

Local Government Performance 2016-17

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

We have also updated our interactive tool which allows the public, councillors, officers and partners to easily compare councils' performance across Wales and over time. "MyLocalCouncil" (www.mylocalcouncil.info) has been designed to be intuitive and user-friendly to make the latest key performance information for Wales' 22 councils more accessible.

Note: The Performance Improvement Framework in Wales has changed significantly since the last Bulletin, with the withdrawal of the majority of the social care indicators. The data for the three remaining social care indicators is not yet available. The absence of data for this service area means that the dataset as published does not provide a complete picture of performance for 2016-17.

Welsh Government has developed new social care measures and we plan to include a number of these in the dataset going forward. More broadly, we have refined the dataset for 2017-18 onwards. This revised framework will continue to provide a clear and simple overview of the performance of local government.

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



Overall performance

At a Wales level, 64% (16) of the 25¹ indicators which were comparable between 2015-16 and 2016-17 show improvement.

The gap in performance (between the best and worst performing authorities) narrowed in 52% (13) of the indicators.

For 36% (9) of the indicators, performance improved and the gap between the best and worst performing authorities narrowed.

Service improvement

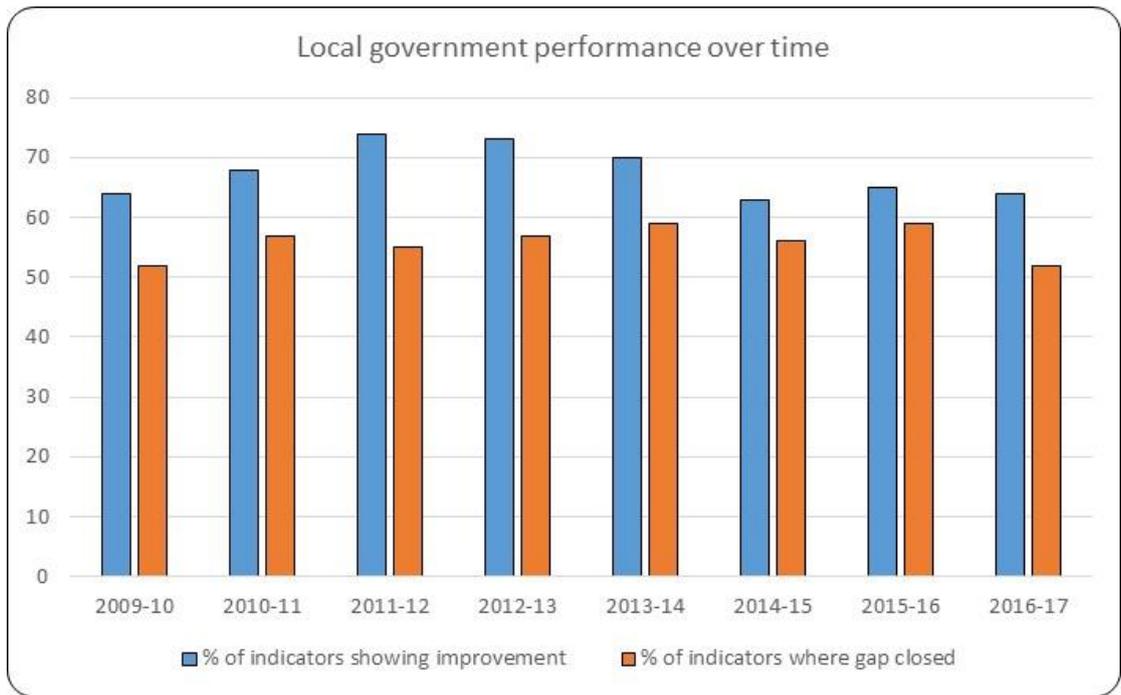
Local authorities are often one of the largest employers in an area and provide a range of services for the communities they serve. The table below shows how these services performed in 2016-17 compared to 2015-16.

Service Area	No. of comparable indicators	% of indicators where performance improved	% of indicators where the gap narrowed	% of indicators where performance improved and the gap narrowed
Education	11	64%	45%	36%
Housing	2	50%	0%	0%
Environment & Transport	7	86%	86%	71%
Planning & Regulatory Services	2	50%	50%	0%
Leisure & Culture	2	50%	50%	0%
Corporate Health	1	0%	0%	0%
Overall	25	64%	52%	36%

Improvement over time

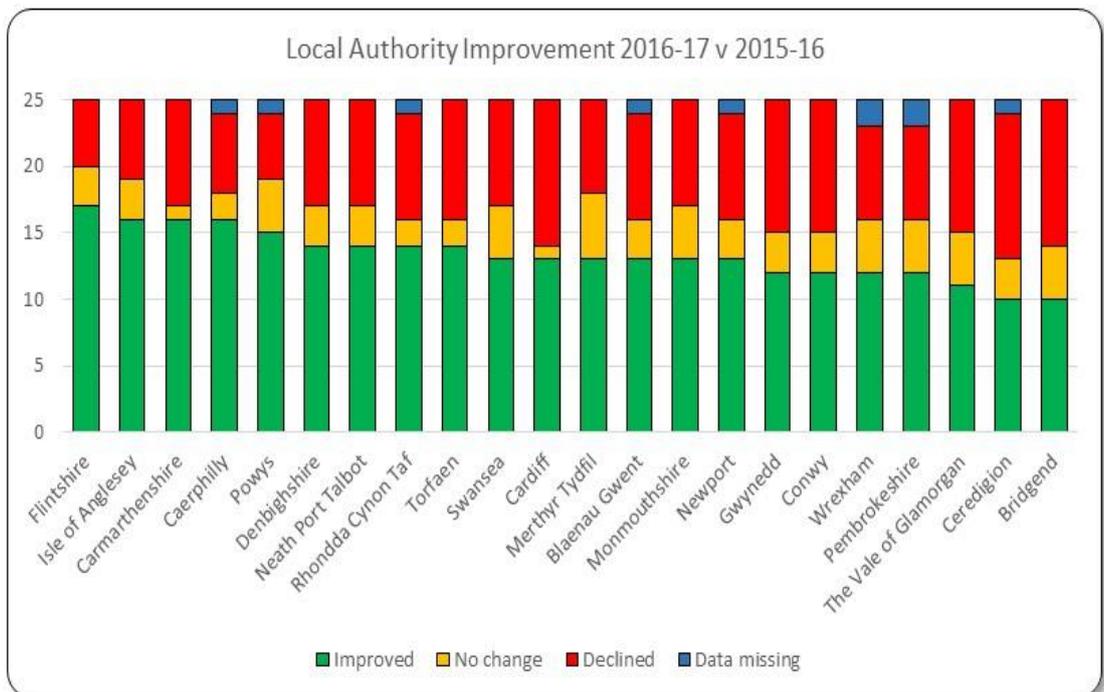
The performance of local authorities across Wales has continued to improve.

¹ There is a reduced number of comparable indicators in 2016-17 as a result of the unavailability of the data for the social care measures. There were 40 comparable indicators in 2015-16.



Last year we reported that 65% of comparable performance indicators showed an improvement over that period. In 2016-17, 64% of the comparable indicators show improved performance at a Wales level and every authority has improved or maintained its performance in over half of the indicators.

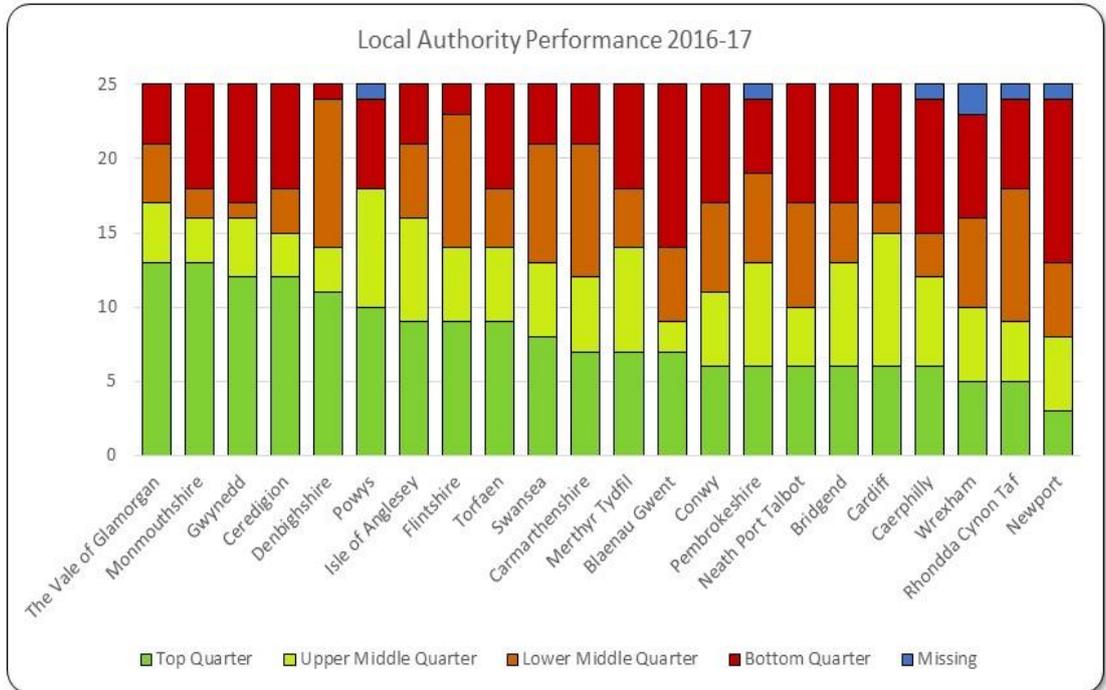
At a local level, of the 25² indicators that were comparable between 2015-16 and 2016-17, Flintshire improved in 17 (68%), whilst Ceredigion and Bridgend improved in 10 (40%).



² There is a reduced number of comparable indicators in 2016-17 as a result of the unavailability of the data for the social care measures. There were 40 comparable indicators in 2015-16.

Relative performance across Wales

Whilst absolute improvement is important, citizens will be interested in how their authority compares with others. Overall, in 2016-17, The Vale of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire had the most indicators in the top quarter of Welsh local authorities, whilst Newport had the least.

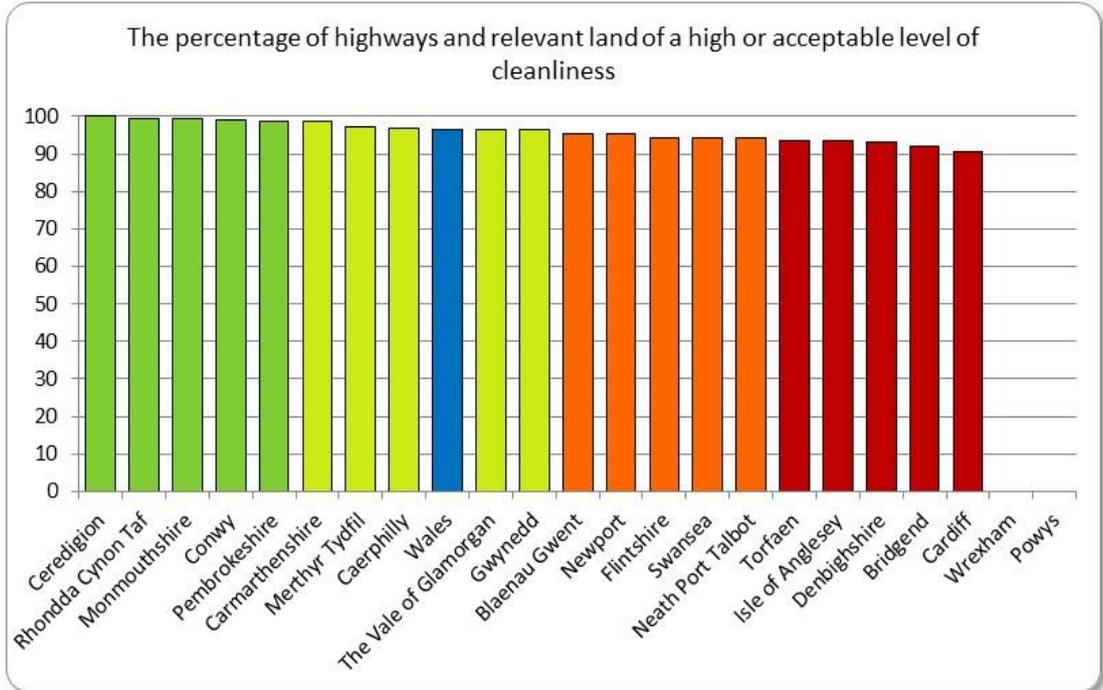


On the following pages you will find detailed information on the performance of local authorities as they deliver important outcomes for our communities.

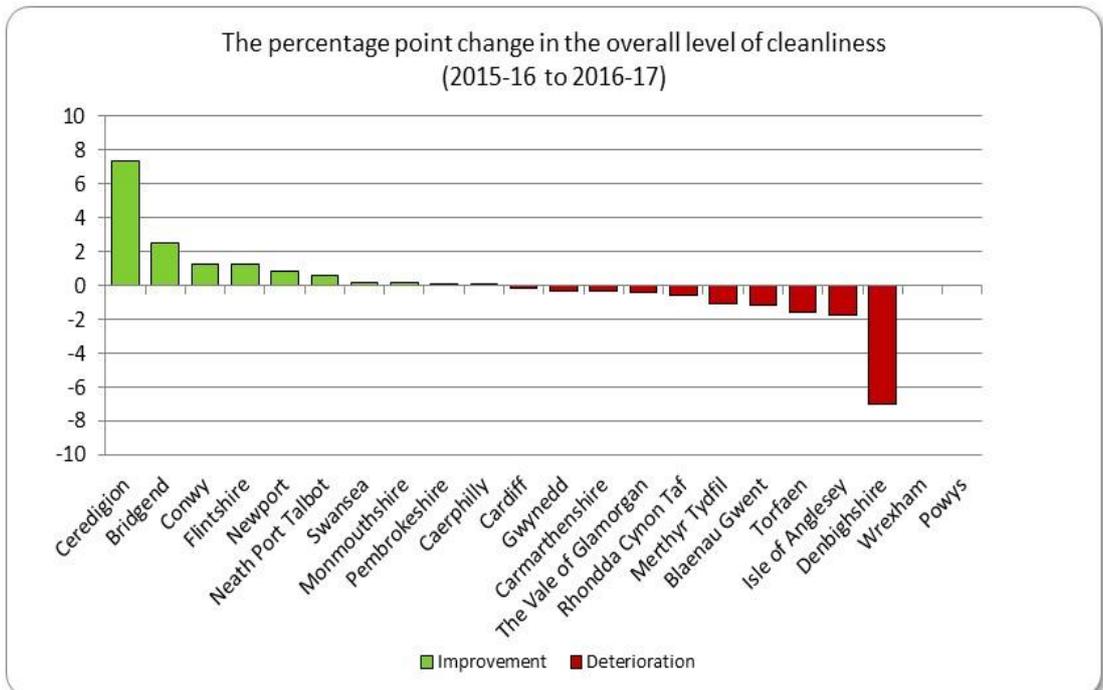
Providing a clean and safe environment...

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

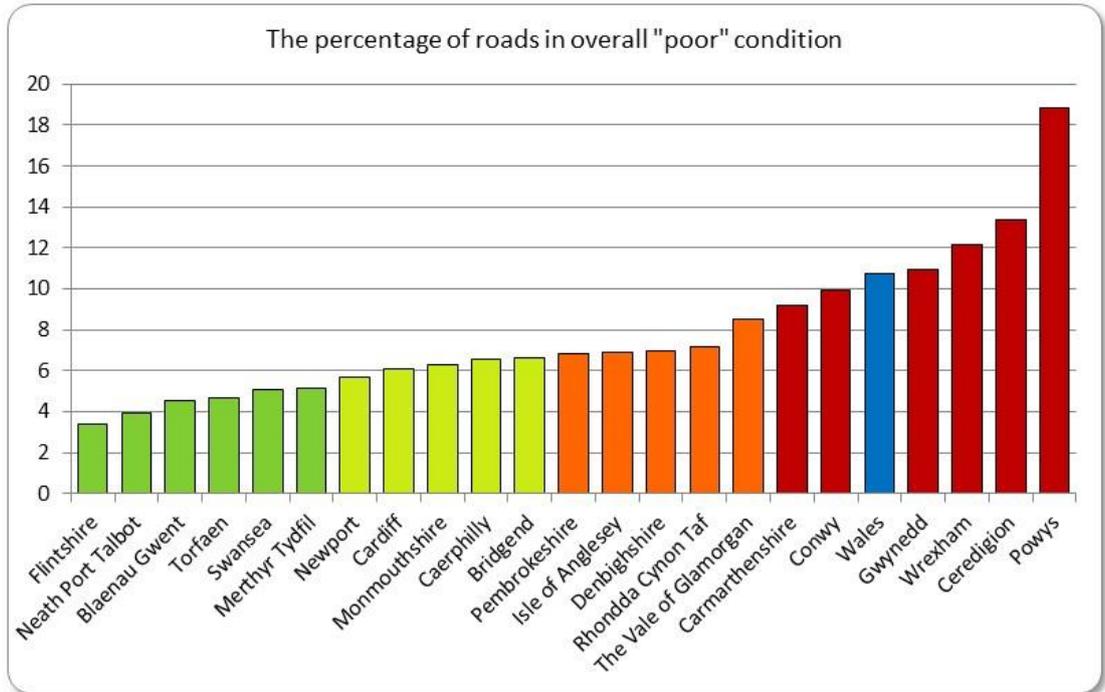
Across Wales, 97% of highways and relevant land inspected was of a high or acceptable level of cleanliness in 2016-17. This ranged from 100% in Ceredigion to 90% in Cardiff.



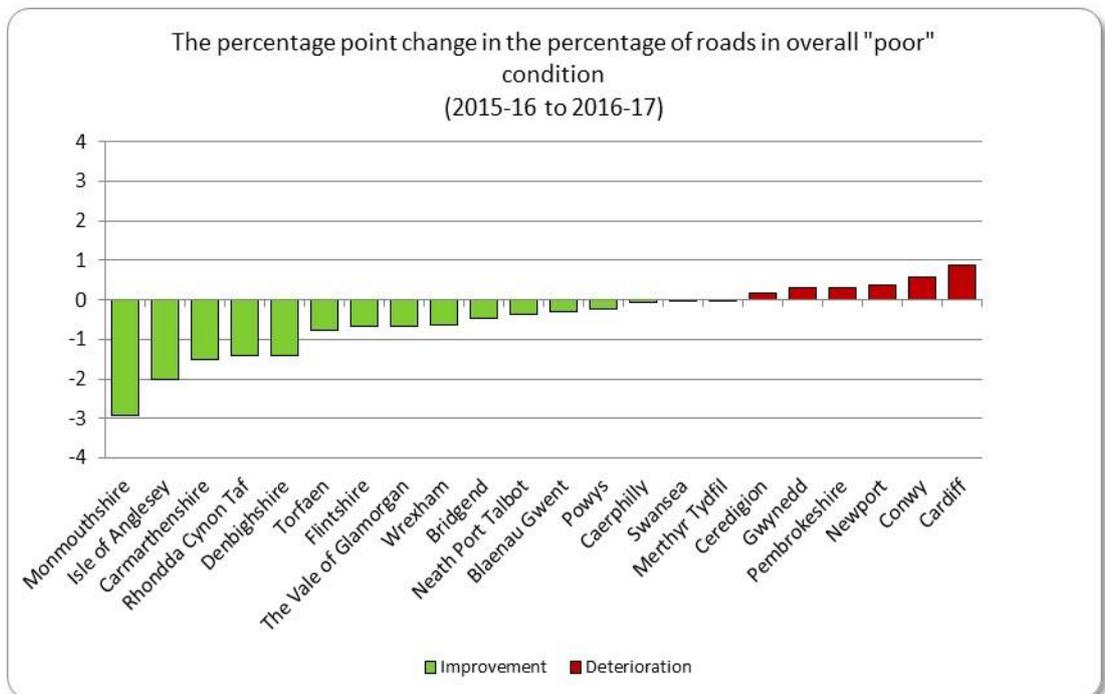
The level of cleanliness rose in Ceredigion by 7 percentage points and fell in Denbighshire by 7 percentage points.



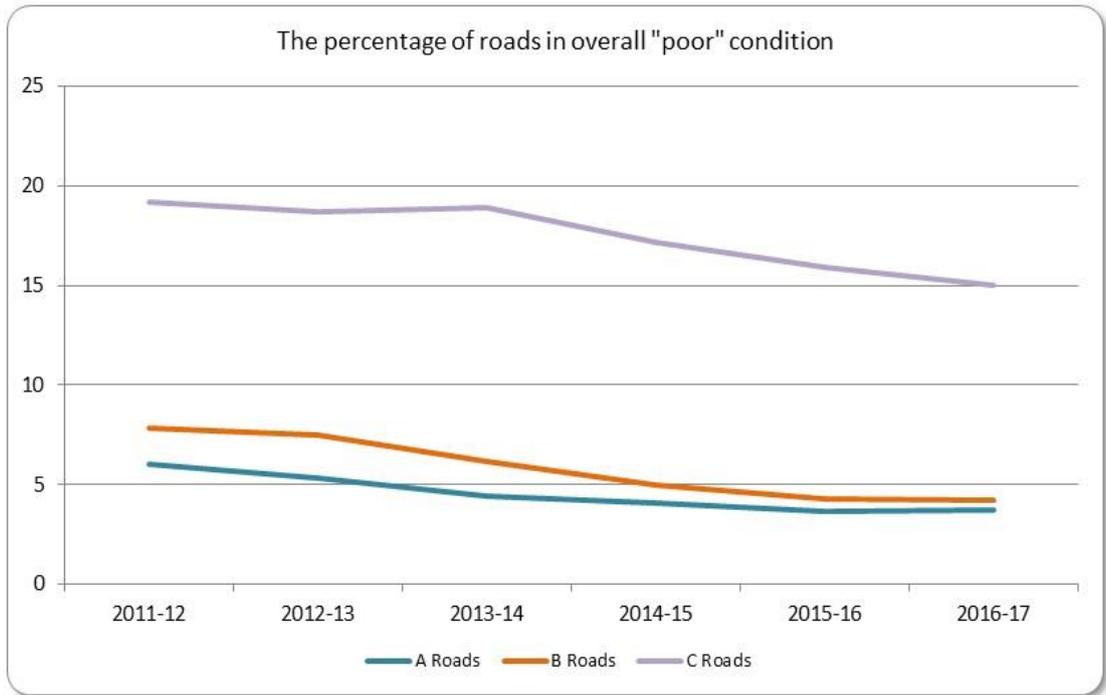
In 2016-17, 10.7% of all local authority maintained roads were in an overall "poor" condition compared to 11.2% in 2015-16. This ranged from 3.4% in Flintshire to 18.8% in Powys.



Across Wales the overall condition of roads improved by 2.9 percentage points in Monmouthshire and deteriorated by 0.9 percentage points in Cardiff between 2015-16 and 2016-17.



Local authorities are responsible for maintaining principal 'A' roads, 'B' roads and non-principal 'C' roads.

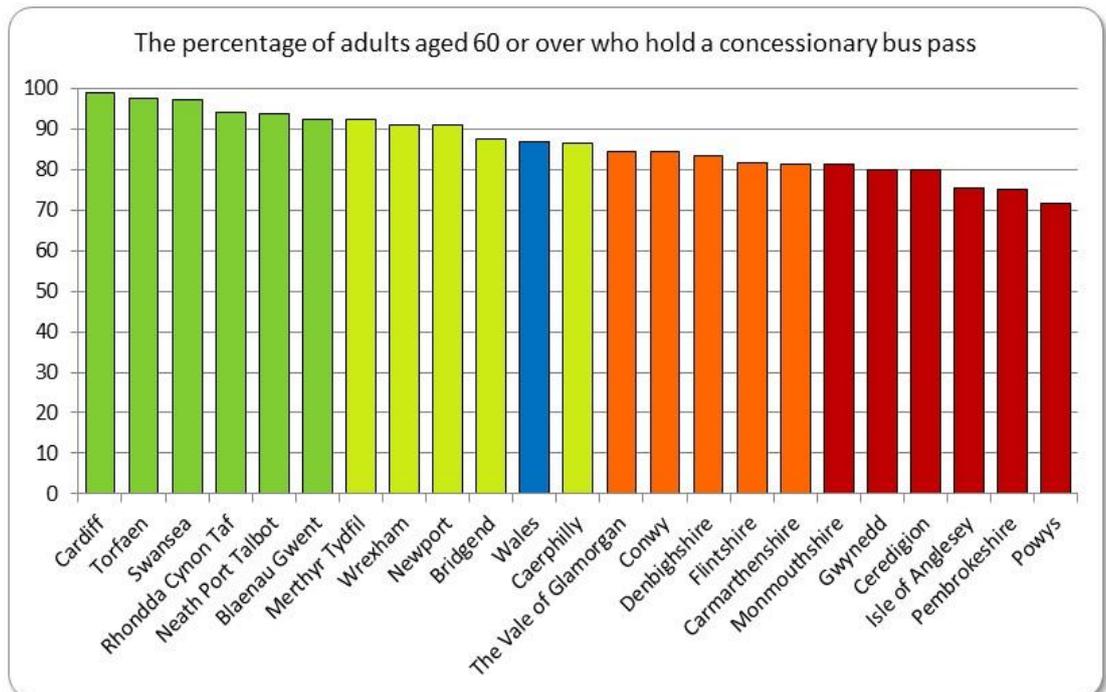


In 2016-17, as in 2015-16, 3.7% of A roads were in "poor" condition. This ranged from 1.5% in Flintshire to 5.9% in The Vale of Glamorgan.

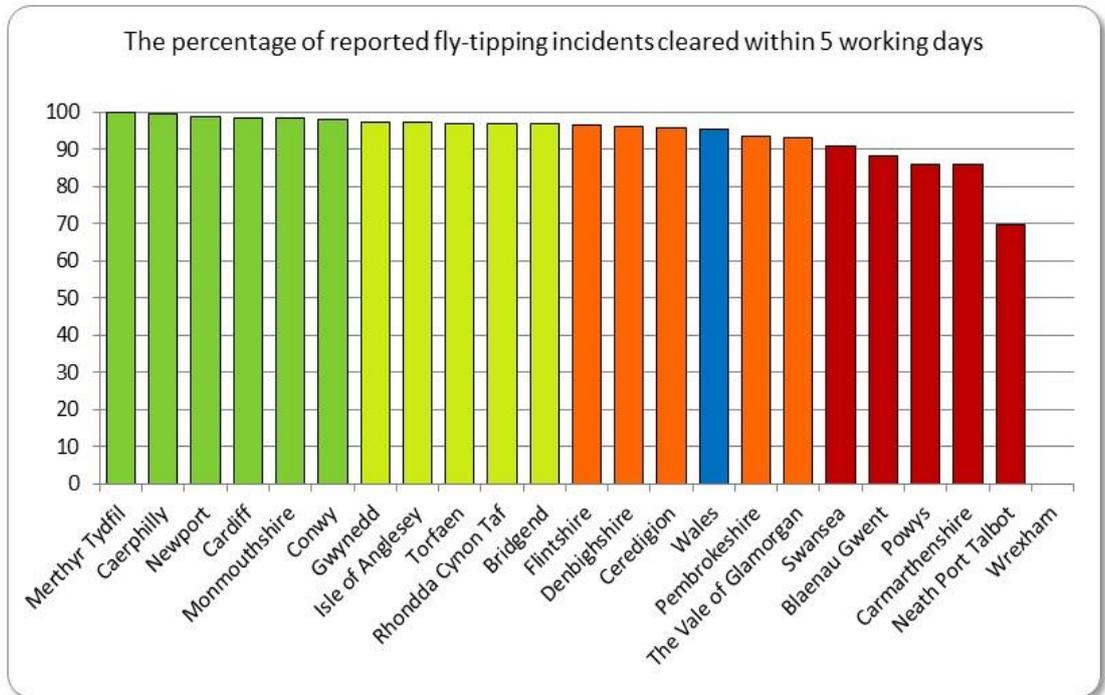
Similarly, 4.2% of B roads were in "poor" condition in 2016-17 compared to 4.3% in 2015-16, ranging from 1.3% in Flintshire to 8.6% in Merthyr Tydfil.

The percentage of C roads in overall "poor" condition continued to decrease. 15.0% were in "poor" condition in 2016-17 compared to 15.9% in 2015-16. Across Wales this ranged from 5.0% in Flintshire to 24.4% in Powys.

Nearly all Welsh local authorities saw an increase in the percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass between 2015-16 and 2016-17. At a Wales level, the percentage increased from 86% to 87%. This ranged from 99% in Cardiff to 71% in Powys.



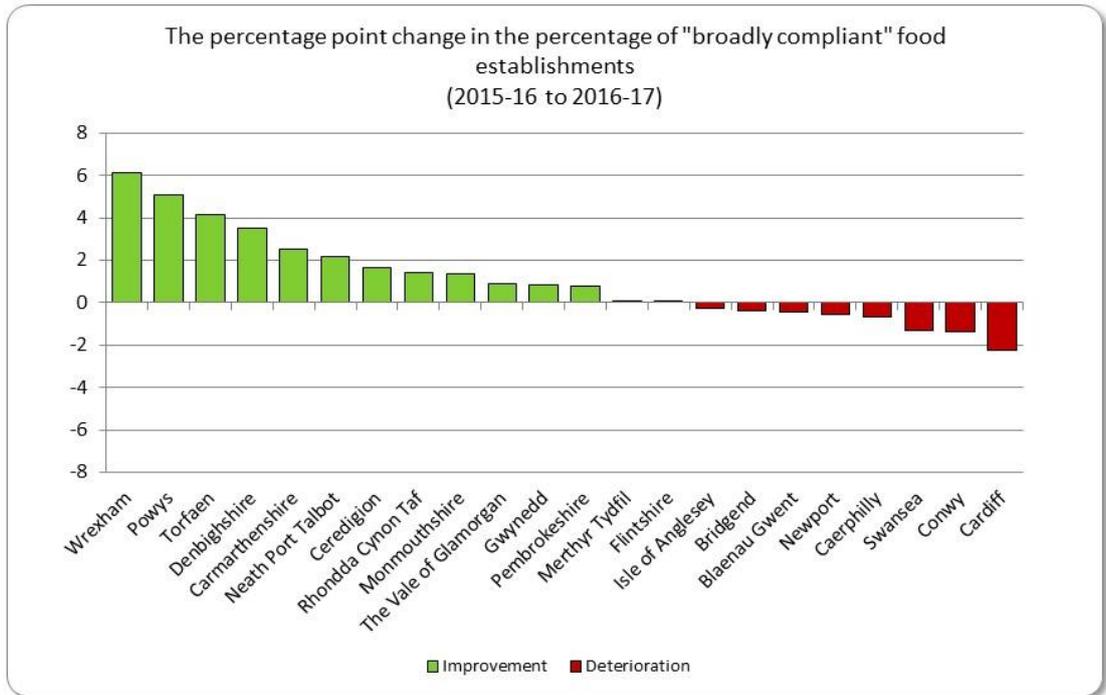
Fly-tipping is a serious environmental crime which can cause long lasting contamination, pollution and put human health at risk. Local authorities are required to clean up small scale fly-tipping incidents on public land within five working days of them being reported. In 2016-17, 95.4% of fly-tipping incidents reported to local authorities were cleared within five working days. This ranged from 100.0% in Merthyr Tydfil to 69.7% in Neath Port Talbot.



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

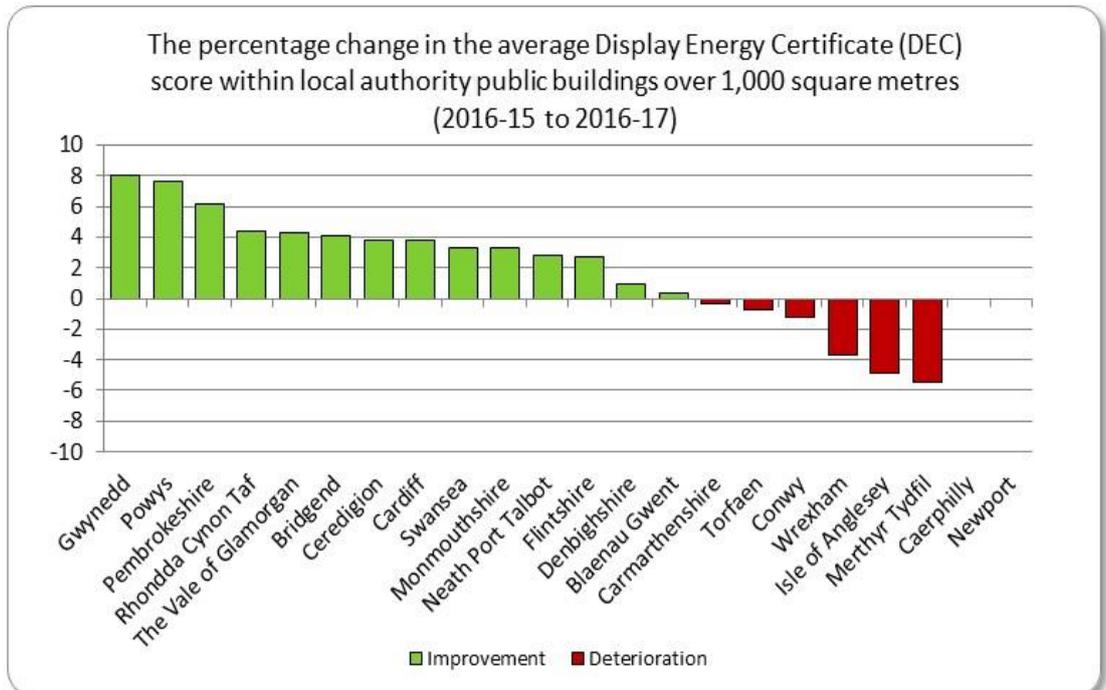
Local authorities help safeguard the food we eat by working with food establishments to ensure they are "broadly compliant" with food hygiene standards. In 2016-17, 95% of food establishments were "broadly compliant", ranging from 99% in Gwynedd and Wrexham to 90% in Blaenau Gwent.

The percentage of food establishments which are "broadly compliant" has increased steadily since 2010-11 with 2016-17 seeing an increase of 1 percentage point on the previous year. Over the same period the percentage of "broadly compliant" food establishments rose by 6 percentage points in Wrexham and fell by 2 percentage points in Cardiff.



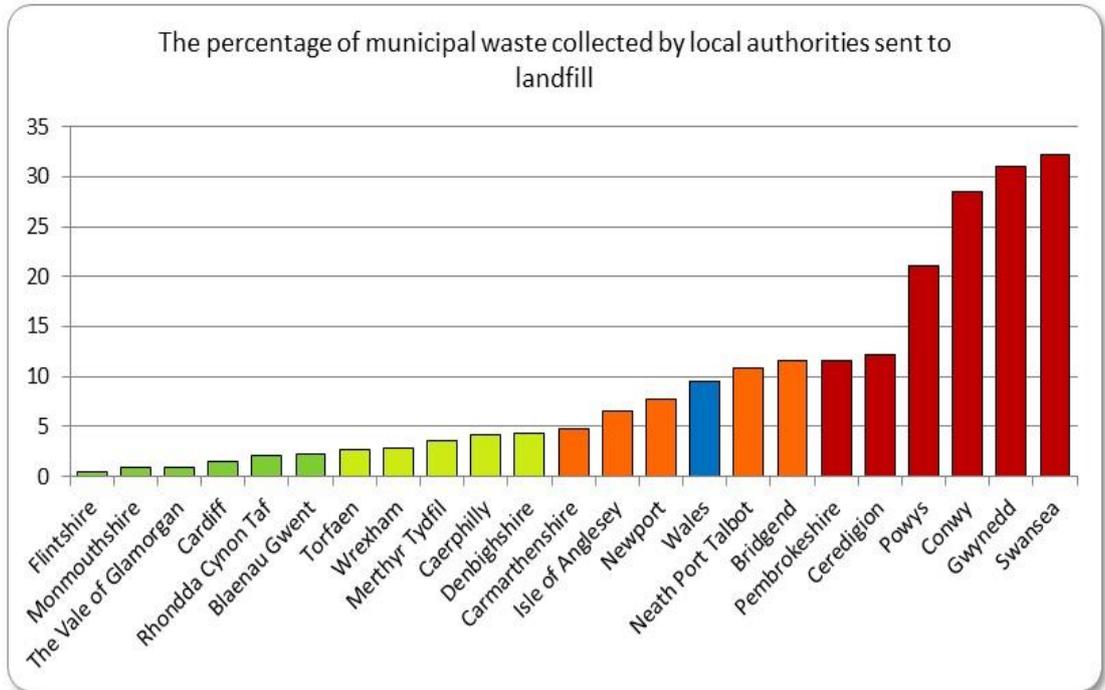
From promoting energy efficiency, to ensuring that resources are reused and recycled, local authorities play a big part in helping secure the future for the next generation.

In 2016-17, energy use across all local authority public buildings decreased by 1.9%. Across Wales this ranged from an 8.0% reduction in Gwynedd to a 5.4% increase in Merthyr Tydfil.

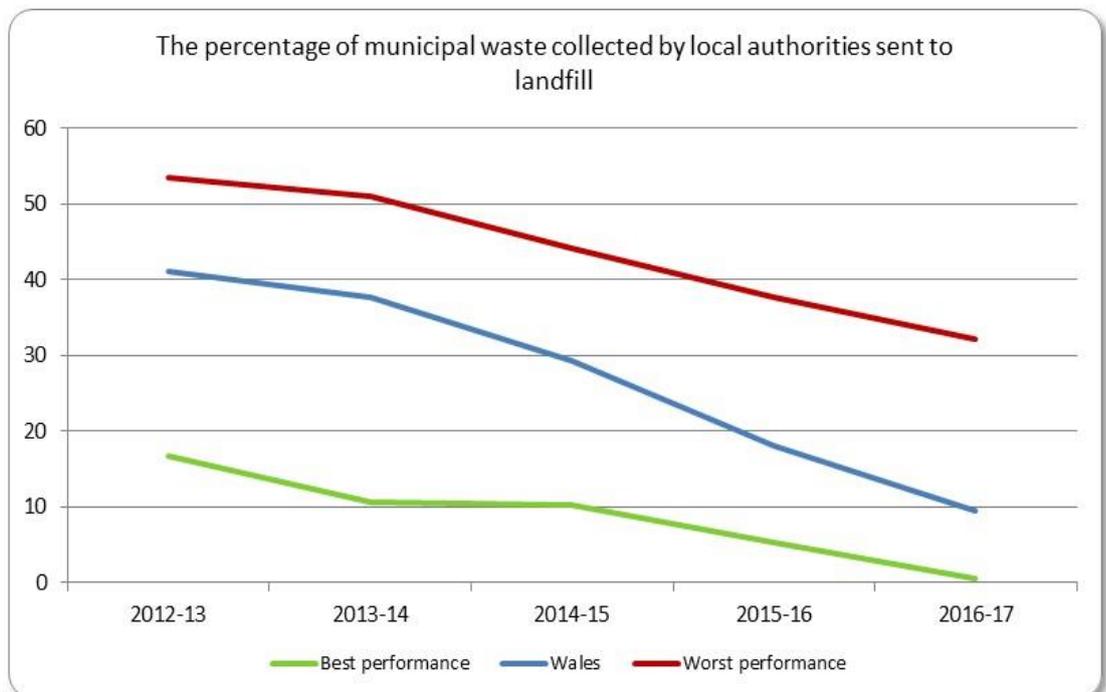


Local authorities collect and process our waste. The amount of landfill space left in Wales is running out fast and landfill taxes mean we cannot afford to keep sending waste to landfill. Landfill can cause air, soil and water pollution. Developing ways of preventing waste, reducing waste going to landfill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

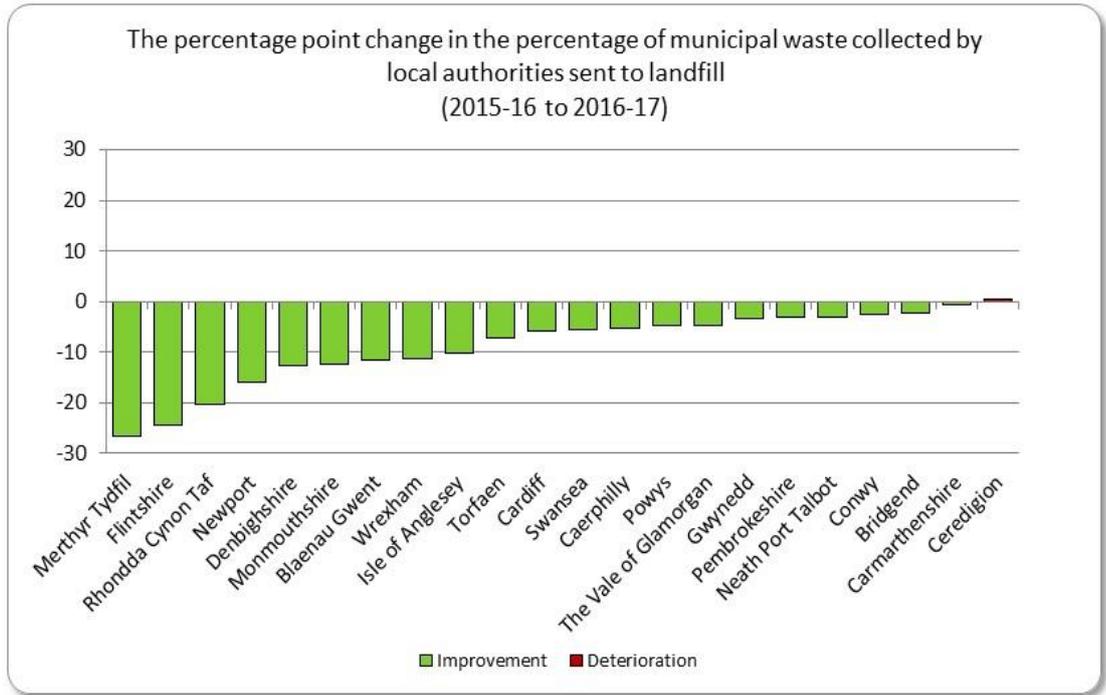
In 2016-17, 9.5% of municipal waste collected by local authorities was sent to landfill, compared to 18.1% in 2015-16. This ranged from 0.5% in Flintshire to 32.2% in Swansea.



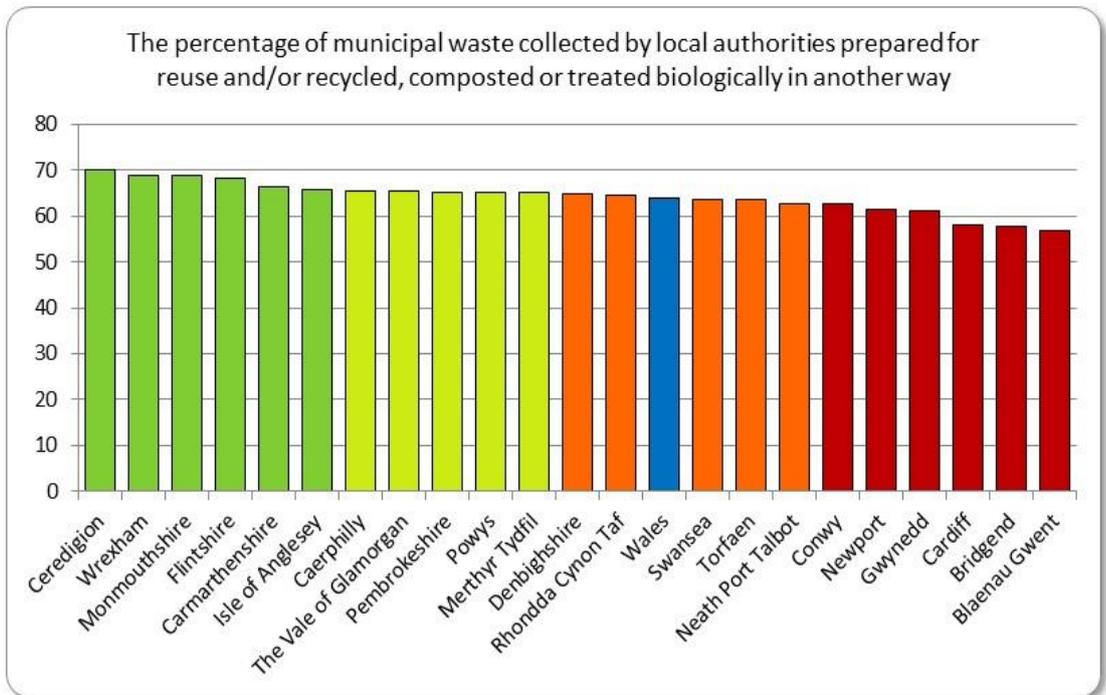
The percentage of waste sent to landfill has continued to reduce steadily since 2012.



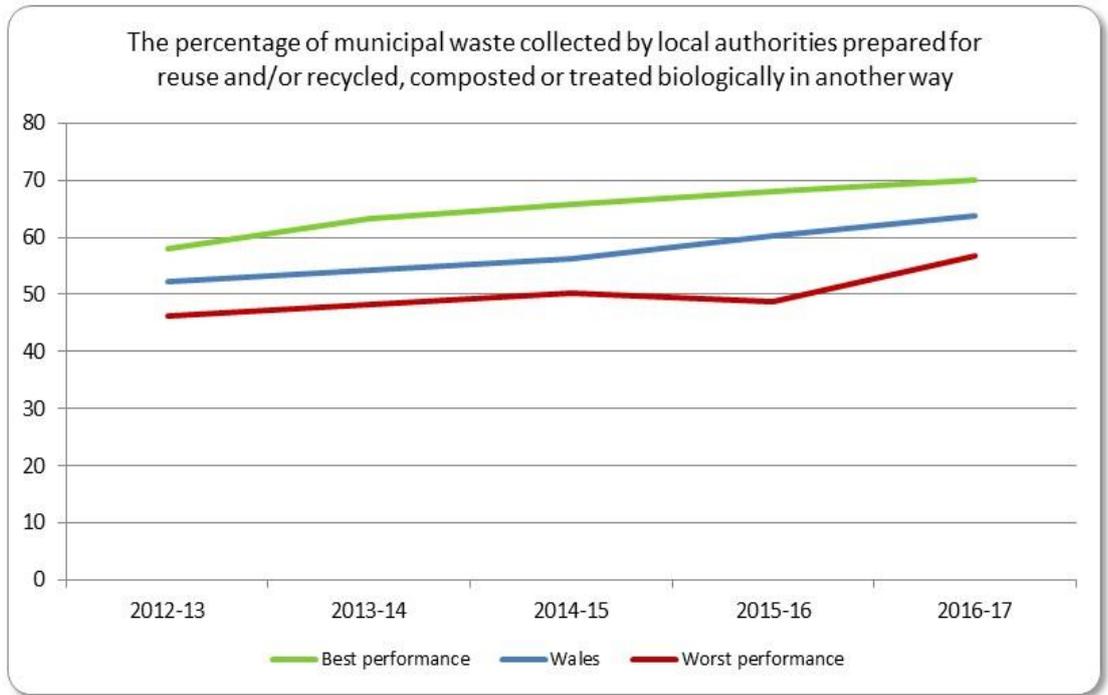
In 2016-17, all but one local authority reduced the percentage of waste they sent to landfill. Between 2015-16 and 2016-17 Ceredigion saw an increase of 0.5 percentage points.



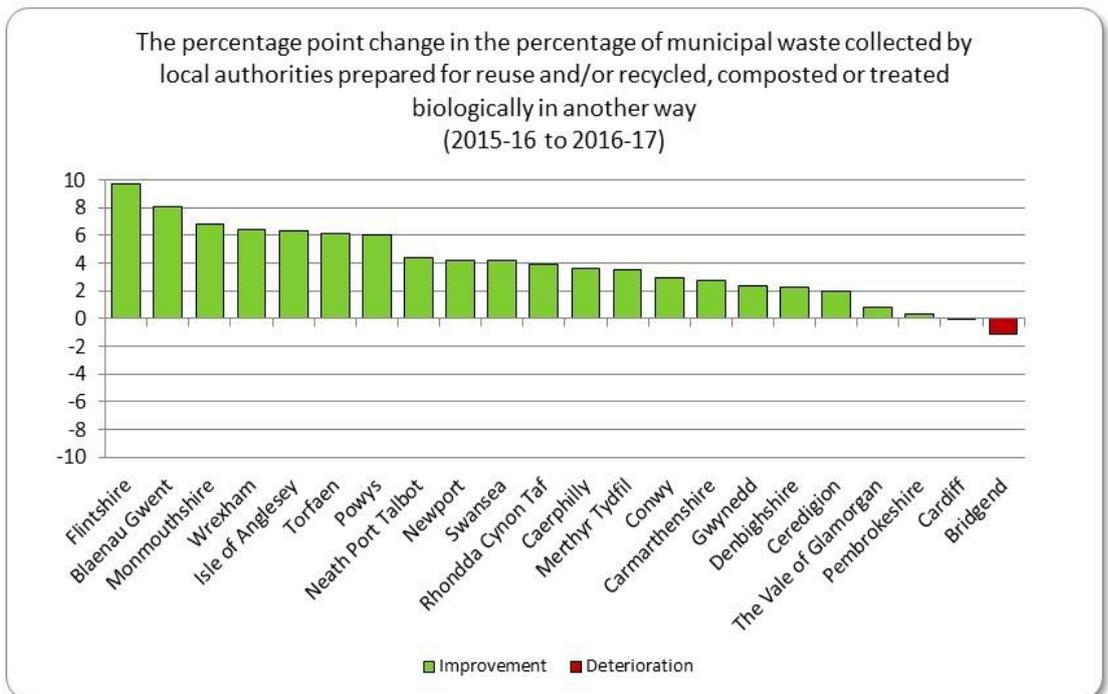
63.8% of the municipal waste collected was recycled, reused or composted in 2016-17 compared to 60.2% in 2015-16. This ranged from 70.1% in Ceredigion to 56.8% in Blaenau Gwent.



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



In 2016-17, all but two local authorities increased the percentage of waste they recycled, reused or composted. Between 2015-16 and 2016-17. Cardiff saw a decrease of 0.1 percentage points and Bridgend saw a decrease of 1.1 percentage points.



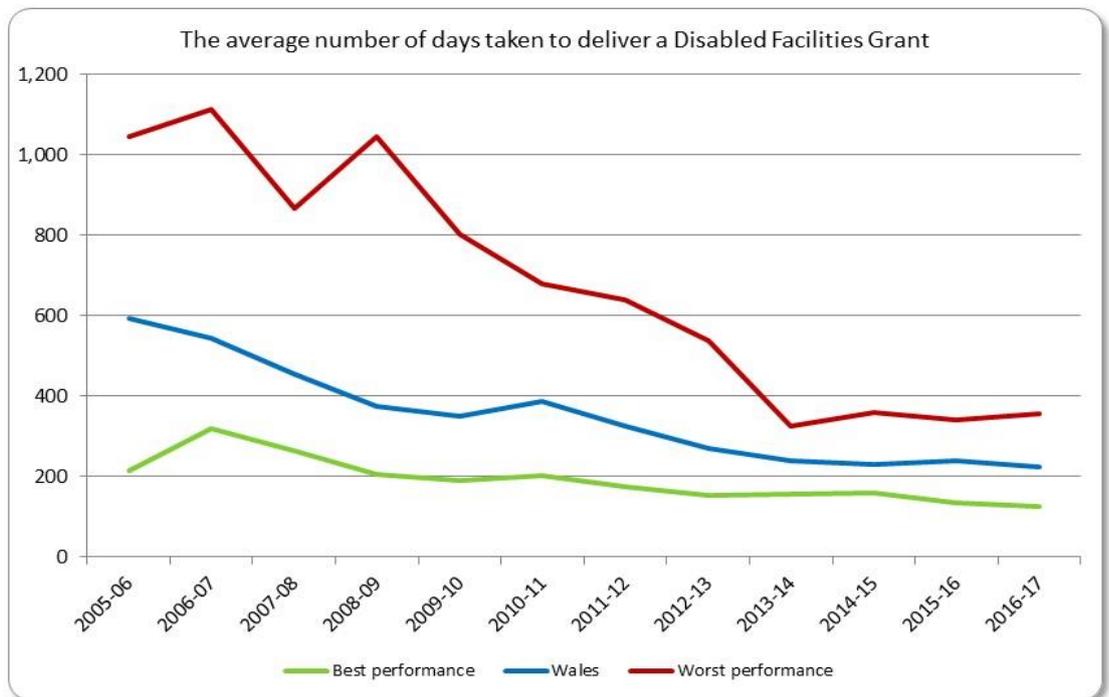
Providing affordable and appropriate housing...

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

Local authorities have a key role to play in ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet identified need. In 2016-17, 36%³ of all additional housing units provided were affordable, the same as 2015-16.

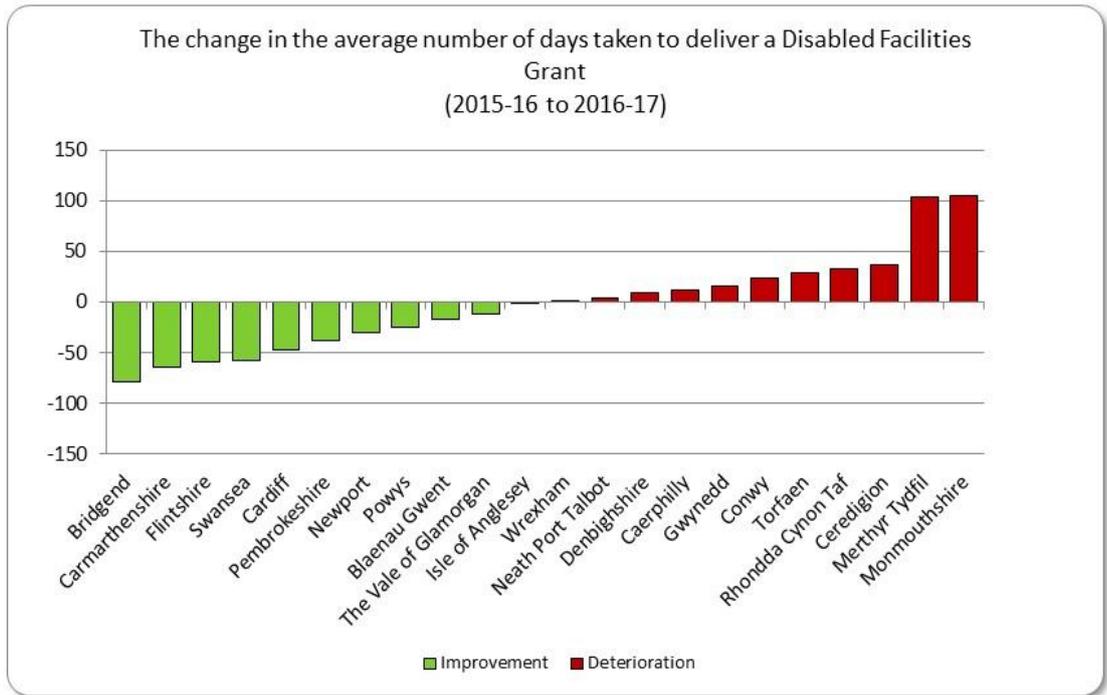
For disabled people of all ages, housing is a key enabler of independent living. Adapted housing enables people to maintain their independence, remain in their communities and exercise choice in the way they live their lives. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) can help towards the cost of adapting a disabled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

Local authorities took an average of 224 days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant in 2016-17, compared to an average of 241 days in 2015-16.

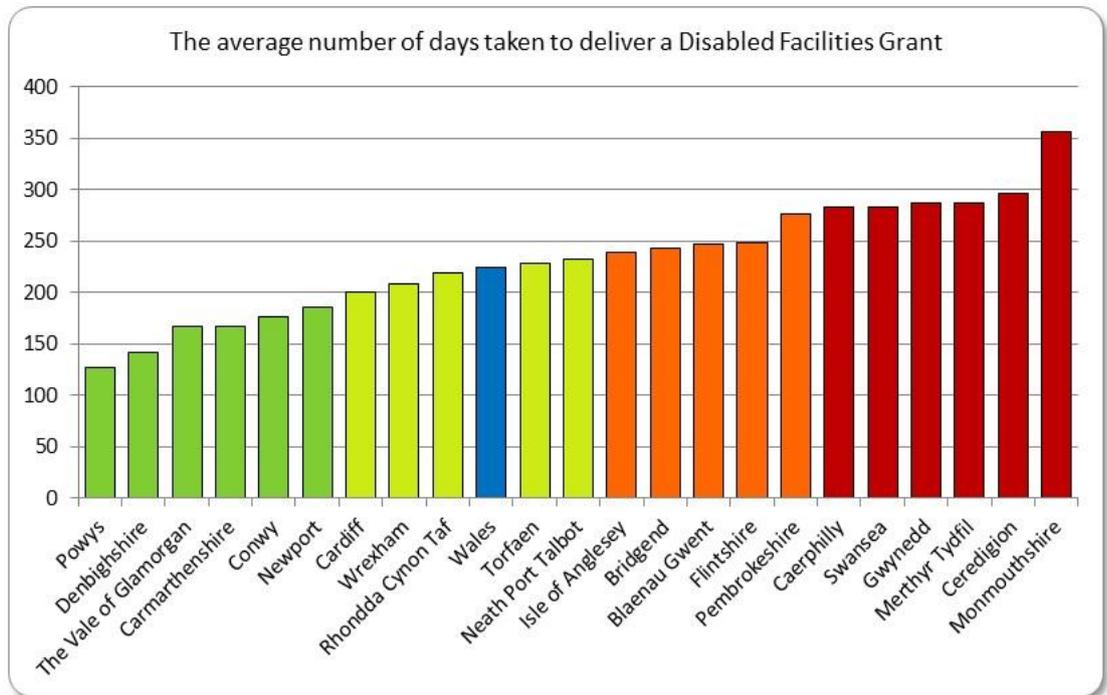


In 2016-17, the average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant decreased by 79 days in Bridgend and increased by 105 days in Monmouthshire.

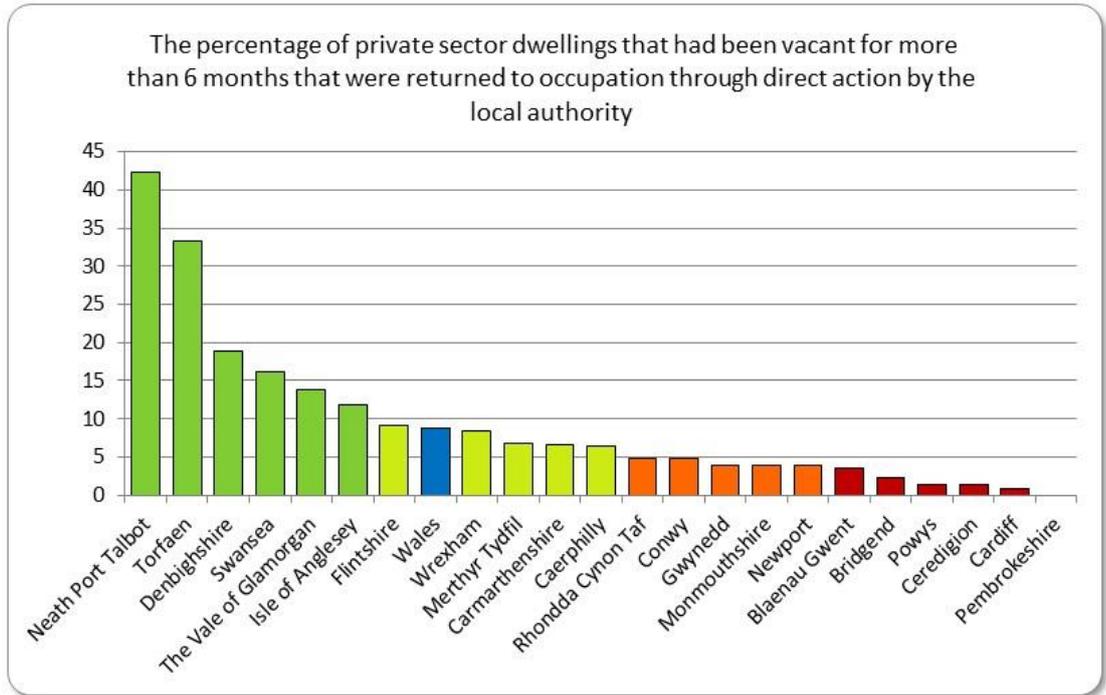
³ The data used to calculate this indicator differs to that published by Welsh Government due to an update received from Flintshire County Council.



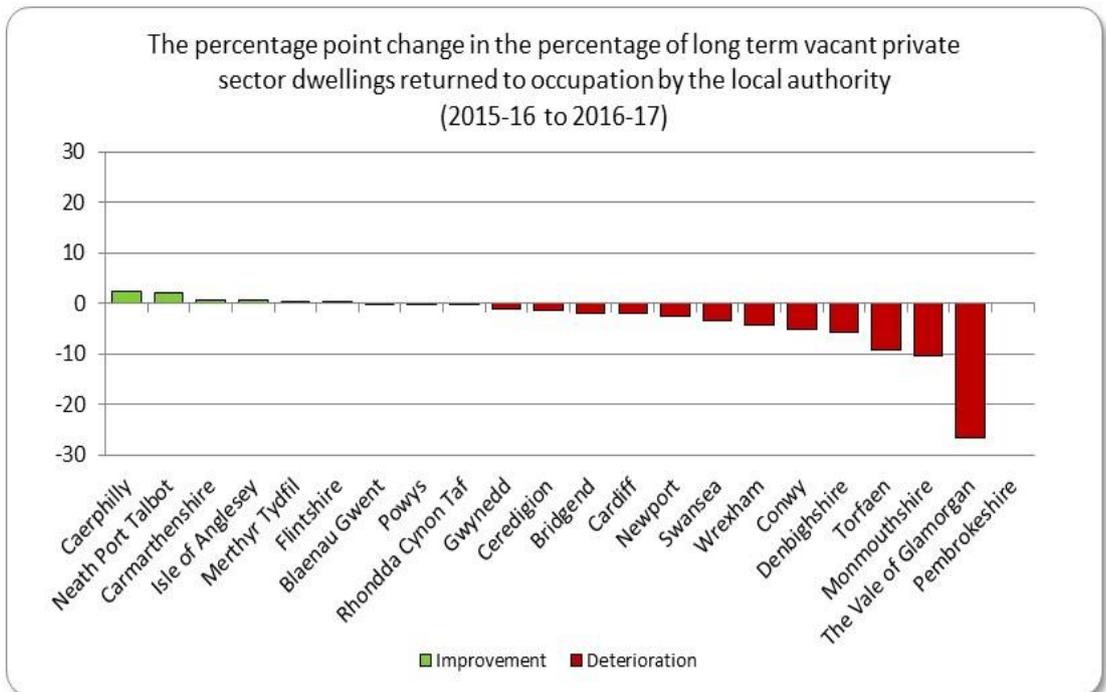
In 2016-17, the average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant ranged from 126 days in Powys to 356 days in Monmouthshire.



Empty homes represent a potential housing resource that may be currently underutilised. 8.8% of long-term vacant private sector dwellings were returned to occupation through direct action by local authorities in 2016-17. This ranged from 42.4% in Neath Port Talbot to 0.8% in Cardiff.



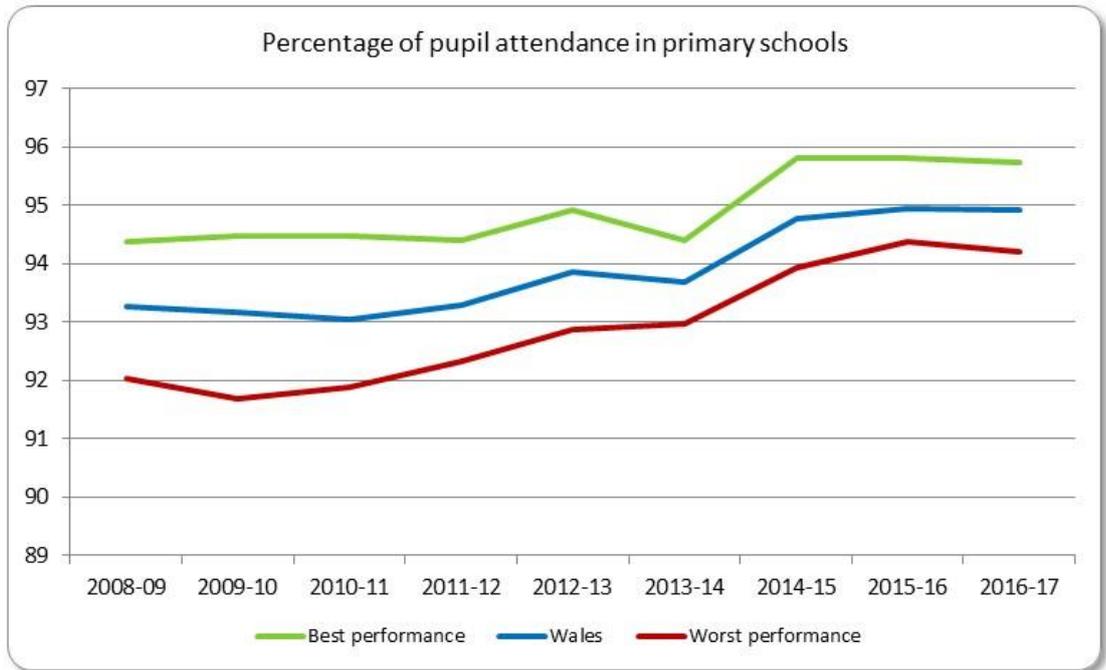
Between 2015-16 and 2016-17 six local authorities increased the percentage of long-term vacant private sector dwellings they returned to occupation through direct action.



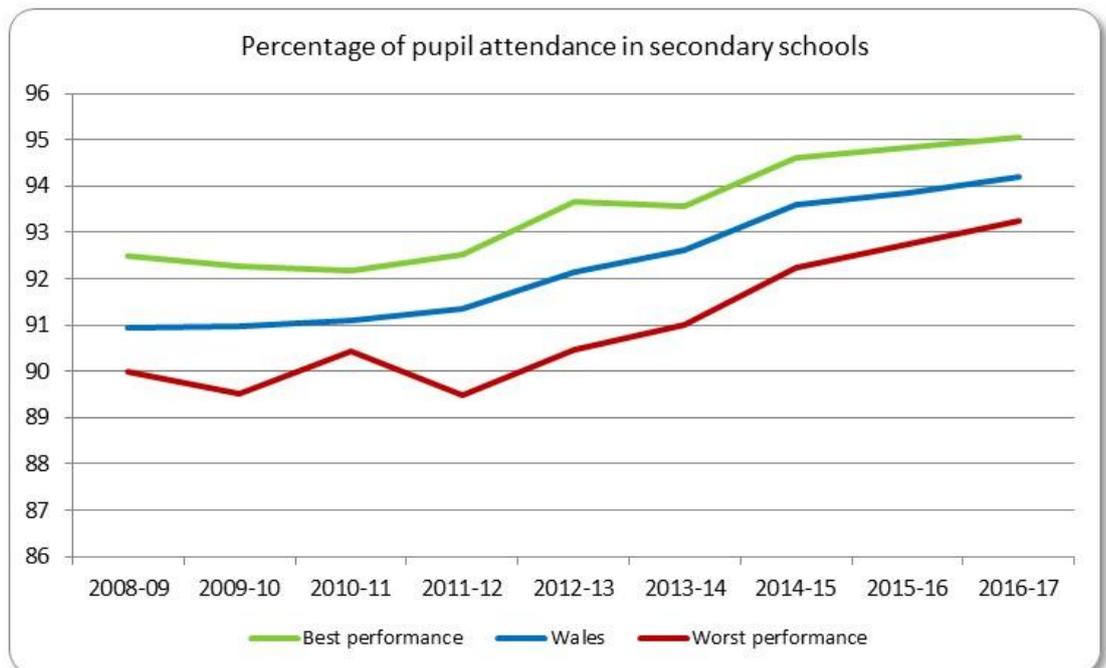
Educating children...

Local authority maintained schools in Wales educate around 470 thousand children each year.

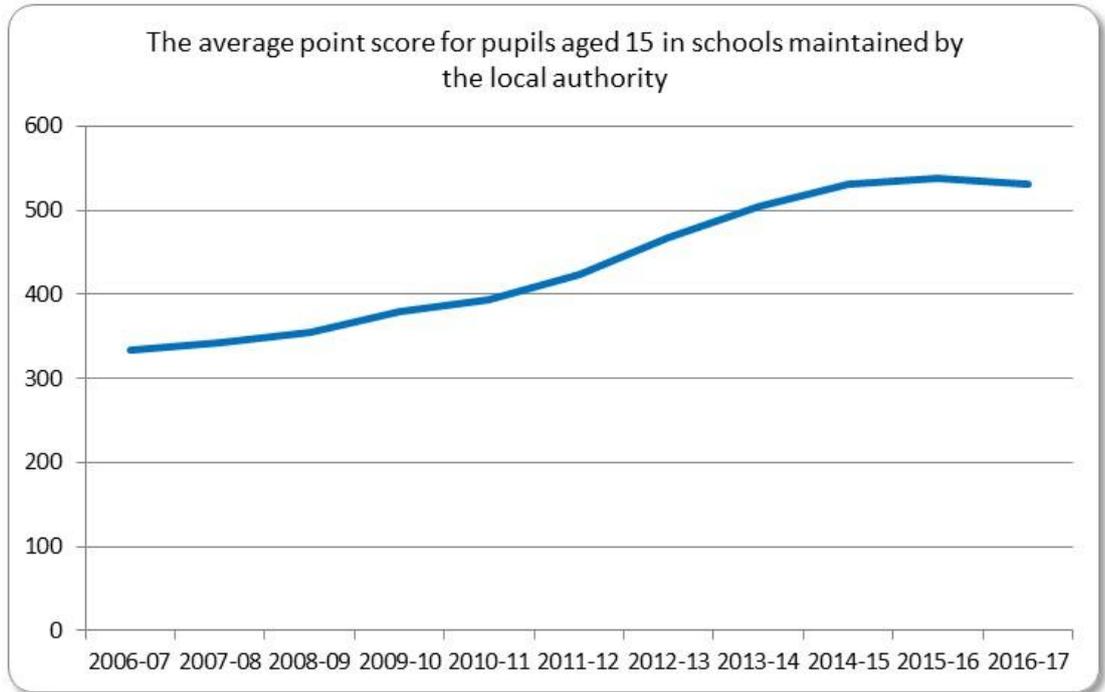
Good attendance is important if children are to learn. In 2016-17, pupil attendance at primary schools across Wales decreased from 95.0% in 2015-16 to 94.9%. Across Wales, primary school attendance decreased in over half of local authorities.



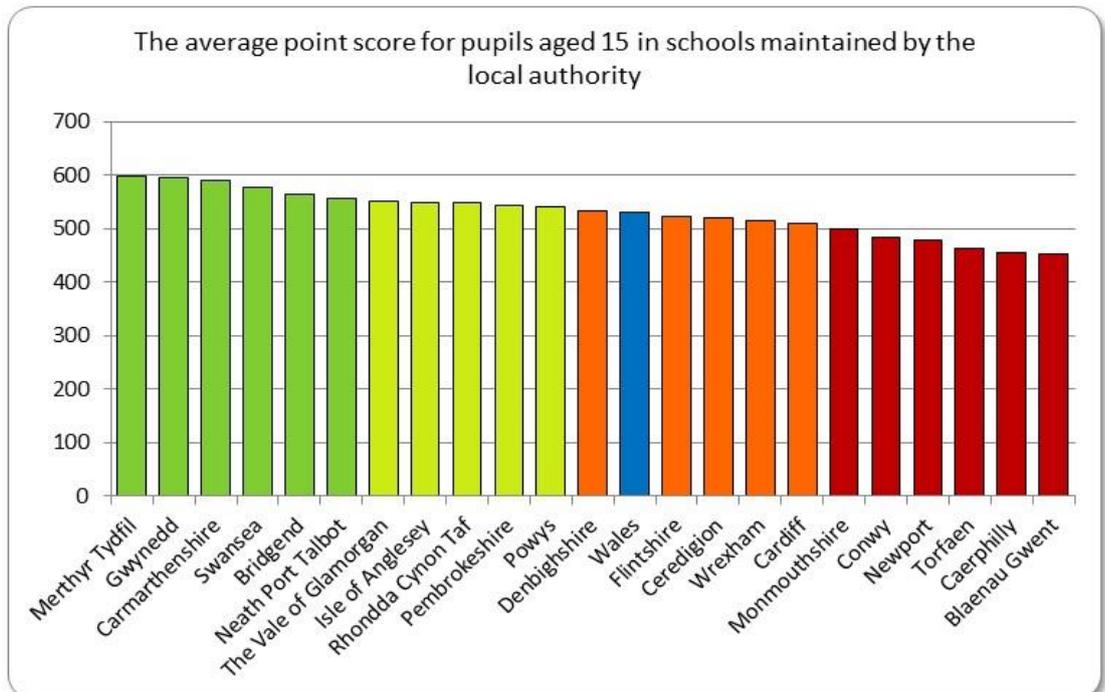
During the same period, attendance at secondary schools continued to increase, rising from 93.9% in 2015-16 to 94.2% in 2016-17.



In 2016-17, the average point score for pupils aged 15⁴ in local authority maintained schools decreased for the first time since 2006-07, from 539 points in 2015-16 to 531 points.



Across Wales the average point score ranged from 598 points in Merthyr Tydfil to 453 points in Blaenau Gwent.

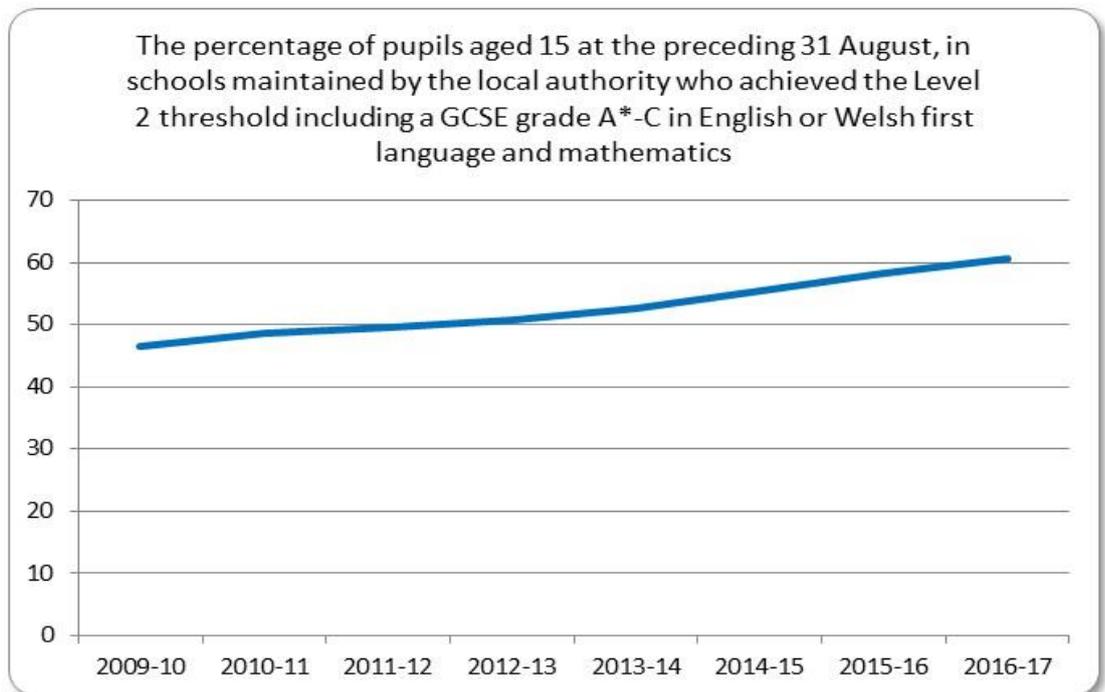


⁴ To enable comparison with previous years this data is based on the 'pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year' cohort and excludes children educated other than at school (EOTAS) or Independent schools. It will differ therefore from the data published by Welsh Government.

The percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at the end of Key Stage 2 increased for the ninth year from 88% in 2015-16 to 89% in 2016-17. This ranged from 94% in Monmouthshire to 85% in Neath Port Talbot, with 15 local authorities seeing an increase on the previous year.

Similarly, the percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator at the end of Key Stage 3 also increased for the ninth year from 84% in 2015-16 to 86% in 2016-17. This ranged from 92% in Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Monmouthshire to 78% in Neath Port Talbot, with all but one authority seeing an increase.

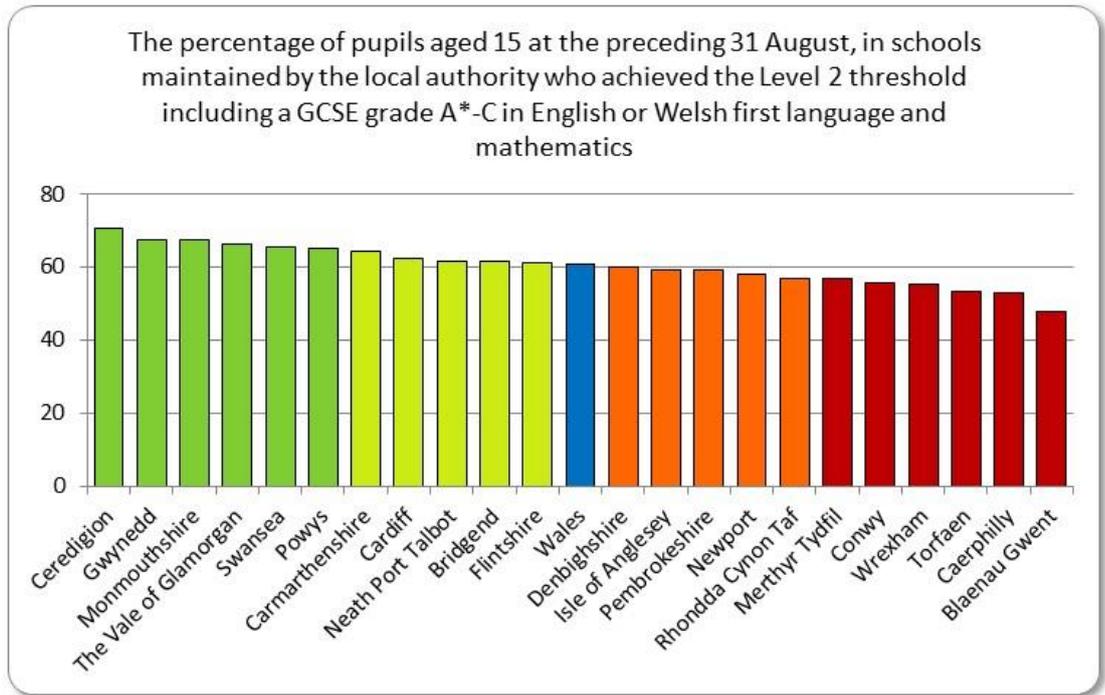
The percentage of pupils aged 15⁵ achieving the level 2 threshold, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics has risen steadily over recent years.



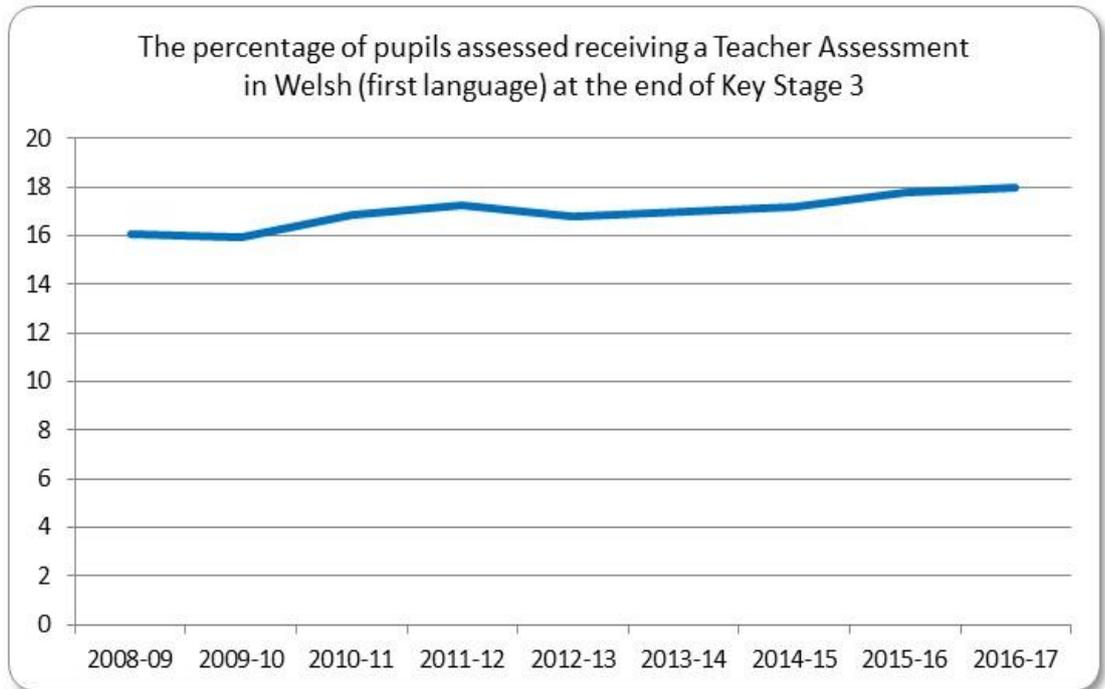
Compared to 2015-16, all but one authority saw an increase in the percentage of pupils aged 15 who achieved the level 2 threshold. This ranged from a 7.8 percentage point increase in Ceredigion to a 0.3 percentage point increase in Blaenau Gwent. Torfaen saw a decrease of 3.4 percentage points.

In 2016-17, 60.7% of pupils aged 15 achieved the level 2 threshold, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics (compared to 58.3% in 2015-16). This ranged from 70.5% in Ceredigion to 48.0% in Blaenau Gwent.

⁵ To enable comparison with previous years this data is based on the 'pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year' cohort and excludes children educated other than at school (EOTAS) or Independent schools. It will differ therefore from the data published by Welsh Government.



18% of pupils received a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2016-17; this is the fourth annual increase.



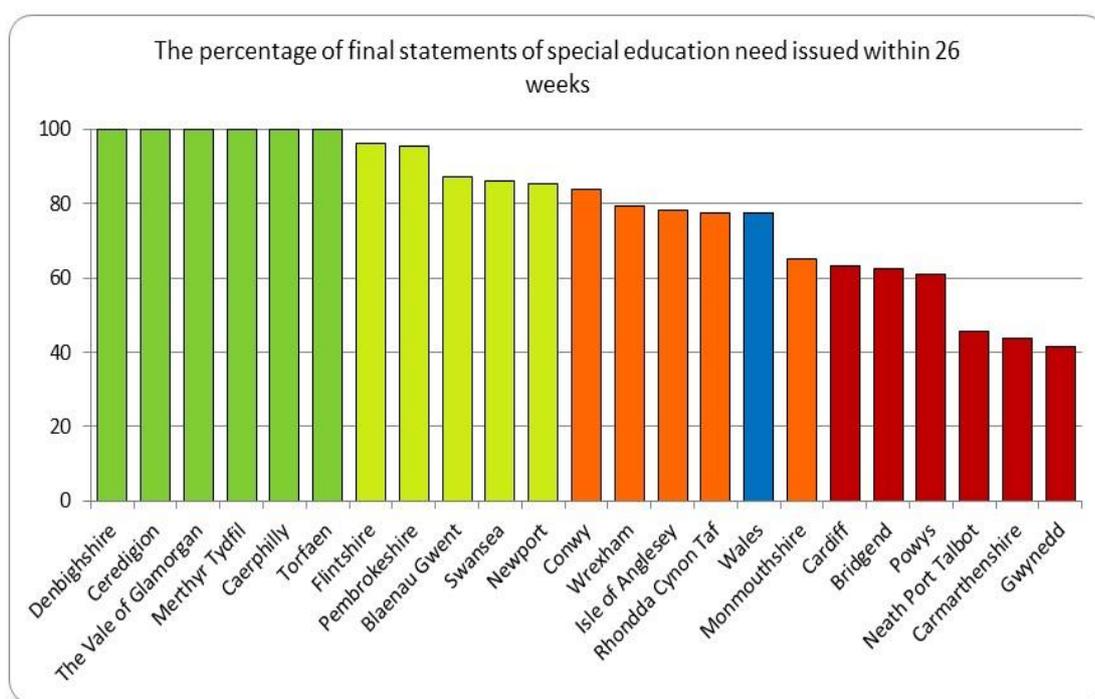
Note: There are no Welsh Language Secondary Schools in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire or Newport.

The percentage of pupils receiving an assessment in Welsh (first language) ranged from 84% in Gwynedd to 0% in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Newport.

In 2016-17, 0.2% of all pupils leaving compulsory education aged 15⁶ (who did not go on to full time education, training or work based learning) did so without a recognised qualification. This compared to 1.1% of pupils in care.

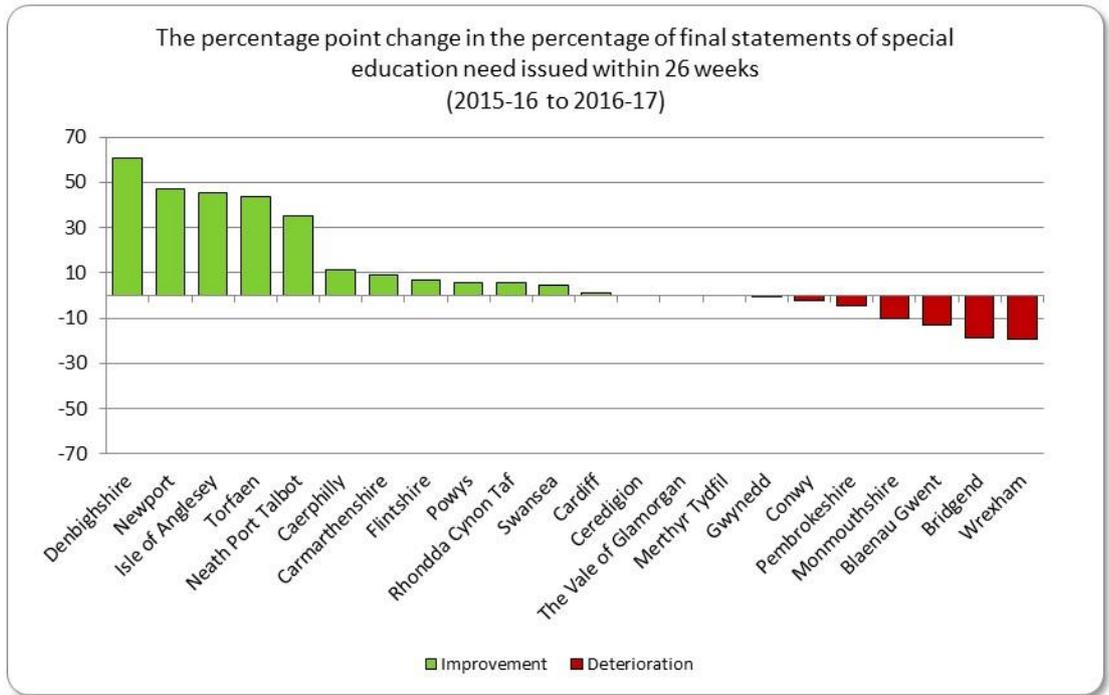
Local authorities have statutory obligations in terms of assessment and statementing, to ensure that children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have appropriate support in place to enable them to reach their potential. SEN statements should usually be in place within 26 weeks of the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

77% of all statements issued were issued within 26 weeks in 2016-17 (compared to 68% in 2015-16) – this is the best performance since the indicator was introduced in 2007-08. This ranged from 100% in Denbighshire, Ceredigion, The Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly and Torfaen to 42% in Gwynedd.



Between 2015-16 and 2016-17, 12 authorities increased the percentage of statements they issued within 26 weeks, with one authority (Denbighshire) seeing a 61 percentage point increase.

⁶ To enable comparison with previous years this data is based on the 'pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year' cohort and excludes children educated other than at school (EOTAS) or Independent schools. It will differ therefore from the data published by Welsh Government.



Over the same period, 95% of statements (excluding exceptions) were issued within 26 weeks (compared to 94% in 2015-16).

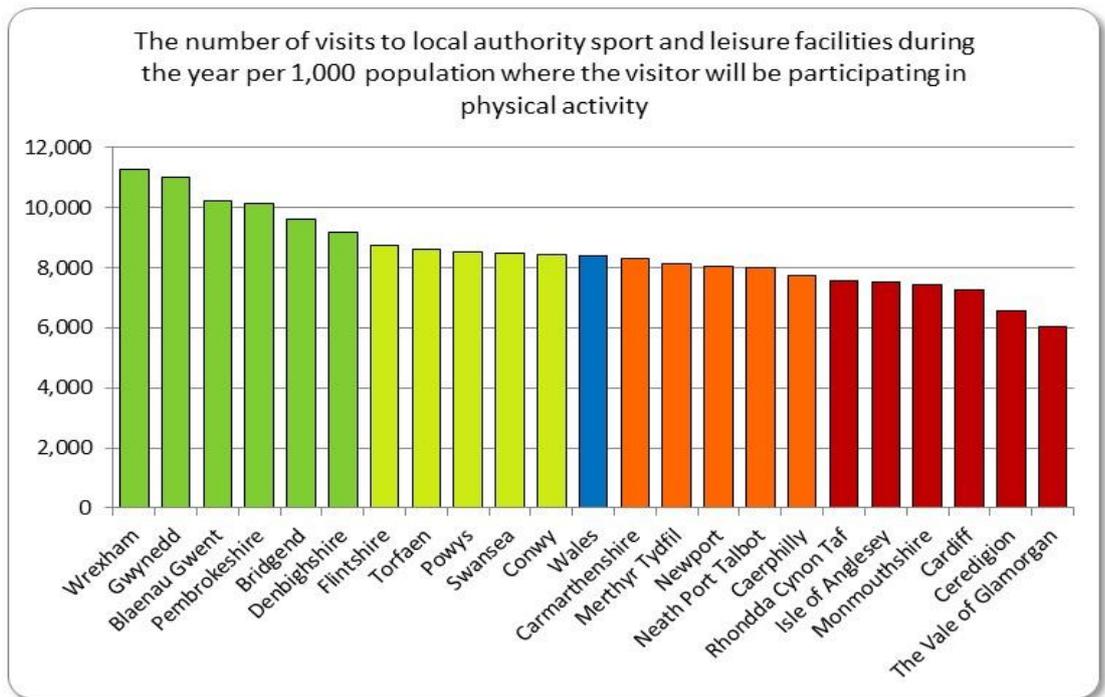
Supporting Leisure & Culture...

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

Note: "Local authority sport and leisure facilities" include those outsourced to an external trust or community council

In 2016-17, the number of visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity decreased for the third year running to 8,387 visits per 1,000 population. This compares to 8,409 per 1,000 population in 2015-16.

Visits to sport and leisure facilities ranged from 11,258 per 1,000 population in Wrexham to 6,056 per 1,000 population in The Vale of Glamorgan.



There were 5,480 visits to public libraries per 1,000 population in 2016-17. This ranged from 9,050 per 1,000 population in Cardiff to 3,292 per 1,000 population in Newport.

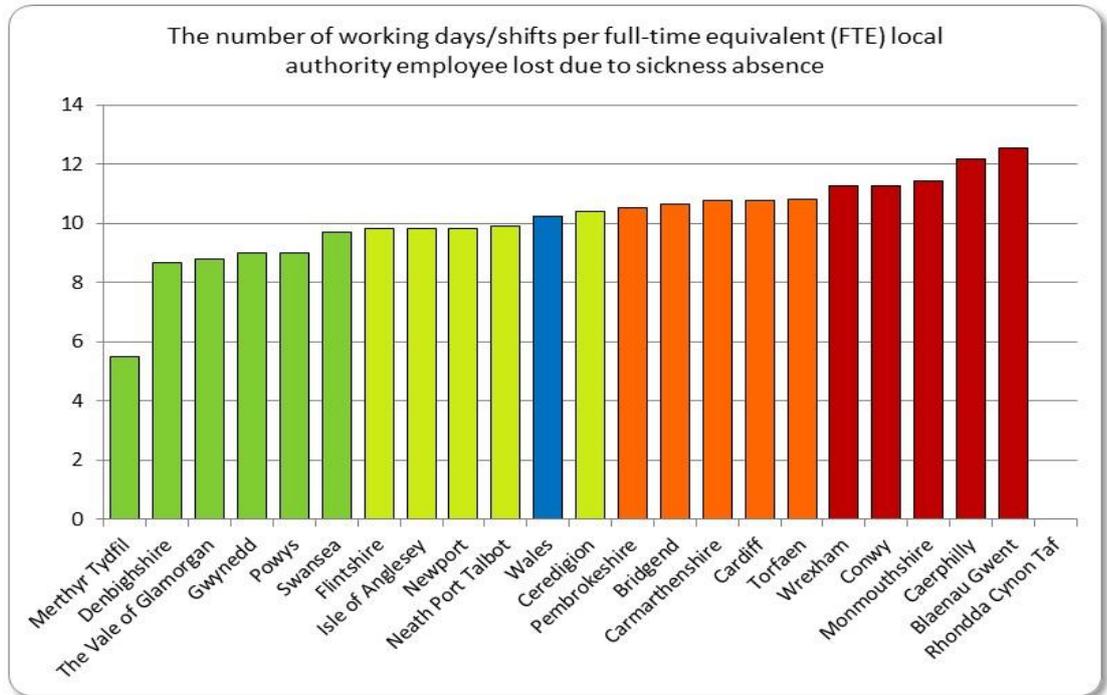
Note: "public libraries" exclude those owned and run by community councils

This is the first time that the number of visits to public libraries per 1,000 population has increased since the indicator was introduced. Across Wales, the year on year change ranged from an increase of 1,030 visits per 1,000 population in Denbighshire to a decrease of 880 visits per 1,000 population in Wrexham.

Corporate Health

Local authorities across Wales employ around 130 thousand people.

During 2016-17, an average of 10.3 days/shifts per full time employee were lost due to sickness. This ranged from 5.5 days in Merthyr Tydfil to 12.5 days in Blaenau Gwent.



Notes

One of the key functions of the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales is to collect, process, interpret and disseminate statistical data on local government services and activities in support of local government improvement.

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

We have simplified performance indicator titles, where appropriate, to aid understanding.

Guidance documents relating to the 2016-17 indicator sets are available on our website. These provide a detailed definition for each of the indicators along with their classification i.e. National Strategic Indicator or Public Accountability Measure.

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

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

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

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

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

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