation Tool)



Leader: Sioned Owen and Gwawr Hughes

Teulu Gwynedd Service

Administration and Business 25-26



Purpose: Provide administrative, business support and customer care of a high standard for all stakeholders

Customer Care satisfaction questionnaires
90% of colleagues, parents and childcare providers are very satisfied with the service provided

Number of social media followers
Increase = 72%

Number of engagement sessions with Gwynedd Families
66

Number of queries received by the Family Information Service and responded to:
217

Number of children who receive their Flying Start, Childcare for 2 year-olds or the Children Care Offer claim:
1,781

Performance Overview:

- Excellent feedback has been received from parents, childcare providers and members of the Unit about the administrative and business service provided over the past financial year.
- A significant increase is seen in the number of followers on our social media. Following the re-branding of the Unit to be known as Teulu Gwynedd and re-structuring the team to have more officers acting on the marketing and engagement element of our work programme, the interventions trialled during the year have given us a boost to obtain a better understanding of our digital audience.
- The Family Information Team has worked very diligently to hold several engagement sessions. The above box is amber because the team has been in a transition period of introducing new methods to new members of the team due to the restructuring that affected the engagement element of their work programme. Nevertheless, the target for the number of enquiries that the team have responded to over the past year has been encouraging.
- Very positive administrative and monitoring services were provided by our team to ensure that high numbers of Gwynedd children receive Flying Start services, 2-year-old Childcare or the Childcare Wales Offer claims.
- Many projects were coordinated over the year. An innovative Welsh resource was established, the Mam, Dad a Magu podcast, which discusses many parenting topics with the aim of providing an informal platform for the parents of Gwynedd and beyond. Thus far, the feedback has been positive with good suggestions to be considered when deciding whether the podcast will continue. A Unit Staff Day and a Flying Start Day was arranged to bring staff together to engage and plan. Initial plans are in place for Flying Start's 20-year celebrations this year.
- Collaboration took place with the Council's Systems Development team to establish the Teulu Gwynedd Digital System to facilitate our current data monitoring and storage systems. Power BI training was also attended to develop the current way of data analysis and to support us when making decisions for the benefit of our services.

Leader: Sioned Owen and Elen Foulkes

Teulu Gwynedd Service

Supporting Families 25-26



Purpose: Support and provide the best opportunities for families, children and the young people of Gwynedd.

286 referrals for one-to-one support **Gwynedd Parenting/Behaviour 25-26**

108 new referrals for support **Language, Play and Early Development Officer 25-26**

39 fun sessions held during 25-26
545 children aged 0-3 years
548 children aged 4-10 years
49 children aged 11-16 years

Service satisfaction questionnaire **88%** parents / carers stating that the support is good or excellent

Performance overview:

- Groups for parents were conducted across Gwynedd, including *Parenting Puzzle, Playful Parenting, Nurturing Programme, Talking Teens, ACE's Recovery and Cygnet*.
- 11 new referrals from the Police for Out-of-Court support and Physical Punishment in the 25-26 year. By now, 7 have closed, 100% stating that they have seen a positive impact to the support.
- Cygnet groups run together with the Autism team, 'Riding the Rapids', with Derwen, Groups for Foster parents with the Fostering Team, collaboration with the Right Door Team.
- Digital Skills Sessions have been very successful following a Government grant. 8 Flying Start families who have completed sessions by *AbilityNet* - Digital Gwynedd and have received IT equipment. Parent's feedback "Thank you very much for all your assistance and support. This has given me the support and assistance to help my grandson with everything."
- Have invested in *Solihull/Togetherness Online* for the Universal element of support to families. The Mam, Dad a Magu podcast has promoted parenting elements through the medium of Welsh.
- A Fathers Officer has been appointed during 25-26 and has already supported 21 families since August.
- Challenges/Barriers: Cases are intense and have more needs, therefore, there is a need for more support and they are open to the team for a longer time. 15 cases on the waiting list.
- **Leader: Sioned Owen and Sue Layton**

Teulu Gwynedd Service

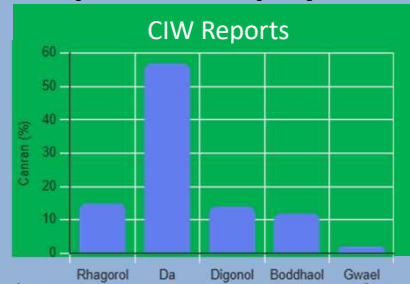
Childcare and Play 25-26



Purpose: Support childcare settings to provide high-quality childcare, play and early education services.

706 children and 323 parents have attended 34 sessions in the Trelar Chwarae during the year.

Plas Pawb Nursery
11 parents' questionnaires have been received
90% of users are very satisfied with the level of care
100% noting that they would recommend the nursery to other families



38 providers have responded to the satisfaction questionnaire, 89.5% gave a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 for the support they receive from the team

- Play**

6 Providers on an activities' framework have held early years sessions across the county - targeting sessions for Fathers.

Play Capital Grant Funding with an investment of £120,000 has funded 27 pieces of equipment in 23 playing fields, development of 3 forest schools and installation of 30 communication tables in playing fields - collaboration with the Adults Learning Disabilities team. Increase the number of Trelar Chwarae sessions this year, compared with last year, and 27.5% more children attending during the year, compared to last year.

- Childcare**

Approved List - a target of 75% of providers on the list. Work in the pipeline to ensure that this target increases.

CIW Reports - target of 80% Outstanding/Good. 25 provisions have received an inspection, and a report has been published during the year, with 72% graded Outstanding/Good. Work continuing to support in order to ensure that we meet the target. Further support available to all provisions on a contract by the Childcare and Play Officer. A provision that has received a poor grading does not receive full support from the authority as they are not on contract,

- Capital Projects**

Continue to work on the Our Lady and Hirael project. A Business Case approved for the Bontnewydd project. A Business Case has been submitted for the Pwllheli project; awaiting confirmation in February. Work in progress for 3 additional business cases for Pentreuchaf, Nefyn and Botwnnog. 61 provisions have received small capital grants.

- Plas Pawb Nursery**

2 staff members have completed a Level 2 Childcare qualification and have started immediately on the level 3 course. Two new Apprenticeships have been appointed through the Council's Care Academy, to commence their posts in February. 107 children attended the nursery over the past year. These include Flying Start children, the Childcare Offer, care for parents to attend parenting groups and care for children associated with the Social Services.

Parent feedback - *I can only thank you for everything that you do with the children.*

Lead: Sioned Owen and Rachel Jones

Out of hours Team / EDT

Purpose: I want timely help to be available for me in a care emergency

Number of calls received by the emergency duty team

3485

Number of calls which have received a decision within a shift period

3485

Number of calls which have not received a response based on the lack of capacity

100%

Performance overview:

- Responding to demand - In the period from April 25 to March 26 all calls have received a response and a decision within that shift and appropriate action within the limitations of this type of emergency service, has taken place. 3485 calls were received, with 1920 calls from Gwynedd, 1384 from Anglesey and the rest from outside the authorities.
- 848 of the calls related to Looked after Children - Gwynedd 587, Anglesey 236 and the rest were other Authorities. This is often regarding regulations of returning home to a setting - and if they are late, they are escalated. High numbers of calls relating to unregulated settings and supportive homes where a young person is over 18 years old, but the setting is reporting that they have not returned because this is that company's policy, despite the individual being an adult with capacity. 'Missing' interviews are conducted by the case worker, and this can be for innocent reasons where there was no risk; to other examples where being missing could cause a risk to the child, e.g., exploitation.
- Homelessness – In this last period, 219 of the calls related to homelessness – including 80 from Gwynedd. As noted previously, Gwynedd Homelessness Service created their own arrangements outside working hours: This arrangement has been operational since 6/2/24 but we are still receiving calls as the new procedure has not been advertised by the homelessness department and also as there are problems with the public being able to contact the worker on call for the homelessness department, e.g., a phone ringing out, or not connecting.
- Mental Health – 388 of the calls related to mental health issues including formal assessments under the Act. Of these, there are 201 from Gwynedd. 134 assessments under the Mental Health Act have been completed by the Emergency Duty Team. Although every call receives attention from the team, there are situations where an assessment is not completed for reasons out of the team's control; this is a problem with intervention under the Mental Health Act, as there is a lack of doctors and beds to promote this work.

Unpaid Carers

PURPOSE : *Identify, acknowledge and support the invaluable work done by unpaid carers across Gwynedd*

Young carers with access to Aidi
133 (total for the year)

Young carers supported by Action for Children
143 (total for the year)

Young carer assessments completed by Action for Children per year
95

Children receive Support Services as respite to carer parents - Derwen
217

The Council is commissioning Action for Children to provide needs assessments for young carers and offer practical support, information, help and advice.

NUMBERS

- Waiting List - 25
- caring for parents up to the end of March 2026 = 57%
- caring for a sibling up to the end of March 2026 = 43%
- caring for more than one person up to the end of March 2026 = 15%
- Caring for parents with a mental illness up to the end of March 2026 = 42%
- Families receiving a crisis grant/referral to a food bank = 6 (Quarter 4)
- Families receiving short breaks TIME = 63

Matters to be highlighted:

- Parents need more emotional support
- Increase in the number of CAMHS referrals
- Increase in the number of children caring for a parent with a mental illness

Internally through the Carers Team, a parent-carer pilot is underway with referrals mainly coming in through the Carers Outreach Parent-Carer officer. Several issues already raised, and the pilot has been extended for another 6 months

IMPACT:

Better emotional well-being / mental health = 53% (sustained / no change = 38%)
 Better attendance at school = 63% (sustained/no change = 13%)
 Improved social skills (including new friends) 52%
 Participation in respite activities = 57% (sustained / no change = 37%)
 Feel that they have a support network = 43% (sustained / no change = 50%)

Feedback from individuals receiving the service:

"It has given me access to some activities I would not have been able to do without the support of young carers;, this has helped with my wellbeing. "14-year-old Young Carer -

The Young Carers Provide understanding of my role at home, grants me the opportunity to socialise and bond with other young carers". 13-year-old Young Carer

"Thank you very much for your time and incredible support you have given my son over the past weeks." Parent of a 10-year-old Young Carer

"As you know, my son's school attendance has been very low, creating a difficult and very concerning situation for us. But since you started to conduct your well-being sessions with our son, the improvement is incredible. He managed to attend school for 5 days last week and he was much happier in himself.

Thank you so much. Your discussions have also helped him share more about his feelings and emotions at home as well. Thank you so much."

Parent of 10-year-old Young Carer

****Feedback and themes to raise via the Action for Children service**

Co-ordinator - Sian Griffiths

Datblygu'r Gweithle

PWRPAS : Datblygu'r gweithle

Trosolwg o berfformiad a negeseuon:

Academi Gofal

65 work experiences have been sorted during the period, this for young people 16+ from local Schools, Colleges and University.

6 new Gwynedd Academi Gofal trainees were appointed in February 2026, 51 applications have been received for these opportunities.

Succeeded in offering a joint retainer with Anglesey and Bangor University to two MA Social Work students and offered a retainer to an Occupational Therapy student in Cardiff to start in Meirionnydd in October 2027. This is in addition to the social work trainee schemes through the MA course at Bangor University and the OT qualification at Wrexham University.

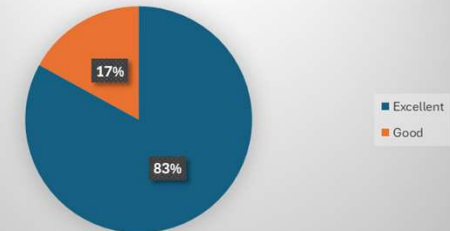
There are now 11 trainees through Academi Gofal. In addition to this, 2 members of the Children's Department staff are doing a first-year course in a social work degree. Additionally, the department has Occupational Therapy trainees and 3 social work trainees.

Mandatory Council Training – Children's Department and Family Support Staff:

VAWDASV – 81%
Safeguarding – 93%

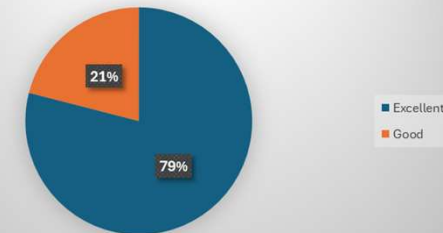
The course achieving its objectives

1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026

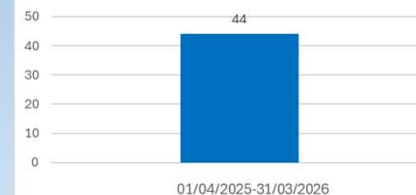


General assessment of the course

1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026



Individuals referred on to Adults and Children's teams through the SOS campaign #CallCaregivers



Youth Justice Service

Purpose: I want to be safe and happy throughout my life without offending

Number of First Time Entrants
20

Re-offending Rate
29.2%

Custody Rate
1

Number of Caseload
102
Females 21 (20%)

Performance overview:

The service has recorded the lowest levels of First Time Entrants since the performance measure was introduced; in the period between January and December 2025, 20 children from the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn area entered the justice system for the first time! Our rate of population (117) is comparative with the lowest figures across England and Wales. Our re-offending rates remain low, however, there was a very small increase since our last report at 29.2%. Of the 65 cases tracked since March 2024, 19 have re-offended, carrying out on average 2.32 offences. We have had our first Custodial sentence for 3 years, and the child is currently detained at the Werrington Young Offenders Institute after being sentenced on 4 October to 2 years and 9 months for wounding with intent, Section 18. The Youth Justice Service continues to support the child through regular visits, contact with parents/family and attending safeguarding and review meetings with the establishment. The caseload continues to be healthy and the engagements within the community is very good. The number and percentage of females in the system has continued to drop (20%). Most cases (84%) are managed based on an Out of Court Settlement; this is 5 percentage points higher than the last reporting period.

Some political announcements were made over the past months that will have significant implications on how youth justice is presented in Wales; the UK and Welsh Governments have agreed to transfer some Youth Justice funding and administrative responsibilities to Wales; in addition, the Ministry of Justice is in the process of introducing a 'White Paper' with the intention of 'Modernising the Youth Justice System'.

Leader: Stephen Wood

MEETING	Scrutiny Committee for Care
DATE	20/11/2025
TITLE	Performance Report from the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
REASON FOR SCRUTINY	To provide assurance that the Cabinet Member has a grip on the department's performance matters.
AUTHOR	Mari Wynne Jones
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr. Dilwyn Morgan

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

In order for Committee Members to be satisfied that I, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing have a grip on performance issues within the department.

2. Background / Context

2.1 Background / Introduction

The purpose of the report is to update you on what has been achieved in the area I am responsible for as Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing. This includes outlining the latest with the promises in the Council's Plan; the day-to-day work of the Department; as well as keeping you updated on any external audits that have taken place during the period.

We are operating on the Council's Plan 2023-28, and I will report on the progress of the projects during year 3 of the plan (2025-26). All issues have been the subject of discussion and have been scrutinised by me in a performance challenge and support meeting. We know that there are significant challenges facing the department as highlighted in the Llechen Lân report. In the context of these challenges, I am happy that significant progress has been made during the year, and I am satisfied with the performance of the department.

2.2 Reasoning and justification

Performance of the Council's Plan Pledges – Year 3 (2025-26)

2.2.1 Below is a summary of the main successes during the year, as well as any issues of concern in terms of progress. I will give some examples, but I am not referring to all workflows as the projects are very broad. Full detail can be found in appendix 1.

Project 1 - Modernising our care resources to meet future needs

2.2.2 The aim of the project is to ensure that our care homes are up to modern standards and that a wide range of accommodation options are available to support individuals who continue to be able to live independently with a little support. It is vital that we understand the need across the county and can identify which locations to prioritise for different developments. The department has commissioned work from Housing LIN outlining the demand for care accommodation and the work is nearing completion with the department awaiting the final report very soon. This will enable accommodation developments to be planned for the coming years based on clear evidence. They are also in the process of commissioning work to analyse the necessary investment across our in-house homes to ensure they meet modern standards.

2.2.3 Good progress has been made in terms of new developments. Two supported houses to support individuals with learning disabilities have opened and the development of Extra Care Housing in Penyberth is underway – due to open in the autumn this year. An outline business case has also been submitted to Cabinet before Christmas for the new Penyberth nursing home development.

Project 2 - Using more technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care

2.2.4 The department has been working to promote Living Well support options through various channels. We are seeing a steady increase in the use of telecare equipment, and the department continues to support the social work teams to understand the options available.

2.2.5 The department, unfortunately, continues to encounter some barriers in relation to direct payment processes including difficulty changing the arrangements of some individuals following years of use, and problems arising with the prepaid card provider. The direct payments team continues to monitor and work more closely with individuals and their carers to support them in changing arrangements and are looking to find an alternative provider to ensure people have a better choice.

Project 3 – Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families

2.2.5 The aim of the project is to ensure prompt and easy support for individuals and their families. That includes recognising the value of unpaid carers and supporting them appropriately and ensuring timely and effective home care.

2.2.6 The department has adapted assessment documents and held sessions to raise employees' awareness of the importance of recording information about how they support carers. It is hoped that this will allow us to be able to share more accurate data in reports like this. Discussions are also underway with the Health Board to try to improve our ability to identify carers and ensure emergency information is available when needed, as well as exploring practical ideas and assistive technology such as the use of Lilly sensors to support and monitor caring situations.

2.2.7 Unfortunately, the work to ensure that no one waits more than three months for home care continues with the demand for care still high and the ability of providers to meet it in some sub-districts is difficult. Work continues to progress in order to promote a closer collaborative relationship between the social work teams and the provider.

Project 4 – Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community

2.2.8 In my last report, I reported on the placement of social work practitioners from three Area Teams at Ysbyty Gwynedd to try and support the hospital assessment. This allows access to the local care knowledge and expertise to ensure the most appropriate support in the community in which the patient lives. The trial is still ongoing and is showing encouraging results so far – cases can be tracked through from hospital to the community, and you will find that the performance data (paragraph 2.2.15) shows an increase in the number of assessments being carried out by the Community Resource Teams. Unfortunately, despite the increase in assessment, it remains very challenging to be discharged from hospital in a timely manner because of the lack of care available.

2.2.9 The department has reviewed the way in which they commission third sector services and are continuing to work with Mantell Gwynedd on this. It is hoped that new, more appropriate agreements will be in place by 2027-28. The department has also developed a plan for ensuring value for money in the commissioning of residential and nursing placements and work is underway to revisit the domiciliary care model.

Project 5 - Developing training and work opportunities for individuals in need of support

2.2.10 Work has been progressing on the Dolfeurig development during the year, with internal work now underway.

2.2.11 It is very encouraging to be able to note that the work of raising awareness of the need for employment opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities in the Council is having effect and there is a slight increase in the number of individuals employed by the Council. I understand that discussions are underway with more services to further expand these opportunities.

Project 6 – Llechen Lân

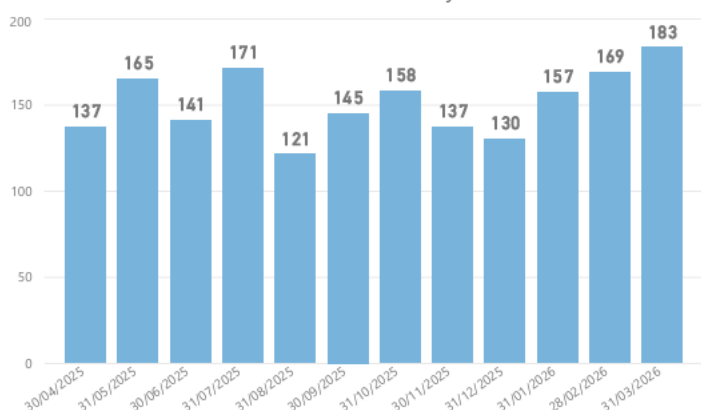
2.2.12 Following the publication of Llechen Lân, it was intended for the department to develop a single plan for bringing together all the work of the department and simplifying the work streams. For various reasons the work has not been completed but a draft plan has been drawn up. The work will be completed soon in 2026-27.

2.2.13 Work on the Llechen Lân action plan continues to progress, but the latest data released by the Government has highlighted the need to update the report. This may affect the content of the plan, and I will of course monitor this and update you in my next report.

The Department's day-to-day work - performance and measures

2.2.14 There are several measures by the department and full details can be found in appendix 2. Yet again, I will refer below to those that cause concern or are subject to congratulations.

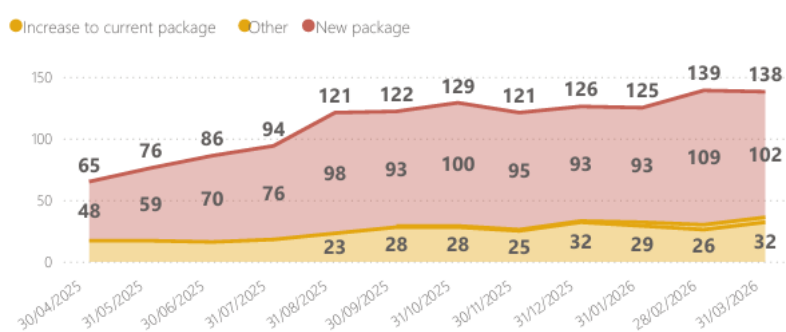
Number of social care needs assessment by month



2.2.15 As I mentioned in 2.2.8, within the **Older People, Physical and Sensory Disabilities** Service there has been a significant increase in the number of assessments that have been completed, with the numbers awaiting assessment continuing to fall. I mentioned in my last report that the department was able to reduce the waiting list for an occupational therapy assessment from a peak of 104 in October 2024, down to 27 by

August 2025. By the end of March 2026, this figure was 16. The service is to be congratulated for the work that has gone on to ensure the completion of these assessments.

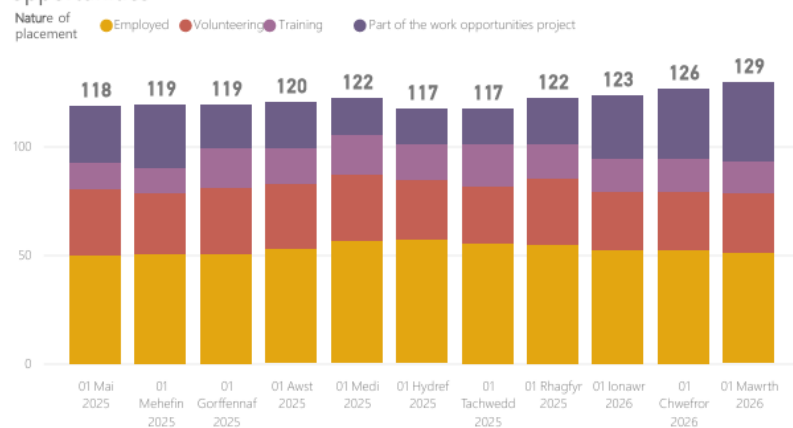
Number on the home care wait list



2.2.16 Since I last reported, we have once again seen an increase in the number on the waiting list for domiciliary care and this reflects the increase in the number of assessments. By the end of March 2026, 102 individuals were waiting for a new package of **home care**. Challenges remain in some specific areas including Ffestiniog, Eifionydd and Dyffryn Nantlle, but in scrutinising these cases, the service has identified that challenges remain in order to be able to distinguish between individuals who are on the list but not ready for care (e.g. because their property is unsuitable) and individuals who really are waiting. As a result, the picture is misleading and overstates how many are waiting. I have shared my concerns about this with the department again and asked for assurances that they will address it as soon as possible.

2.2.17 One issue of concern to me is that only 71 (4%) of all assessments last year were carers' assessments. A further 221 (12.6%) are joint assessments, where the carer's support needs are identified within the same assessment as the individual being supported. Our data shows that no one was waiting for a carers assessment at the end of March but given that 234 unpaid carers were being supported anew by Carers Outreach in the second half of the year alone (Quarters 3 and 4), we are likely still having difficulty identifying carers. I have asked the department further about this and am of the understanding that discussions are taking place to seek alternative arrangements for carrying out more carer assessments. We all know how important the support offered by unpaid and family carers is and it is vital that we can identify them more effectively and offer assessments.

Number of individuals with learning disabilities who are in employment opportunities



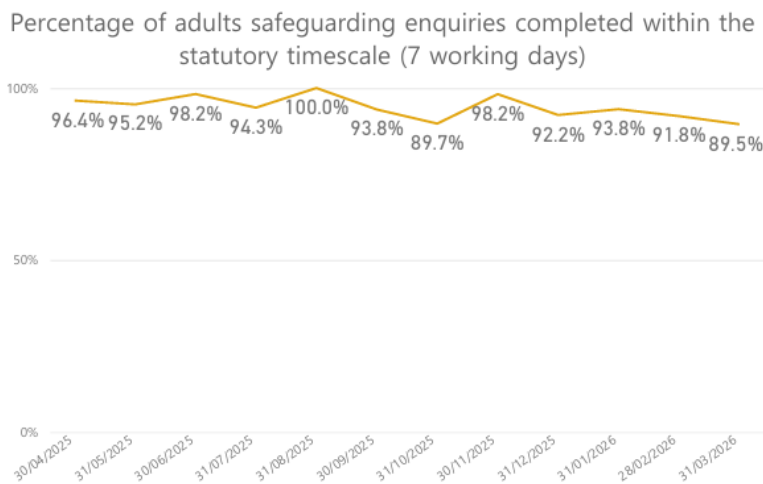
2.2.18 The steady increase in the number of individuals with a learning disability who are part of the employment opportunities pathway is extremely positive and commendable. Last time I reported, it had reached 118 in August 2025 and by the end of March 2026 the figure was 129 with an increase in the number now involved in the project and at the start of

their journey. As I mentioned previously, awareness-raising efforts within the Council is starting to show and two individuals had taken up a post with the Council in the last quarter of the year. This is something we should be proud of and build upon.

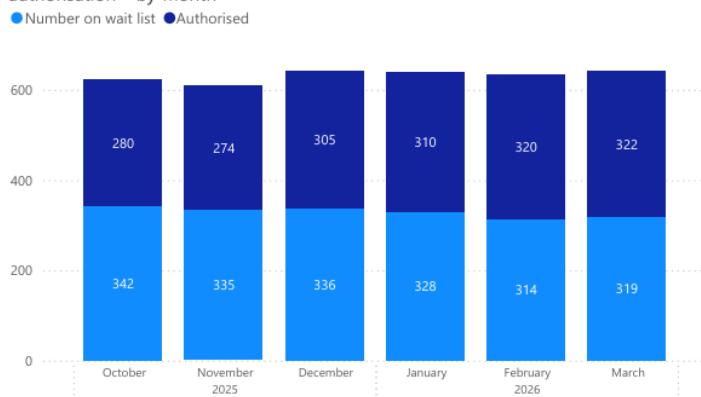
2.2.19 Over the past few months 305 individuals across the county have attended Dementia Actif services, this is an increase of 37 since I last reported. This service is essential to support individuals living with dementia and their families. However, many of the individuals attending the sessions are individuals who are not living with dementia, which proves the social value of the work. I'm extremely pleased to see these numbers and it emphasises how vital preventative services are to help people continue to live independently and contribute within their communities, while also providing vital support to unpaid carers.

2.2.20 It is encouraging to note that the bed filling rate in our in-house homes has increased back to 87% after seeing a decrease over the winter. Job vacancies, sick periods and more complex needs can all disrupt this percentage, but for the first time in some time, there are no units closed in our homes as a result of development or construction work. I therefore hope that I can report further progress by the next meeting.

2.2.21 Over the past few months, we have seen a reduction in the department's ability to complete adult safeguarding enquiries within the statutory 7 day timeframe. This is due to several things, including the loss of capacity in the team and the ever-increasing complexity of cases. It is challenging to discuss complex cases with all relevant stakeholders within 7 days. In times of understaffing in the safeguarding team, the social work teams continue to support with the investigation of the referrals. However, these teams are the same ones who are trying to respond to increasing requests for assessments and organising care in a situation of lack of provision and so naturally the work of examining adult safeguarding referrals can take longer. The good news is that a new Safeguarding Officer has been appointed and will start her post with the service in July.



Number of individuals on the waiting list compared to the number with a current DoLS authorisation - by month



2.2.21 The number waiting for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) assessment remains high with 319 individuals on the waiting list for assessment at the end of March 2026. However, it is lower than it has been for a long time and we have seen an increase in the number being authorised. The department believes that this is due to the appointment of Best Interest Assessors following a successful bid, and we hope that we will continue to see the investment

take effect. The department has received a further grant from the Government, and the money will be used again this year to commission an agency to undertake assessments. Grant funding has also been used to employ a Social Worker to support the significant work of assessing community DoL cases in the Learning Disability service.

Financial Situation

2.2.22 During the November 2025 review, there were forecasts that the department's budget deficit would be £3m for the year 2025/26, and this was a concern for me. By the end of the financial year, the actual deficit was around £1.4m. Although the situation has improved in the second half of the financial year, the pressure on provider services continues and accounts for £1m of the departmental pressure, which is mainly on staff overspend and agency staff utilisation within residential care. The pressure also continues on the residential side of the Mental Health Service. An additional budget has been

provided to the department for 2026-27 to try and deal with these requirements, and I hope to see the impact of this on the financial situation. I will be keeping close contact with the department over the coming months to get an idea of the financial position for 2026/27 as soon as possible.

2.3 External Audits

The department has not been subject to external audits during 2025-26. Following reporting to the Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the October 2024 audits at its February 2025 meeting, the department continues to implement the recommendations, with the Head of Adults meeting every six months with the auditors to discuss progress on the areas of improvement.

3. Consultations

The report has been created based on the information and content of a recent meeting to challenge and support the performance of the Department for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, with the Director, Head of Department, Assistant Heads and myself attending this meeting.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Council Plan project milestone progress reports

Appendix 2: Departmental Performance Measures

Gwynedd Council Plan 2023-28 – Year 3 Actions

A Caring Gwynedd: Supporting Gwynedd residents to live full and safe lives in our communities

Department: Adults, Health and Wellbeing

Overview	What we aim to achieve during the THIRD year 2025–26 (milestones):	Has the milestone been completed	What has been achieved during the year	What is the effect (or likely effect) on the people of Gwynedd?
Project: Modernising our care resources to meet future needs				
<p>We will modernise our care homes, update our community resources and expand the accommodation options available to Gwynedd residents.</p> <p>Amongst our plans are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Care Housing - Development of over 100 new units in Penyberth, Frondeg (Caernarfon), Canolfan Lleu (Penygroes) and Dolgellau. • Residential Homes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Redevelopment of Plas Gwilym, Penygroes. ○ Upgrading Hafod Mawddach and Cefn Rodyn. ○ Opening a Dementia Unit at Bryn Blodau and Plas Hedd Homes. ○ Planning dementia developments at Plas Pengwaith 	1. Submit a brief and business case to the Housing and Property Department for Extra Care Housing in the Caernarfon area, and prepare a timetable for the work.	Partly	We have submitted a business case to the Housing Department for the development of Extra Care Housing in the Caernarfon area, but due to the need to confirm practical information, there is a delay in drawing up a timetable.	<p>This work contributes to the department's aim to expand accommodation options for the people of Gwynedd, ensuring that we promote independence with appropriate support within a local community, reducing or delaying the need for care or placement in a care home. This is crucial to ensure that people can live their lives safely and in the way they wish to live it.</p>
	2. Scope the need for additional Extra Care Housing provision on the Penyberth site, Pwllheli.	Yes	The development of Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli is underway and the above Housing LIN report will feed into the final plans for the care model required.	
	3. Decide on the way forward for Extra Care Housing provision in the Dolgellau area.	No	A suitable site for development in Dolgellau remains unclear and work continues to investigate any options, but the Housing LIN report will also help us understand the extent of the need in the area.	
	4. Complete and submit an initial business case for a new nursing home at Penyberth.	Yes	An outline business case has been submitted to Cabinet in December 2025 for a new nursing home in Penyberth. The home will be run in conjunction with the Health Board and will be the first of its kind in the county.	
	5. Prepare a full analysis of all our in-house homes detailing the investment	No	The work of compiling a full analysis of our in-house homes and the investment required has been commissioned through the	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opening of new nursing and dementia home at Penyberth with 50+ beds ● Supported Housing in the Community – a minimum of 6 houses located throughout the county to offer suitable and safe care homes. ● Commissioning work jointly with the Housing Department to understand the need for suitable care accommodation for the future. 	needed to meet modern standards.		Housing and Property Development Service and four companies have tendered for the work. The next step will be to score the companies and determine the company that will undertake the work.	
	6. Complete 2 new supported houses.	Yes	We have completed 2 supported houses to support individuals with learning disabilities in Harlech and Penrhyndeudraeth.	
	7. We will have a report summarising the demand for care accommodation in Gwynedd over the next 20 years, prepared jointly with the Housing and Property Department.	Almost completed	We awarded the work of producing a report outlining the demand for care accommodation to Housing LIN. We have received a draft of it and expect to receive a final version very soon in 26-27.	

Project: Using more of technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care.

<p>We will enable the people of Gwynedd to live a good life as long as possible within their local communities. To achieve this, they need to have the required information to take advantage of community opportunities that would promote their well-being, as well as flexible methods of organising the support they need.</p> <p>Amongst our plans are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopting and promoting a community information system, Dewis ● Integrating a virtual occupational therapy system, AskSarah, into our website 	1. Promote the use of the Dewis Cymru system across Gwynedd and train editors on their role in maintaining the system.	Yes	We have been promoting the system and training editors who will assist us into the future. We continue to work with Dewis Cymru as they make further developments to the system that will facilitate its future use.	<p>The above work is essential to our aim of promoting independence and living well. In turn, the use of technology and equipment reduces the need for traditional care intervention (and thus reduces dependence and delays decline). Given the prospects outlined in the Llechen Lan report, succeeding in keeping people living independently with such support is vital to ensure the future sustainability of our services.</p>
	2. Develop a promotional programme for 'Help Yourself', Telecare, Direct Payments and other options that support Living Well.	Yes	We have been promoting Living Well support options through various channels.	
	3. Make a menu of telecare devices available and promote widely on the website, in the media and through social work teams.	Yes	The menu of telecare devices is being promoted, and support is available to the social work teams in understanding the options available. Individuals and their families can apply directly for telecare equipment through the council's website and as the performance data shows, we are seeing a steady increase in usage.	
	4. Transfer all individuals using Direct Payments to a new payment system (prepaid cards).	No	While any new direct payments package may offer a prepaid card, it is more of a challenge to change the arrangements of those who have been using these payments	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing our use of Technology Enabled Care (TEC) • Promoting use of the Telecare service • Making use of robotics to enable independent living • Developing our Direct Payments system using a virtual wallet 			<p>for years. However, in these cases we put arrangements in place to monitor and collaborate more closely with individuals and their carers. We have also experienced issues with the prepaid card provider and so we are looking to find an alternative provider to ensure people have a better choice.</p>	
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Project: Ensuring that full and timely support is available to support people to live at home

<p>To ensure that people can live their best lives, we must make prompt and easily accessible support available for individuals and their families.</p>	<p>1. Update our assessment documents to ensure they provide accurate and reliable data on unpaid carers' support.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>We have adapted assessment documents and held sessions to raise staff awareness of the importance of recording the information about how they support carers. This will ensure that we have more accurate data to identify how we support carers.</p>	<p>Ensuring appropriate support for unpaid carers will have a direct impact on our demand for care. They do invaluable work supporting their loved ones to live independently and reducing the need for traditional care. Unpaid caring is a significant demand on individuals and their families, and appropriate support is vital to the wellbeing of the carer as well as the individual in need of the care. Ensuring they have the confidence that their loved ones will be cared for in an emergency is essential to reduce anxiety and prevent deterioration.</p>
<p>We will implement plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure we acknowledge the value of family and unpaid carers by making sure that we can easily identify them and offer them full support with caring • reduce our waiting lists for new home care packages, ensuring no one in Gwynedd waits longer than 28 days following a care assessment. 	<p>2. Develop arrangements to help unpaid carers plan ahead for caring for their loved ones in an emergency, including a standard form to complete and a dedicated recording space on the new Mosaic social care system.</p>	<p>Partially</p>	<p>The services have been expanding the use of the 'message in a bottle' scheme, giving out the 'bottles' free of charge to individuals and their carers to record vital details in the event of an emergency. The current WCCIS form has been modified to record more information about emergency plans for unpaid carers, with the work to identify the best way to record emergency plans on Mosaic continuing into 26-27.</p> <p>There is also an emphasis, through discharge training in conjunction with the Health Board, on identifying unpaid carers. In addition, practical ideas and assistive technology (e.g. Lilly) are explored to support and monitor caring situations.</p>	<p>Ensuring they have the confidence that their loved ones will be cared for in an emergency is essential to reduce anxiety and prevent deterioration.</p>
	<p>3. Implement a work programme to reduce our home care waiting lists, ensuring no one waits more than 91 days for home care.</p>	<p>Partially</p>	<p>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 waiting over 91 days has decreased. Work continues to promote a closer collaborative</p>	<p>Securing additional support through domiciliary care when needed strengthens individuals' ability to stay at home and live</p>

			relationship between the social work teams and the provider.	independently in their local community.
Project: Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community				
<p>To ensure that we fully promote the well-being of individuals, it is vital that we are able to change our culture and ensure that we work effectively with the Health Board to deliver comprehensive care and health services into the future.</p> <p>Amongst our plans are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-locating adults' teams with community nurses and health therapists • Developing collaboration systems as one team around the individual through a Community Resource Team system • Working together to align the Community Resource Teams with the Primary Health Clusters • Developing new collaboration arrangements for the community mental health teams. 	1. Review Social Services and Health front doors and decide on the best model for our Information, Advice and Assistance service for the future.	Partially	We have researched the front door models of Social Services and undertaken a review of existing arrangements as well as discussing possible options moving forward. We are in the process of reaching an agreement on the way forward and consulting with staff and considering what new systems will need to be in place in order to be able to implement the changes.	<p>These workstreams have a significant impact on our residents, primarily by ensuring that they can easily access suitable and timely support, from assessment to care and following a hospital stay. It also contributes to our efforts in the preventive field to try to reduce hospital periods.</p> <p>The work on our front doors is expected to reduce pressure on staff and enable them to focus on their caseload and assessing in a timely manner.</p> <p>Making more effective use of 3rd sector support will also enable them to provide alternative support to promote good living and early identification of needs. In turn, it is expected that this will reduce pressure on statutory services and allow us to focus our resources on those who need them most.</p>
	2. Community Resource Teams to decide on the most suitable collaboration and co-location arrangements in each sub-area, with home care providers as a core part of these teams across the county.	Yes	A decision has been made that the current co-location arrangements are suitable, and regular meetings are taking place with the Provider Service in the hope of addressing the waiting list in the most vulnerable areas.	
	3. Trial a Social Work Practitioner role located with Hospital Discharge Coordinators to facilitate patient discharge and prevent inappropriate referrals to our community resource teams.	Yes	The piloting of the role of a Social Work Practitioner in the Hospital is still ongoing but is showing encouraging results. The performance data can be seen to show an increase in the number of assessments being carried out.	
	4. Restructure management of our community resource teams to support the sub-area-based way of working.	Yes	The Community Resource Teams now work at a sub-district basis with local teams taking ownership of the area and care packages. This has facilitated the control they have over their sub-districts and enables a better overview for the Area Managers.	
	5. Review our new collaboration arrangements with community mental health teams to ensure they	Yes	A review of new collaboration arrangements with the community mental health teams took place in May 2025. Some barriers remain in working with Health and	

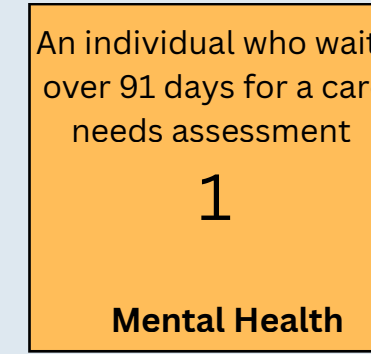
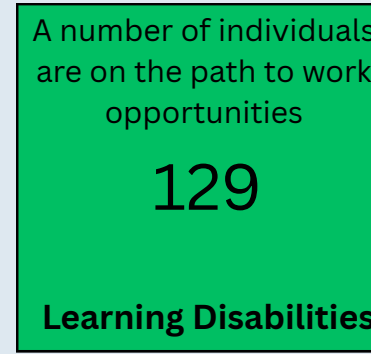
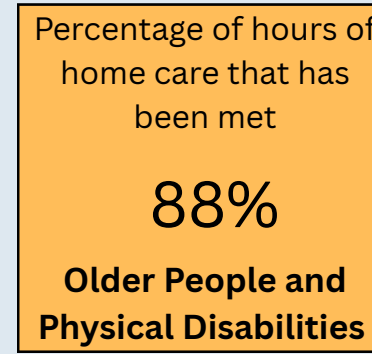
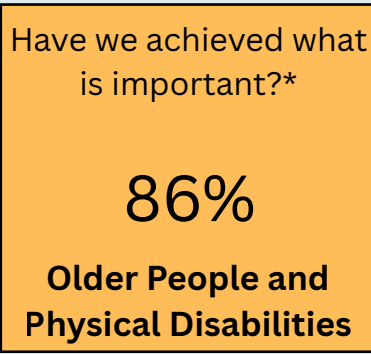
	are robust (one year established).		persistence is needed to ensure that collaboration runs smoothly and there is no delay in the transfer of cases. The work continues to establish a strong working relationship.	
	6. Complete a review, jointly with Mantell Gwynedd, of how we commission third sector services to ensure consistency and best value across the county.	Yes	A review of the way we commission 3rd sector services has been carried out and we continue to work with Mantell Gwynedd. We will continue to negotiate with 3rd sector providers over the coming months, with a view to having new, more fit for purpose agreements in place by 2027-28.	
	7. Develop a commissioning strategy to ensure we understand Gwynedd residents' care and support needs over the coming years and can develop a diverse, sustainable market to meet demand.	Partially	We have done a lot of work which contributes to the development of a commissioning strategy e.g. we have a plan for ensuring value for money when commissioning residential/nursing placements, we are reviewing the domiciliary care model, and we are in the process of updating the Llechen Lân information. However, further work will be needed to bring together a single strategy.	

Project: Developing training and work opportunities for individuals who need support




We will promote training and work opportunities for individuals who need support. Amongst other schemes, we will improve provision at our Learning Disabilities Day Centres at Dolfeurig in Dolgellau and Frondeg, Caernarfon.	1. Development work on the new Dolfeurig building progressing during 2025–26, aiming to open by 2027.	Yes	Work continues at the new building at Dolfeurig, with the building now holding water and progressing to the interior work.	All these developments contribute to the aim of ensuring that individuals with learning disabilities have opportunities, like everyone else, to contribute fully within their local communities. We know that this is very important from a wellbeing and sense of achievement perspective, and it also promotes independence and provides opportunities to engage with others within the community,
	2. Secure long-term resource for employment support officers so this work becomes a permanent part of the service.	No	We are continuing to try to sort out how the employment support service will be funded on a permanent basis but in the meantime, we have secured funding up to March 2027.	
	3. Develop businesses to employ individuals with learning disabilities within the Council.	Yes	Efforts to raise awareness of the need for employment opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities in the Council are now coming to fruition and we have seen an increase in the number of individuals with Learning Disabilities employed by the Council. We are also in discussions with	

			more services in order to further expand these opportunities.	reducing the demand for care services.
	4. Jointly with our partners, develop a community opportunities strategy for learning disabilities in Gwynedd.	Partially	Work has begun on the development of a community opportunities strategy but there are plans to reshape the Well-being Pathways scheme and therefore the strategy will need to be developed hand in hand. This work will therefore continue into 2026-27.	
Project: Llechen Lân				
We will prepare an analysis of the demographics of Gwynedd; the demand for service; and adult social services best practices to understand and highlight the demand for service and associated resources that will be needed for the next twenty years.	1. Create a single plan for bringing together all the work of the Department for Adults, Health and Wellbeing and streamlining the workflows.	Partially	For various reasons this work has not yet been completed but a draft plan has been drawn up, and an initial discussion has taken place at a meeting of the Departmental Management Team. Following the appointment of a Senior Executive Officer to the department, this work will be completed early 26-27.	The Llechen Lân data is also being updated following the release of the latest data by the Government, and this may affect the content of the scheme.

Overview of the performance of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department April 2026

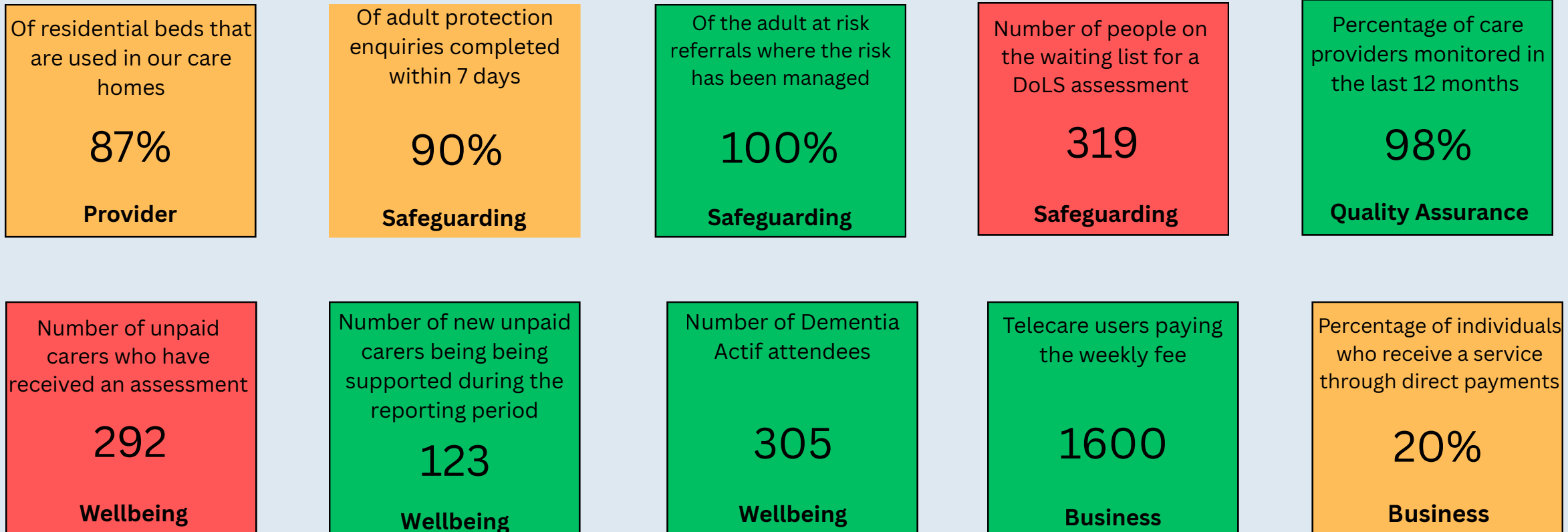


Does the Service succeed in meeting the need?

-  Yes, consistently
-  Yes, partially, inconsistently or delayed
-  Long delays or inability to deliver

*It should be noted that this is a sample of individuals who have received a care review. These figures do not include individuals who are waiting for a service.

Overview of the performance of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department April 2026



Does the service succeed in meeting the need?



Yes, consistently



Yes partially, inconsistently or delayed

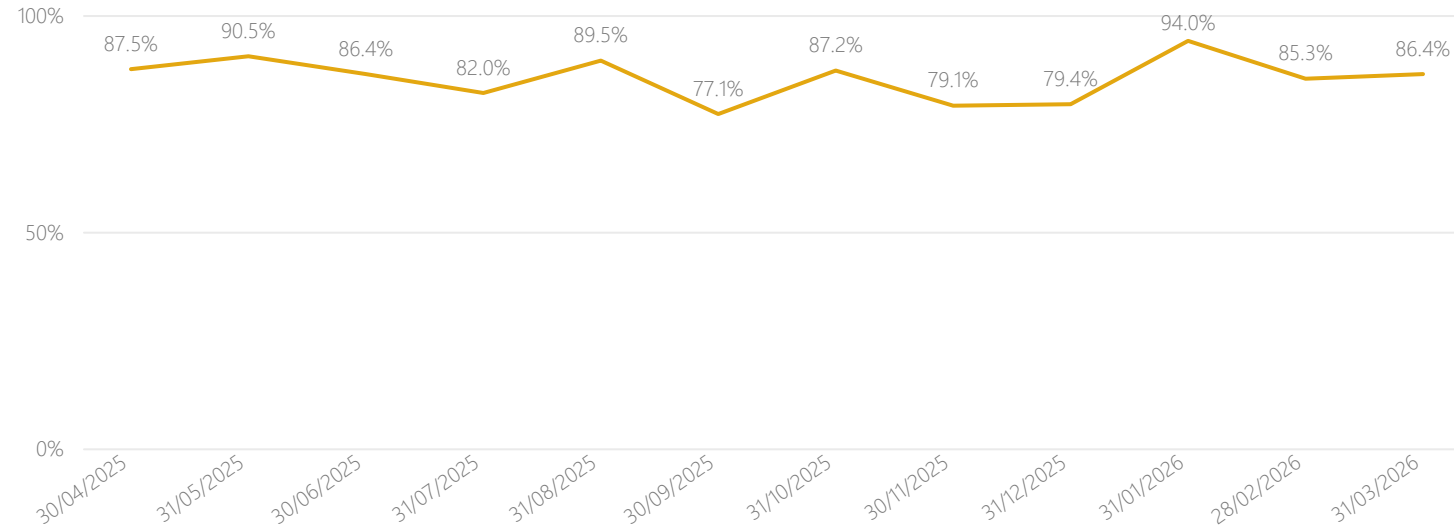


Long delays or inability to provide

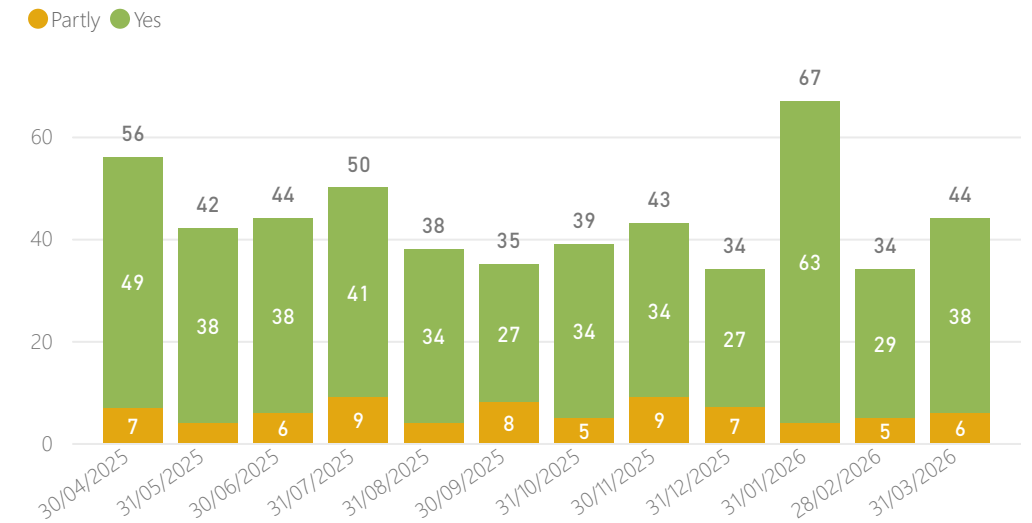
Older People and Physical Disabilities - Sian Edith Jones

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

Percentage of reviews where the individual has noted we succeeded in supporting them to achieve what's important to them



Do individuals feel supported to be able to achieve what's important to them?



Behind the performance:

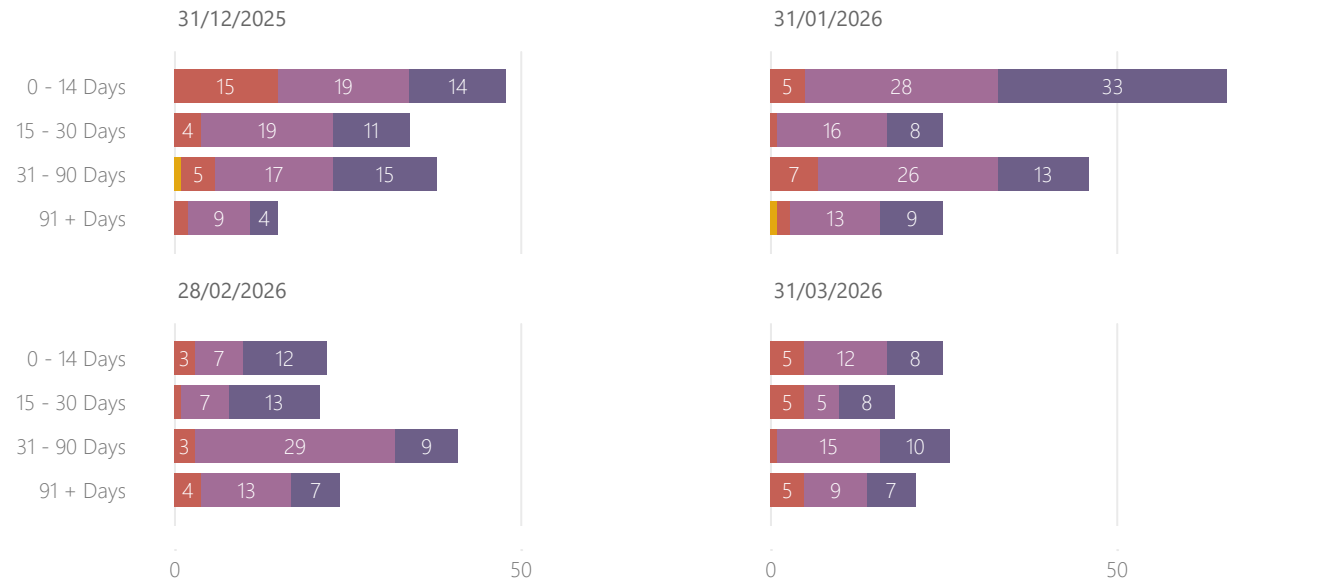
Reviewing activity has been fairly stable, with a significant number of reviews completed by the end of January, followed by a noticeable decline by February and March. The majority of individuals noted they were satisfied, with a relatively low number only partially satisfied. The reasons for being partially satisfied varied, including unsuitable housing, frustration, mobility problems and lack of day activities. Others said they were unhappy with the home care visit times. Some were partially satisfied or dissatisfied because they were in a residential setting rather than at home due to a lack of home care which is an extremely sad situation.

Older People and Physical Disabilities - Sian Edith Jones

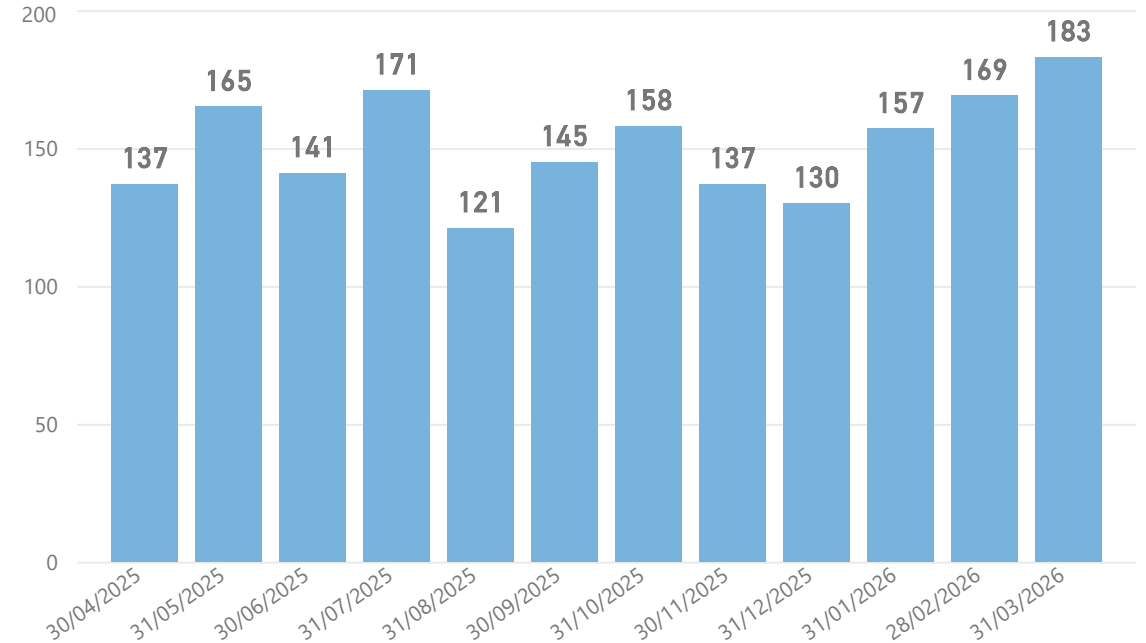
to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

How long individuals have been waiting for a social care needs assessment

● GW- Pending Carer Assessment ● GW-AS-Pending Allocation OT ● GW-AS-Pending Allocation Social Care Practitioner ● GW-AS-Pending Allocation Social Worker



Number of social care needs assessment by month



Behind the performance:

The number of assessments completed during this period is higher than it has been for a long time, reflecting the heavy work pressures placed on the teams. We hope this is the effect of winter pressure and that the same level of intensity is not going to last but time will tell. Investment has recently been made to ensure timely assessments to facilitate discharge from hospital, especially at Ysbyty Gwynedd. The aim of this work was to reduce DPOC codes (specific reasons for hospital discharge) for individuals awaiting allocation or for a social worker assessment. Indeed, the DPOC figures have dropped significantly, coinciding with the large increase in the number of assessments completed. Now, lack of care packages and residential/nursing placements are the main reasons for DPOC. The improvement in hospital discharge data emphasises the need for the government to invest further in increasing home care and residential/nursing care capacity.

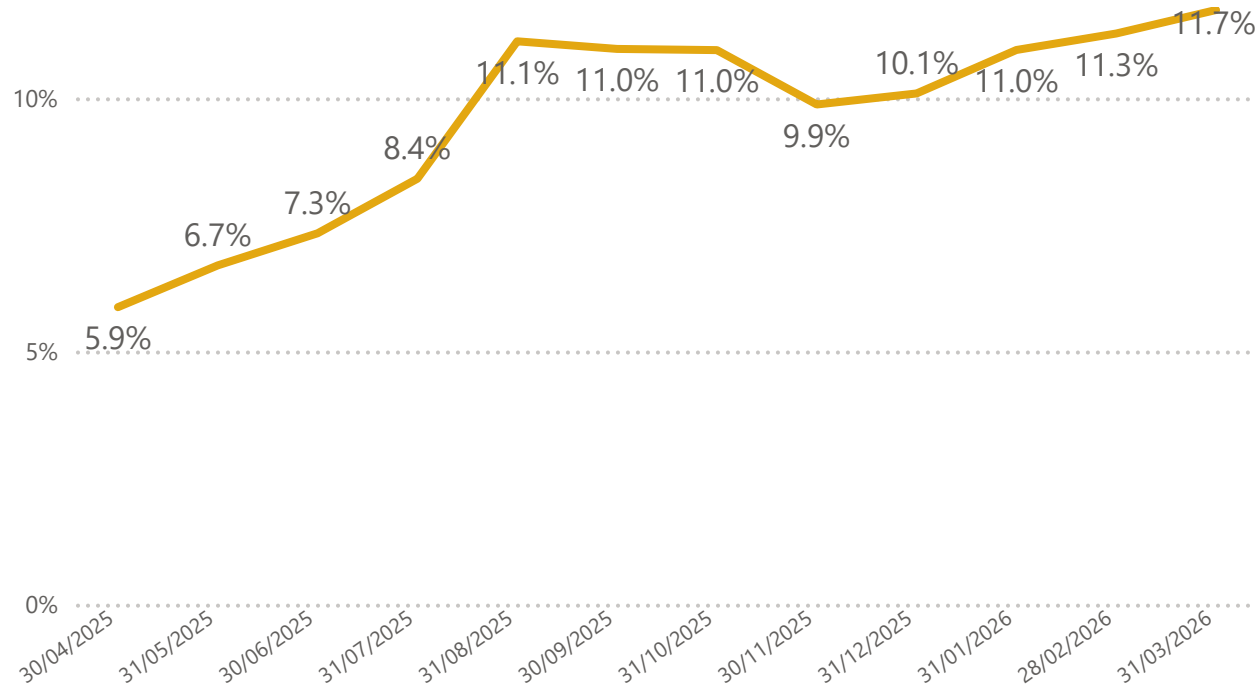
The data on people awaiting assessment is related to staffing and recruitment concerns. We are losing experienced social workers and by today there is less interest in the social work degree course, and it is not entirely clear why. This is an issue that deserves serious attention and potentially requires internal solutions.

There is a significant reduction in the occupational therapy waiting list which is encouraging given the previous patterns and recruitment difficulties. This decrease is due to the use of agency support and the employment of a temporary therapist. In terms of people waiting for a carer's assessment, some carers have been waiting during the period (shown in yellow on the data), but it's positive to note that no one is currently waiting.

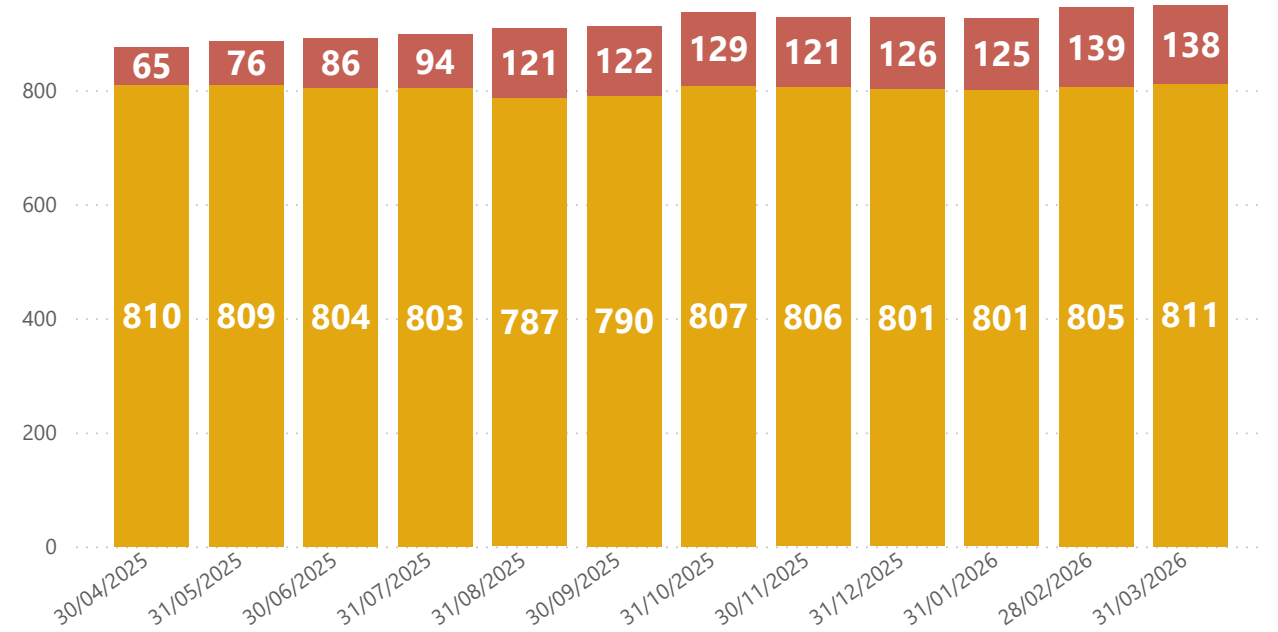
Home Care Waiting Lists - Sian Edith Jones

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

Percentage of unmet home care hours



Number of people receiving care (yellow) and the number on the waiting list (red)



Behind the performance

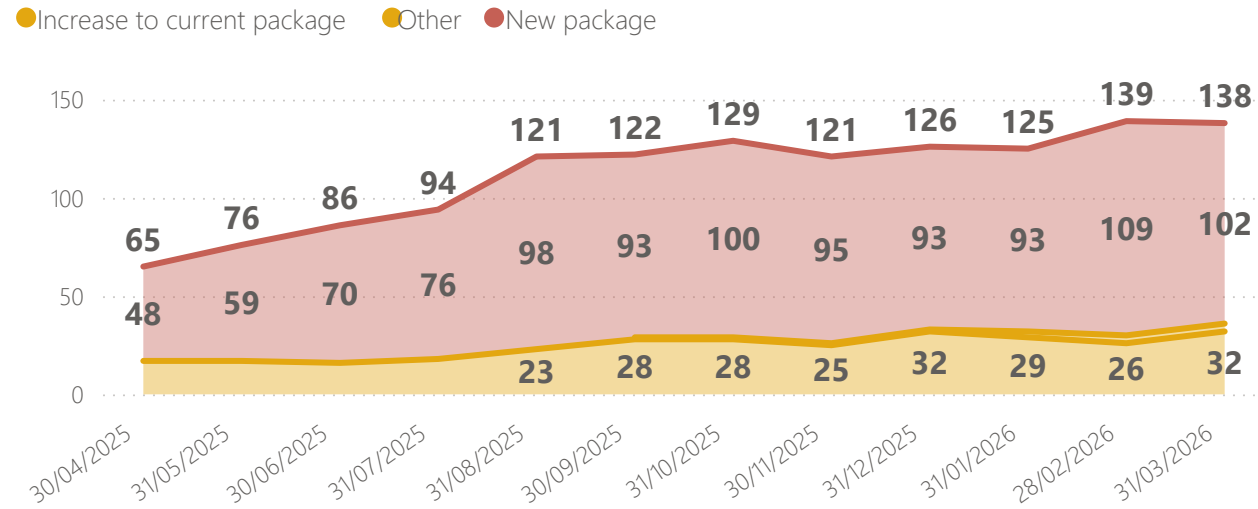
The home care waiting list reflects the increase in the number of assessments. As a result of increased assessments, more people are now having to wait for care packages. Dyffryn Nantlle, which had previously been an area of concern, has reduced its waiting list to 13 people (down from over 20). This improvement can be linked to regular, effective meetings held weekly to review the waiting list, prioritize and strive to free up capacity through the use of hospital patient data dashboards. Good collaboration takes place and positive feedback from staff that this approach is beneficial. However, staffing issues in the area continue to have an impact on our ability to deliver in Dyffryn Nantlle, although the ongoing collaboration and discussions are making a difference.

Ffestiniog and Eifionydd are also areas of concern. Although the overall figures there were high, only a handful of people had to wait more than 90 days. It was explained that many of those individuals, despite being listed, were not truly prepared for care - for example, because the property was unsuitable for other reasons. It is intended to separate these individuals from the main listing data, as the present picture is misleading and suggests that there are more waiting than there are in reality. An additional category is needed to report on people who are "waiting for care but not yet fully ready", to reflect the situation more accurately in the data. Encouragingly, 10 out of 17 districts had relatively low waiting figures of between one and eight people.

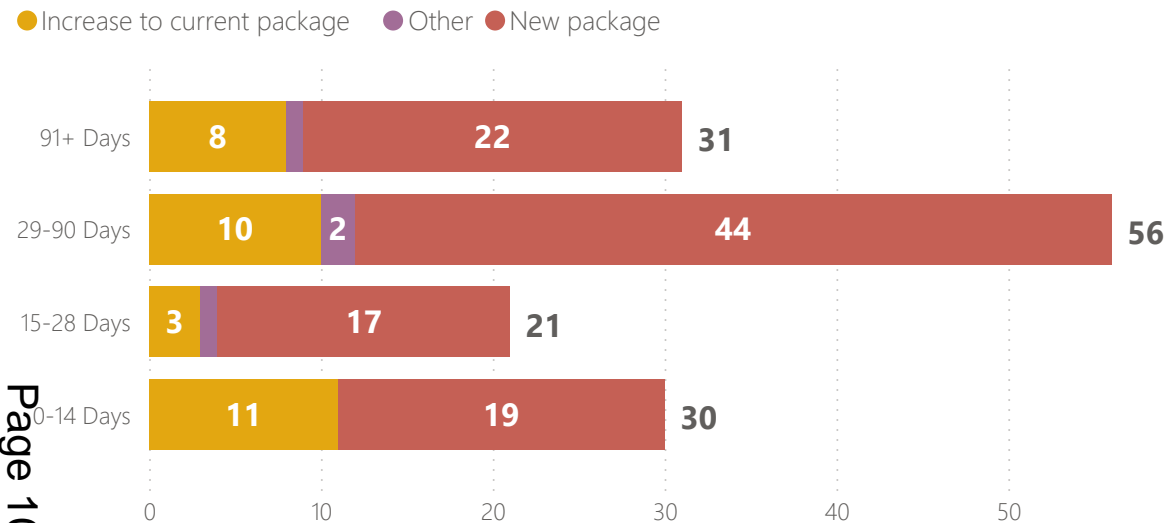
Home Care Wait Lists - Sian Edith Jones

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

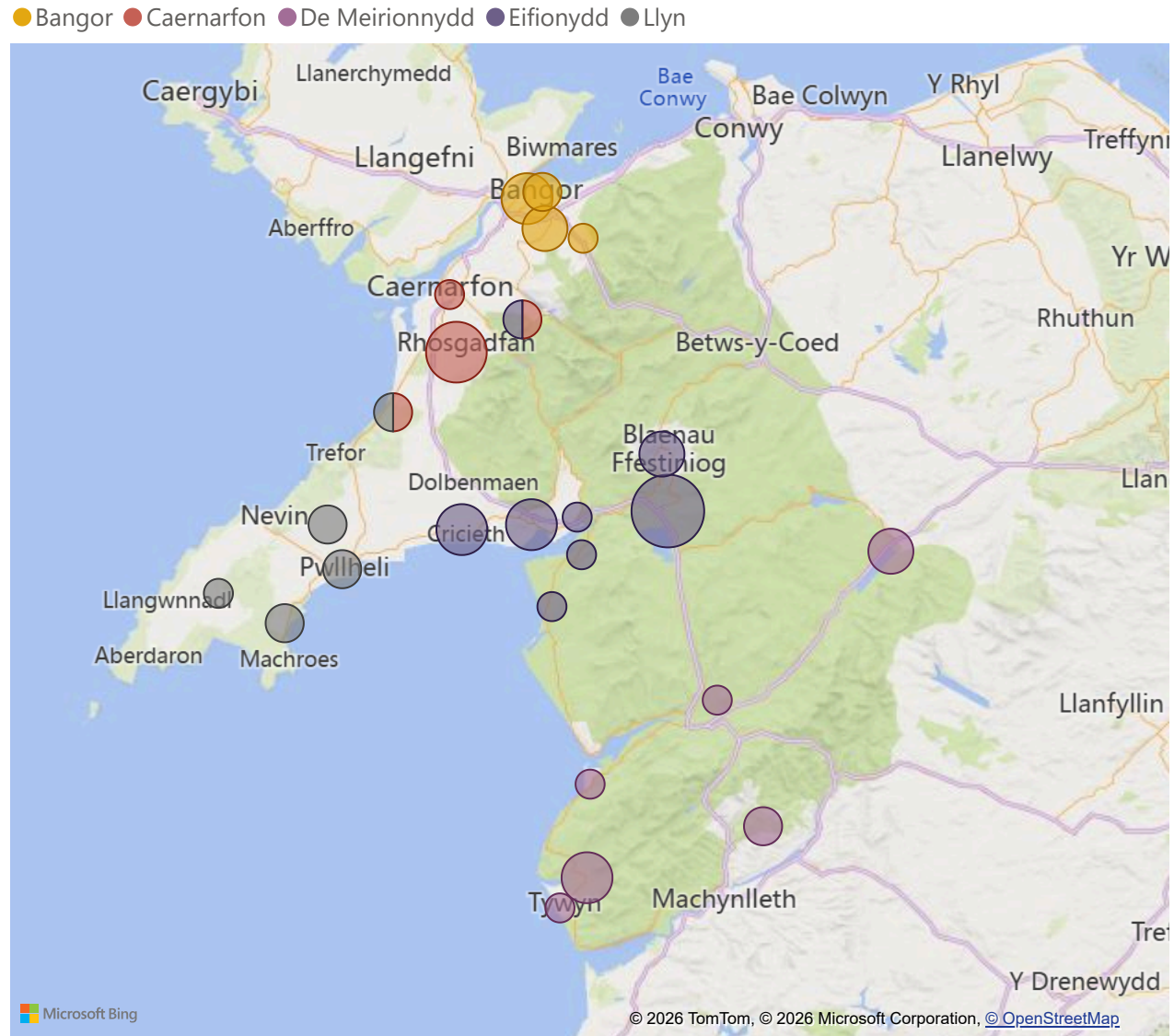
Number on the home care wait list



How long has an individual been waiting



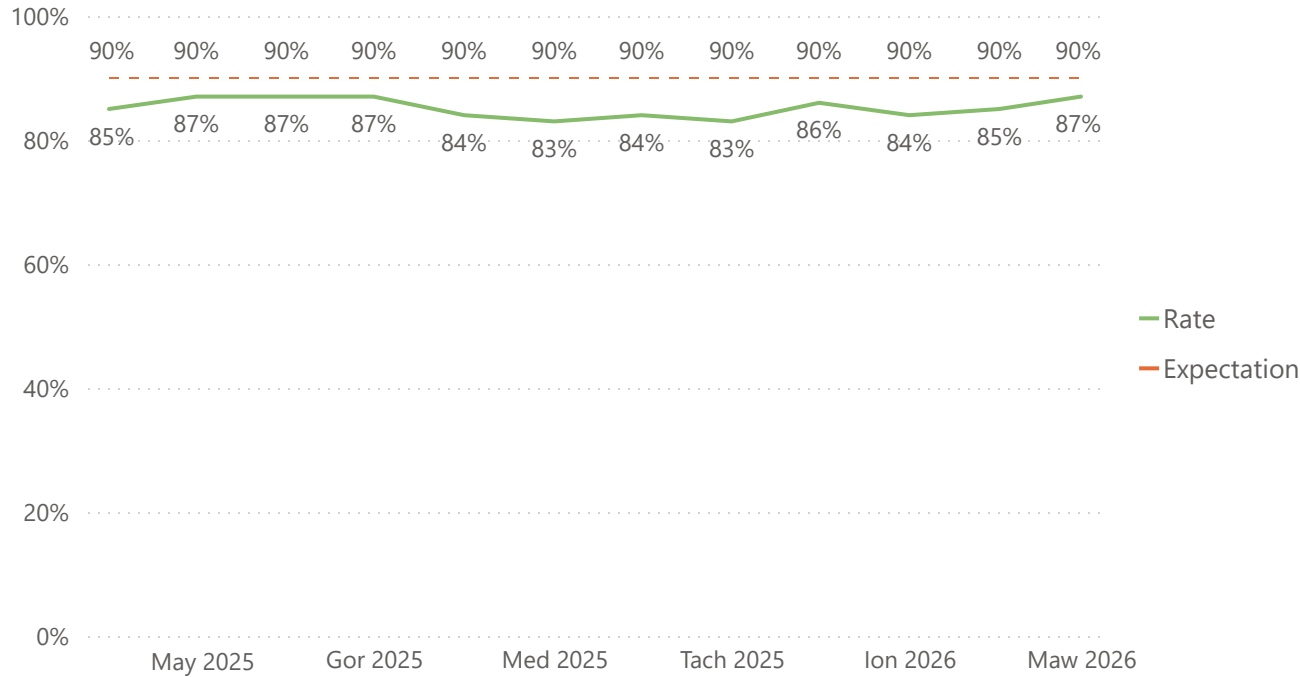
Number on the waiting list for a new package of care



Internal Residential Care Provision - Rhion Glyn

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

Average bed filling rates at our internal homes



Behind the performance

It's promising to see the percentage back at the highest level it's been (87%) since regular reporting. After a long and frustrating period of waiting for the opening of the second dementia unit at Plas Hedd, it is good to be able to report that the unit has now been opened and is gradually being filled.

For the first time in quite some time, there are no units closed in our homes as a result of development/construction work. Therefore, we hope to see the percentage reach 90% over the next few months.

Staffing levels and level of needs

These percentages are calculated on the basis of vacancies and where staff members with a fixed-hours contract are off on long-term leave (longer than 28 days). The information does not include casual staffing levels, short-term illness or situations where staff are excluded from work.

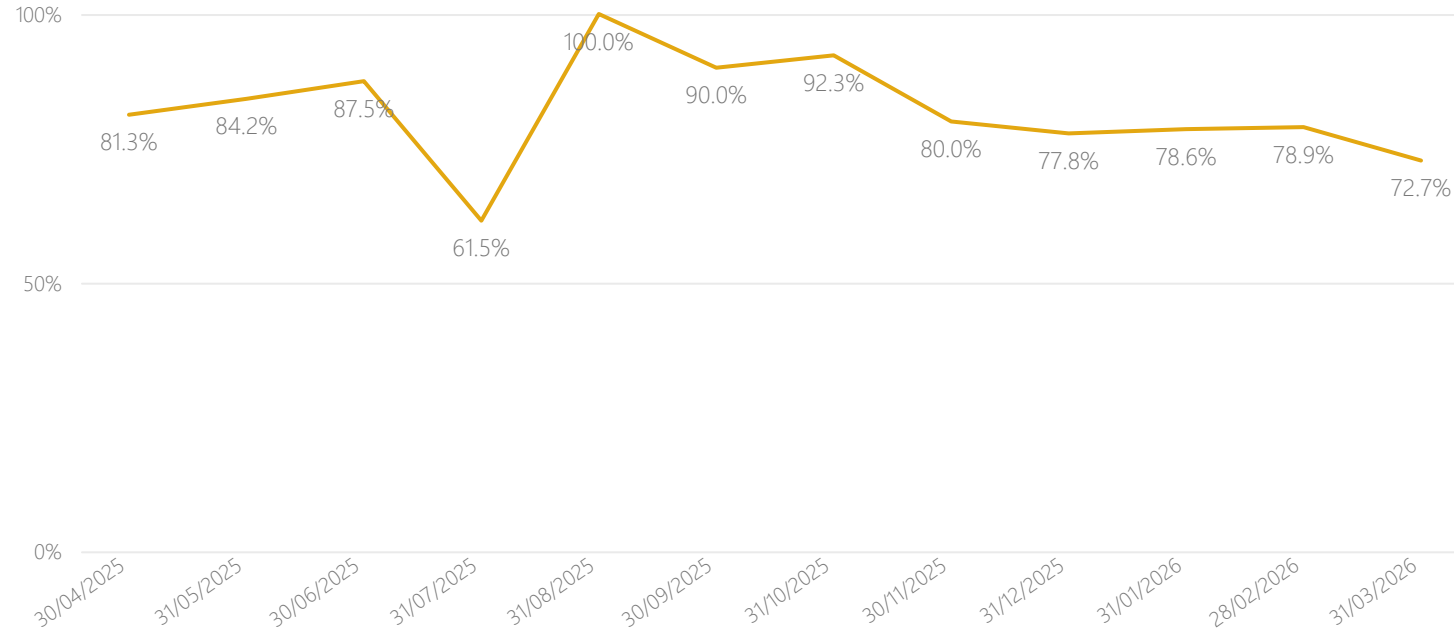
While the data is expected to vary across households from time to time, looking overall at the situation at the end of March 2026 it appears that job vacancies and long-term illness are currently having a greater impact compared to the same period last year.

	Mawrth '25	Awst '25	Hydref '25	Rhagfyr '25	Mawrth '26
Plas Hedd	87%	74%	82%	86%	83%
Plas Ogwen	86%	95%	100%	95%	100%
Plas Pengwaith	90%	90%	94%	81%	77%
Plas Maesincla	100%	94%	97%	93%	76%
Plas Gwilym	96%	91%	100%	100%	95%
Plas Hafan	96%	87%	90%	87%	87%
Plas y Don	84%	77%	92%	92%	86%
Bryn Blodau	90%	97%	85%	85%	89%
Cefn Rodyn	97%	92%	100%	90%	97%
Hafod Mawddach	95%	84%	86%	88%	92%
Llys Cadfan	84%	91%	87%	87%	88%

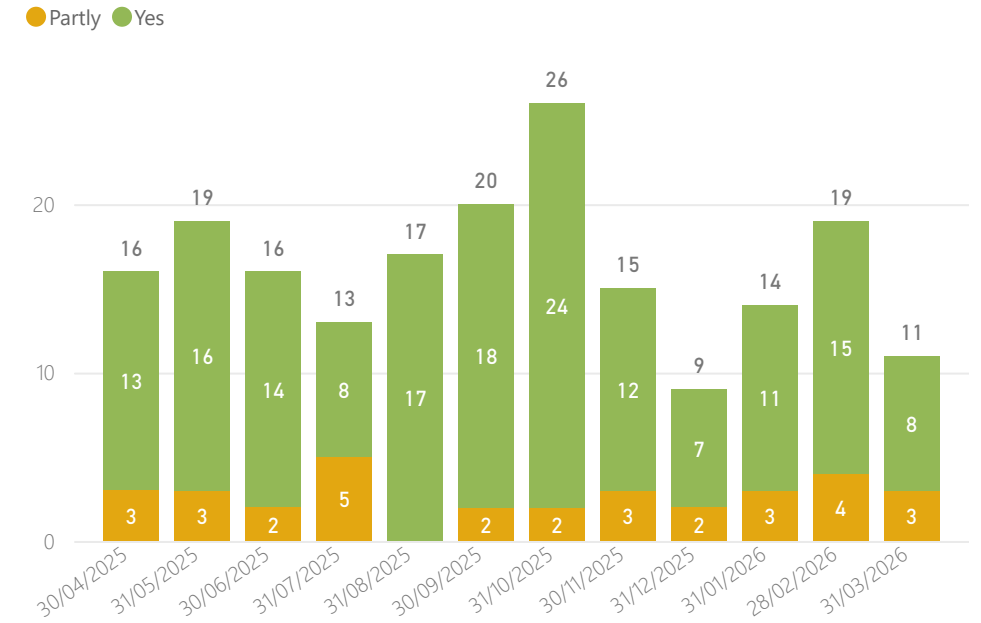
Learning Disabilities - Llinos Rowlands

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

Percentage of reviews where the individual has noted we succeeded in supporting them to achieve what matters to them



Do the individuals feel they are supported to achieve what matters to them?



Behind the performance:

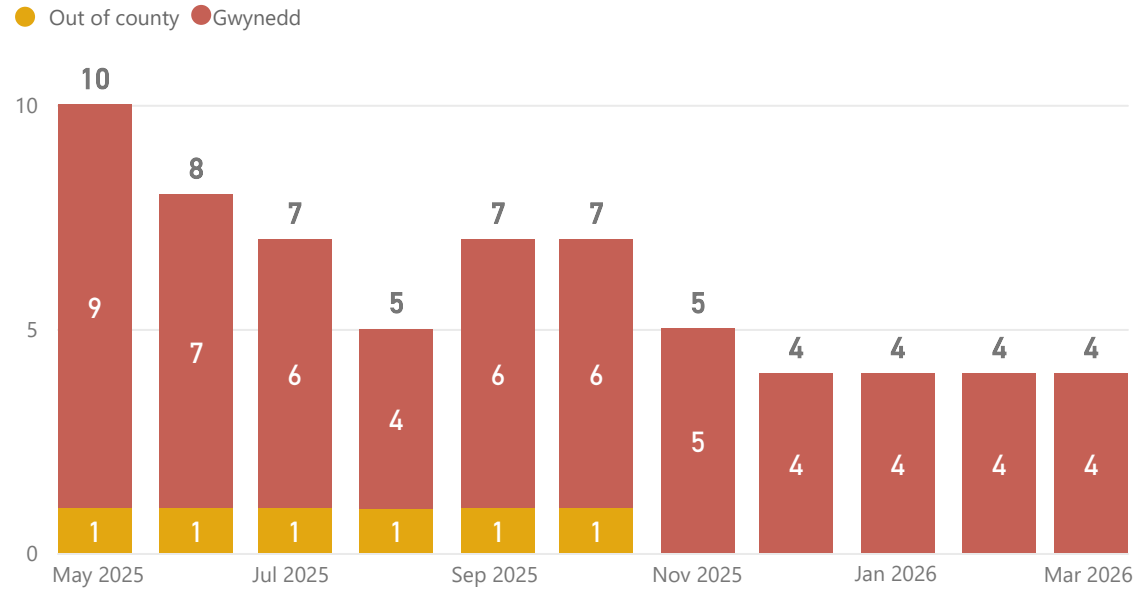
It is seen that there has been an increase in the number of reviews following the holiday period. The majority of individuals report that they are able to achieve what matters to them.

There are various reasons why some individuals state that they are partially able to achieve what is important to them. Two are waiting for equipment, another is still waiting for a house and health issues are disrupting the rest.

Learning Disabilities - Llinos Rowlands

to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

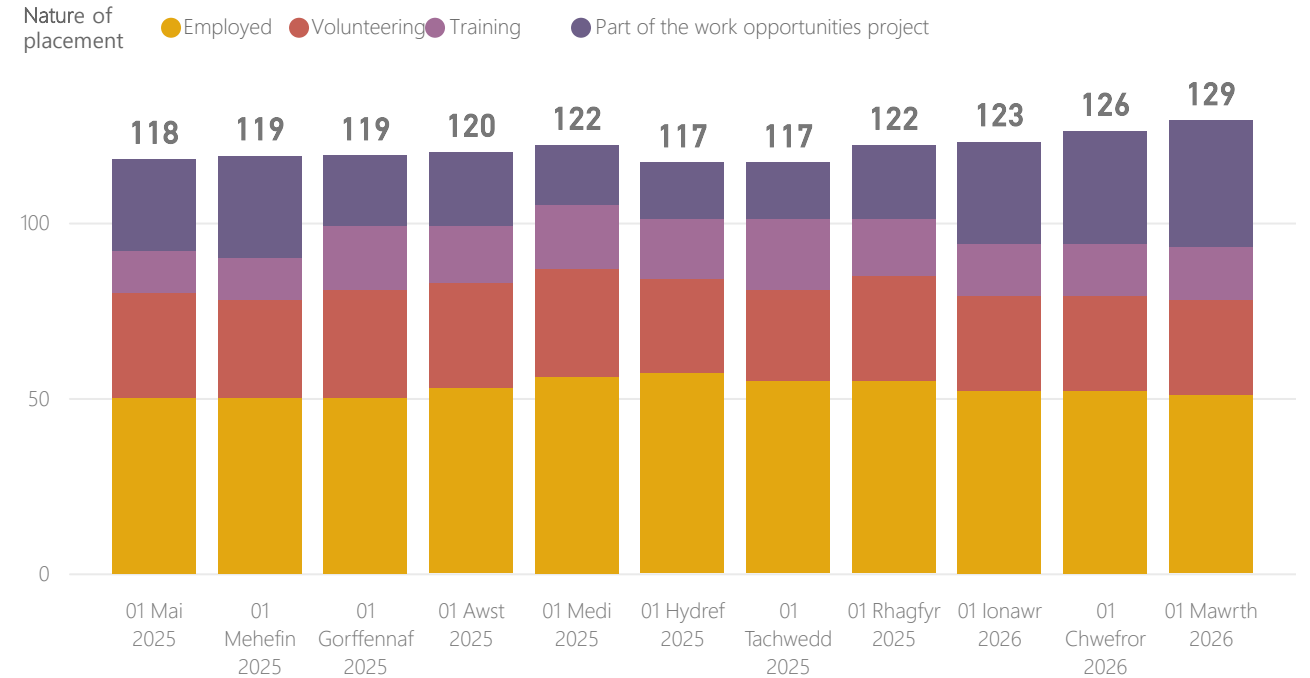
Number of individuals with learning disabilities who have accommodation needs within the next year



Behind the performance:

A new supported house opened in Harlech during the period. Three individuals have settled well in their new home. There are 4 names remaining on the waiting list – with one of them in hospital, and one having settled in his current home but wishing to move location. Arrangements are in place for the other two individuals and hopefully they will have moved by the next time I report.

Number of individuals with learning disabilities who are in employment opportunities



Behind the performance:

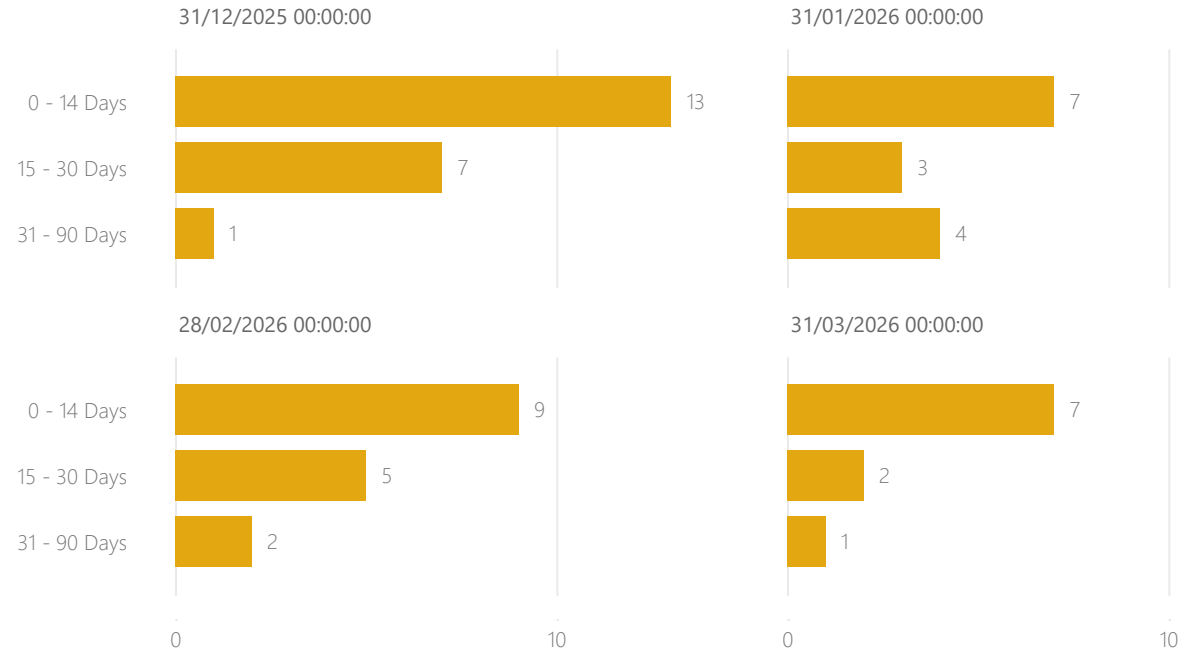
The number of individuals part of the scheme has increased over the reporting period. Two individuals have gained employment within the Councils in that period. This shows that the presentations to management network meetings are beginning to come to fruition.

Mental Health - Mannon Trappe

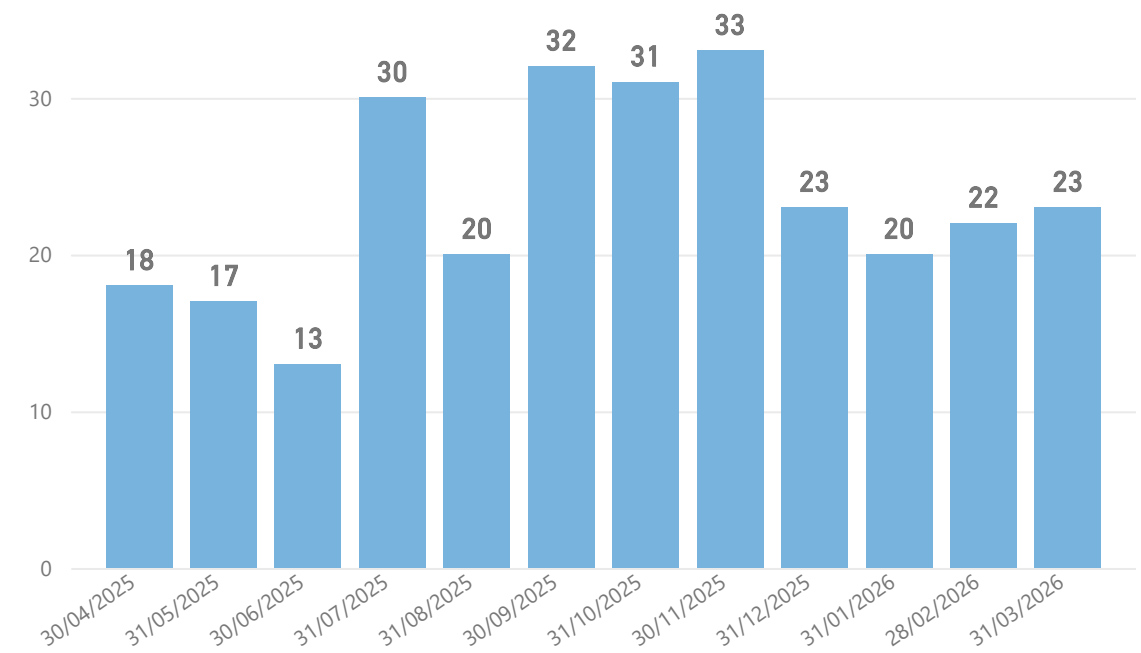
to enable Gwynedd Adults to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

How long have individuals been waiting for a care needs assessment?

● Assigned To Team



Number of social care needs assessments within the month



Behind the performance:

There has been no significant change within the Mental Health Social Service. The South Gwynedd team is currently short of two social workers but there is an attempt to recruit for the same vacancy. It has been seen that many are refusing Support Worker support since the care charging policy was introduced. Because of this, there is an intention to submit a change of structure form to adapt two Support Worker positions to be Social Work Practitioners. This would assist the service in meeting IAA needs and to be able to assess in a timely manner.

49 assessments have been completed under the Mental Health Act since January.

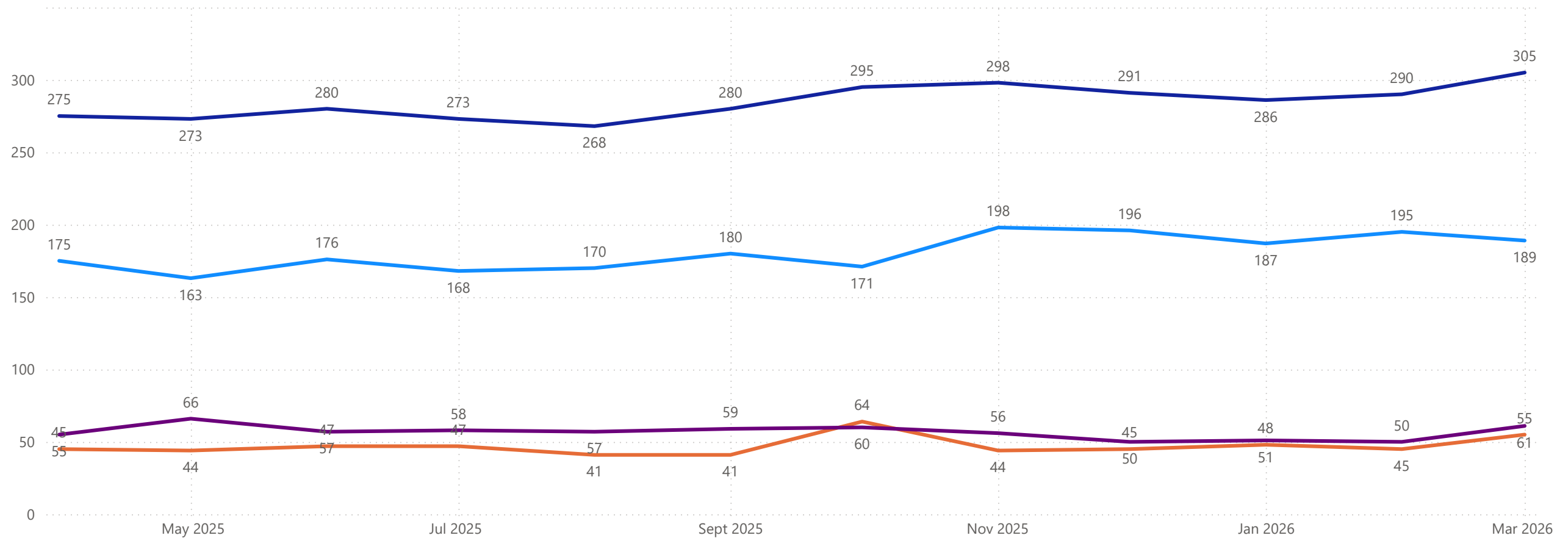
Wellbeing - Alun Gwilym Williams

"Supporting people to live well within their communities"



Number of individuals who attended Dementia Active sessions, per month

● Preventative ● Total ● Unpaid carers ● People living with dementia



Behind the performance

Attendance at classes has increased – with the period seeing the highest numbers of members throughout the year 2025-2026.

In addition to the weekly classes the team have been hosting special events and activities, such as a Boccia Tournament which brings together pupils from primary schools and Dementia Actif members to compete. It is an opportunity to promote activity whilst reducing stigma and barriers for individuals with dementia and carers, supporting community connection and encouraging understanding of dementia.



[Click here to watch a video of the Boccia tournament held at Byw'n Iach Arfon](#)

"I didn't know anything about dementia before, now I know a lot and I enjoyed helping people in the Boccia tournament." - a quote from a school pupil.

Wellbeing - Alun Gwilym Williams

"Supporting people to live well within their communities"

Number of unpaid carers registered and being supported by Carers Outreach



2355

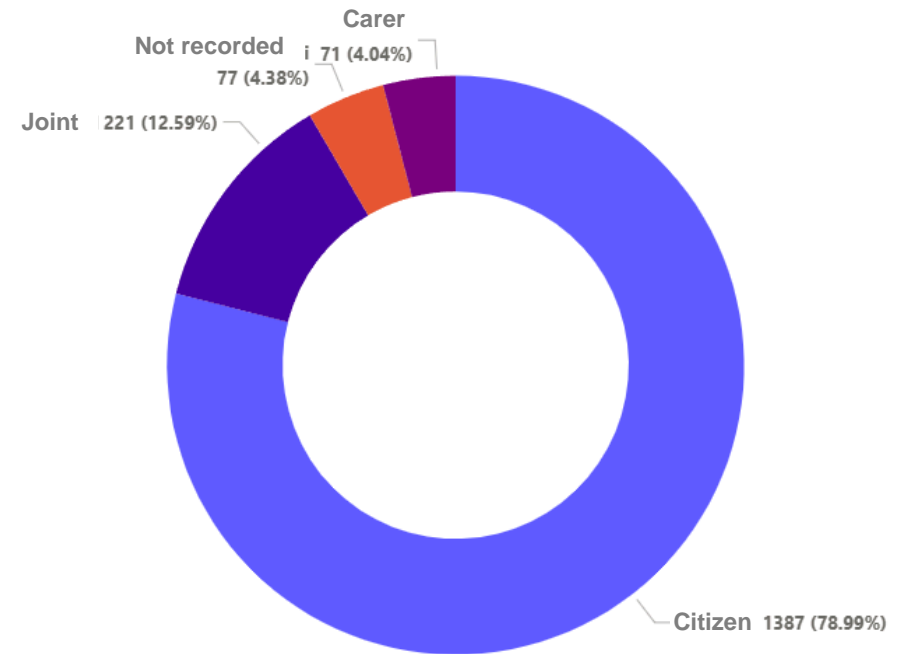
Number of unpaid carers being supported anew during the period



123

Number of Carer Assessments

(looking at the type of assessment and if there is a related carer)



Behind the performance

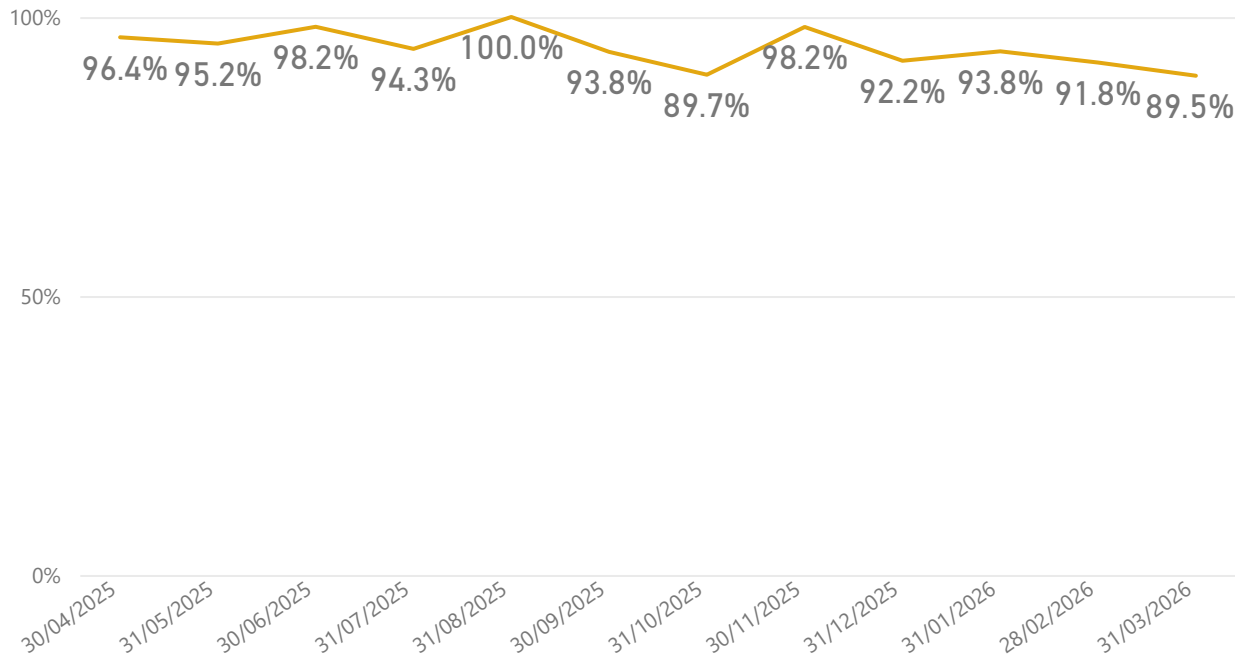
The support available to unpaid carers continues to receive national and regional attention, and our work plan in Gwynedd reflects several issues that arise and proposes ways of addressing them locally. Progress has been made on our work programme during the last quarter including:

- **Adapting the What Matters form:** Completed the work of adapting the WCCIS forms in terms of supporting carers and recording more detailed and accurate data. Sessions were held to raise awareness among the social work teams of these changes, and the importance of accurate reporting. A box has been added to the form to record details of any contingency/emergency plan for carers' wishes.
- **Carers App:** Initiating discussions with the designers of the app (Brandified) in order to establish the scope of the work. Circulating a questionnaire to find out the views of carers and staff on the content and use of the app.

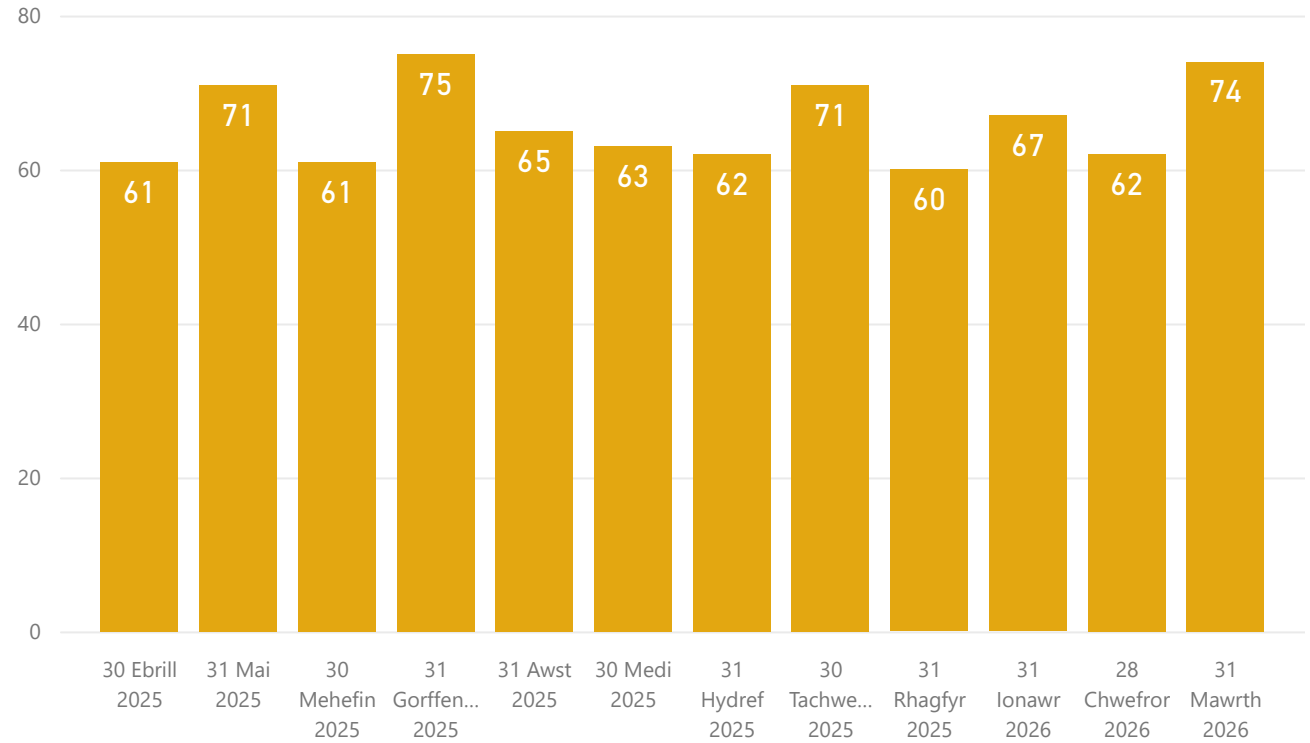
Safeguarding - Mannon Trappe

Safeguarding adults who have care and support needs and are at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Percentage of adults safeguarding enquiries completed within the statutory timescale (7 working days)



Number of new safeguarding referrals by month



Behind the performance:

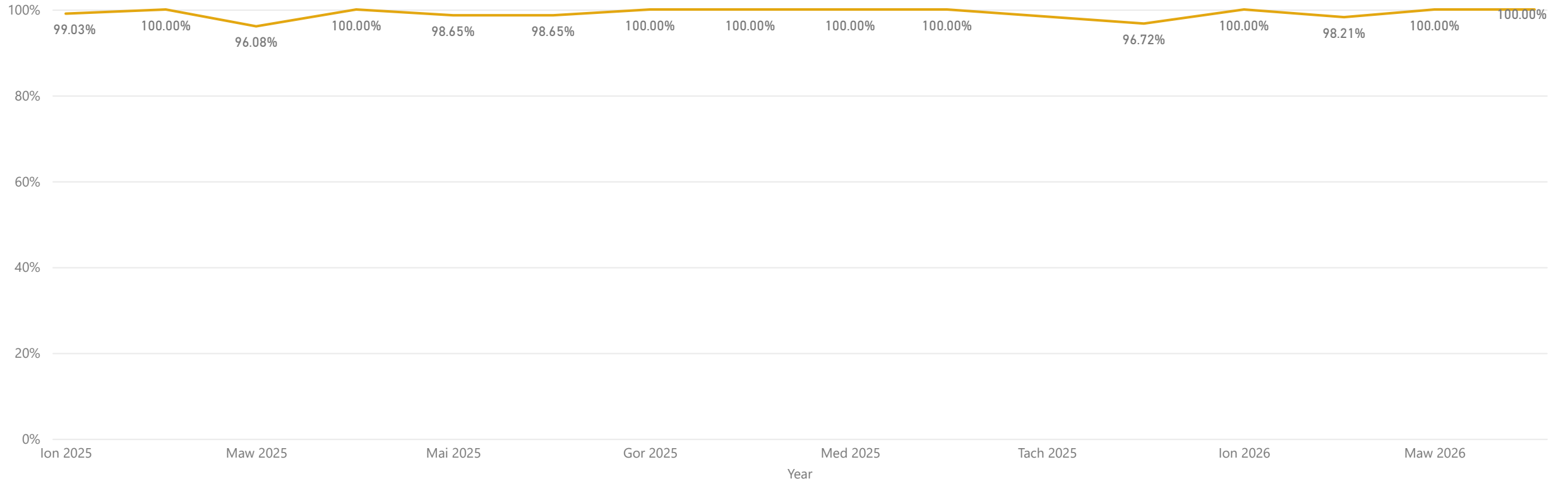
Unfortunately, our ability to complete a.126 queries within a statutory 7-day timeframe has slipped over the past few months. Our full-time Safeguarding Officer is now retired and the other officer is working part-time. In addition, the complexity of cases is constantly increasing and it is now a very difficult task to be able to make contact with the key stakeholders within the timeframe.

The Safeguarding Officer post has been advertised several times but we have not been successful in recruiting for the role. We will be interviewing on 24/4/26 so hopefully there will be an appointment. In the meantime, a number of reports are being sent to the districts to act on.

Safeguarding - Mannon Trappe

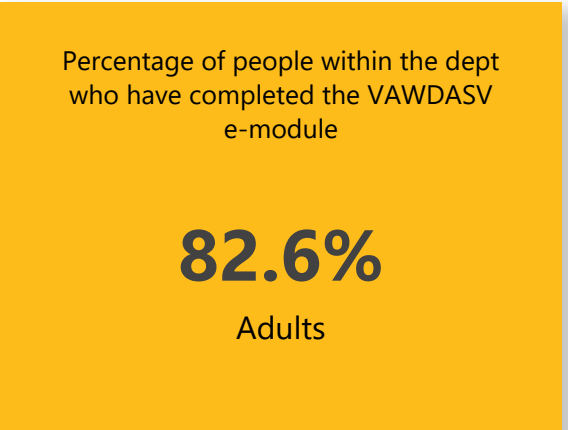
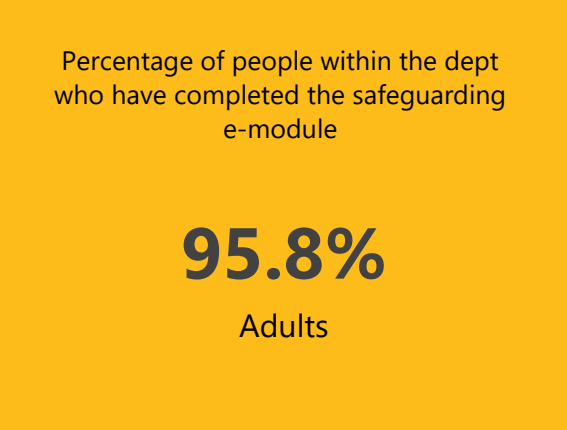
Safeguarding adults who have care and support needs and are at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Of the adult safeguarding referrals completed, the percentage where the risk was managed



Behind the performance

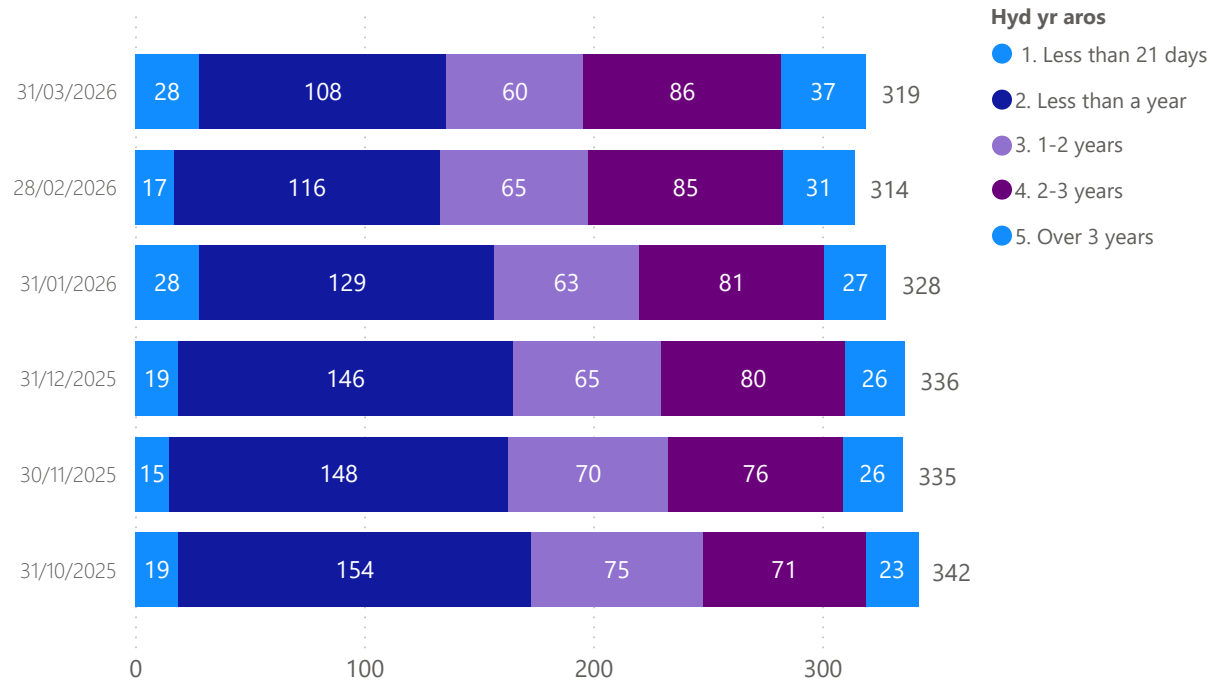
Guidance has gone out to the Leaders to ensure that the safeguarding forms are closed at the end of the process which means an increase in the number of cases where the risk has been managed.



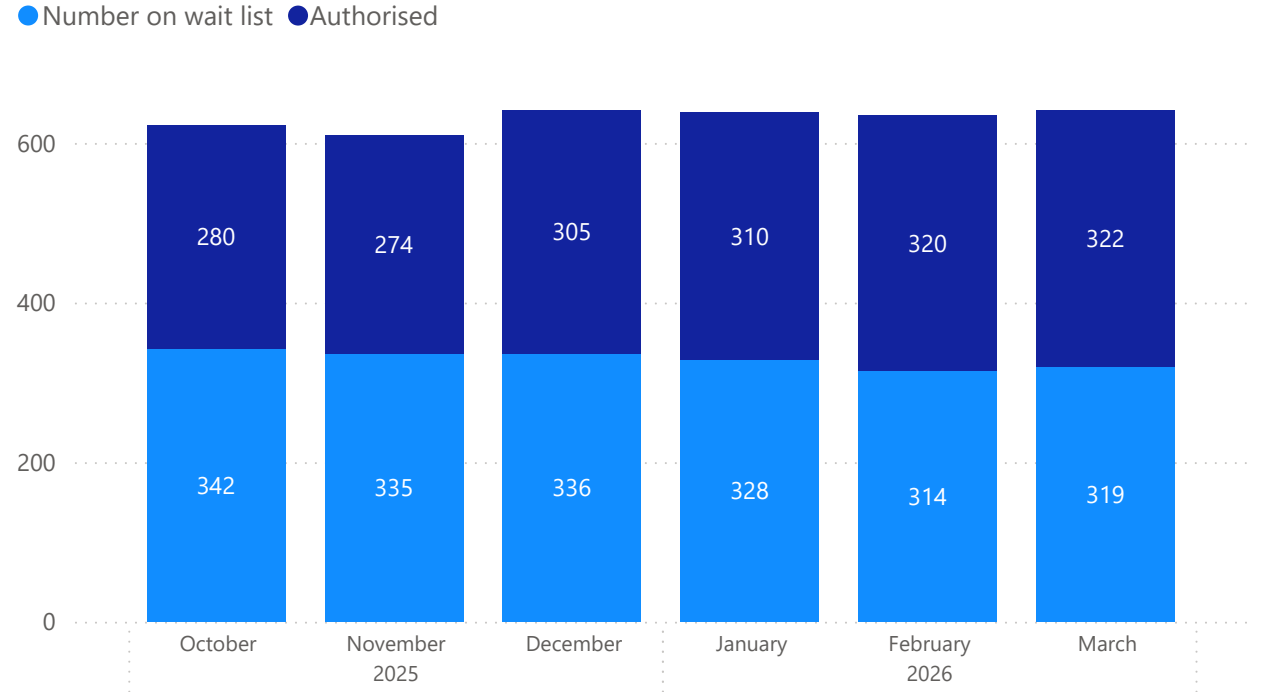
Safeguarding - Mannon Trappe

Safeguarding adults who have care and support needs and are at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

Number on the waiting list for a DoLS assessment and how long they've been waiting - by month



Number of individuals on the waiting list compared to the number with a current DoLS authorisation - by month



Behind the performance:

You can see that there has been an increase in the numbers that have been authorised. The DoLS Coordinator has worked hard to shorten the waiting list. She has established a process where she will coordinate all assessments and this frees up the time of the Best Interest Assessors to focus on assessing and writing their reports. The two Best Interest Assessors have now qualified and hold their own caseload.

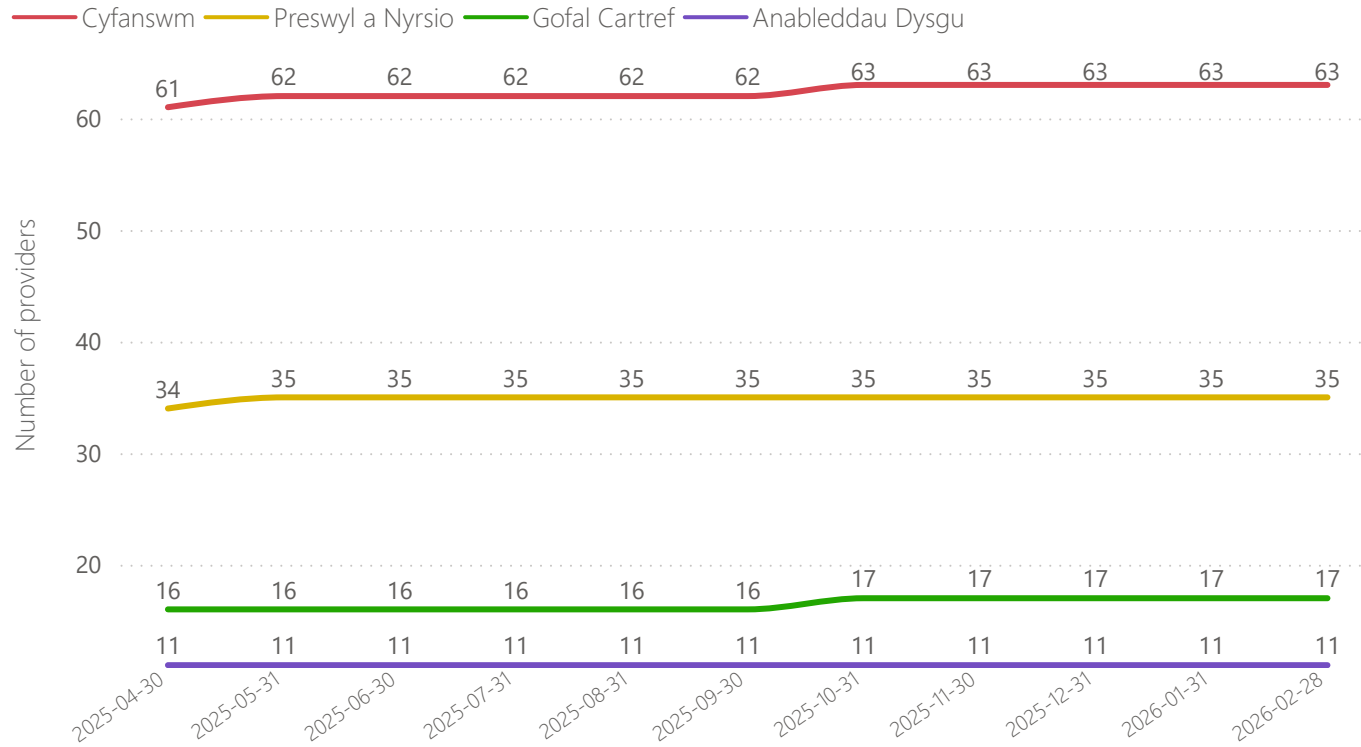
A successful application has been made to the Welsh Government for a grant of £114,000 to assist us with the DoLS waiting list. This funding will be used again this year to commission an agency to undertake audits, with the majority of these being out-of-county locations.

Grant funding has been used to employ a Social Worker to support the significant work of assessing the Community DoL cases in the Learning Disability service.

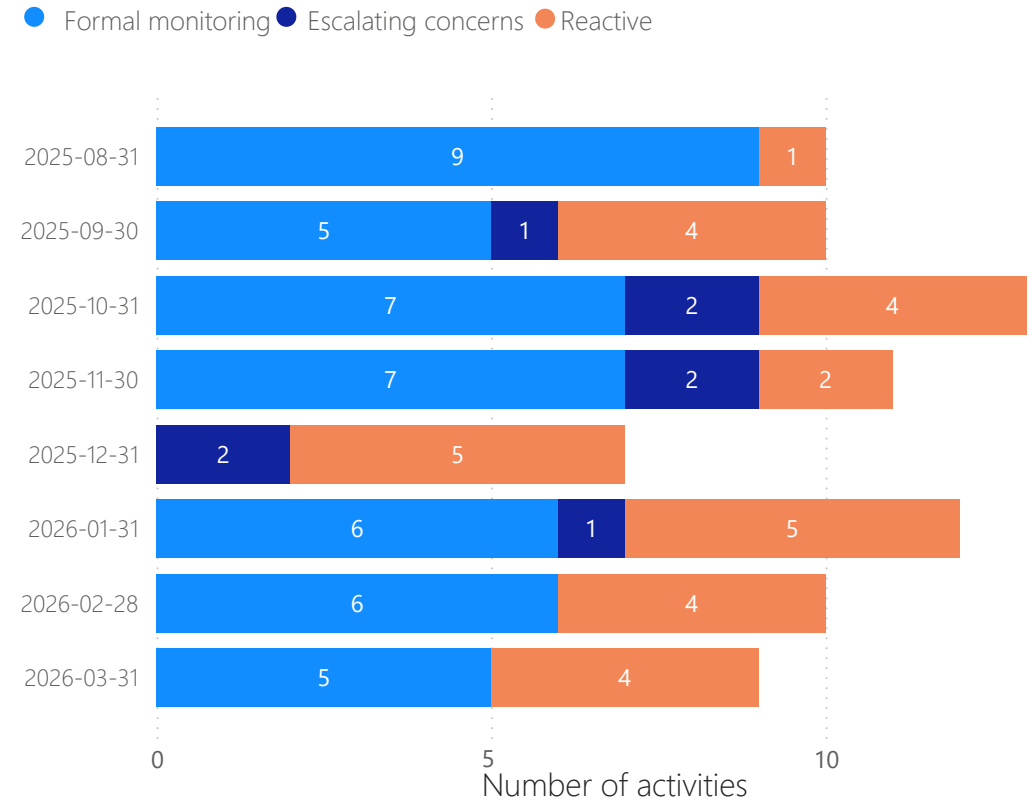
Quality Assurance - Mannon Trappe

Ensuring that the care commissioned is safe and of good quality.

Number of providers monitored in the last 12 months (accumulative figure)



Nature of monitoring activities



Behind the performance

Officers regularly monitor and respond quickly to any concerns to ensure we are commissioning safe and good quality care. The data shows that regular visits are being made to residential homes. A pre-monitoring form has been introduced, which assists officers to better prepare for visits and to focus on any risks. The team will meet fortnightly with the Medicines Team and internal managers to discuss medication errors and offer support. This work contributes to keeping residents safe within our provisions.

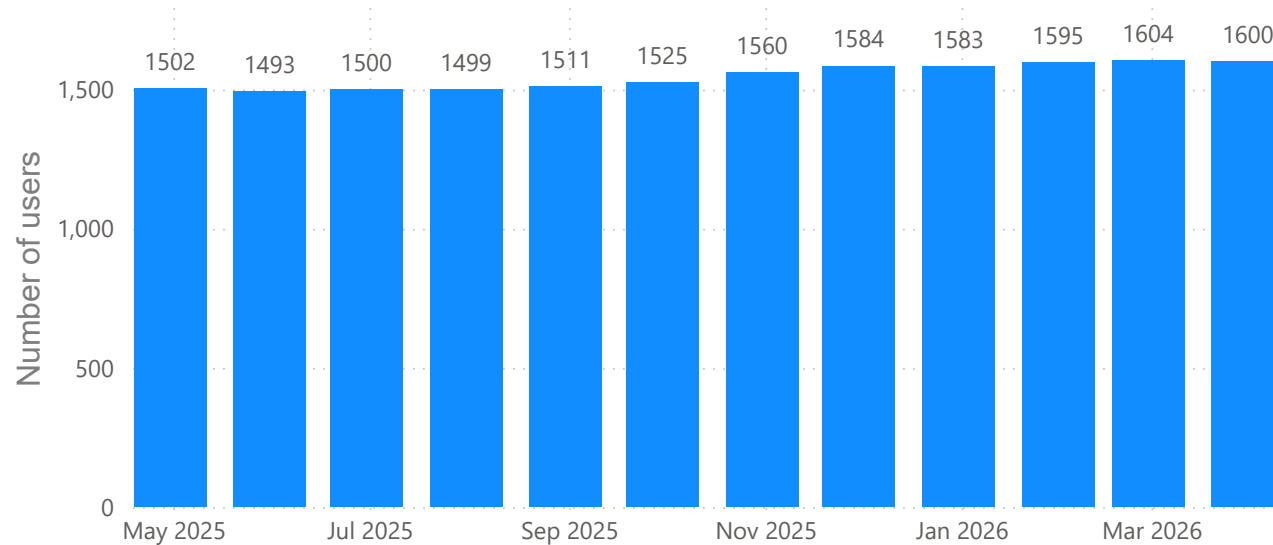
There is regular contact with services, sharing details of relevant training and any useful information. Work with Learning Disability Supported Housing services has continued, including the safe closure of one provision with support for the residents. While home care monitoring has been a bit slower, officials have responded quickly to problems with two providers. Work here will continue, focusing on one provider where improvements are needed.

One provider remains under the Escalating Concerns regime and new entries have been embargoed since October 2025. The recall naturally has an impact on the ability of our services to place in that area and every effort is made to try to work with the provider to ensure that the necessary improvements have been made.

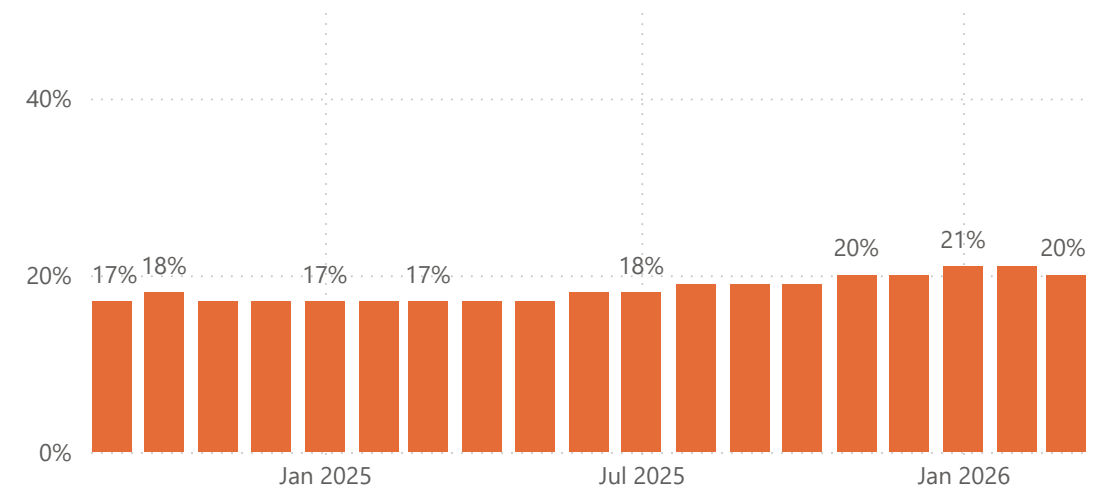
Business - Alun Gwilym Williams

Providing business support and guidance to social services.

Telecare users paying weekly fee



Percentage of home care or support services provided via direct payments



Behind the performance

The number of telecare users has continued to increase steadily over recent months, mainly as individuals transfer services from housing associations Adra and Grŵp Cynefin. The team continues to work closely with the housing associations to ensure a smooth transition of residents, and we are confident that the transition of residents to new devices will be completed by the end of the summer.

In addition, we will be working with Adra and the North Wales Fire Service on a new project over the coming months. The aim of this project is to ensure that a significant proportion of residents who transfer receive a fire safety audit as part of the process. The hope is that this project will be proactive, and lay the foundation for much more collaboration in this area in the future.

Behind the performance

The number of adults funding their home care or support service through direct payment has remained stable over the past few months, with the slight decrease in percentage as a result of the increase in the number of people being looked after. A leader has been appointed to lead the Independence Promotion Team and will be responsible for driving the work programme forward.

A number of developments are underway in the area, for example the establishment of a website that will enable care workers to find work and for people to search for workers in their areas locally. It is hoped that this type of development will make direct payments a realistic option for more people across Gwynedd.

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	6 June, 2026
TITLE	Housing and Property Cabinet Member Performance Report
AUTHOR	Carys Fôn Williams, Head of Housing and Property
CABINET MEMBER	Coun. Paul Rowlinson

1. Why does it need scrutinising?

So that the Committee Members can be satisfied that I, the Housing and Property Department Cabinet Member, has a grasp of performance matters within the Department.

2. Background / Context

2.1 Background / Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field I'm responsible for as Housing and Property Department Cabinet Member. This includes outlining the latest regarding promises within the Council Plan; the department's day-to-day work; as well as the latest regarding the cuts and savings plan.

We operate on the Council's Plan 2023-28, and I report here on the progress made up to the end of March 2026, as well as looking back across the whole of 2025/26. All matters have been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised by myself in performance challenging meetings, and I am satisfied with the Department's performance.

2.2 Logic and justification

Council Plan Projects Performance

Progress against milestones set for the Department's projects within the Homely Gwynedd and Efficient Gwynedd improvement priority can be seen in Appendix 1.

I'd like to bring attention to the fact that most (13) milestones have achieved their goal by the end of the financial year. More details on some in particular is found below (with numbers corresponding to those in the table in Appendix 1):

A Homely Gwynedd: Increasing the supply of housing for local people

1. The ambition of building 500 social housing units through the PDP and the partnership with the Housing Associations by the end of the financial year has been achieved, with 506 units constructed by the end of the year.

4. Empty homes schemes are making excellent progress, with 37 further properties brought back into use during 2025/26, 9 more than the year's ambition, bringing the total to 145 empty properties brought back into use by the end of the year.
5. As a result of the Homebuy Scheme, 221 people across 85 households were assisted to buy a home on the open market.

A Homely Gwynedd: Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty

1. The Energy Service continues to help hundreds of people with their energy situation by referring them to the y ECO Scheme. During 2025/26, 650 individuals were referred to ECO, an improvement on the original goal of 300. Following the announcement that the scheme would come to an end in March 2026, a further statement was made about an extension to the scheme until December. Despite this good news, financial resources are still scarce, and at present, there is only one contractor operating in Gwynedd. This situation shows the continuous challenges in trying to improve energy efficiency for residents, while national schemes change and funds are coming to an end.
4. The service set a goal of conducting 10 home visits during the year, to offer support with energy matters. 17 visits were in fact completed, in doing so, referring individuals and families to crucial support services.
6. The energy team organises several drop-in sessions annually to offer support to residents across the county, referring them to support and expert assistance. In 2025/26, 32 of these sessions were held.

This improvement priority will transfer to the Department's day-to-day work from April 2026 onwards and will therefore not be reported as part of the Council Plan objectives.

A Homely Gwynedd: Ensuring that no-one is homeless in Gwynedd

1. During the last 12 months, tenants moved into 137 High Street Bangor, where 12 individuals can be accommodated. Development work on 35 College Road, Bangor was completed – it is anticipated that tenants will move in during the next few months. Good progress is being made on the former Crown Building, Penrallt and we are on track to submit a planning application early in 2026/27, aiming to complete initial works on site by the end of the summer. An open day was held in February inviting stakeholders and the public to see plans for the building, and valuable comments and discussions were made by many who attended.
4. Our dependency on expensive, unsuitable emergency accommodation remains high, as in all counties in Wales, but the Department is making deliberate, and successful efforts to reduce that dependency and further increase our temporary accommodation options. To that end, the Department is continuously looking for opportunities to purchase buildings, and three were purchased over the last year – one in February in Bangor and two in March – one in Bangor and the other in Caernarfon.

Some milestones that were not reached (5) are very close to achieving or have slipped for practical and understandable reasons – details can be found below (where numbers correspond to the numbers in the table in Appendix 1).

A Homely Gwynedd: Increasing the supply of housing for local people

2. Due to unforeseen problems with a water connection, Dôl Afon Goch, Llanberis site is expected to complete in May 2026, roughly 1 month after the original target date. Potential buyers are in the conveyance process, and an open day will be held soon. The Coed Mawr, Bangor site is making good progress, however the timetable has also slipped, now completing in May 2026.
3. The Buy to Let Scheme is a bit behind the target, but very close to achieving the aim set at the beginning of the year. Despite this, with 66 properties purchased and 32 of those already let, the scheme is certainly succeeding in giving more options for housing to Gwynedd locals.

A Homely Gwynedd: Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty

1. Energy vouchers are a large part of the support offered by the Energy Service, and 309 vouchers worth £11,880 have been distributed to residents in need who are on a pre-payment meter over the past year. Since the beginning of the scheme, 6,515 vouchers have been given out, directly helping Gwynedd locals. However, since setting the target at the start of the year, housing associations are now taking calls from their own residents, which has meant a reduction in the calls processed by the Council's Energy team.

A Homely Gwynedd: Ensuring that no-one is homeless in Gwynedd

2. We have not succeeded in attracting as many properties to the Leasing Scheme Wales as anticipated, however 53 expression-of-interest forms were received over the year, and many are currently going through the assessment process or are in discussions about next steps. Despite fewer properties being welcomed to the scheme, I am glad to see that 91 individuals have benefitted from the houses we have already on lease, and the ability to move households from emergency accommodation to more suitable temporary accommodation has relieved some of the pressure on the homelessness service.

An Efficient Gwynedd: Adopting a Property Assets Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for future working

1. We intend to adopt a Property Assets Management Plan, and discussions with departments to consider options as to centralise services and rationalise the estate continues.

The Department's day-to-day work

The Department deals with several areas of work, and offers various services to the people of Gwynedd, from key front-line services such as Homelessness, Housing Options and Energy; corporate services such as Estates, Maintenance and Property Safety, Offices and Cleaning; and commercial services such as Pest Control.

Performance measures for these services can be seen in Appendix 2, and I wish to highlight some below:

- **Eiddo 1 & Eiddo 3: The time (in days) taken to complete maintenance work; and the time taken (in days) to complete a request for Telecare work**

Following a slightly unstable period, these two measures have stabilised over the past year to approx. 14.5 days (E1) and 13.5 days (Telecare), and it's believed that a reliable baseline has been set in terms of the team's ability to deliver, and the team now operates within normal range.

- **Eiddo 4: Percentage change in carbon emissions from Council buildings compared to the same time last year**

The percentage of carbon emissions from Council buildings is 8% higher than the same time last year. We believe this may be as a result of improved data quality, or due to broken instruments in some buildings which meant higher electricity use.

- **Eiddo 6, 7, 8 and 9: Customer Satisfaction for various property services**

It's good to see that customer satisfaction for the property services is consistently high over the last 12 months, with every customer completely satisfied during the last reporting period (Feb-March 2026).

- **Tai 01: The number of empty homes which have been brought back to use thanks to support from the Council (since April 2020)**

343 empty properties have now been brought back into use since April 2020, and following a period of reduced capacity due to two staff departures over the last 6 months, it's good to report that new members of staff have been appointed and are about to begin in their posts. The unit will also take the opportunity to revisit systems and data collection methods.

- **Tai 04: Number of social housing developed to achieve the HAP's ambition**

This measure is ahead of the original target, with 506 houses built in order to meet local demand. However, there are concerns that our ability to continue to reach our targets may be hampered while regular objections to affordable housing developments continue.

- **Tai 5: Number of people who have received help to live locally (HAP Ambition)**

Over the last period, some of the Housing Action Plan highlights include a successful open day at the Crown Building, Caernarfon; Tŷ Gwynedd, Llanberis site about to be sold to the first buyers; and the Homebuy Scheme achieving 85 properties bought with the help of the Scheme.

- **Tai 08: Average number of days spent in unsuitable emergency accommodation**

Following a successful period where the number of people in emergency accommodation fell between April 2025 and January 2026, the last two months has seen a pattern of increase again. The Service will closely monitor this over the next period. It's worth noting that 67 households were placed in emergency accommodation in March – an extraordinary figure which highlights the continued pressure the Service is under.

- **Tai 11: Social Housing Allocations**

The increase in days on the waiting list for social housing continues, the main reasons being beyond the unit's control, and the lack of availability of housing still being a main factor. The concern regarding objections to social housing planning applications is reiterated here, and while these challenges exist, this situation will continue to be seen.

3. Consultation

This report has been created based on the information and content of the latest Housing and Property Department performance challenge and support meeting, where the the Head of Department, service managers and I were present.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Council Plan project milestones progress report

Appendix 2: Department Performance Measures

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 – Year 3 Actions

A Homely Gwynedd: Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities

Department	Project	What we will achieve during the THIRD year 2025-26 (milestones):	Progress update on the milestones this far (March 2026)	Has the milestone been completed / likely to be completed by the end of the financial year (Yes / No)
Housing and Property	Increasing the supply of housing for local people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 By the end of the third year, a further 200 houses will be available for Gwynedd residents, and a total of 500 social housing will have been developed by the end of the period 2 Two Tŷ Gwynedd developments will have completed and at least another two developments will be on site 3 We will have purchased a total of 68 houses from the open market through the Buy to Let Scheme and will have let at least 40 of those to tenants in housing need 4 We will have brought a further 28 empty properties back into use through the help of grants to renovate vacant homes for first time buyers, bringing the total to 130 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 At the end of the third year, a total of 506 social housing units have been built, which meets the target set at the beginning of the year 2 Dôl Afon Goch, Llanberis is anticipated to complete in May following problems with a water connection, and prospective purchasers are in the conveyance process. The Coed Mawr, Bangor site is making good progress, and this site will also complete in May 2026. 3 66 properties have been bought and a further 4 is in the conveyance process. 32 homes have been let and another 7 are in the process. Renovation work is coming to an end at 6 other sites. 4 A further 37 properties have been brought back into use bringing the total to 145 empty homes back in use by the end of the year 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Yes 2 No 3 No 4 Yes

		5 Through the Homebuy Scheme, 70 properties will have been bought through the Scheme, helping and enabling people to live in their local communities	5 85 properties have been purchased helping 221 people	5 Yes
Housing and Property	Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty	1 From a decarbonisation homes point of view, we will ensure that the county's residents make the most of existing schemes such as ECO4 and Nyth and we will have referred 300 clients to ECO4 or Nyth.	1 650 people have been referred to ECO during the year.	1 Yes
		2 We will make sure that any funding that is released to help with the cost of living is claimed. For example, the funding given by Welsh Government to the charity Fuel Bank Foundation (FBF). Should the FBF funding continue to be available, we will look to introduce 1,000 vouchers	2 309 energy vouchers have been distributed to residents in housing need who are on pre-payment meters in Gwynedd, which are worth £11,880. Since the beginning we have distributed 5,788 vouchers worth £239,565 - money that has gone directly to some of the county's most vulnerable residents. Please note that Adra, Grŵp Cynefin and North Wales Housing handle their own calls for their tenants so this has meant a decrease in calls that are processed by the team. In addition, the team has completed 32 DAF (Discretionary Assistance Fund) applications to help with Oil costs. This has been worth £24,000.	2 No
		3 We will refer 40 residents who contact us for additional assistance to the Food Banks, Age Cymru, Carers Support, Canllaw, CAB and Housing Associations.	3 Referred 67 over the period	3 Yes
		4 We will conduct at least 10 home energy support visits as needed where we will offer assistance and refer individuals to relevant support.	4 Have conducted 17 visits over the period	4 Yes
		5 We will hold 2 Energy Partner Sessions with NEA, with a number from the 3 rd Sector, Councillors, Members of the Senedd part of the partnership, and share current information and training.	5 1 held in April and another in November	5 Yes

		6 We will organise 20 Energy Drop-in Sessions to provide energy assistance to residents across Gwynedd and refer to relevant services.	6 32 walk-in sessions held	1 Yes
Tai ac Eiddo	Ensuring that no-one is homeless in Gwynedd	<p>1 We will have completed the renovation at 35 College Road and individuals will have moved into 137 High Street Bangor. Work will be ready to start on Penrallt building, Caernarfon</p> <p>2 The final phase of the Lle Da building (former Gisda and NatWest building on the Maes, Caernarfon), i.e. the café and the young people's hub, will have completed</p> <p>3 We will have attracted 20 extra properties to the Leasing Scheme Wales</p> <p>4 We will continue to look to purchase or adapt existing buildings to further increase our options for temporary accommodation</p>	<p>1 Work has been completed at 35 College Road. 137 High Street has already completed. An open day was held in February for stakeholders and the public to see Penrallt, Caernarfon plans, and we are ready to submit a planning application, aiming to complete initial works at the site by the end of summer.</p> <p>2 The final phase has already been completed and the project has closed.</p> <p>3 29 properties are currently under lease, and another 5 are in the pre-lease stage.</p> <p>4 Three buildings were purchased over the last period – 1 in February (Bangor) and 2 in March (one in Caernarfon and the other in Bangor)</p>	<p>1 Yes</p> <p>2 Yes</p> <p>3 No</p> <p>4 Yes</p>

An Efficient Gwynedd: Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently

Department	Project	What we will achieve during the THIRD year 2024-25 (milestones):	Progress update on the milestones this far (March 2026)	Has the milestone been completed / likely to be completed by the end of the Financial year (Yes / No)
Housing and Property	Adopting a Property Assets	1 We will adopt a Property Asset Management Plan, incorporating the draft policies which have been	1 Discussions with Departments to consider options to centralise services continue. A	1 No

	<p>Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for future working</p>	<p>reviewed, and the findings of discussions with Departments in relation to assets which are surplus to requirements.</p> <p>2 The work on adapting the Headquarters building will continue, focussing on a welfare space for staff. We will assess the potential to centralise officers who are still working in peripheral offices to Block A.</p> <p>3 We will assess the options for the offices at Ffordd y Cob and Penarlâg to meet the needs of hybrid working</p>	<p>draft policy for disposing of property has been amended to address these changes and further considerations to the procedure for identifying properties surplus to requirements.</p> <p>2 The Welfare Space in the Headquarters building has been completed and is in use. A successful bid for funding was made to ensure equality and accessibility provisions in the Headquarters building, and another bid has been submitted to address changes to the Penrallt Office in order to move relocate PP/YGC officers from Cibyn offices and centralise Children’s services.</p> <p>3 Work has been done to identify our needs for office space in Ffordd y Cob and Penarlâg, and a feasibility study has been commissioned for the Penarlâg site, with the intention of maximising the use of the site.</p>	<p>2 Yes (but please note there is a change of direction)</p> <p>1 Yes</p>
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TAI 13: Fuel Poverty

[Back to dashboard](#)

Measure: Number of homes that have seen an improvement in their Energy Performance Certificate

Total of EPC improvements:

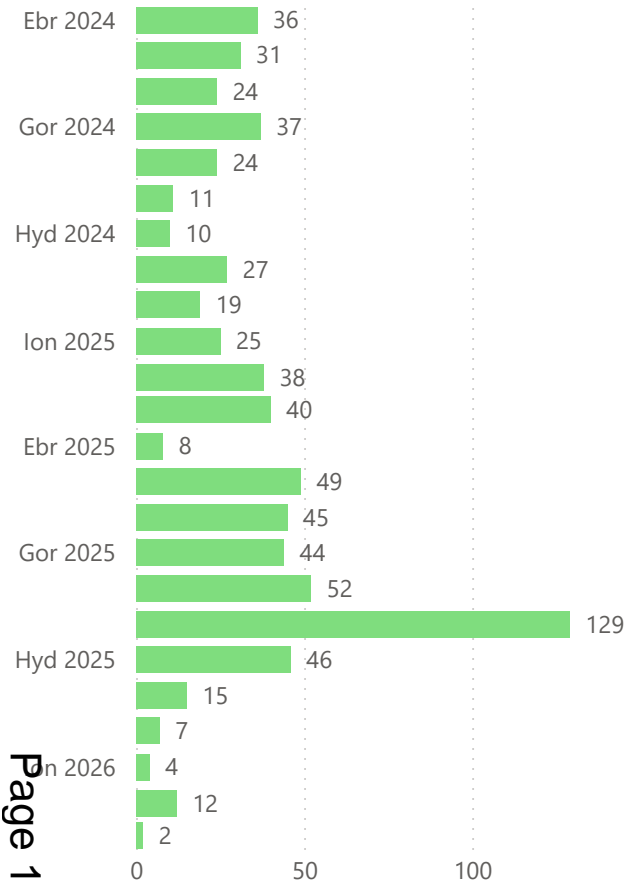
1158

This is a measure which looks at the increase in EPC levels on houses that have received Eco 4 support. The Eco 4 Scheme started in October 2022. Between October 2022 and March 2026, 1158 houses 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 means that there has been an expenditure of over £10M on houses in Gwynedd since the beginning of ECO 4.

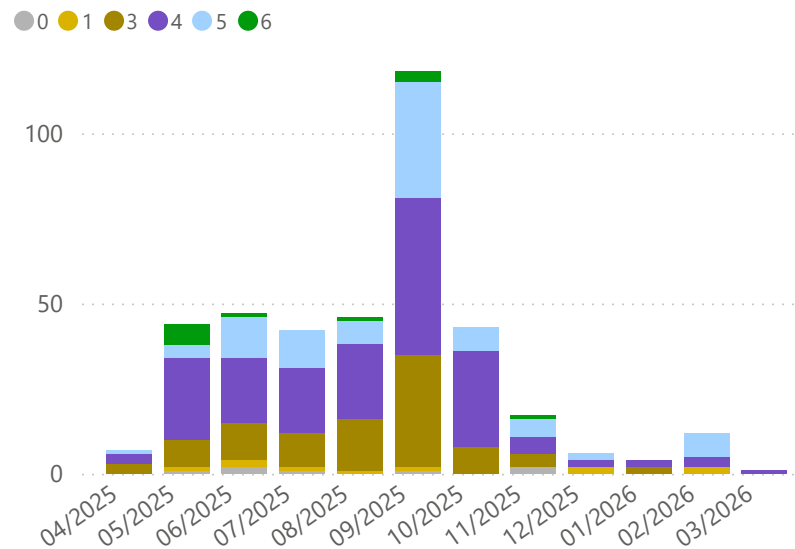
Alongside this, 2156 applications have been approved in the same period.

The Westminster Government announced that the Eco scheme would be ending in March 2026. However, we have received an announcement from Ofgem that an extension to the plan has been approved until December. Nevertheless, financial resources are scarce, and most of the five contractors that had been implementing the plan have now frozen their projects due to a lack of money. Currently, LMF Live Manage Facilitate Limited is the only contractor with finance available to deliver these improvements in Gwynedd. This situation shows the ongoing challenges when trying to improve energy efficiency for residents, whilst national plans are changing and the funding is about to end.

Monthly EPC improvements



Number of improvements in EPCs (in grades)



Homes' new EPC grades

