

REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE AND COMPLIANCE COORDINATOR

**SUBJECT: BENCHMARKING OF PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK
AUTHORITY'S PLANNING AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE**

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with further information on PCNPA's Planning Authority performance benchmarked against other Planning Authorities in Wales.

Background

The data and information within this report are taken from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Planning Annual Performance Report (APR) 2015-16 and Welsh Government's All Wales Planning Annual Performance Report 2015/16.

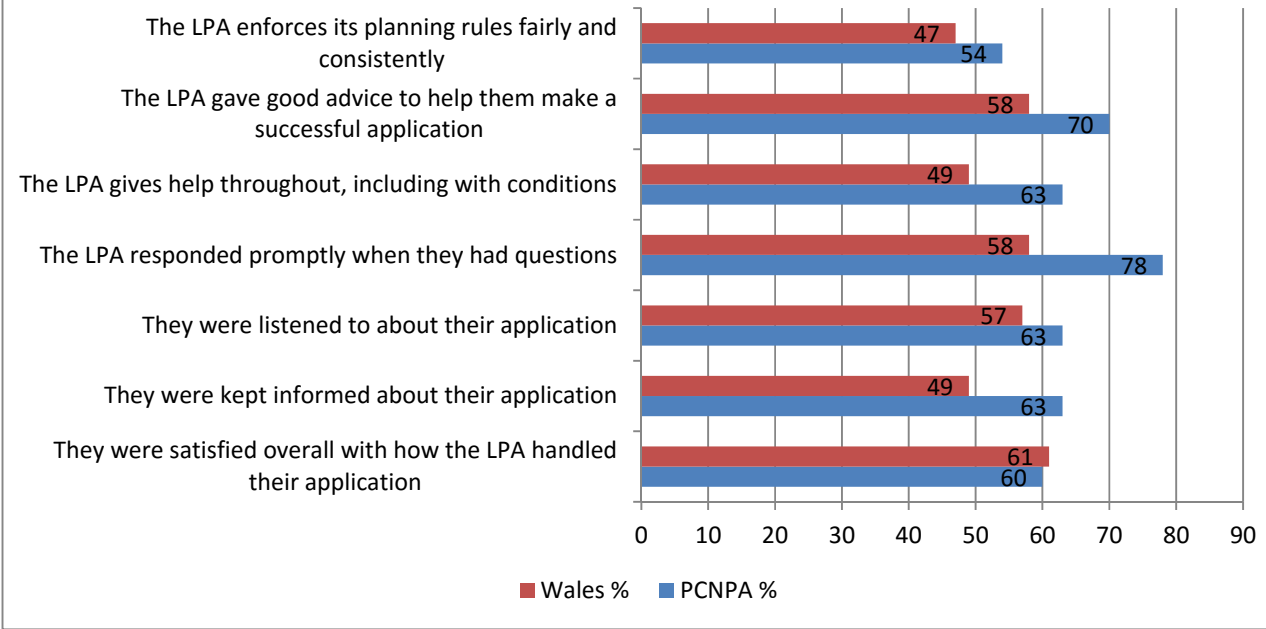
In January the Welsh Government's second All Wales Planning Annual Performance Report for reporting period April 2015 to March 2016 was published. A copy of this document can be found in Annex A. APR's have been introduced as part of Welsh Government proposals, embodied with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, to modernise the planning system and improve local delivery of planning service.

This report provides a summary of benchmarked customer satisfaction data and key planning performance indicators across the areas of efficiency, quality and engagement.

Customer Satisfaction

In 2015-16 the Authority conducted a customer satisfaction survey aimed at assessing the views of people that had received a planning application decision during the year. Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents that selected either 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' for each statement for both our planning authority and Wales. PCNPA performed better than the Wales average across all statements except for one statement area.

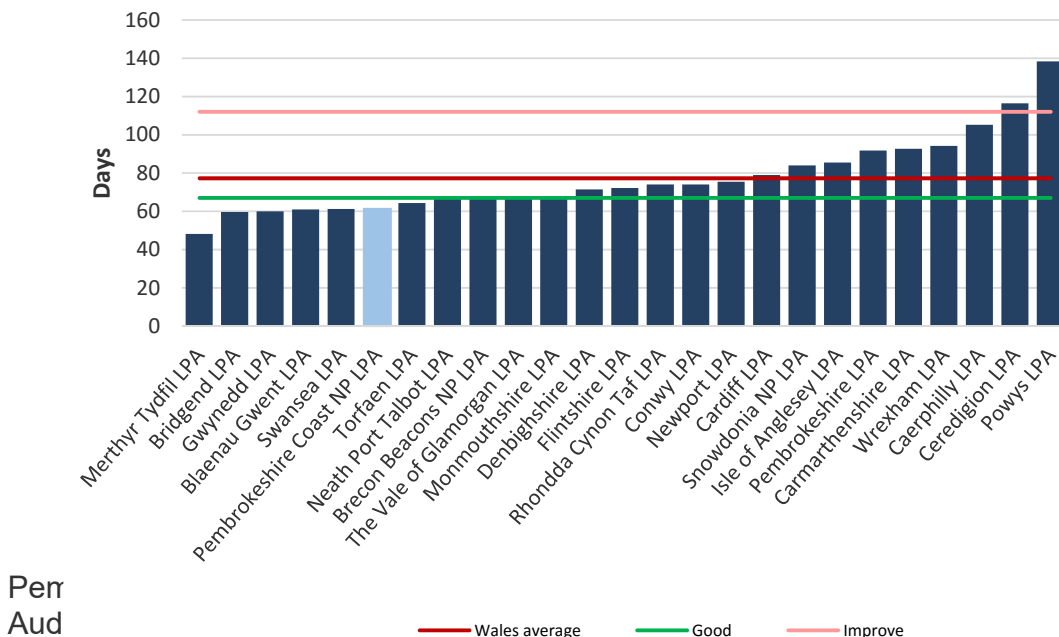
Figure 1: % of respondents who agreed with each statement



Efficiency

In 2015-16 the Authority determined 525 planning applications, each taking, on average, 61 days (9 weeks) to determine. This compares to an average of 77 days (11 weeks) across Wales. Figure 2 shows that PCNPA was ranked 6 out of LPAs in Wales in 2015/16 on average time taken to determine an application during the year.

Figure 1: Average time taken (days) to determine applications, 2015-16



72% of all planning applications were determined within the required timescales. This was a decrease from 86% in 2014-15. This compared to 77% across Wales and was below the 80% target. Only 8 out of 25 LPAs met the 80% target. When benchmarked PCNPA was ranked 18 out of the 25 LPAs in Wales in 2015/16 on this performance indicator and fell into the “Fair” category. Performance in this area was affected due in part to the fact that the Development Management section was without a manager for approximately 5 months of the reporting period. A Team Leader was appointed in July 2016 and performance data ytd for 2016/17 is now showing an upward trend in this area.

Quality

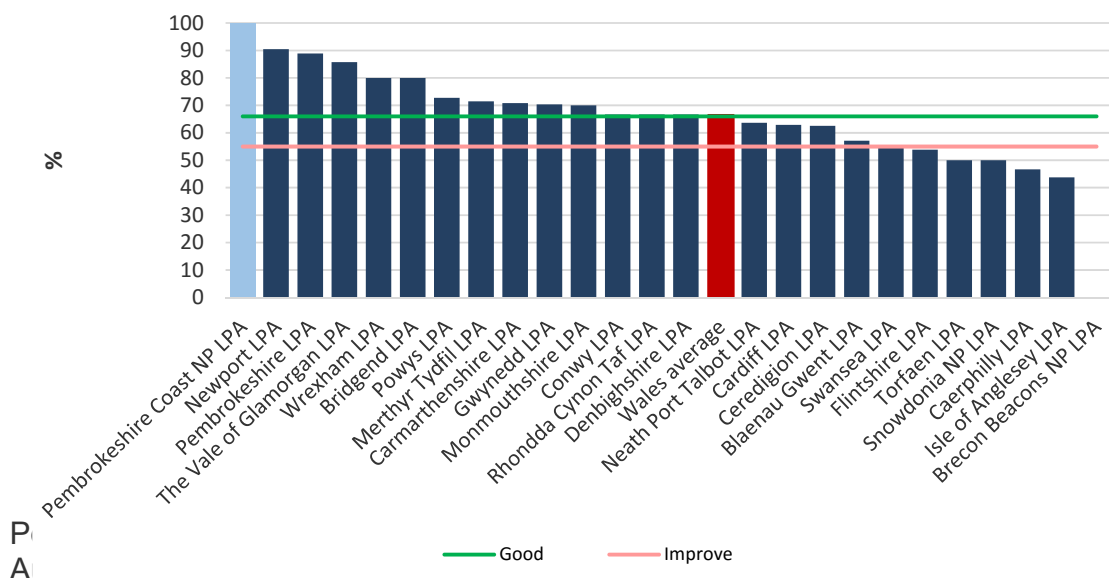
In 2015-16, the Authority’s Planning Committee made 44 planning application decisions during the year, which equated to 8% of all planning applications determined. Across Wales 7% of all planning application decisions were made by planning committee.

5% of these member-made decisions went against officer advice. This compared to 9% of member-made decisions across Wales. This equated to 0.4% of all planning application decisions going against officer advice; 0.6% across Wales.

In 2015-16 the Authority received 7 appeals against its planning decisions, which equated to 1.4 appeals for every 100 applications received. This was the fifth lowest ratio of appeals to applications in Wales.

Of the 3 appeals that were decided during the year, 100% were dismissed. As Figure 3 shows, this was the highest percentage of appeals dismissed in Wales and the Authority was one of 14 LPAs that reached the 66% target.

Figure 3: Percentage of appeals dismissed, 2015-16



Engagement

The Authority is one of 24 LPAs that allowed members of the public to address the Planning Committee in 2015/16.

The Authority is one of 2 LPAs that had a partial online register of planning applications in 2015/16. This limited access is inhibited to some extent by being reliant on the neighbouring Authority for providing this element of the service and the introduction of a document management system would also benefit a wider online facility. Both issues are currently being addressed.

Financial

A budget has been allocated to address the limitations of the online document system.

Risk

The Authority fails to maintain performance of DM service and high levels of customer satisfaction. Authority performs poorly when benchmarked against other planning Authorities through the Welsh Government Planning Performance Framework.

Equality Issues and Welsh Language

Delivery of planning service must comply with Equality Act 2010 and Welsh Language Standards.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

No issues.

Conclusion

PCNPA is performing well when benchmarked across a number of key planning performance indicators. Where benchmarked data has highlighted areas for improvement, actions have been put in place to address performance in these areas.

Recommendation

That Members note the contents of this report and discuss content of All Wales Planning Annual Performance Report.

Background Documents

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Planning Annual Performance Report (APR) 2015-16 - <http://bit.ly/2khPXWA>

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee – 15 February 2017

Welsh Government's All Wales Planning Annual Performance Report 2015/16 -
<http://bit.ly/2k2r4kn>

For further information, please contact Mair Thomas (Performance and Compliance Co-ordinator)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

All Wales Planning Annual Performance Report 2015/16



INTRODUCTION

Lesley Griffiths AM – Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

This second all-Wales Annual Performance Report highlights the continuing efforts of Local Planning Authorities to pursue continuous improvement over the reporting period of April 2015 to March 2016.

During this period, the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 came into force, making significant improvements to the way the planning system in Wales is administered. Local Planning Authorities have continued to deliver services during the transitional period, as we develop in partnership the subordinate legislation needed to implement the Act. I thank them for their support in implementing changes to streamline and modernise the planning system, whilst also creating increased opportunities for citizens to participate in decisions which affect them.



The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the overarching context for the planning system to help to deliver in accordance with the wellbeing goals. Sustainable development is a principle which has long been integral to the planning system and changes introduced by the Planning (Wales) Act provide legislative certainty.

A clear theme emerging from the performance reports is one of the increasing pressure on the planning system arising from public sector restraint. The end to restraint is not in sight, making it a priority to identify new and innovative ways to improve the resilience of this essential public service. I am encouraged by the work undertaken by some Local Planning Authorities to standardise resources and share expertise, which has created opportunities to increase their ability to adapt to the fluctuating demands. The positive outcomes from collaborative learning and sharing of information and practice, as well as informed business planning, continues to be highlighted in individual Local Planning Authority Annual Performance Reports.

However, it is clear more needs to be done if we are to have a planning system which helps to deliver the types of places where people want to live and businesses invest. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government is in conversation with stakeholders to explore options to take forward greater regionalisation of service delivery. Planning should play a full part in the discussions and help to shape and deliver the quality and resilient planning service for the future Wales needs.

I am confident ongoing dialogue and information sharing between Local Planning Authorities, based on their shared experiences as set out in the Annual Performance Reports, will enable us to face up to the challenges and deliver further service delivery improvements over coming years.

Lesley Griffiths AM
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs
January 2017

1 – Context

Annual Performance Reports – Background

This is the second all-Wales Annual Performance Report, covering the period April 2015 to March 2016. As well as considering the performance of the planning service over the reporting period, this Annual Performance Report also considers performance trend over time.

The basis of this report is set out in the [Positive Planning Consultation](#), which proposed the introduction of a suite of performance indicators, and the introduction of an annual report upon them. The system is comprised of three parts:

- a Performance Framework, publishing performance against indicators and targets agreed with stakeholders and informed by data collected on a quarterly basis;
- an Annual Performance Report, prepared by Local Planning Authorities, summarising their performance over the previous financial year, and identifying areas of best practice and actions to be taken to drive improvement where required; and
- a cumulative Annual Performance Report, prepared by the Welsh Government, giving a strategic picture of common issues and factors in the delivery of local services and setting out areas for future work in delivering and sharing good practice.

The production of an all-Wales Annual Performance Report enables the Welsh Government to give a clear picture of the way in which the planning service currently operates in Wales. The Report also enables a cumulative view on the issues and pressures being faced by local planning departments and allows readers to understand the impact of legislative and policy changes on the operation of the service.

This Annual Performance Report considers the operation of local and Welsh Government aspects of the planning services. In July 2017, statutory consultees will also be required to submit reports on their engagement with the planning service, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015. Consequently, the next all-Wales Annual Performance Report, due to be published in December 2017, will also consider the views, experiences and performance of these important stakeholders when commenting upon the operation of the planning service in Wales.

More information on the Planning Performance Framework is available from the following sources:

- The Performance Framework table for the period 2015-16 is at **Annex A**. An index of published Local Planning Authority Annual Performance Reports is at **Annex B**.
- Our [Planning Performance Framework webpage](#) sets out current targets and the latest published reports on performance.
- Our [Annual Performance Report webpage](#) contains the performance indicators and targets to be reported upon, guidance on the format and production of Annual Performance Reports, and hosts the 2014-15 Annual Performance Report.

2 – Planning Services Delivered by Welsh Government

The business of the Welsh Government’s Planning Directorate

Work in the 2015-16 reporting period has been dominated by the introduction of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, which introduced improvements to the operation of the planning system in Wales.

The 2015 Act placed a number of new duties upon plan making and decision taking bodies across Wales. These include the introduction of statutory purpose for the planning system – to act in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as well as placing a statutory requirement when preparing a plan making or making a decision on a planning application to have regard to the impact of development on the Welsh Language.

The Act places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to prepare a National Development Framework, steering major infrastructure and development to appropriate locations across Wales and driving future investment opportunities. Work is underway on the Framework with a project team and engagement strategy established.

Around two thirds of the provisions of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 have now been commenced. Extensive consultation has taken place to develop the enabling subordinate legislation required to implement some of the detailed provisions of the Act. This has included:

- Introducing a new planning application process to enable the Welsh Ministers to determine **Developments of National Significance**;
- Commencing provisions relating to Strategic Development Plans, to enable Local Planning Authorities to start the process for designating Strategic Planning Areas and establishing **Strategic Planning Panels**;
- The introduction of powers to appoint and operate **Joint Planning Boards**;
- The requirement for developers to undertake statutory **pre-application consultation** with communities before submitting a major planning application;
- The introduction of a statutory level of minimum **pre-application service** for prospective applicants;
- The introduction of a **non-validation appeal** process; and
- A series of detailed changes to the **development management process**, concerning decision making and enforcement.

More detail on the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and associated work, is set out in our [Positive Planning Implementation Plan](#).

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Welsh Ministers to ensure the national planning policy aligns with the well-being goals. Whilst the planning system has been at the forefront of sustainable development for many years, the Act has required realignment and in some places a review of national policy and technical advice. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) version 8 was produced to reflect this new duty, and issued in January 2016. Future programmed changes to PPW were outlined in the [Planning Policy Prospectus](#).

The revision to Planning Policy Wales also took account of the implications of the duty to consider the impact of development on the Welsh language set out in the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and Technical Advice Note 20 also is in the process of being revised accordingly.

Work to support the preparation of Local Development Plans has continued, with the adoption of Cardiff and Neath Port Talbot plans occurring in January 2016. Planning Directorate has also continued to provide an advisory service for local planning authorities who continue to progress their plans to adoption.

Planning decisions made by the Welsh Government

CASE TYPE	INDICATOR	TOTALS
	Good – >80	
	Fair – 60-80	
	Improve – <60	
Award of Costs cases within 84 days	Cases on time	3 of 3
	% on time	100
	Average days	17.7
Decisions whether or not to call in applications within 21 days	Cases on time	38 of 40
	% on time	95
	Average days	6.6
Notification Direction cases within 21 days	Cases on time	7 of 7
	% on time	100
	Average days	15.8
Recovered Appeals and Called In cases within 84 days	Cases on time	5 of 8
	% on time	62
	Average days	80.1
Compulsory Purchase Order Confirmations within 84 days	Cases on time	3 of 3
	% on time	100
	Average days	51
EIA Screening requests within 21 days	Cases on time	19 of 22
	% on time	86
	Average days	12.3
Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent Confirmations within 84 days	Cases on time	28 of 30
	% on time	93
	Average days	62.7
Transport and Works Act applications within 112 days	Cases on time	0 of 0
	% on time	N/A
	Average days	N/A

Fig 1 – Welsh Government Caseload Performance Statistics

The Planning Directorate determined 103 of its 113 cases within its target date, representing an average percentage rate of 91%. The timeliness for determining these cases broadly meets the set targets; although we acknowledge delays in processing a small number of complex cases has had an effect on the small sample size of the caseload. It also represents a period of unprecedented workload for the Directorate flowing from implementation of the Planning (Wales) Act.

Enhanced record-keeping practices have streamlined the case handling process, and better use of ICT solutions to log, process and monitor cases, including the production and monitoring of performance statistics, has ensured the data has more accurately reflected the performance of the Planning Directorate over time. As a consequence, performance against all these indicators gradually improved over the duration of the financial year, against the 2014-2015 target indicators.

While the figures above indicate 91% of cases are dealt with within the target, we believe there is continuing scope to improve on this and will continue to seek further improvements in performance in 2016-2017.

Planning decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate (Wales), on behalf of the Welsh Government

CASE TYPE	INDICATOR	TOTALS
	Good – >80	
	Fair – 60-80	
	Improve – <60	
Planning appeals decided by written representations procedure to be determined in 16 weeks	Cases Determined	338
	% on Time	94.91%
	Average Weeks	14.75
Householder Appeal Service Pilot (Written)	Cases Determined	33
	% on Time	90.90%
	Average Weeks	6.89
Minor Commercial Appeal Service Pilot (Written)	Cases Determined	1
	% on Time	100%
	Average Weeks	4.29
Planning appeals decided by the hearing procedure to be determined in 22 weeks	Cases Determined	67
	% on Time	92.42%
	Average Weeks	20.84
85% of all planning appeals decided by the inquiry procedure to be determined in 30 weeks	Cases Determined	11
	% on Time	100%
	Average Weeks	27.39
85% of all enforcement appeals decided by written representations procedure to be determined in 30 weeks	Cases Determined	27
	% on Time	100%
	Average Weeks	21.05
85% of all enforcement appeals decided by hearing and inquiries procedures to be determined in 41 weeks	Cases Determined	18
	% on Time	88.89%
	Average Weeks	31.41
Provide Inspector for LDP inquiries in at least 90% of cases on the date requested by the LPA, provided the objection period has ended and at least 6 months' notice has been given	Plans Received	3
	% on Time	100%
	Average Weeks	N/A
To deliver 90% of Inspectors' reports on development plan inquiries to local authorities according to timescales agreed under service level agreements	Plans Reported	2
	% on Time	100%
	Average Weeks	62.14
Called in applications and recovered appeals to meet timetable for delivery of report to the Welsh Government (7 weeks up to 8 inquiry sitting days, agreed timetable for larger cases)	Cases Reported	8
	% on Time	100.00%
	Average Weeks	6.91

Fig 2 – Planning Inspectorate Wales Caseload Performance Statistics

The Planning Inspectorate for Wales (PINS Wales) provides planning appeals, casework and Local Development Plan examination services in Wales. PINS Wales is funded by, although independent from the Welsh Government. The decisions it takes are informed by

the Welsh planning policy framework, . As well as maintaining its high levels of service in appeals, Local Development Plan (LDP) examinations and other areas of environmental case work it has been at the forefront of delivering and facilitating the Welsh Governments planning reforms.

. There are around 17 PINS Wales Inspectors most of whom live in Wales and are largely drawn from Welsh local planning authorities Occasionally Inspectors from the Planning Inspectorate in England are called upon during periods of high demand. By virtue of being part of the broader Planning Inspectorate, PINS Wales benefits by being able to draw on the experience and depth of knowledge of a large body of professionals in planning and other related fields, and by obtaining training for all staff including Inspectors and through access to corporate services, such as IT.

The Inspectorate's strategic goals are set out in its Strategic Plan and specific key business objectives tailored set by the Welsh Ministers. These include performance targets relating to 'planning' casework. Other responsibilities include examining Local Development Plans, overseeing housing land availability studies and casework on listed building consents, rights of way, common land applications and compulsory purchase orders.

The Planning Inspectorate Wales continued to meet tighter targets of 85% for both planning and enforcement appeals. The overall workload in 2015-16 was slightly more than in 2014-15, with a total appeals intake of around 858 compared to 776 in the previous year.

The Cardiff and Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plans were both adopted in the reporting period. The Vale of Glamorgan, Powys and Gwynedd and Anglesey joint plan examinations were on-going at the end of the reporting period.

In excess of 99% of inspectors' decisions were issued free from justified complaint or legal challenge during the year, against a target of 99%. Similarly, over 99% of work was free from administrative errors.

Numbers of enforcement and planning appeals are likely to remain steady. Planning appeal reforms aimed at speeding up and streamlining the planning system are likely to take effect in spring 2017. Environmental and other types of specialist casework are set to increase as new legislation is introduced by the Welsh Government.

Planning applications for Developments of National Significance (DNS) are made to the Welsh Ministers and administered by PINS Wales. The Welsh Government has set a statutory target of 36 weeks from the validation of a DNS application for a decision to be made. For potential applicants, local planning authorities, statutory undertakers and communities to be prepared, PINS Wales has produced Guidance Notes and is working with Planning Aid Wales to ensure communities feel able to fully engage in the decision making process.

Initial estimates for numbers of potential DNS applications indicated 3 to 4 cases a year. The threshold of those types of development which fall under the definition of a DNS has changed since the estimate was made and PINS Wales anticipates this number may increase. However, only one application has been made, in the first 9 months since introduction of the new procedure. PINS Wales will reorganise its current organisational structure to match the workload although it foresees a need for an increase in staffing levels to match this demand for service, should application numbers increase above those estimated.

The inaugural Planning Inspectorate Wales Stakeholder Event in September 2015 provided the opportunity for stakeholders to hear and discuss what the implications of the Planning (Wales) Act means for all parties in the planning processes, how PINS Wales will be meeting its responsibilities, and what the future may hold for planning. The event was well attended and received, delegates heard from Carl Sargeant AM, the then Minister for Natural Resources, and representatives from industry and the community.

The 2015 People Survey results showed, overall, a high level of engagement amongst the Planning Inspectorate Wales team. PINS Wales will continue to work with colleagues to improve performance to the benefit of the business. Senior managers in PINS Wales have taken part in the Inspectorate's management development programme and all staff were encouraged to make use of online courses. Staff worked across multiple teams sharing knowledge and skills. Team managers have utilised flexible working solutions such as Bring Your Own Device and Occasional Home Workers policies.

3 – PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The following section considers the performance of the 25 Local Planning Authorities in Wales as a whole, against the indicators and targets established in the Planning Performance Framework, and published in the Performance Framework table for Financial Year 2015/16 (attached at Annex A). Where relevant, charts are used to establish benchmarks and make relative comparisons of progress against indicators. Detailed consideration is given to each performance indicator.

Broadly, performance against the majority of indicators has improved in this reporting period, when compared to the 2014-15 reporting period. This is largely a result of progress on adopting development plans and refocusing of resources within existing teams to secure improvements, as well as effective and accurate recording of planning application information.

Some Planning Committees have amended established practice in advance of the coming into force of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provisions relating to Committees, and forthcoming Welsh Local Government Association Planning Committee protocol. The resulting smaller, effectively trained Committees appear to be making more robust planning decisions as evidenced by fewer decisions contrary officer advice and a higher success rate at appeal.

Several Local Planning Authorities report work to modernise ICT systems to enable flexible, remote and agile working. In a number of cases, Local Planning Authorities have jointly commissioned ICT systems, creating synergy from sharing of training and best practice. The establishment of purchasing consortia enables Welsh Local Planning Authorities to use their buying power to require ICT software suppliers to serve the specific needs of the Welsh planning system.

In the 2014-15 reporting period, a small number of Local Planning Authorities reported the success of a “development team” approach to major planning applications, from pre-application enquiry through to monitoring of conditions. In this reporting period the practice appears to have become widespread amongst Local Planning Authorities, with each respective authority finding merit in the adoption of this procedure. This sharing and common use of best practice is encouraged, and demonstrates the values of shared learning through the production of reflective Annual Performance Reports.

Whilst Local Planning Authorities have secured improvements in the reporting period, significant challenges remain. The Annual Performance Reports received for this reporting period continue the trend reported in previous years of increasing budgetary pressures on local planning departments.

The budget allocations for planning departments is a matter for each Local Planning Authority, however, the resource allocated to the department should be sufficient to cover its running cost to a standard with which the Local Planning Authority is satisfied. We will continue to investigate the relationship between planning application fees and the cost of service delivery and wish to work with local government to identify the true costs and benefits of the system.

The Welsh Government introduced a planning fee increase in 2015 and the consensus in feedback indicates this uplift in income has been used to offset reductions in funding from

the authorities. Consequently, the fee income has typically not resulted in an increased budget for planning service provision, limiting capacity for improvement.

Some Local Planning Authorities have sought to maintain service levels across all areas of delivery by reorganising posts or teams, or moving responsibility for specialist work into generalist posts. For example, a number of Local Planning Authorities have made savings from staff departures by moving enforcement work into development management teams, instead of appointing new enforcement officers.

More broadly, several Local Planning Authorities have reported upon impact in service delivery timescales arising from diminishing access to specialist non-planning stakeholders, such as highways, conservation and biodiversity specialists. These experts sometimes sit outside of planning teams and are therefore subject to separate management oversight, workload planning and budgets. It is important to ensure these experts have the opportunity to effectively contribute to the decision making process where relevant issues arise and we will undertake work to investigate this further.

Whilst a higher percentage of decisions are being reported as “on time”, the average time for decisions is longer than in 2014-15. This is attributed to an increased use of Planning Performance Agreements and agreed extensions, which provide an opportunity to manage customer expectations in a resource-diminished environment.

Feedback from applicants indicates a willingness to pay an increased fee, provided an efficient service is delivered as a result. Planning Performance Agreements in particular create opportunities to obtain additional resource to support spikes in workload, especially for significant applications.

Some Local Planning Authorities have already responded to the changing Local Government financial landscape by aligning processes, with a view to making time efficiency savings, which will free officer time to concentrate on other matters. This work can be extended to enabling sharing of staff resources. For example, early work is underway by the North Wales Planning Officers Group to align practices and procedures for heritage and ecology services. Other regional officer groups also continue to develop and share good practice and information.

The Flintshire and Carmarthenshire Joint Minerals and Waste Services both continue to provide specialist expertise and input into emerging Local Development plans as we as on planning applications, in their respective regions. The continued success of this regional delivery model provides a useful template for other specialist service areas.

The Performance Framework indicators for planning enforcement continue to be subject to negotiation and review. Whilst extensive guidance has been provided on the collection and interpretation of the data supporting the indicators, it is apparent the information is still subject to local variations in interpretation.

We have worked with stakeholders in the Planning Officers Society for Wales to refine the enforcement indicators set out in the Performance Framework, including tabling proposed revisions to indicators for discussion at the National Association of Planning Enforcement conference in Cardiff, in November 2016. Some of the enforcement indicators may be subject to change as a result of this ongoing work.

OVERVIEW OF WALES AVERAGE PERFORMANCE AGAINST ALL INDICATORS

This chart compares the average performance of Welsh local planning authorities against the 18 Performance Framework indicators, for the periods 2013/14 to 2015/16. A number of these indicators were introduced in November 2014. Comparative data for the earlier periods is not available.

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Plan making			
1. Is there a current Development Plan in place which is within the plan period?	Yes		No
2. LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	<12	13-17	18+
3. Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	Yes		No
4. The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	5+	4-4.9	<4
Efficiency			
5. Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	Not set	Not set	Not set
6. Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	Not set	Not set	Not set
7. Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	80+	60.1-79.9	<60
8. Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+
Quality			
9. Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	5-8.9	9+
10. Percentage of appeals dismissed	66+	55.1-65.9	<55

Wales Average 2013/14	Wales Average 2014/15	Wales Average 2015/16
Yes	Yes	Yes
46	47	39
Yes	Yes	Yes
4.7	4.2	3.9
21	24	35.3
No Data	206	212.7
72.1	72.7	76.6
No Data	76.4	77.2
No Data	10.1	9.0
65.4	65.6	66.5

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
11. Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2
Engagement			
12. Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No
13. Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No
14. Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No
Enforcement			
15. Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	Not set	Not set	Not set
16. Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases	Not set	Not set	Not set
17. Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application received within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)	Not set	Not set	Not set
18. Average time taken to take enforcement action	Not set	Not set	Not set

Wales Average 2013/14	Wales Average 2014/15	Wales Average 2015/16
0	0	0
Yes	Yes	Yes
No Data	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes
No Data	65.8	79.4
No Data	71.1	88.1
No Data	76.8	72.8
No Data	175.5	210.1

SECTION 1 – PLAN MAKING

Indicator	01. Is there a current Development Plan in place which is within the plan period?	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
A development plan (LDP or UDP) is in place and within the plan period		No development plan is in place (including where the plan has expired)

Performance	Yes (18 of 25)
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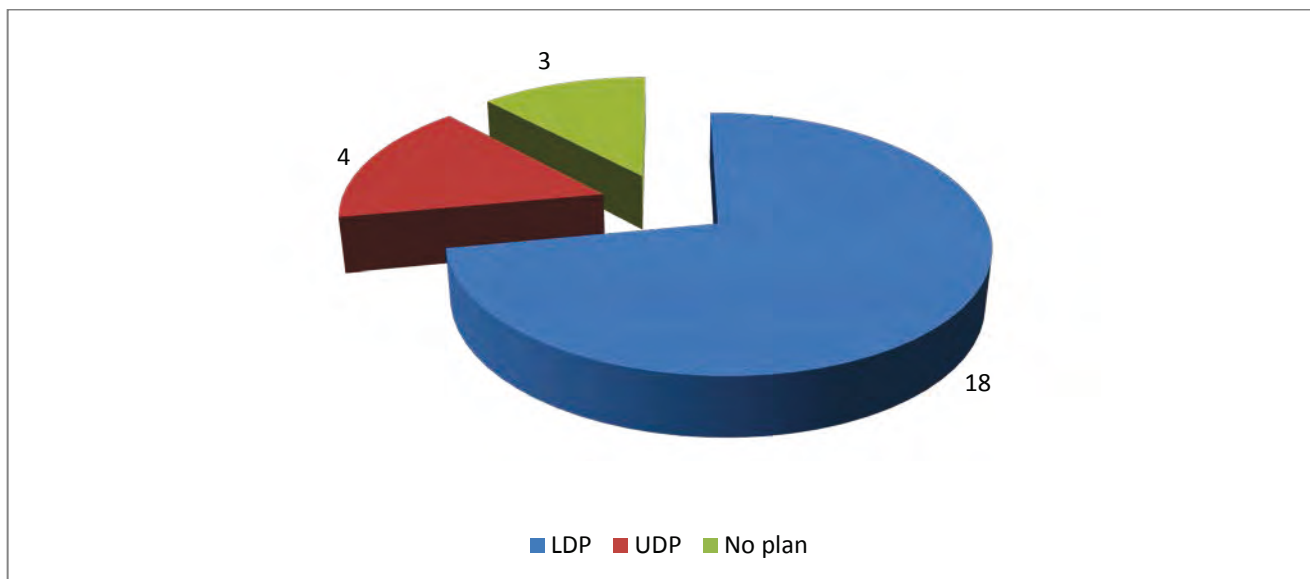


Fig 3 – Local planning authorities with an adopted development plan in March 2016

Neath Port Talbot CBC and Cardiff CC both adopted their Local Development Plans in January 2016. Consequently, 18 of 25 Local Planning Authorities had an adopted Local Development Plan at the end of the reporting period, with a further 6 Local Development Plans yet to be adopted (Gwynedd & Anglesey are preparing a Joint LDP). This is 75% coverage across Wales. There are a further 3 plans submitted for examination which, if adopted, would take the total to 21 adopted plans, providing 87% plan coverage. All remaining plans were on track at the end of the reporting period, taking into account their most recent Delivery Agreements.

Indicator	02. LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
The LDP is being progressed within 12 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed within between 12 and 18 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed more than 18 months later than the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement

Performance	47.4 months
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Each Local Planning Authority must, very early in the process of preparing a Local Development Plan, publish a Delivery Agreement, setting out how it will bring the plan forward, including a timeline setting out key stages of progress. This indicator measures slippage from key milestones set out in the original Delivery Agreement timeline. It applies only to Local Planning Authorities which had not yet adopted their LDP in March 2016.

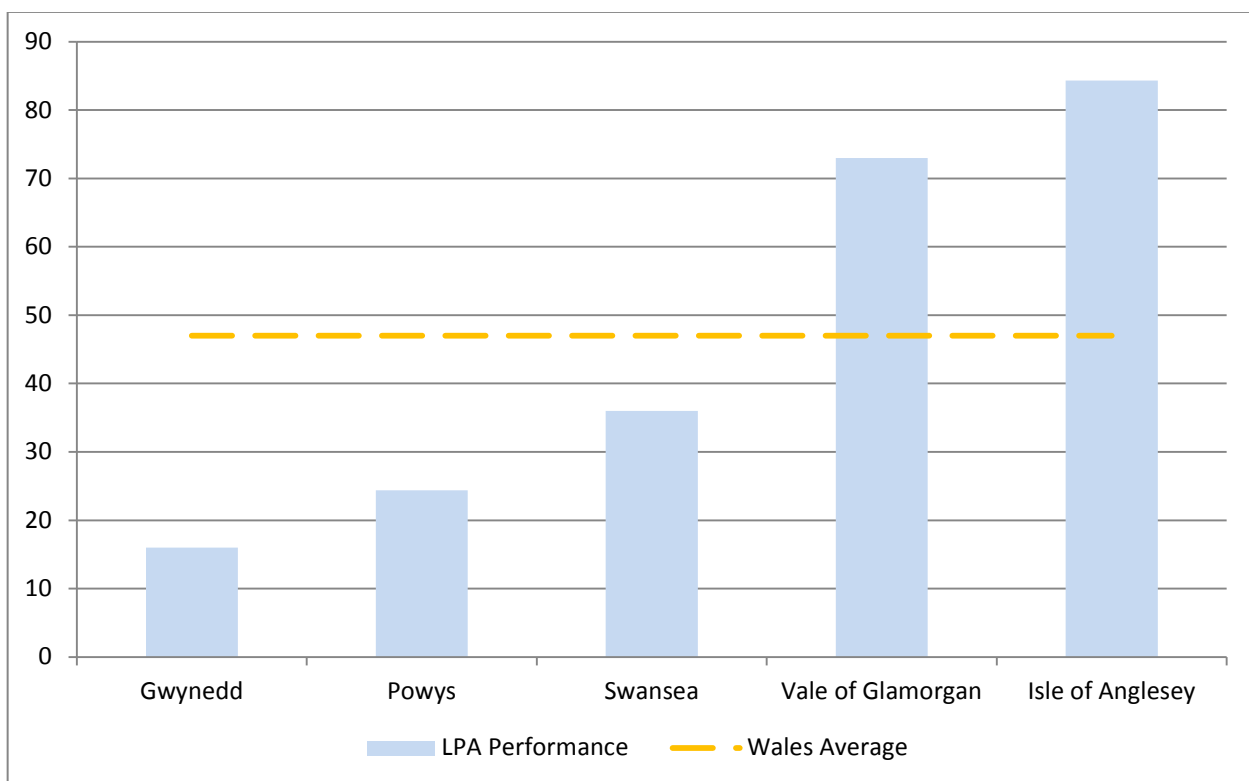


Fig 4 – Delay in LDP preparation, in months

Although five authorities are listed above, there are four Local Planning Authorities currently measured as being delayed in progressing their plans according to their respective delivery agreements. This is because Cyngor Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey County Council are pursuing a single joint Local Development Plan.

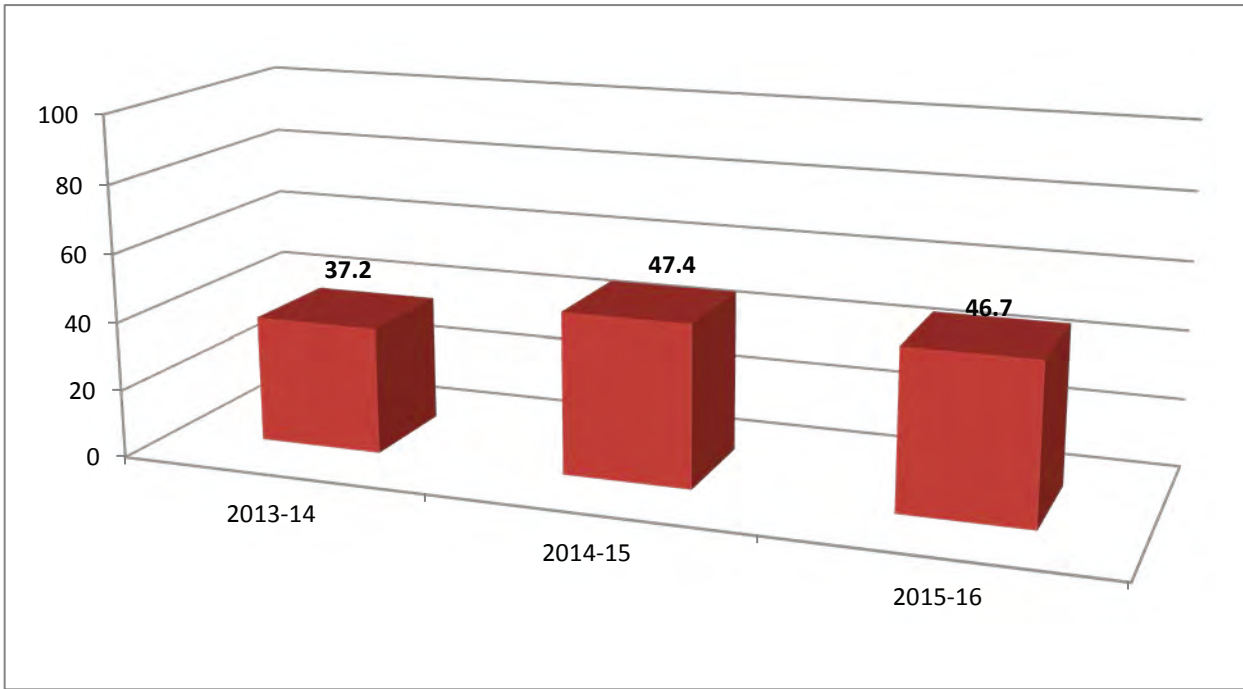


Fig 5 – Year-on-year comparison of average delay in LDP preparation, in months

Neath Port Talbot CBC and Cardiff CC both adopted their Local Development Plans in January 2016. The adoption of the Cardiff Local Development Plan has reduced the average delay in progressing Local Development Plan preparation amongst those Local Planning Authorities still preparing their plans.

Indicator	03. Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
An AMR is due, and has been prepared		An AMR is due, and has not been prepared

Performance	Yes (13 of 14)
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An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is a legislative requirement. It reports on the progress on achieving the aims of the LDP, and indicates whether or not the LDP’s strategy and policies are working as intended. The context and indicators for an AMR are agreed as part of the public examination process, prior to LDP adoption. A negative trend against an AMR indicator may trigger a partial, or full, LDP review. The timely submission of AMRs has assisted in keeping the effectiveness and suitability of LDP policies under review.

Each Local Planning Authority which was required to submit a AMR in October 2015 did so, except one. Brecon Beacons NPA submitted its AMR in draft in October although it did not obtain Member approval of the AMR until November 2015. The detail of each AMR, and the conclusions reached by the respective authority, can be found on each authority’s website.

Indicator	04. The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
The authority has a housing land supply of more than 5 years		The authority has a housing land supply of less than 5 years

Performance	3.9 years
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The planning system is responsible for identifying suitable sites for new housing through the LDP process. Under the Welsh Government’s planning policy each Local Planning Authority is expected to demonstrate sufficient available and deliverable land within the authority to build housing for the next five years, based on the housing requirements identified in their LDP. The way this policy requirement is monitored is known as the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS). Each year Local Planning Authorities conduct these studies and publish the findings. . For the year 2015-16 eight authorities had a housing land supply of five years or more (see Figure 6 below). A shortage of housing land, lack of delivery by the house building industry, or a lack of range and choice of sites, may mean the authority’s plan cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply and needs to be revised. The lack of a five-year housing land supply will be a significant consideration where there is an application for housing development not identified in the LDP, both for the Local Planning Authority in determining the application and where there is an appeal. Local Planning Authorities must look to identify measures to address any shortfall in housing land supply as part of their LDP Annual Monitoring Reports.

The national policy context, is set out in [Planning Policy Wales](#) and [Technical Advice Note 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies](#)

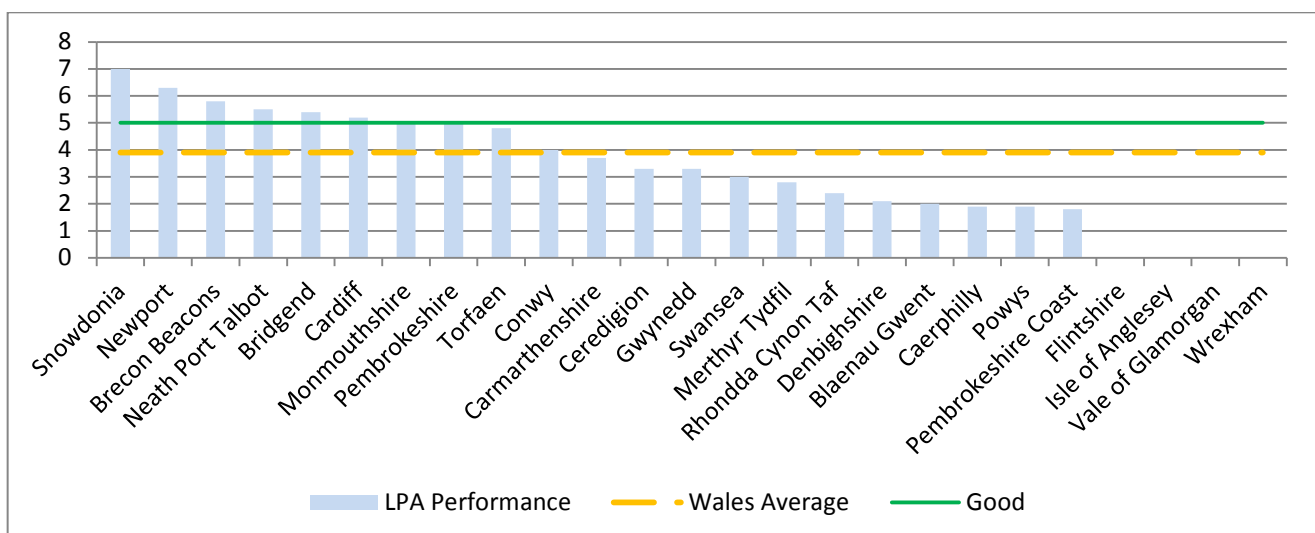


Fig 6 – Number of Local Planning Authorities with a housing land supply of 5 years or more (as at 1 April 2015)

Fig 6 above shows the housing land supply of each local planning authority in Wales as at 1 April 2015. Local Planning Authorities without an adopted LDP (or an adopted UDP still within its plan period) are unable to carry out a Joint Housing Land Availability Study and therefore are considered to have a zero years housing land supply. Consequently, four Local Planning Authorities demonstrate a housing land supply of zero years.

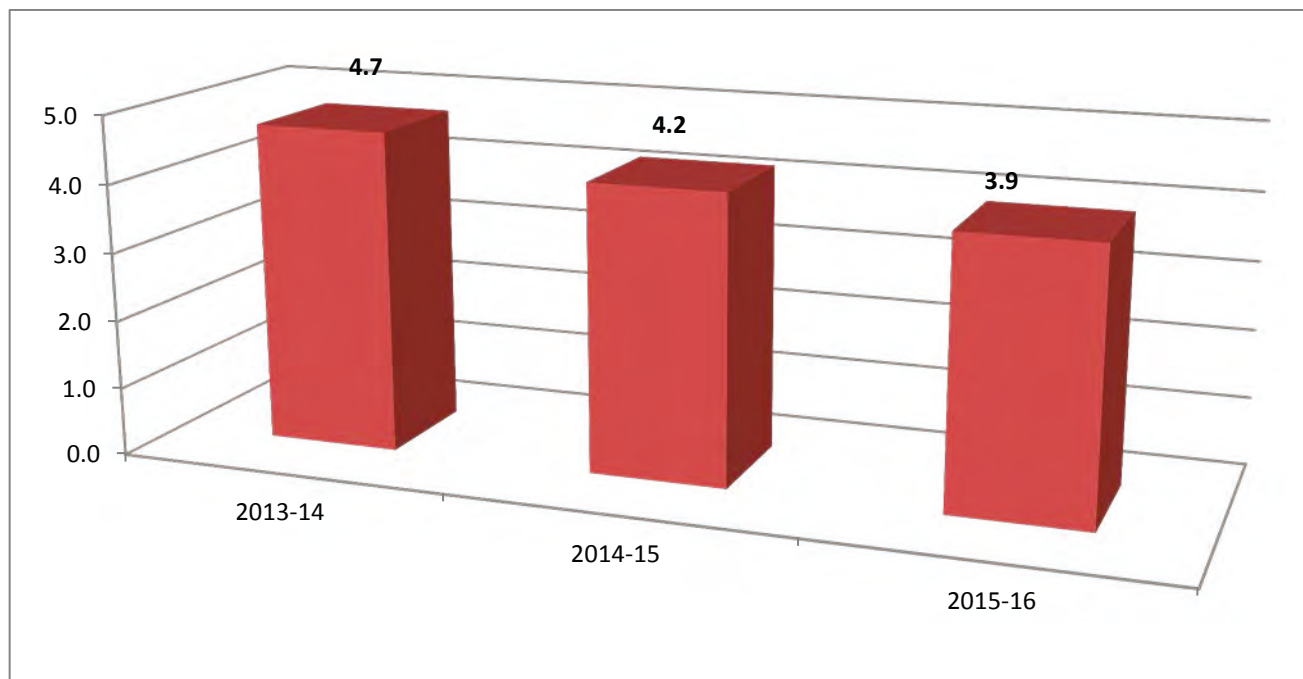


Fig 7 – Year-on-year comparison of average housing land supply, in years

Fig 7 above shows the average housing land supply of Welsh Local Planning Authorities has declined since the introduction of the Performance Framework in 2014.

Land supply as reported in JHLASs has declined for many LPAs, including some with recently adopted LDPs. Research commissioned by the Welsh Government (*Longitudinal viability study of the planning process* undertaken by Arcadis (UK) Ltd) indicates one of the main reasons is the allocation of sites for housing which are essentially undeliverable or only likely to come forward at later stages of the LDP period. Viability was identified as a key reason for delays in delivery, covering issues such as affordable housing requirements, sites being located in low value market areas, poor quality sites or specific infrastructure requirements. The research makes a number of recommendations for addressing these issues, which are under consideration.

SECTION 2 - EFFICIENCY

Indicator	05. Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	35.3%
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Local Planning Authorities should determine planning applications within the timescales set out in legislation – 8 weeks for an ordinary application, or 16 weeks for an application which may have a significant environmental impact. Applicants can choose to extend this period, and where an extension is agreed, and this deadline is met, then an application is also deemed to be determined “on time”.

Major planning applications are more likely to raise complex technical issues, which may require additional work for applicants, statutory consultees and infrastructure providers; consequently it is not unusual for such applications to take longer than 8 weeks to determine. Local Planning Authorities in England, for example, are expected to determine such applications in 13 weeks.

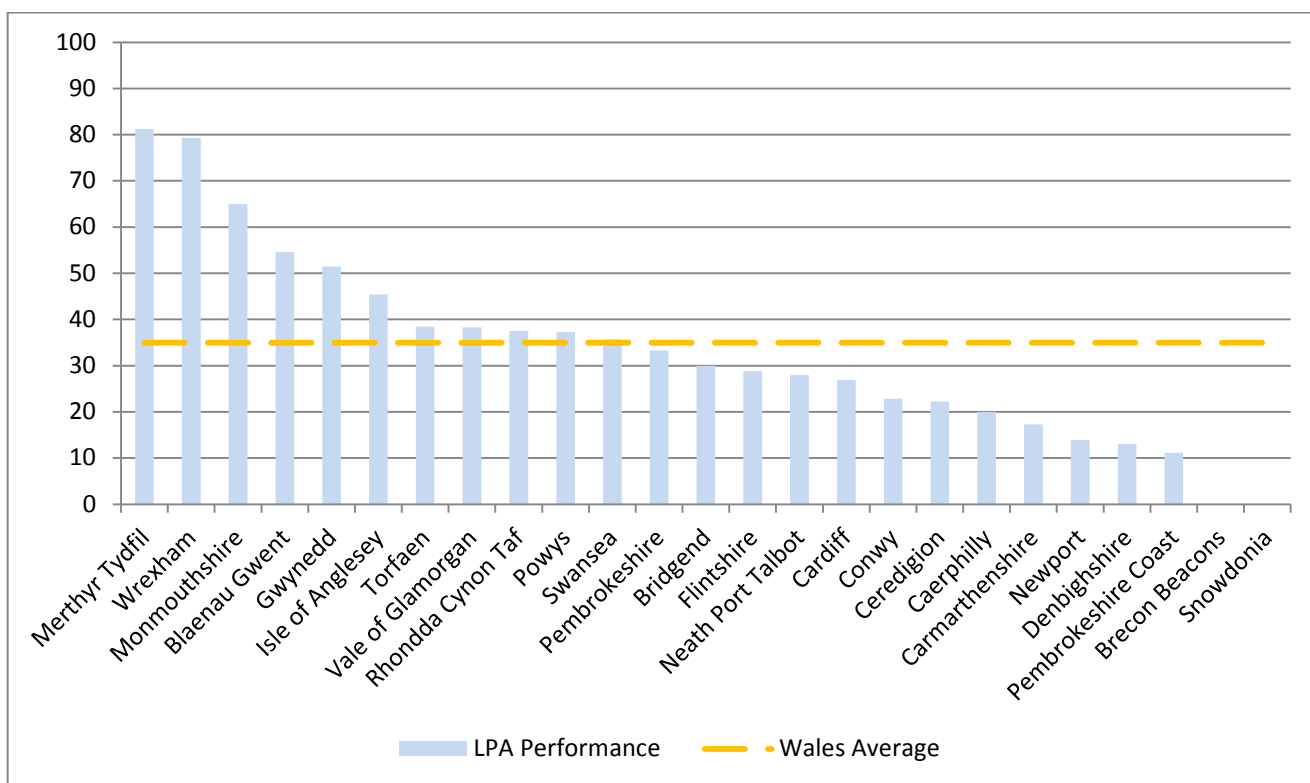


Fig 8 – Comparison of Local Planning Authority performance for determination of major planning applications

The above chart shows the individual performance of each Local Planning Authority against this indicator. Wrexham CBC, as well as determining the highest number of major planning applications in the reporting period, also achieved the second highest standard for

determining those applications “on time”. Several other Local Planning Authorities have also demonstrated improved performance against this indicator in this reporting period. Unlike the previous year, the authorities performing well typically handle more major planning applications than others, and those performing less well typically receive fewer major planning applications.

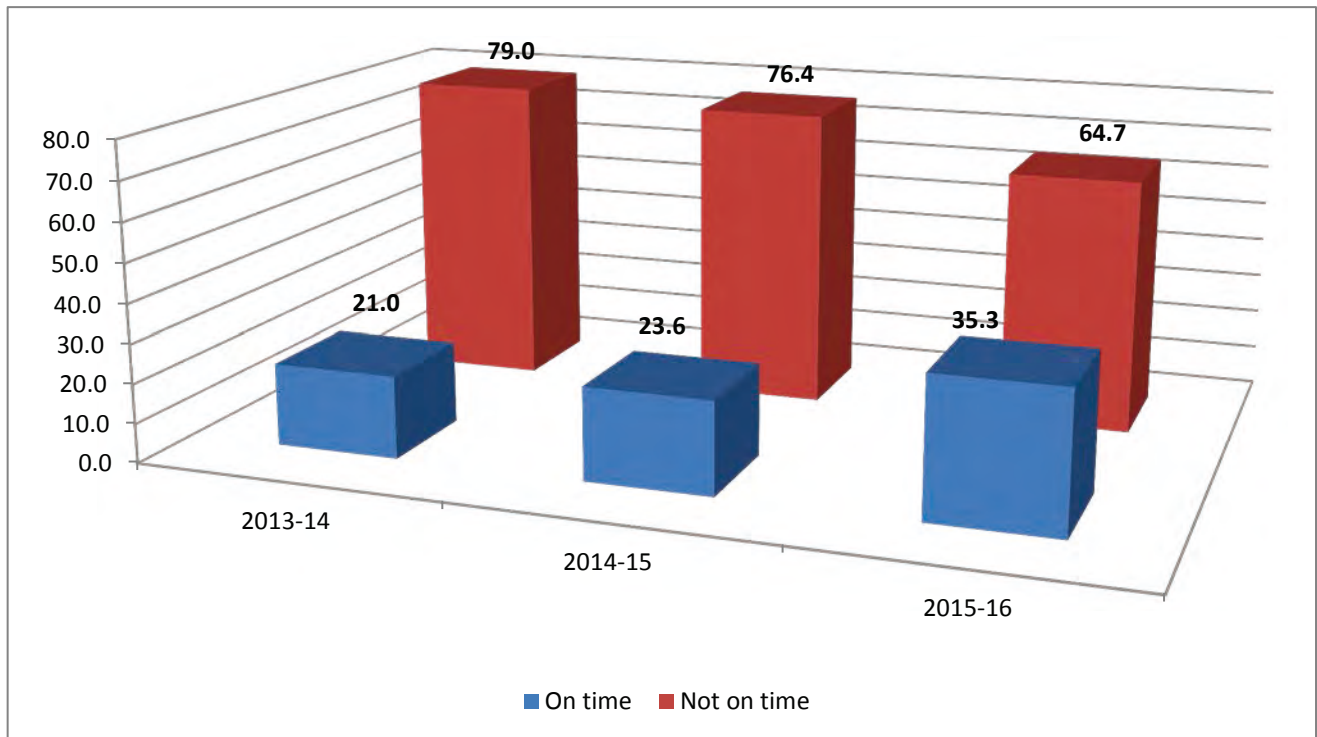


Fig 9 – Year-on-year comparison of percentage of major planning applications determined “on time”

The year-on-year comparison at Fig 9 shows an increasing performance across Wales against this indicator. However, the performance data for Indicator 06, reported below, indicates the time taken to determine major applications has increased by 6.7 days.

In the 2014-15 APR, some authorities reported the introduction of a “development team” model, bringing together various departments within an authority to work on a project, helped to process major applications smoothly. Many Local Planning Authorities have reported the adoption of a “development team” model to the processing and determination of major planning applications in their 2015-16 Annual Performance Reports.

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced two new procedures which are anticipated to have a significant bearing on the handling of major planning applications in future. Major applications must be subject to statutory pre-application consultation, which will enable developers to draw out any potential objections and take account of these issues before submitting their applications.

Additionally, Local Planning Authorities must now provide a statutory minimum pre-application service. The new statutory pre-application service requirements came into force in March 2016 and the new duty placed on developers to undertake pre-application consultation took effect from August 2016. We expect both of these changes to also have a positive effect on the determination times for major applications in the future.

Indicator	06. Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	212.7 days
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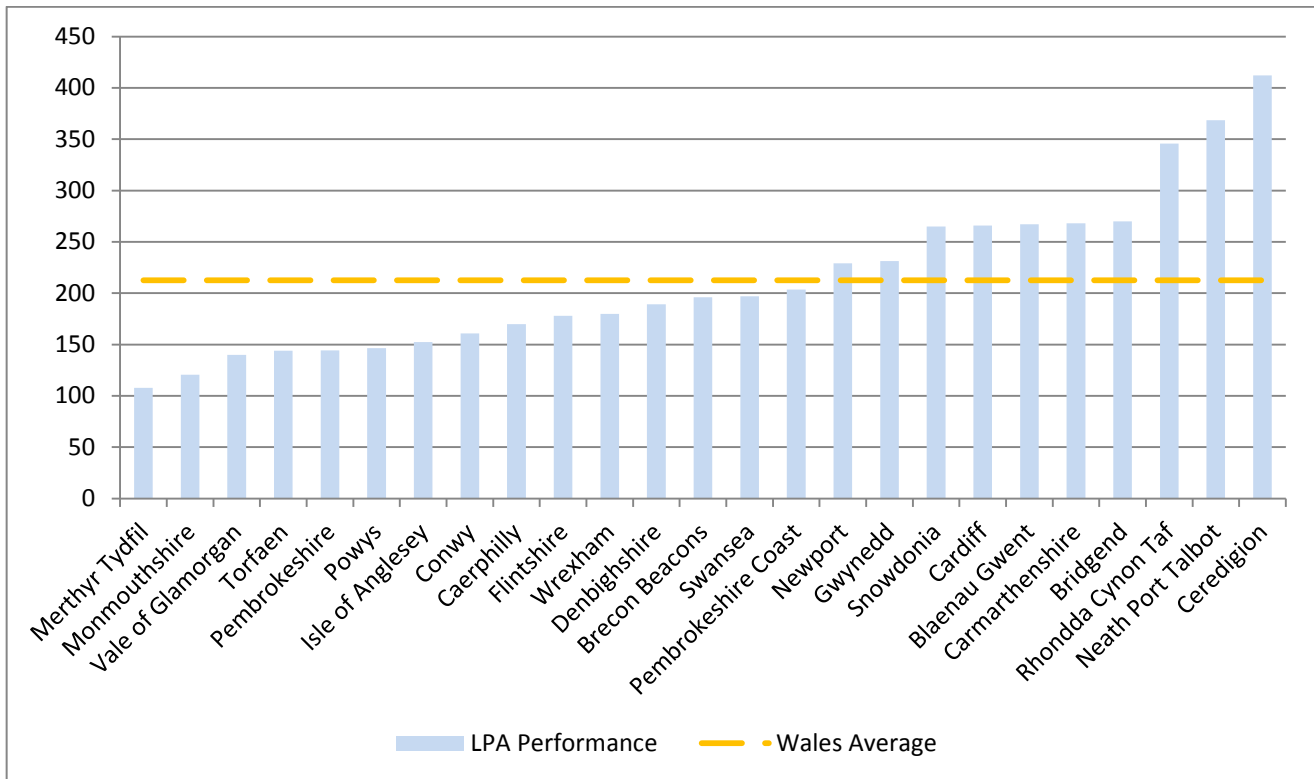


Fig 10 – Comparison of average time taken to determine major planning applications

Fig 10 above displays the average time taken to determine major planning applications in each Local Planning Authority in Wales during the reporting period. The average time taken to determine applications of this kind has increased across the board amongst Local Planning Authorities. For example, the shortest average time taken reported by a Local Planning Authority within this period was 107.75 days; this is more than double the shortest average time from 2014-15, which was 52.5 days.

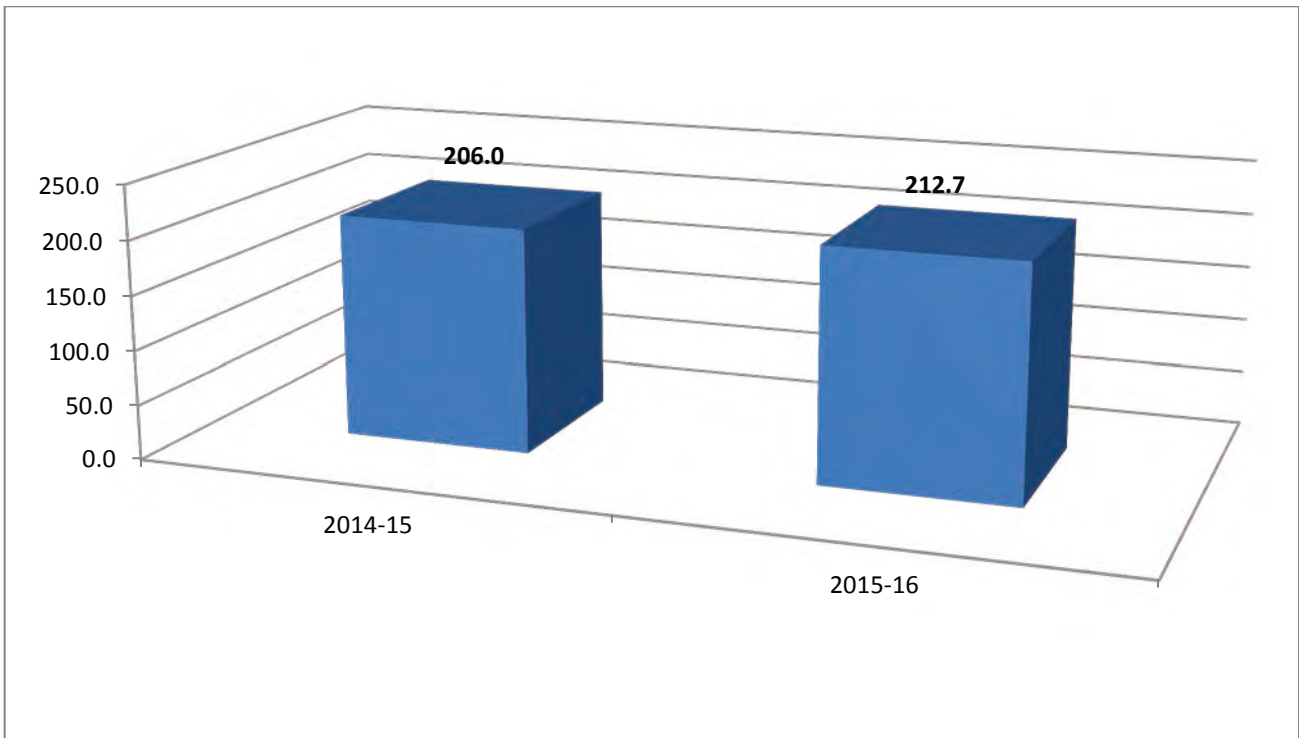


Fig 11 – Year-on-year comparison of average time taken to determine major planning applications, in days

The increase in both percentage of applications determined “on time” and the actual time taken to determine applications is attributed to more effective use of Planning Performance Agreements and agreed extensions, and changes in the way which determination dates are reported via the Development Management Quarterly Survey.

Planning Performance Agreements and agreed extensions allow for longer timeframes for decisions on major applications which are also acceptable to applicants. Local Planning Authorities report applicants are prepared to wait longer to obtain what clients perceive as higher quality decisions on applications.

Indicator	07. Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
More than 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 60% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period
Performance	76.7%	

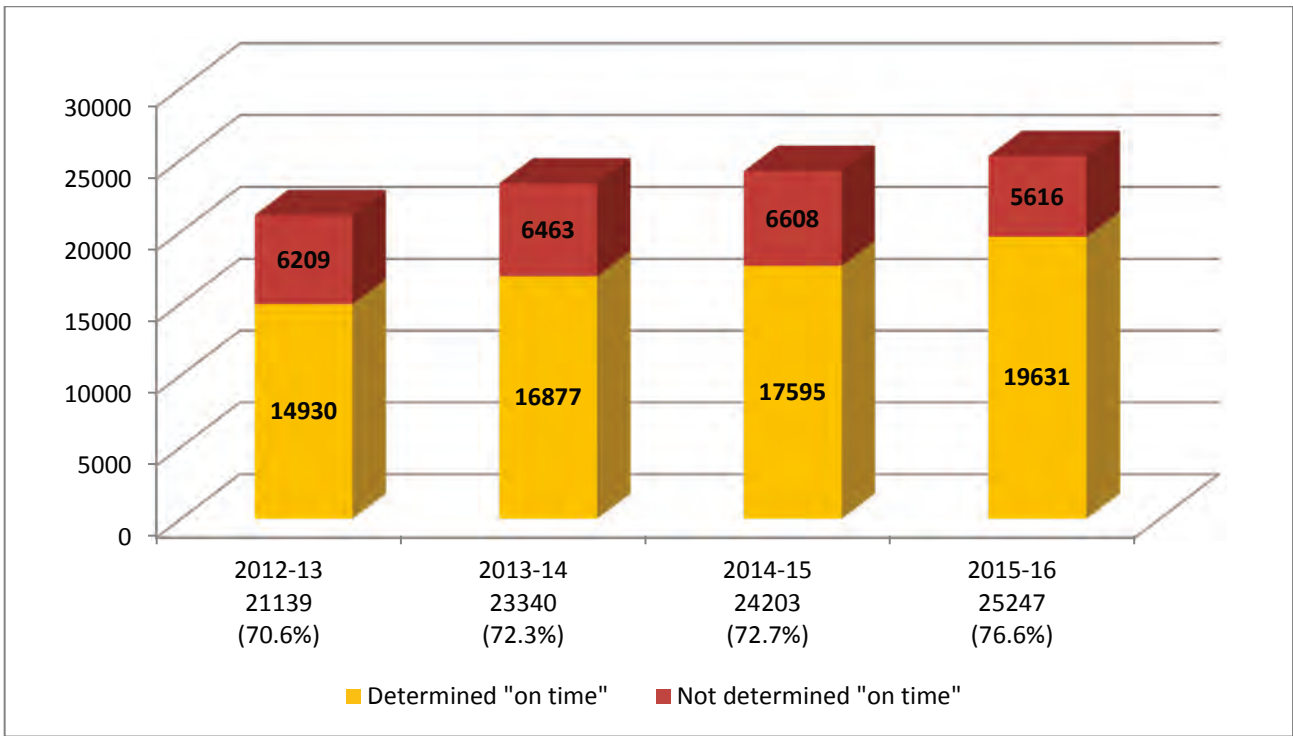


Fig 12 – Year-on-year comparison of percentage of all planning applications determined “on time”

In financial year 2015/16 19,631 of 25,247 planning applications determined were decided within the statutory time period; a rate of 76.6%. This is a continuing improvement on previous years, and makes progress towards the “good” standard of 80% of all planning applications in Wales to be determined “on time”.

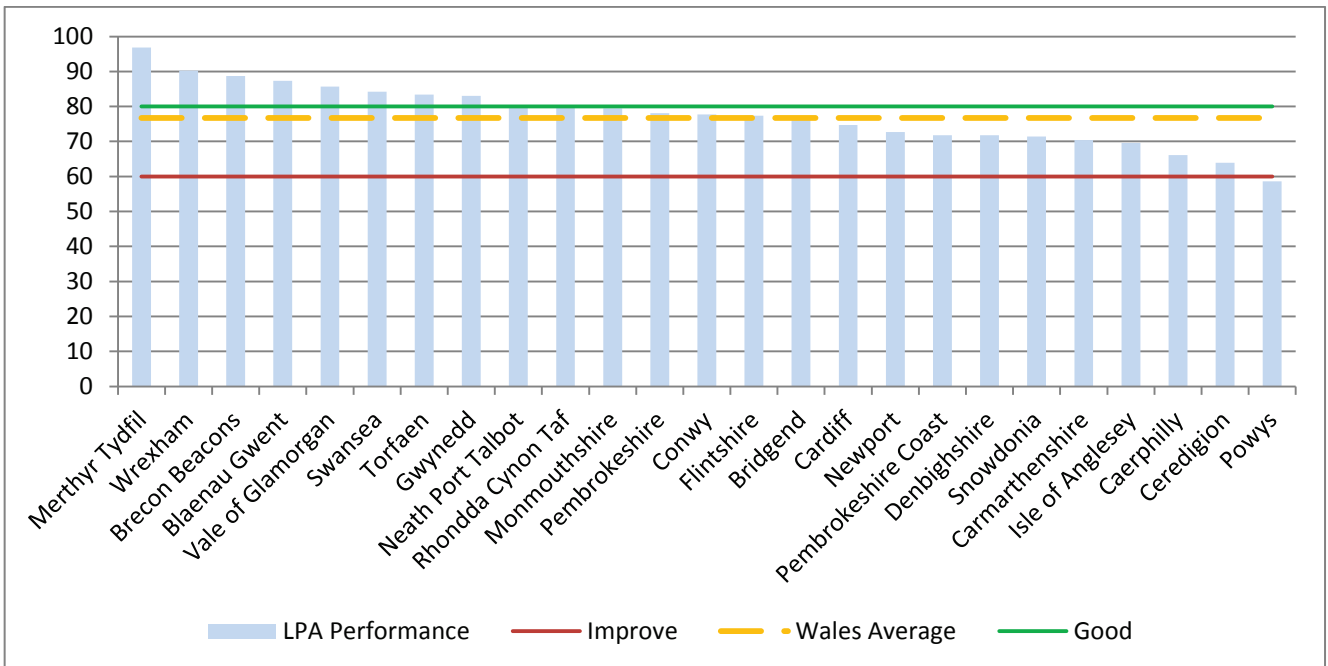


Fig 13 – Comparison of Local Planning Authority performance for determination of all planning applications

Individual local planning authority performance against this standard continues to improve, with nine Local Planning Authorities achieving the “good” standard by the end of the financial year, an increase of four from the previous year, A further 3 Local Planning Authorities are within two percent of achieving the “good” standard. Ceredigion CC has significantly improved from its “poor” performance banding in the previous year and has moved well into the “fair” banding, determining 63.9% of applications “on time”.

Powys CC has fallen just within the “poor” banding, determining 58.6% of planning applications “on time”. Powys CC, however, reported significant performance improvements in this area in the closing quarter of 2015-16, determining 84% of applications “on time” in the January to March period.

Indicator	08. Average time taken to determine all applications in days	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	77.2 days
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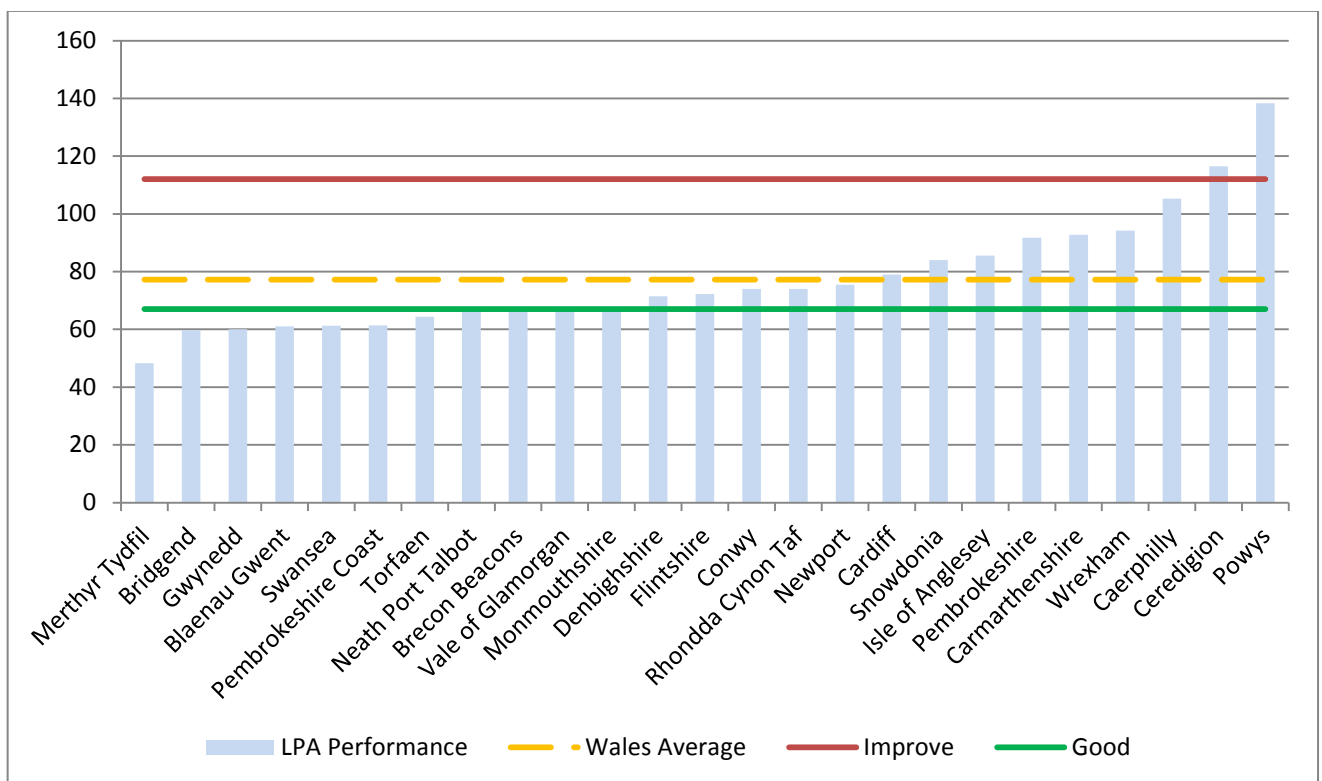


Fig 14 – Comparison of average time taken to determine all planning applications

Fig 14 above shows a comparison of average determination speeds for all application types.

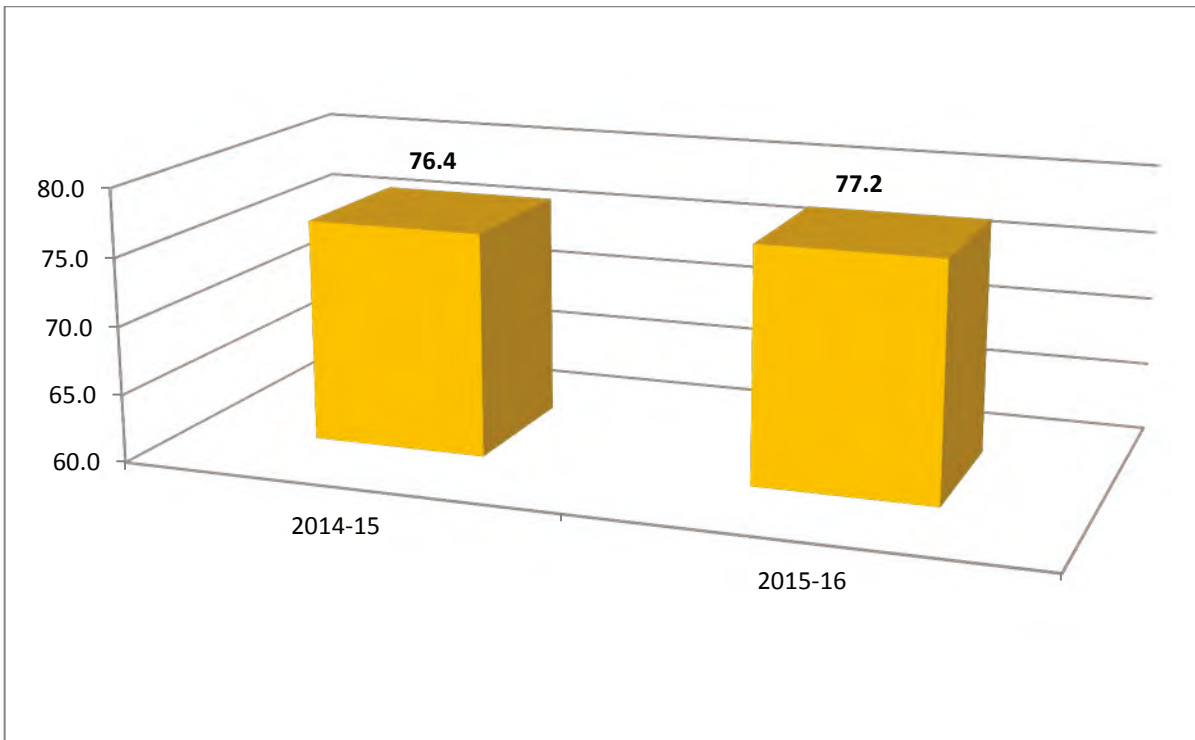


Fig 15 – Year-on-year comparison of average time taken to determine all planning applications, in days

The Welsh average for time taken to determine application is 77.2 days.

Local Planning Authorities are dependent upon input from colleagues with specialist expertise in technical fields, when preparing applications for determination. This includes internal colleagues such as highways, biodiversity and heritage officers, as well as external organisations such as Natural Resources Wales and the Health and Safety Executive.

Local government has had to make efficiency savings to address reduced funding as a consequence of public sector austerity and Local Planning Authorities are now reporting an impact on access to this specialist expertise as a result, which is in turn delaying informed advice on planning applications and increasing the time taken to issue planning decisions. Resourcing for these specialist roles is a matter for each Local Authority, although we would expect such expertise to be available to meet the relevant demand.

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on certain statutory consultees to provide a substantive response when consulted on planning applications. Those consultees will also be required, from July 2017, to report annually on their performance against this requirement. We will consider the impact of statutory consultees on the timeliness for determining planning applications in future Annual Performance Reports.

SECTION 3 - QUALITY

Indicator	09. Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked
Performance	9.0%	

Local Planning Authorities should determine applications in accordance with the relevant development plan policies unless material considerations lead it to decide otherwise. Consequently, it should be a relatively infrequent occurrence for applications to be determined contrary to those policies. Where applications are determined contrary to plan policies, clear planning reasons should be stated in the decision notice, justifying the departure from the plan.

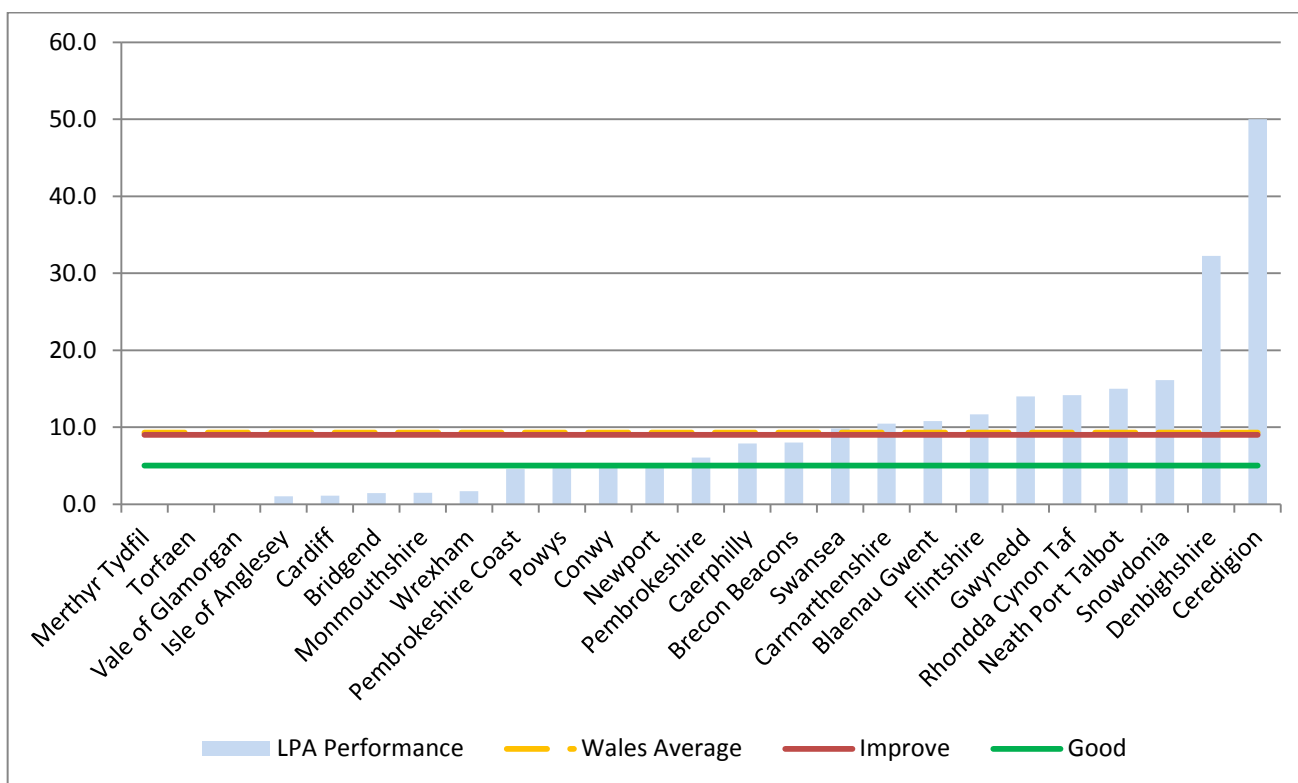


Fig 16 – Percentage of planning applications determined contrary to officer advice

Fig 16 above displays a comparison of the percentage of applications which were determined by Planning Committee, contrary to the advice of planning officers, as a percentage of all planning applications determined by the respective Planning Committee. Similarly to last year, there are two significant outliers which skew the all-Wales average for this performance indicator.

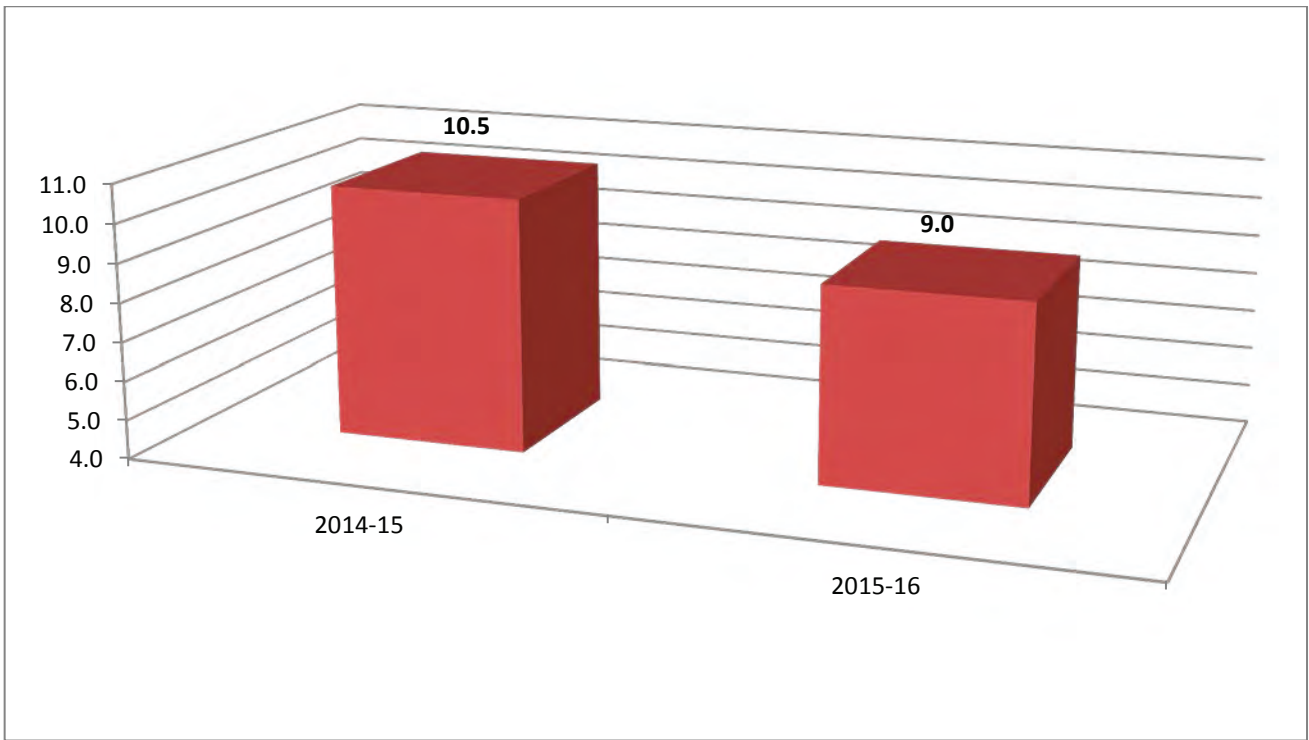


Fig 17 – Year-on-year comparison of percentage of Member decisions made contrary to officer advice

Whilst the all-Wales average for this performance indicator is still within the “improve” banding, the proportion of Member decisions made contrary to officer advice has decreased. This positive change is expected to continue in future years.

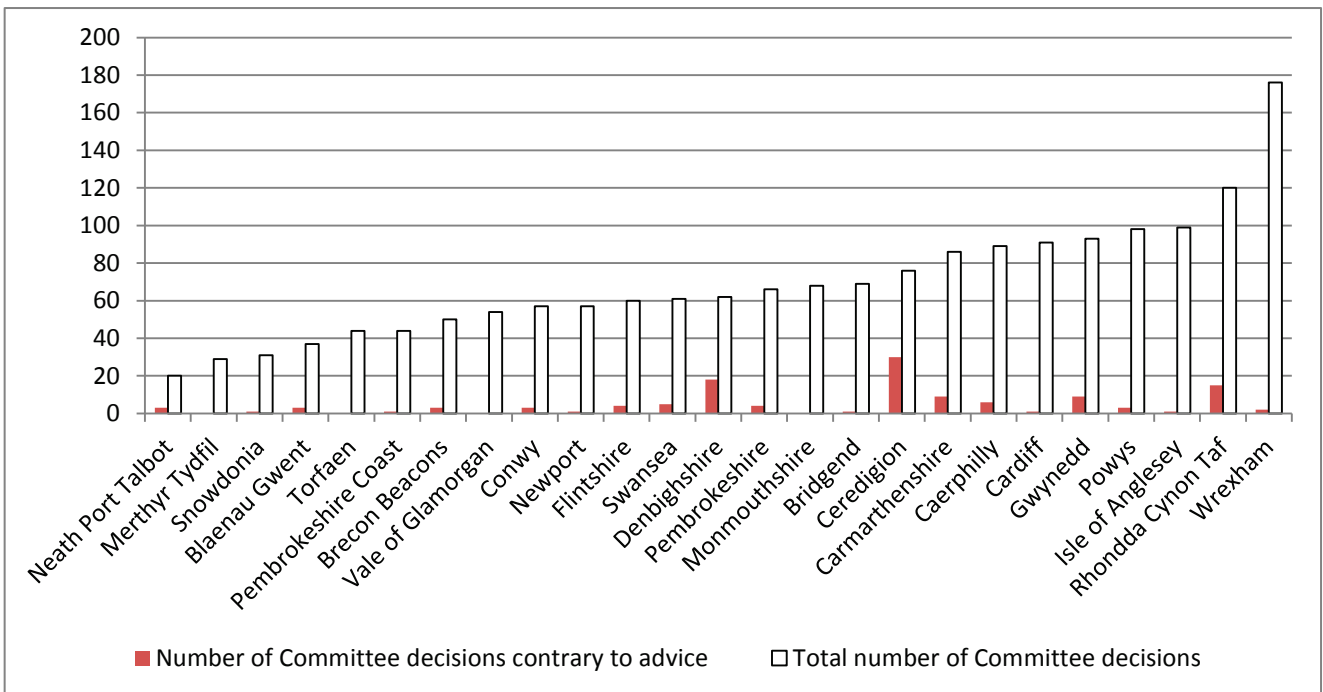


Fig 18 – Number of planning applications determined contrary to officer advice compared against total number of Committee decisions

Fig 18 above compares the number of overturn decisions to the overall number of Committee decisions. The two Local Planning Authorities with the highest number of overturns also determine a relatively low number of decisions at Committee, although there is no apparent relationship between the number of decisions made by Committee and the number, or proportion, of officer recommendations each Committee will overturn.

Feedback from Annual Performance Reports indicates where Planning Committees have been reduced in size, the smaller, better trained Planning Committees were more likely to make decisions based on strong policy considerations, and therefore in accordance with officer advice.

Several Local Planning Authorities previously reported the operation of a “cooling off” period for decisions which were made contrary to officers’ advice was helpful in ensuring there were legitimate planning reasons for such decisions.

Indicator	10. Percentage of appeals dismissed	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
More than 66% (two thirds) of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Between 55% and 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Less than 55% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal

Performance	66.5%
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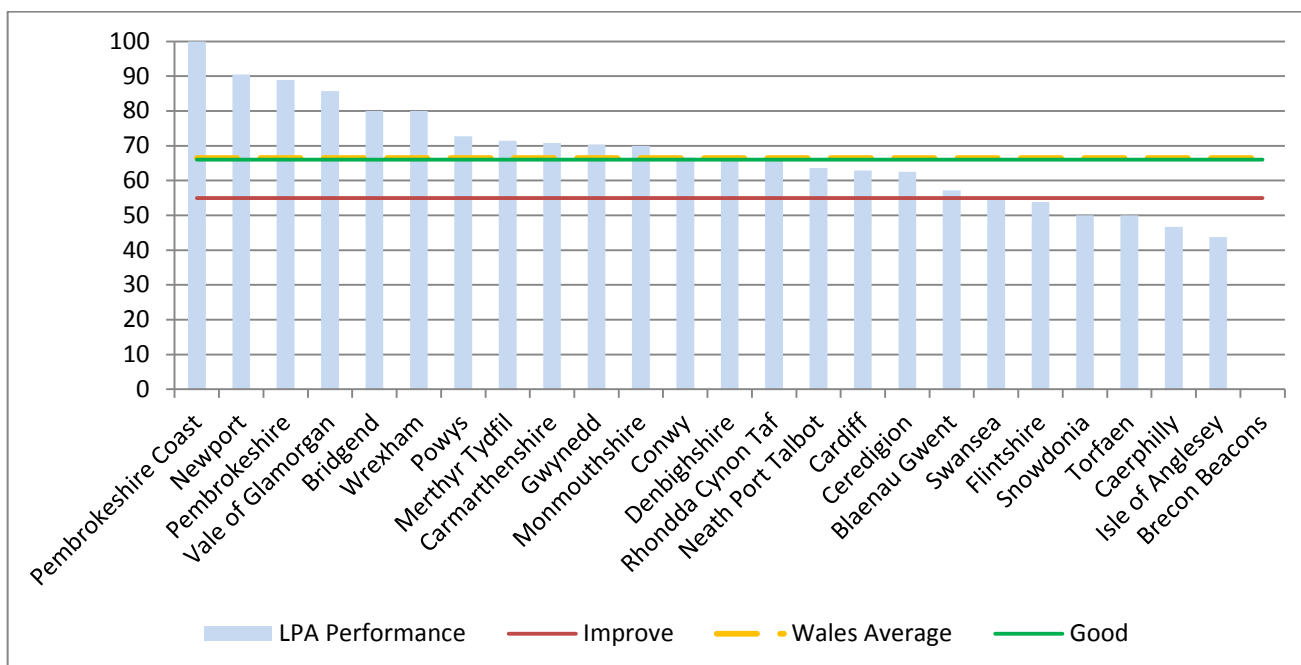


Fig 19 – Percentage of planning appeals dismissed

The chart at Fig 19 shows the comparative performance at appeal of each of the Welsh Local Planning Authorities. The average across Wales for the reporting period sits just inside the “good” performance banding.

As with previous years, it is accepted a small sample size may significantly skew the performance reported by some smaller Local Planning Authorities. For example, Brecon Beacons NPA was subject to three appeal decisions in the reporting period, in which all three appeals were upheld.

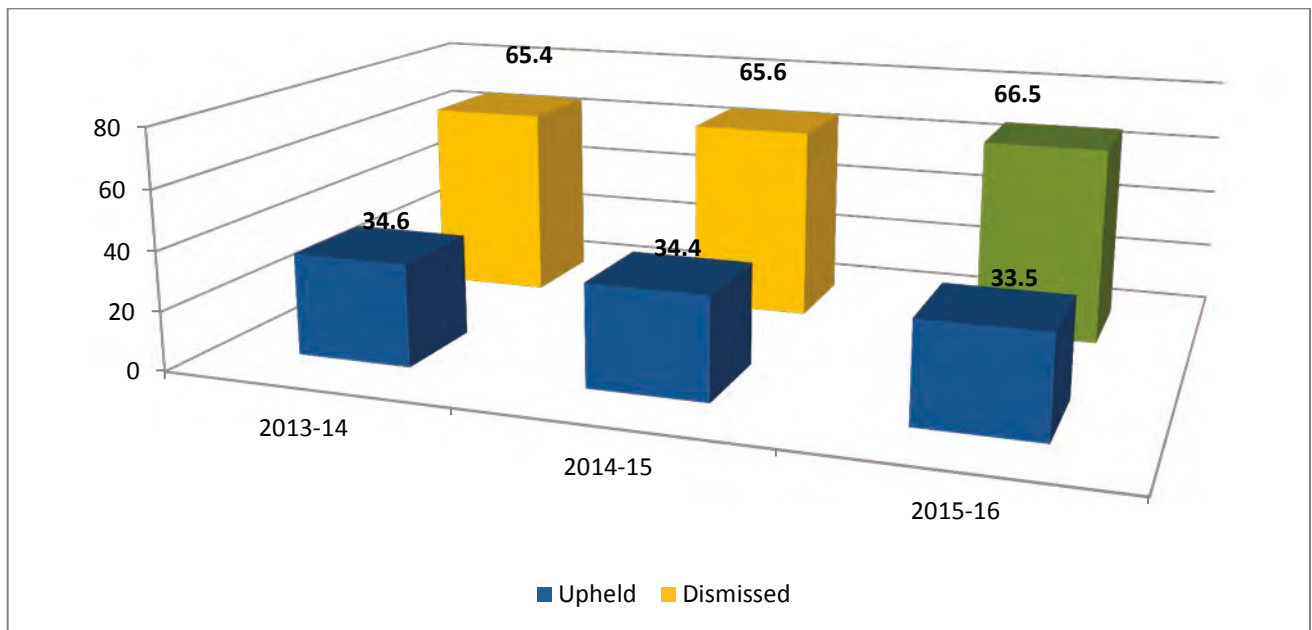


Fig 20 – Year-on-year comparison of percentage of planning appeals dismissed

The above chart shows in total, 326 of 497 appeals were dismissed in 2014/15, with an average of 65.6% - just slightly below the “good” banding. This is also a very slight improvement from 65.4% in the previous year.

The chart is indexed by percentage of appeals dismissed, with the highest percentage on the left and the lowest on the right. However, we recognise in the cases of some authorities, the very small number of appeals determined mean a very small number of upheld appeals can have a disproportionate impact on performance against this indicator.

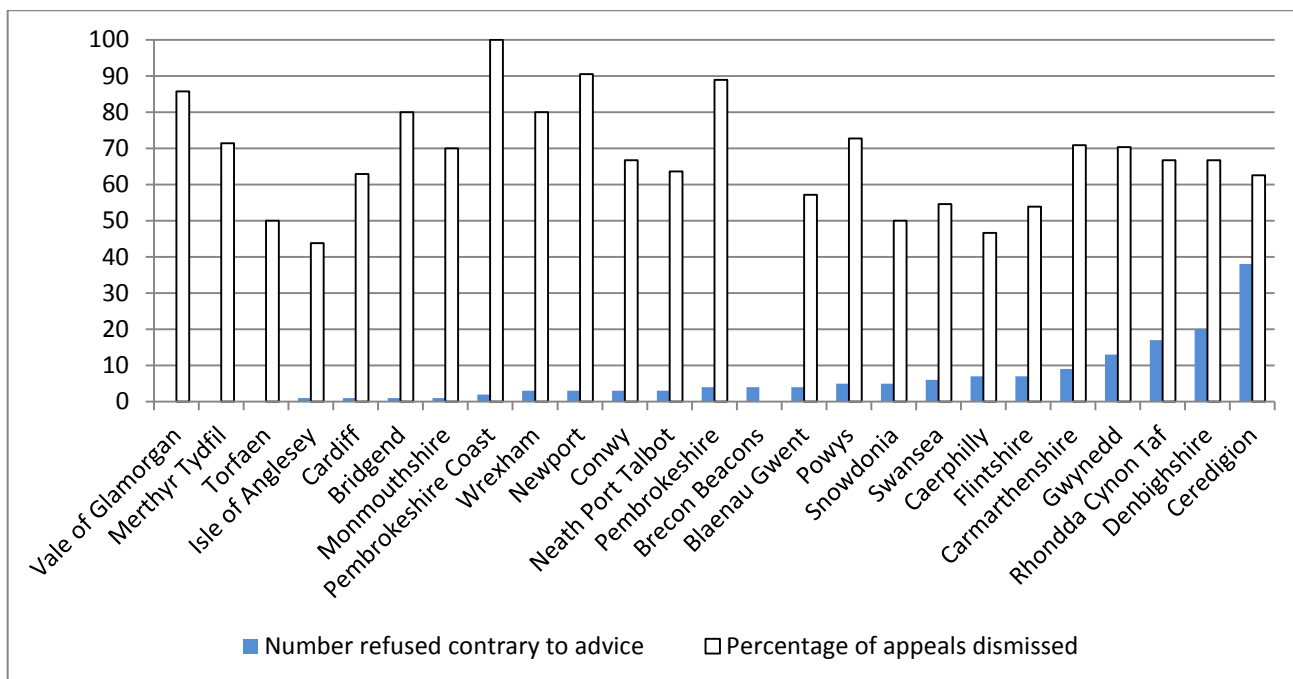


Fig 21 – Comparison of refusal overturns and appeals dismissed

It is not possible to draw a direct relationship between planning decisions determined contrary to officer advice and subsequent planning appeals. However, the reduction in decisions made contrary to officer advice increases the likelihood of decisions being made in accordance with development plan policy, which remains the primary consideration in any planning appeal. Any further reduction on determinations contrary to officer advice is also expected to lead to an increase in the all-Wales trend for improvement in percentages of appeals dismissed.

Indicator	11. Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
The authority has not had costs awarded against it at appeal	The authority has had costs awarded against it in one appeal case	The authority has had costs awarded against it in two or more appeal cases

Performance	0 appeals (20 of 25)
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During an appeal, both the appellant and the relevant authority have the opportunity to seek to recover costs for the appeal process if they believe the other party has acted unreasonably. The costs cover the work and effort required for the appeal to be considered – this can include the time and costs required for officers or agents to give evidence.

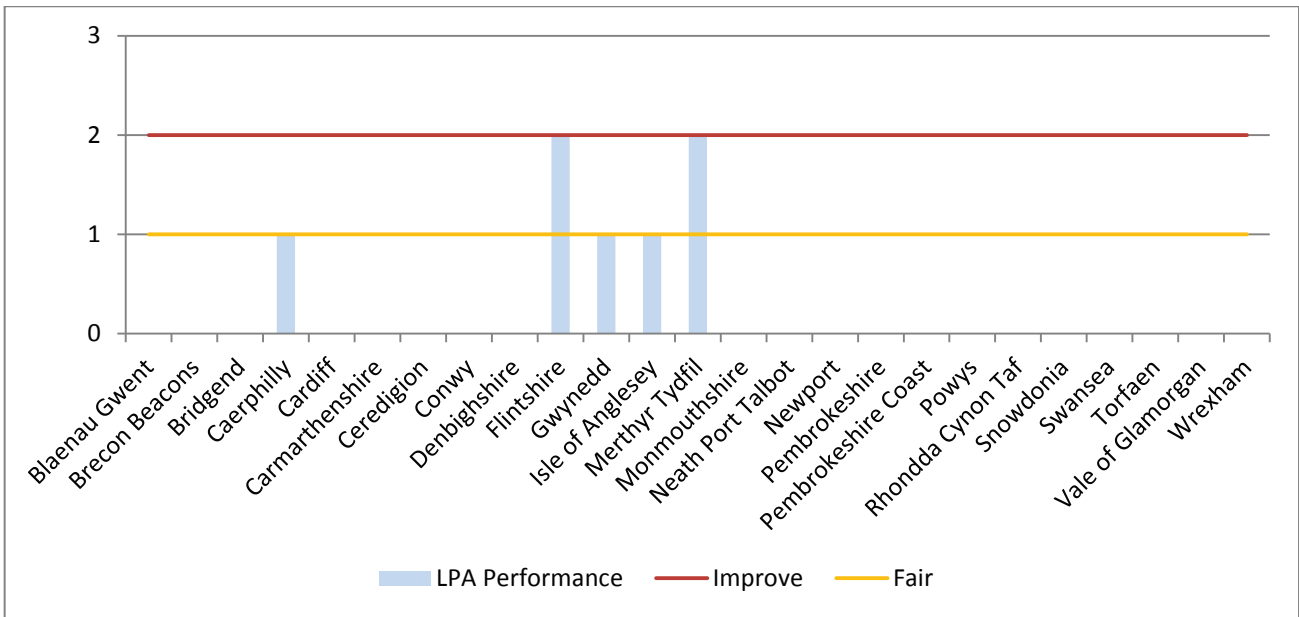


Fig 22 – Number of cases where costs have been awarded against the local planning authority at appeal

Fig 22 above illustrates costs were only awarded against local planning authorities in seven cases – although two authorities were subject to award of costs twice. 20 of 25 authorities did not have costs awarded against them at appeal, which is a successful outcome against this indicator.

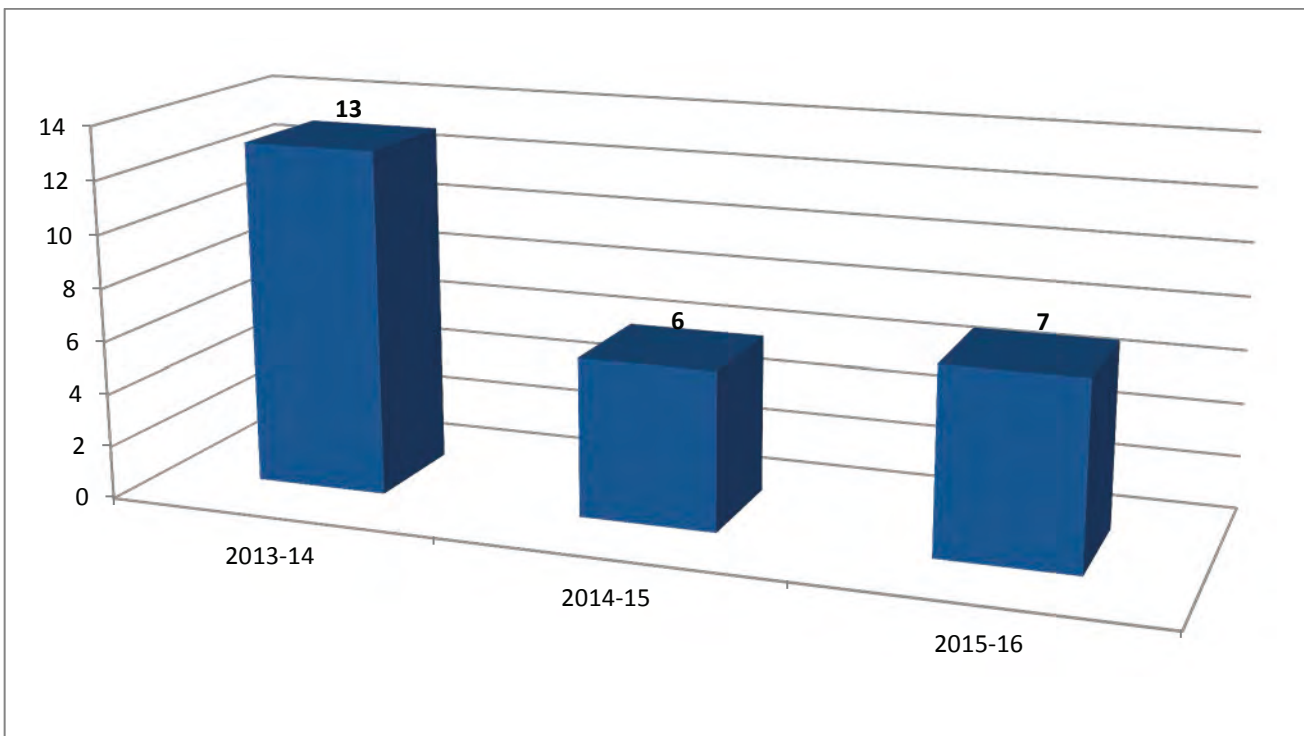


Fig 23 – Year-on-year comparison of number of cases where costs have been awarded against the local planning authority at appeal

Year-on-year comparison indicates progress on this indicator achieved last year has been maintained. Whilst the total number of cases where costs have been incurred has

increased by one, the number remains low in comparison with the statistics for the 2013-14 reporting period and low in general. This is encouraging, as the award of costs against a Local Planning Authority is indicative of unreasonableness on the part of the Local Planning Authority in refusing permission.

Feedback to Members on costs cases, as part of a “lessons learned exercise”, has been reported by some Local Planning Authorities as successful in encouraging decision makers to ensure the planning decisions they make are transparent and defensible.

SECTION 4 – ENGAGEMENT

Indicator	12. Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
Members of the public are able to address the Planning Committee		Members of the public are not able to address the Planning Committee

Performance	Yes (24 of 25)
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Planning decisions are made by Local Planning Authorities in the wider public interest. The effective operation of the planning system in Wales depends upon decisions being seen to be made in this way. Enabling access to and participation in the decision making process for members of the community affected by decisions ensures they have greater confidence in the process. This includes providing members of the public with opportunities to speak at Planning Committee, informing Members of their views on decisions as they are about to be made.

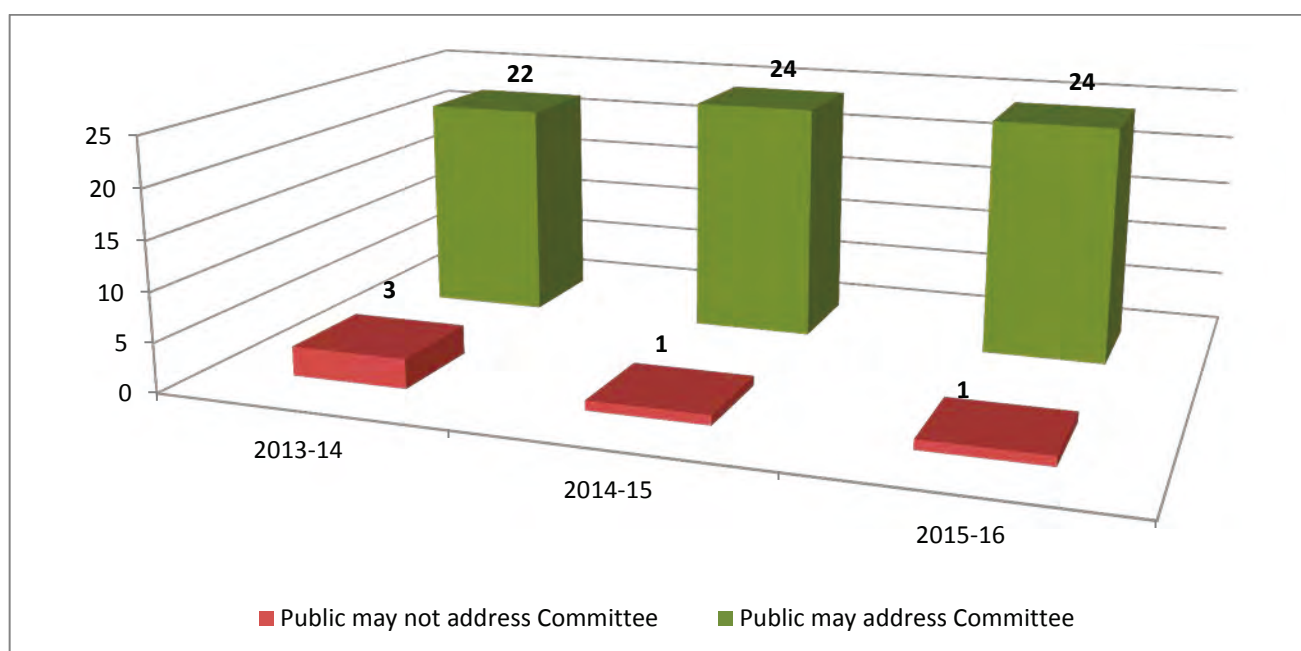


Fig 24 – Year-on-year comparison of number of authorities which allow members of the public to address Planning Committee

Merthyr Tydfil CBC is the only Local Planning Authority which does not allow members of the public to address its Planning Committee. The Council conducted a Member workshop in the reporting period, in order to inform a response to the Welsh Local Government Association’s consultation on a Planning Committee Protocol, in which the Council’s Members supported the principle of public speaking rights at Planning Committee.

The implementation of this agreement is yet to take effect although is likely to occur in 2017 as a result of the Committee Protocol, at which point all Welsh Local Planning Authorities will allow the public to address Planning Committee.

Indicator	13. Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
Members of the public can seek advice from a duty planning officer		There is no duty planning officer available

Performance	Yes (22 of 25)
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Many Local Planning Authorities offer a “duty officer” service, where members of the public can access a designated officer throughout the working day to resolve queries on planning matters or advice on development proposals and likely policy considerations. In more complex or larger scale cases, pre-application queries may be directed into the more formal statutory or non-statutory pre-application services.

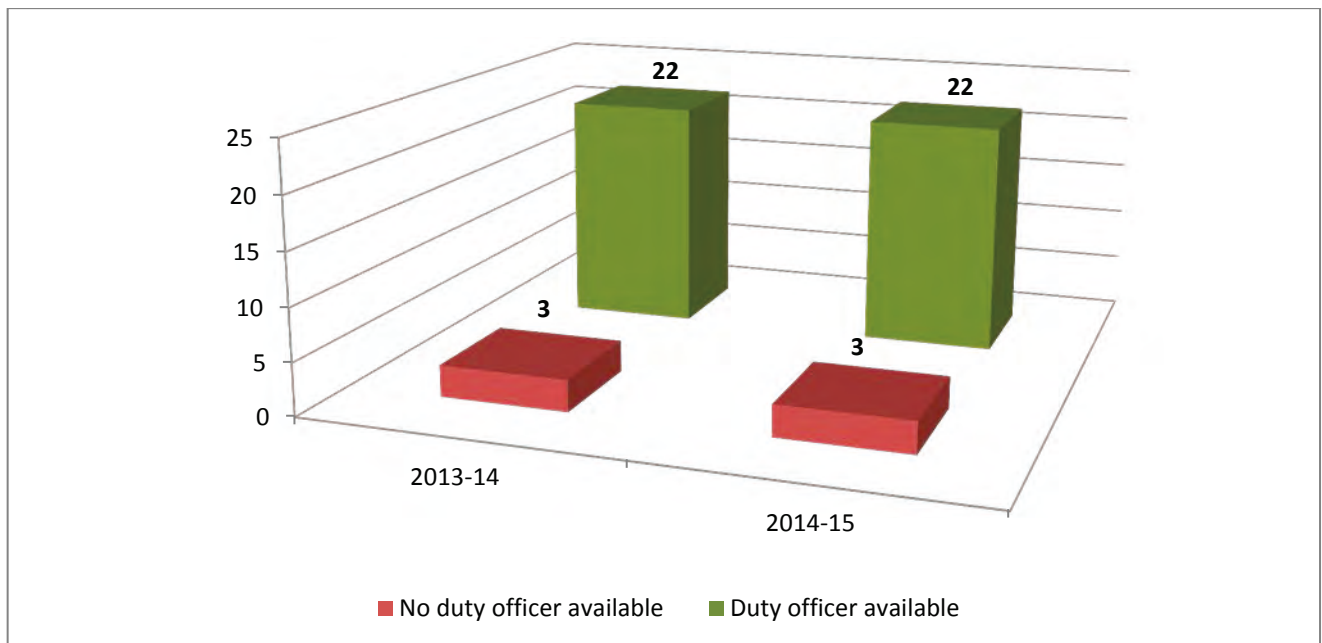


Fig 25 – Year-on-year comparison of number of authorities which provide a “duty officer” service

Fig 25 indicates no change in the number of Local Planning Authorities which provide a “duty officer” service over three years. Each of the three remaining Local Planning Authorities which do not offer this service has considered the need for the service and resolved, according to its own circumstances, not to provide it.

In the case of Bridgend CBC and Gwynedd Council, both Councils have moved this customer facing function into a broader corporate customer service team, as a part of Council reorganisation. Meanwhile, Ceredigion CC reports it has focused efforts to improve service performance on planning application handling.

Indicator	14. Does the local planning authority’s web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access track their progress (and view their content)?	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
All documents are available online	Only the planning application details are available online, and access to other documents must be sought directly	No planning application information is published online

Performance	Yes (20 of 25)
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The ability to access planning applications and supporting documents on the internet increases opportunities for participation in the decision making process, particularly amongst those who are unable to attend Local Planning Authority offices, due to access, travel or other time commitments. Many Local Planning Authorities make use of ICT systems which can publish planning application files and associated content directly to the authority’s website.

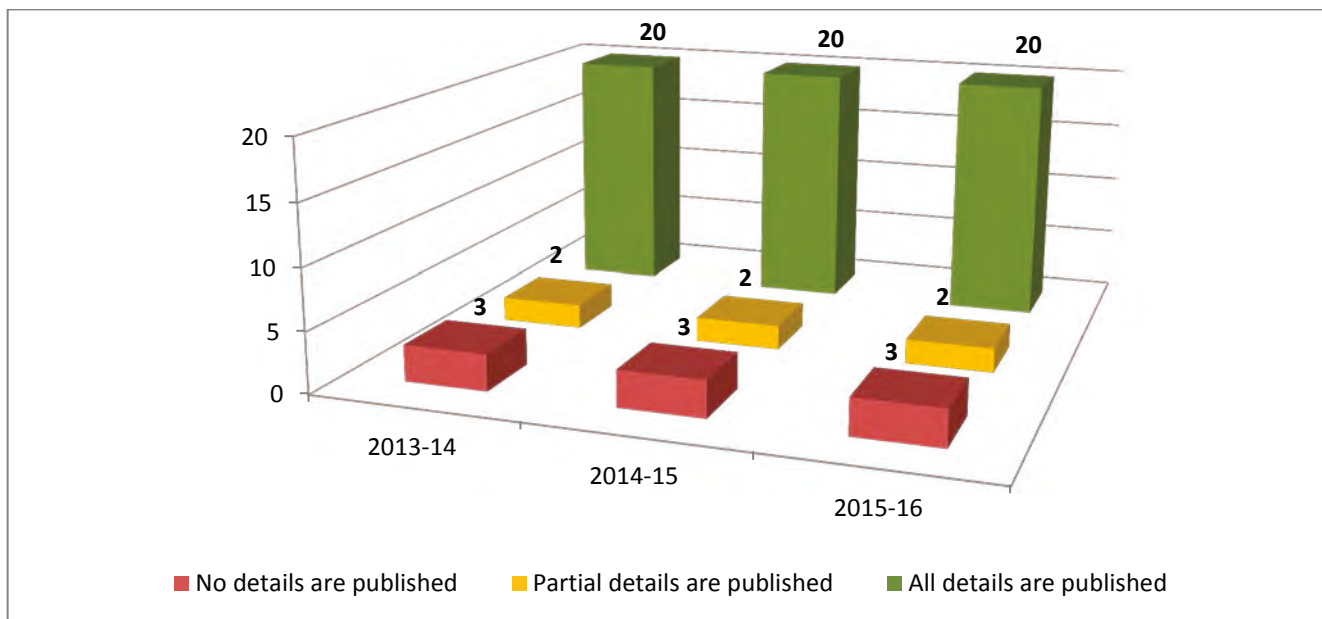


Fig 26 – Year-on-year comparison of number of authorities which publish planning application information on their web site

Fig 26 shows 20 Local Planning Authorities provide full access to planning application files on their web site. Of the remaining 5, 2 provide some level of planning application information and 3 provide no details. There has been no change in this area over the previous three reporting periods, although Torfaen CBC has since commissioned a new web-based service. The four remaining Local Planning Authorities are all exploring options for resourcing a similar service, subject to local financial constraints.

SECTION 5 – ENFORCEMENT

Indicator	15. Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	79.4%
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Third parties can expect alleged breaches of planning control to be investigated within a reasonable time frame. The target of 84 days, or 12 weeks, is agreed as reasonable by Local Planning Authorities which should expect to respond to as many complaints as possible within this timeframe.

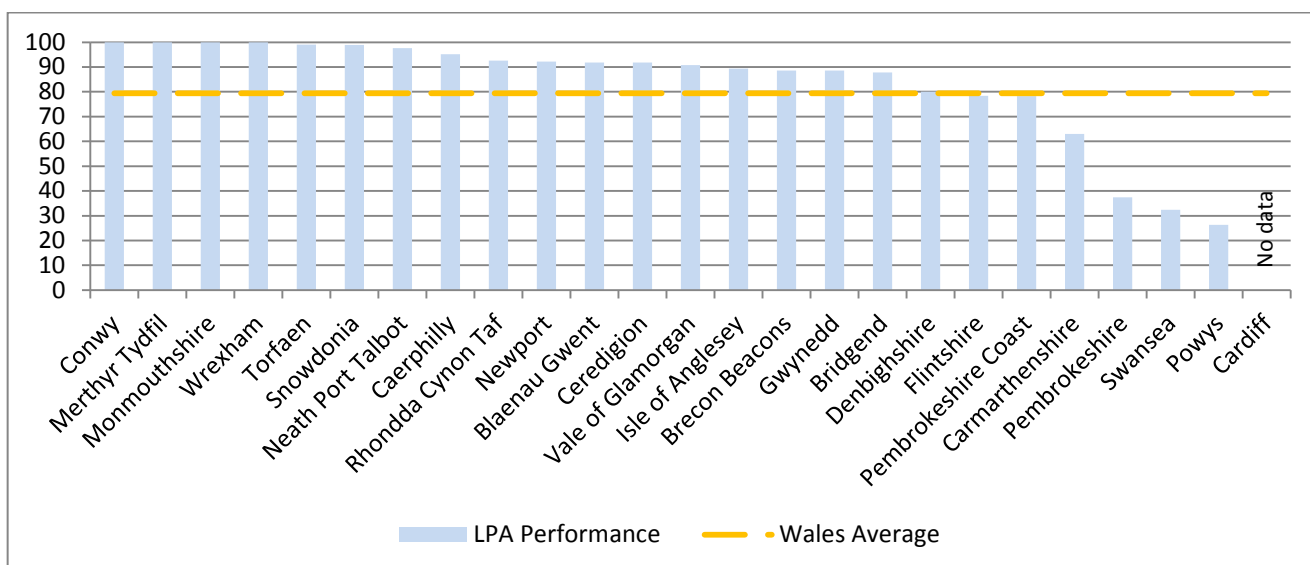


Fig 27 – percentage of enforcement complaints investigated within 84 days

Fig 27 above shows the individual performance of Local Planning Authorities against this indicator. 17 Local Planning Authorities comfortably meet the “good” performance banding, with a further three falling slightly short of the 80% target. There are three significant outliers for performance against this indicator and Cardiff CC has not supplied data for the reporting period, although the Council has now introduced measures to collect and report on this data. With Cardiff CC’s data included the Wales average for performance against this indicator will rise above 80%.

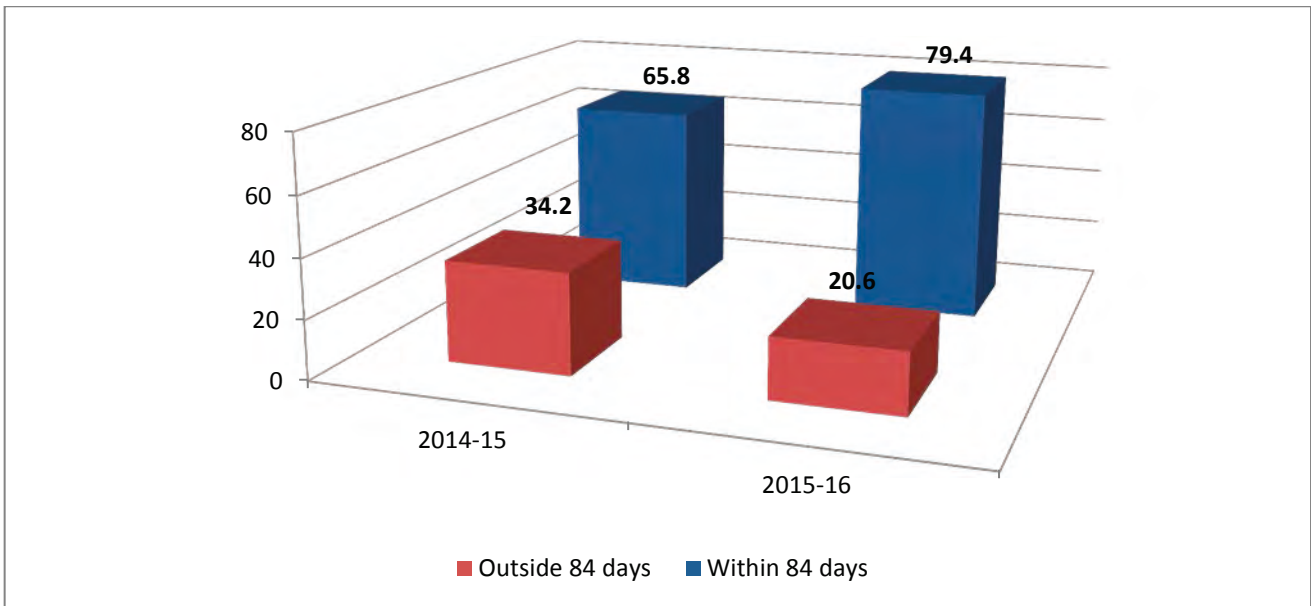


Fig 28 – Year-on-year comparison of the percentage of enforcement cases investigated within 84 days

The above chart shows in the majority of cases (79.4%), complaints of breaches of planning control are investigated within the target date of 84 days. Whilst performance is not banded, the current performance is viewed as at close to a “good” standard across Wales.

The general progress on this indicator over 12 months is to be welcomed, particularly in a time of financial restraint, although to some extent this can also be attributed to more effective data reporting.

Indicator	16. Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	88.1 days
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This indicator is intended as a comparator to the performance of authorities against the 84 day timescale for investigating performance cases, reported above.

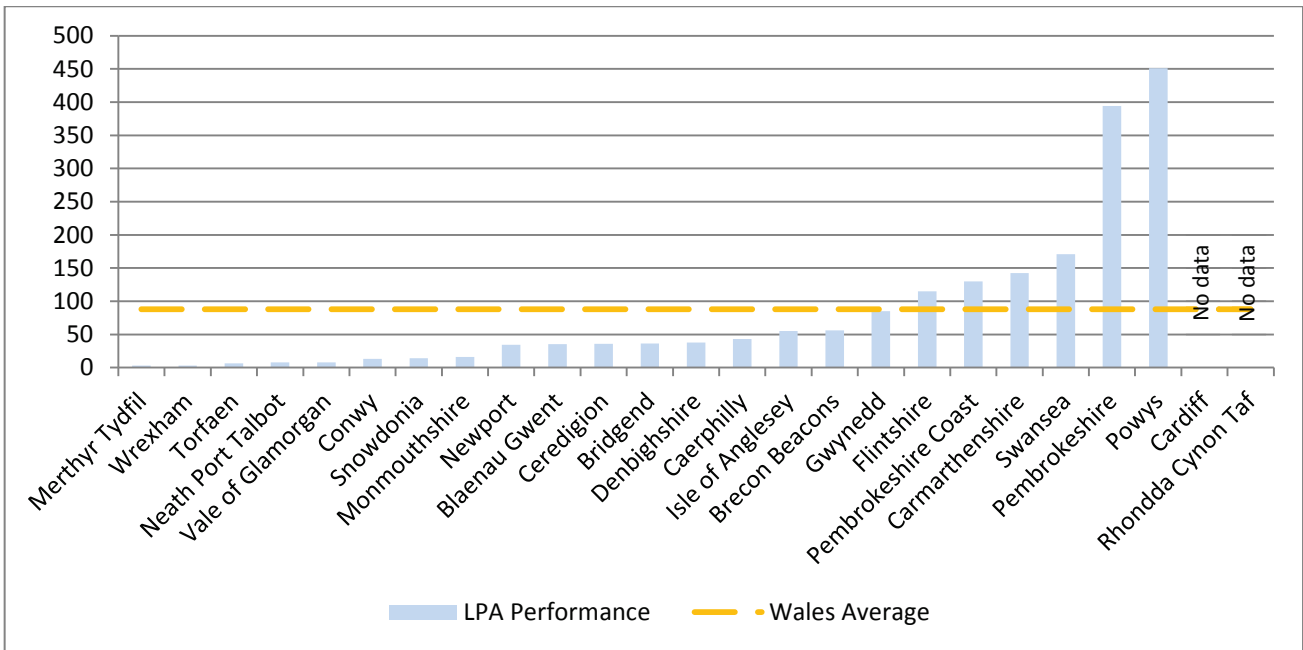


Fig 29 – Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases

Fig 29 above shows the comparison of average times to investigate enforcement cases. There are two extreme outliers in this comparative chart, which significantly skew the all-Wales average for performance against this indicator. Both report they have made significant progress in addressing a historic backlog in enforcement cases in the reporting period.

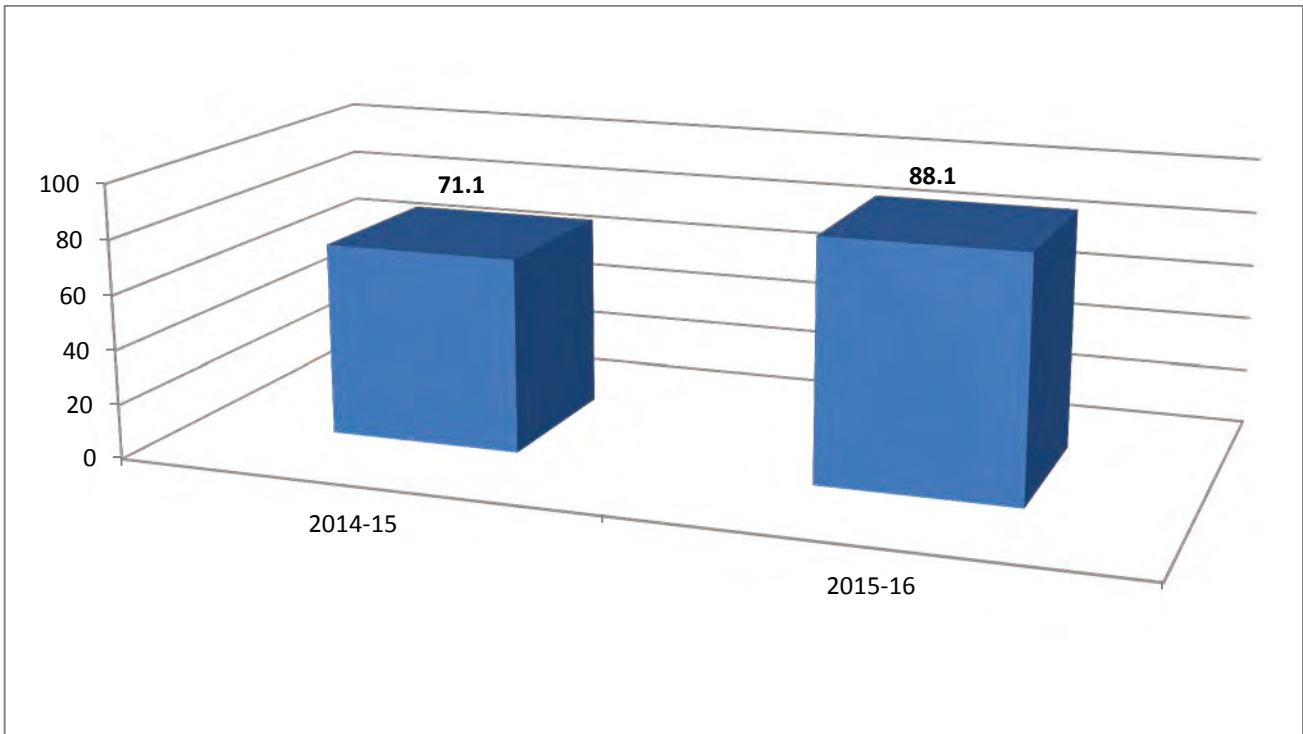


Fig 30 – Year-on-year comparison of average time taken to investigate enforcement cases, in days

Fig 30 shows whilst the percentage of cases investigated in 84 days has increased, so has the average time taken to investigate cases. As with Fig 29, extreme outliers have disproportionately affected the Wales average here. Powys CC, for example, reports an average time of 451 days to investigate enforcement complaints; this is attributed to some long standing enforcement cases resolved in the reporting period. We expect both Powys and Pembrokeshire CCs to report performance much closer to their peers in the next reporting period.

Indicator	17. Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application received within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	72.8%
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The time for taking enforcement action can be significantly extended by the developer, using a variety of means. Local Planning Authorities have reported they have no ownership or control over their performance against this indicator in some cases, as a consequence of such circumstances. Given the indicator should measure Local Planning Authority performance, we have agreed further consideration should be given to the suitability of the indicator.

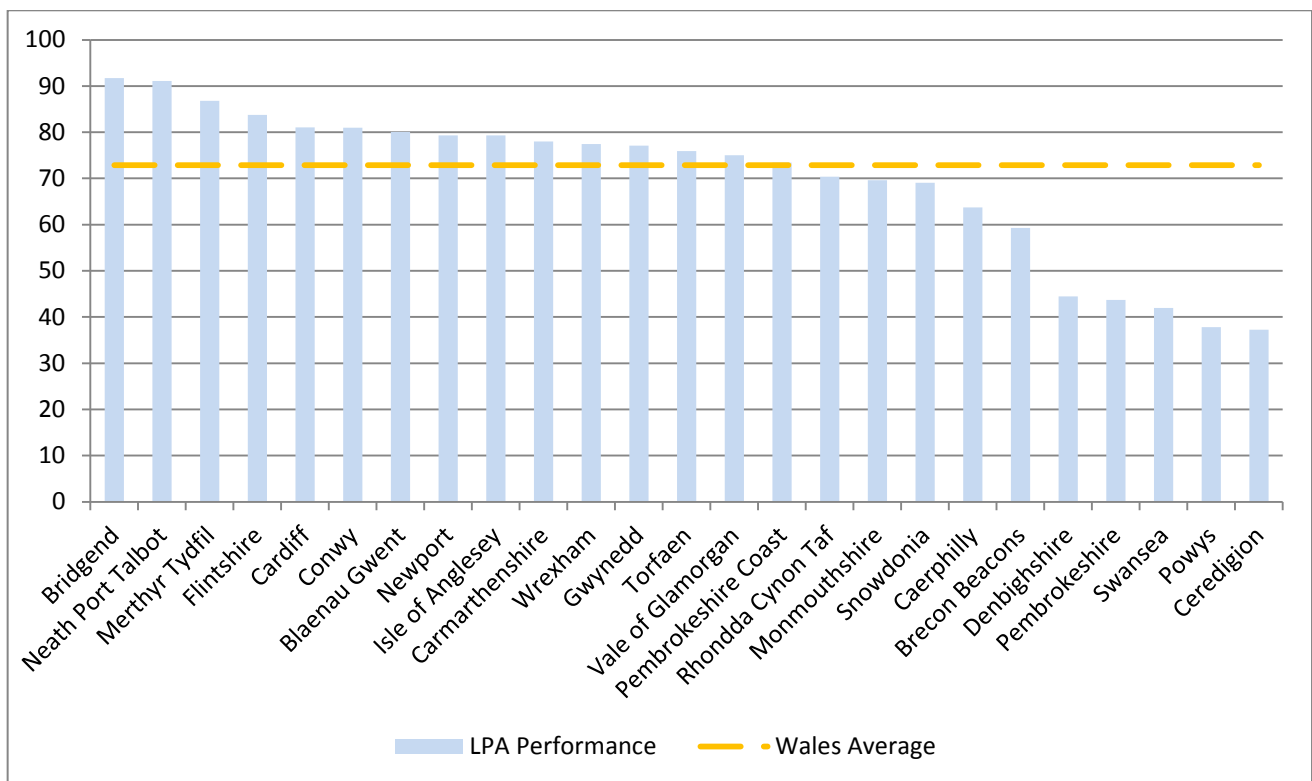


Fig 31 – percentage of enforcement complaints resolved within 180 days

In the mean-time, Local Planning Authorities report significant variation on their performance against the indicator, as set out in Fig 31 above. As with Indicators 15 and 16, Local Planning Authorities which have chosen to reduce their enforcement teams as a response to budget pressures have typically performed less well than others. This demonstrates the value in a trained and experienced enforcement team.

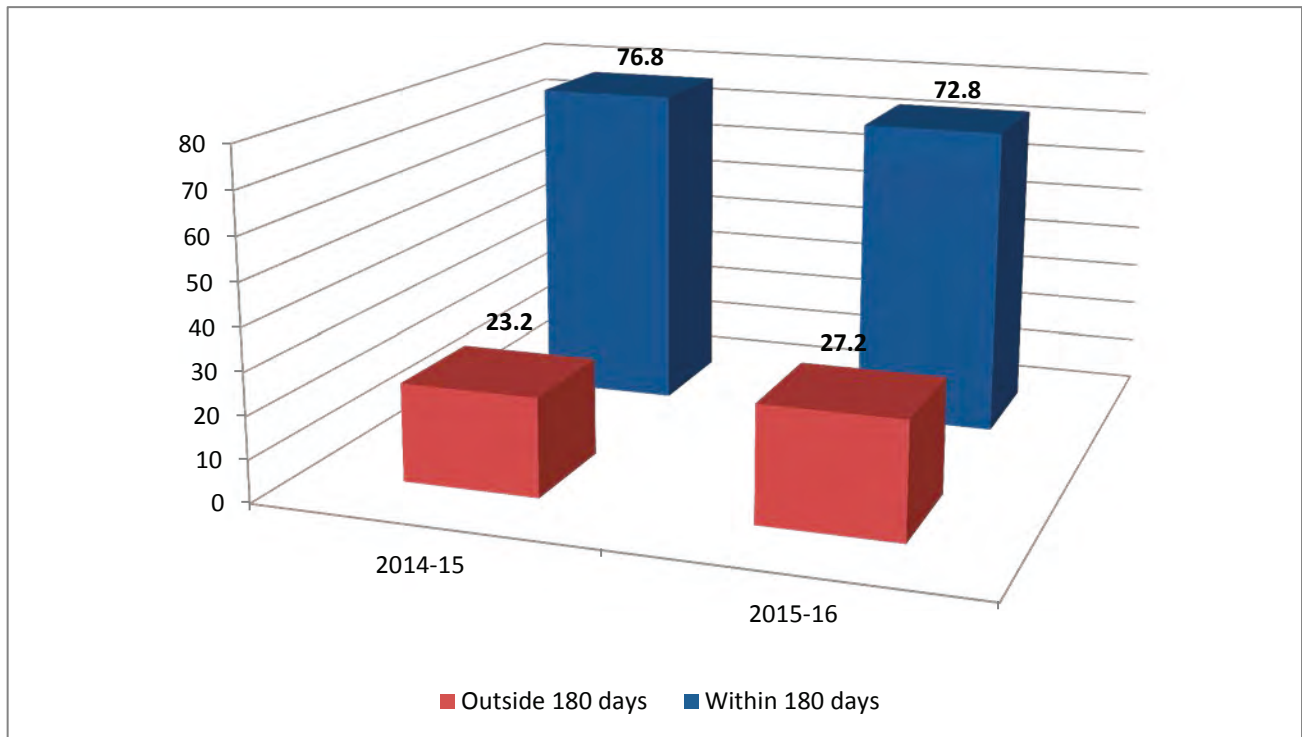


Fig 32 – Year-on-year comparison of percentage of enforcement cases resolved in 180 days

The above chart shows 76.8% of enforcement cases where action is required are acted upon within 180 days. This is a decline of 4% on the previous year and also highlights the transfer of enforcement tasks to core development management teams.

Indicator	18. Average time taken to take enforcement action	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Performance	210.1 days
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This indicator shows the average time taken for Local Planning Authorities to resolve enforcement complaints, as described in Indicator 17.

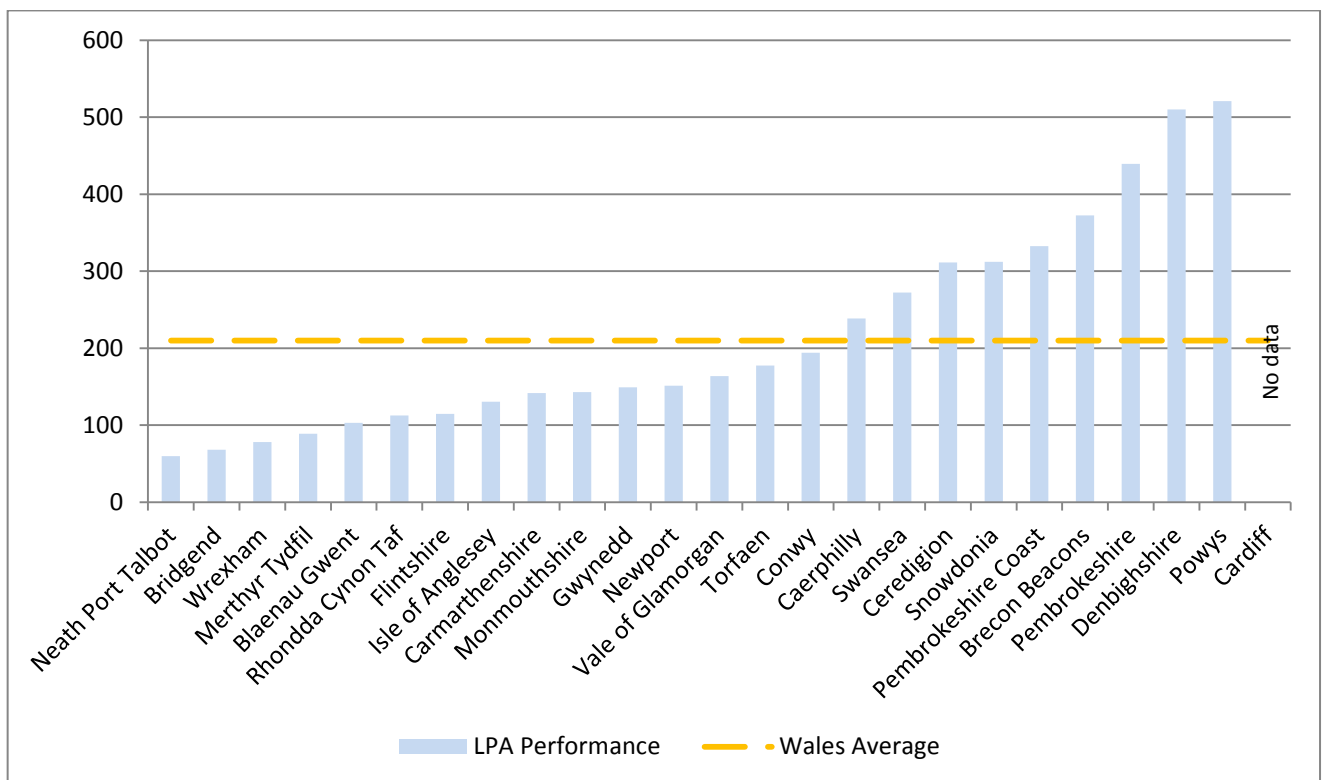


Fig 33 – Average time taken to resolve enforcement cases

As with Indicator 16, Cardiff CC has not provided date for the reporting period although the Council plans to do so for future reporting periods. The 24 other Local Planning Authorities report significant variation in time taken to resolve enforcement cases, in Fig 33. This is attributed both to the presence (or not) of enforcement officers in the Local Planning Authorities and the relative complexities associated with some enforcement cases.

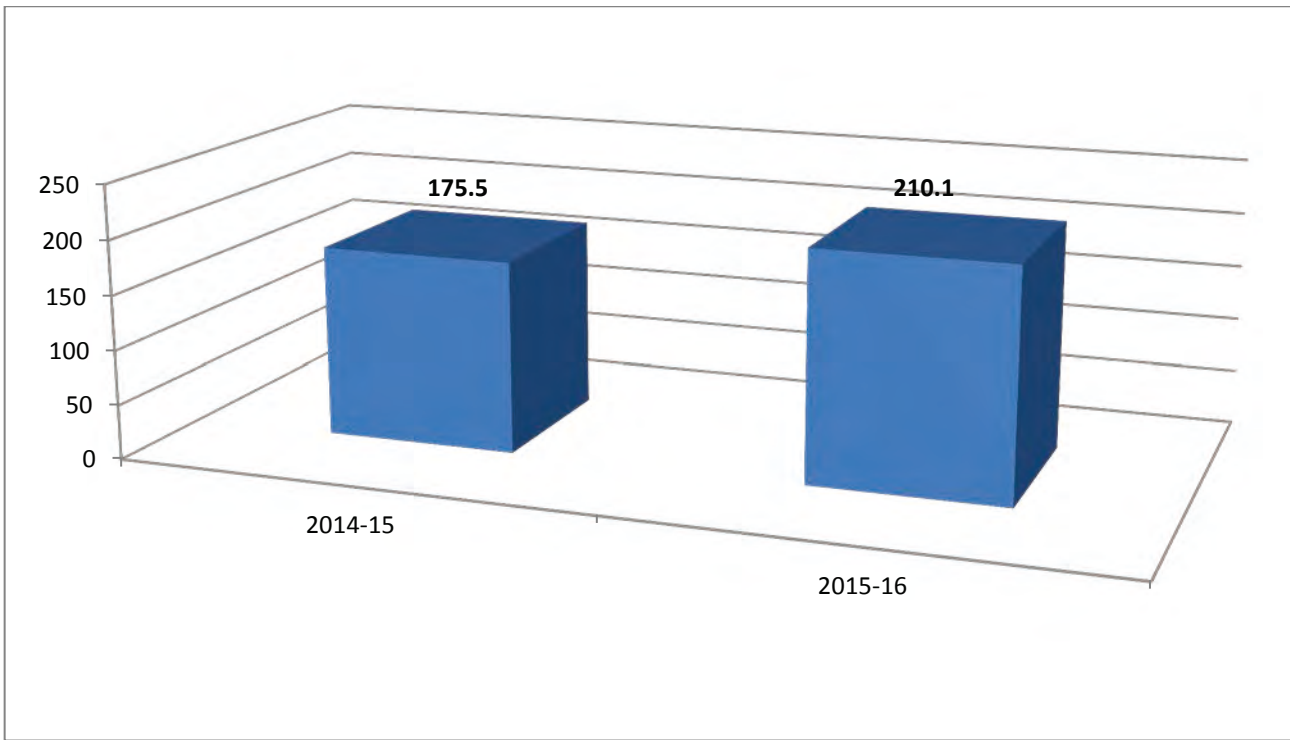


Fig 34 – Year-on-year comparison of average time taken to resolve enforcement cases, in days

Fig 34 shows the overall time taken to resolve enforcement cases. On average it has increased by 34.6 days. As well as being a consequence of the drawdown of local enforcement teams to address service budgeting issues, this is also partly attributable to a more complete dataset, as several Local Planning Authorities provided no data on this indicator in the previous reporting period.

Given the statements by a number of the Local Planning Authorities performing less well against Indicator 18, we anticipate performance in this field will improve in the coming year.

4 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies, including Welsh Ministers, to carry out sustainable development. The Act defines sustainable development as:

“Sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

Acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle means a body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The planning system is key to the implementation of sustainable development in Wales. It enables the legislative and policy framework for the use, management and development of land in the public interest.

The Welsh Government operates a suite of seven key indicators designed to identify how the planning system contributes to the achievement of sustainable development in Wales. They are:

- SD1 Economic Renewal - Economic Development
- SD2 A Low Carbon Economy - Renewable Energy
- SD3 Access to Better Homes – New Homes (including affordable housing)
- SD4 Resilience to Climate Change – Flood Risk
- SD5 Efficient Land Use – Previously Developed Land
- SD6 Open Space – Open Space Lost/Gained
- SD7 Community Infrastructure – Contributions Secured for Community Facilities

The information is collected from Local Planning Authorities following their consideration of planning applications and submitted on a quarterly basis. This is used for cumulative, rather than comparative, analysis.

Provision of the data is necessary to demonstrate the significant role the planning system plays in helping to deliver a range of sustainable development outcomes and the value of planning to society more generally.

The following Local Planning Authorities submitted complete data in the reporting period:

- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- Ceredigion County Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- Denbighshire County Council

- Gwynedd County Council
- Isle of Anglesey County Council
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Newport County Borough Council
- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
- Powys County Council
- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council

The following Local Planning Authorities submitted partial records in the reporting period:

- Flintshire County Council
- Pembrokeshire County Council
- Snowdonia National Park Authority
- City and County of Swansea

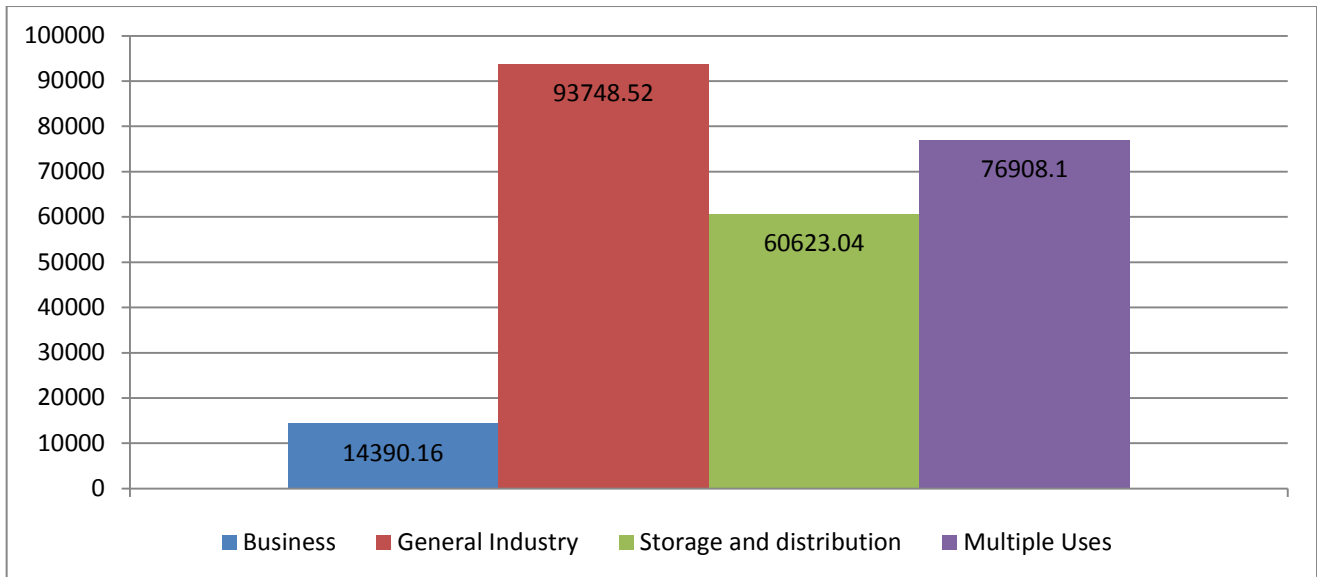
The following Local Planning Authorities submitted no records in the reporting period:

- Cardiff City Council
- Wrexham County Borough Council

Indicator	SD1. The floorspace (square metres) granted and refused planning permission for new economic development on allocated employment sites during the year.
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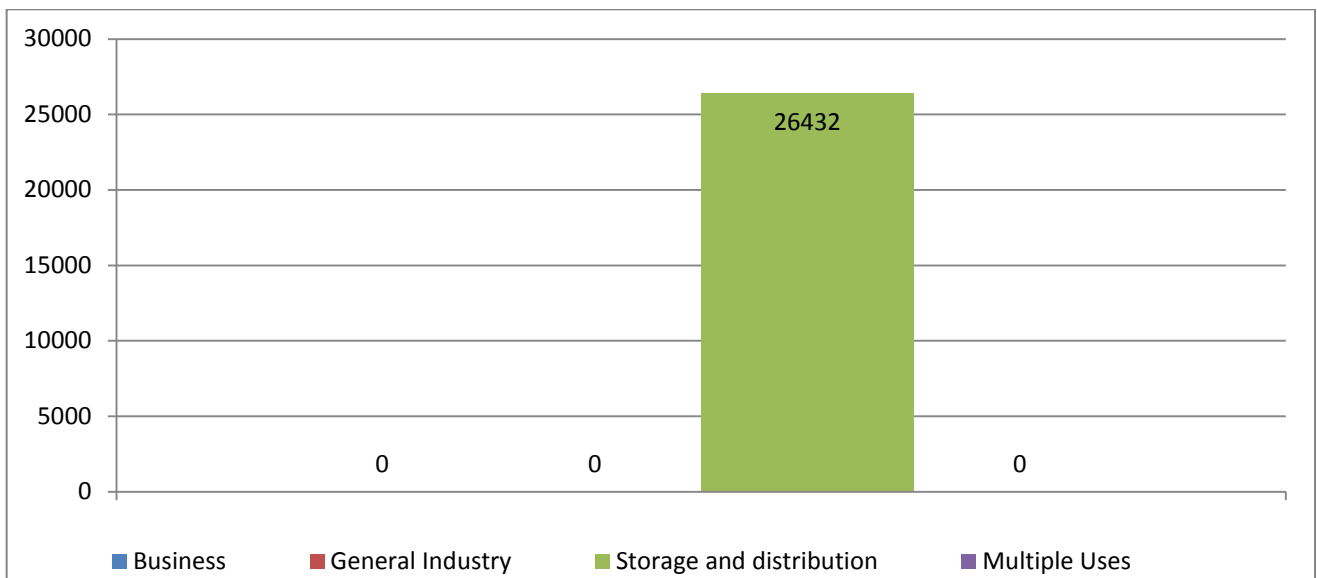
Granted (square metres)

Performance	245,669.8
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Refused (square metres)

Performance	26,432
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The planning system should support economic development and steer such development to the most appropriate locations. This indicator provides information on the contribution the planning system is making to delivering traditional economic development in identified employment sites.

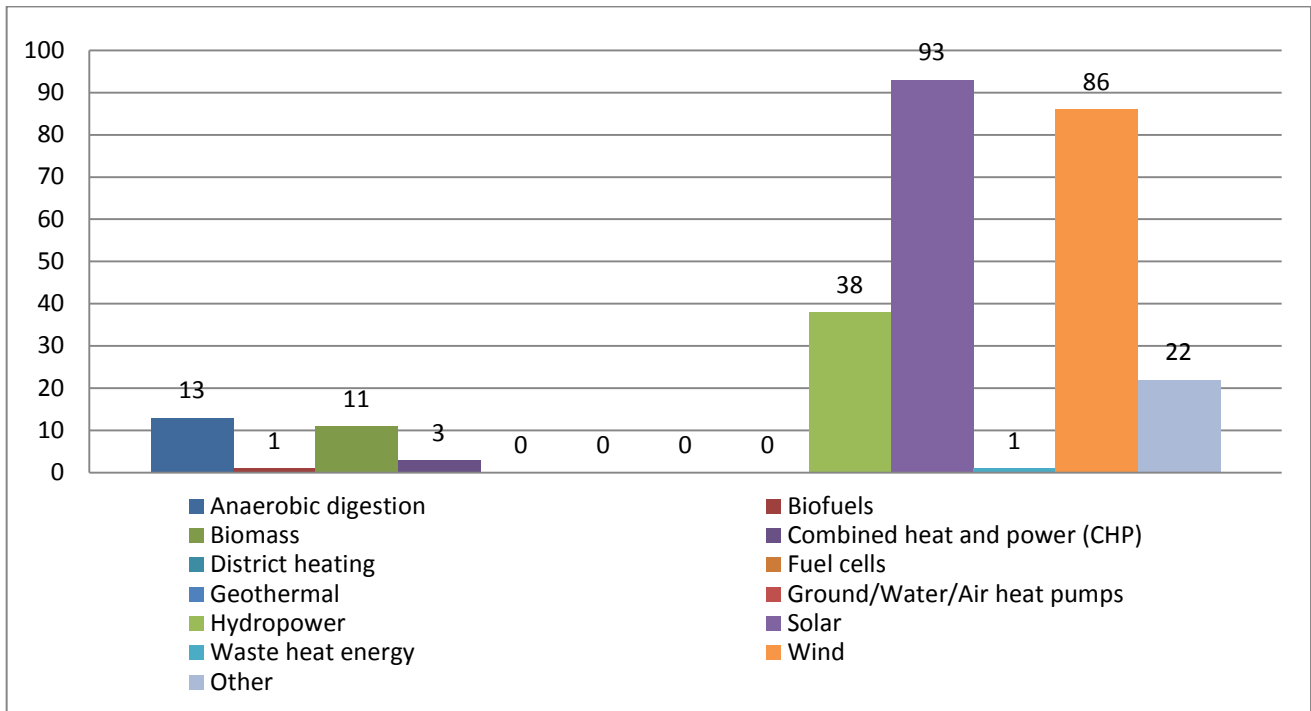
Although the data for 2015-16 is not complete (not all local authorities responded), it shows the Local Planning Authorities who have provided data have facilitated 245,669 square metres of new floor space for economic development. This reflects the importance of planning for employment land provision and the role of development plans in allocating land for economic development. This figure is down on the previous year where 251,615 square metres of new floor space for economic development was granted. The Annual Performance Reports have indicated the take-up rate of employment land in some areas has been limited as a result of low levels of demand.

There has been a total of 26,432 square metres of new floor space for economic development refused in 2015-16, compared to 70 square metres refused in the previous year.

Indicator	SD2. Planning permission granted for renewable and low carbon energy development during the year.
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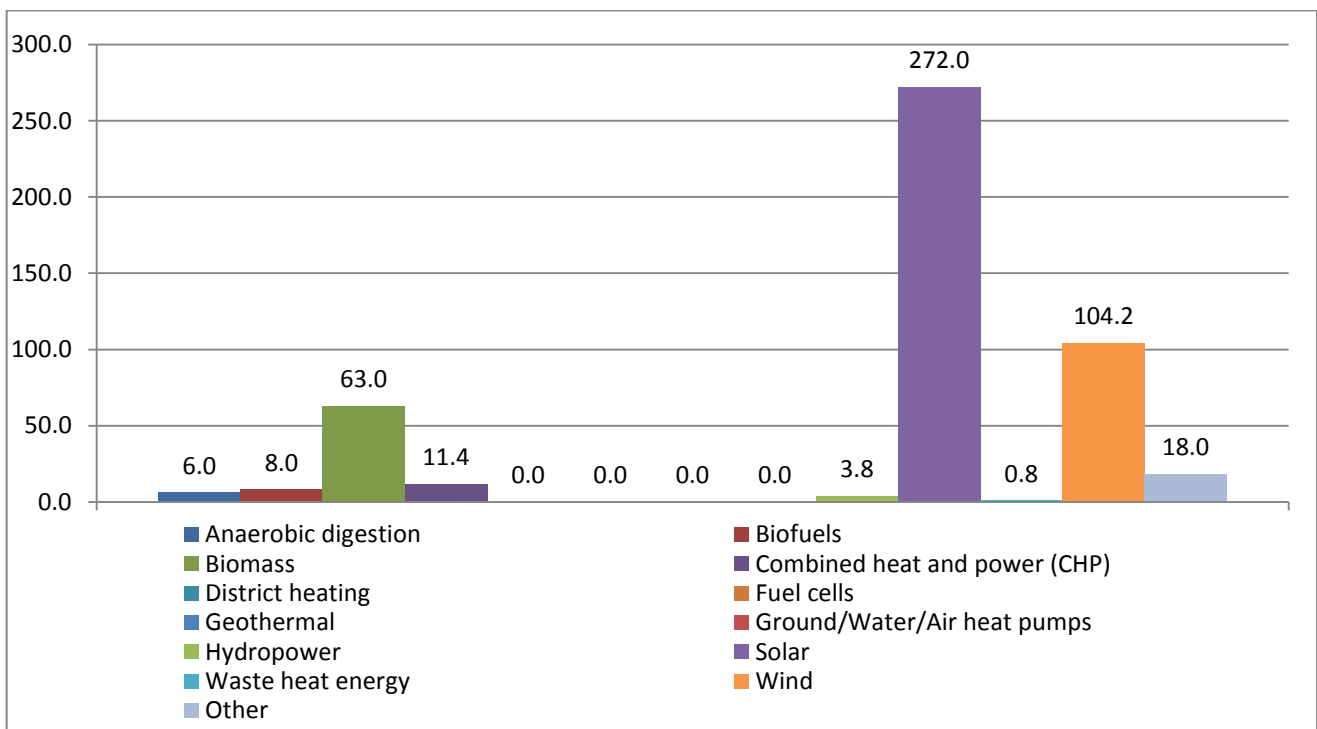
Granted permission (number of applications)

Performance	268
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Granted permission (MW energy generation)

Performance	487.1
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The planning system can facilitate renewable and low carbon energy generation. This indicator tells us the contribution the planning system is making to delivering renewable and low carbon energy generation and moving towards a low carbon economy.

The data shows the planning system is facilitating a mix of renewable and low carbon energy development. In particular, from the data provided, there has been a significant amount of development approved for biomass, wind and solar energy.

In comparison to last year’s data, there have been an additional 88 planning applications and 113 MW of energy capacity granted planning permission. Whilst there has been a decrease in hydro power developments, there has been an increase in anaerobic digestion, solar and wind energy developments granted planning permission.

The APR responses highlighted how factors outside the influence of the planning system affect the delivery of renewable energy development. The increase in permissions in this year’s data, particularly for wind and solar energy, is likely to have been, in part, as a result of developers seeking to obtain planning permission prior to changes to renewable energy subsidies, which were introduced by the UK Government coming into force. It is expected next year’s data will give us a greater understanding of the impacts of the subsidy changes.

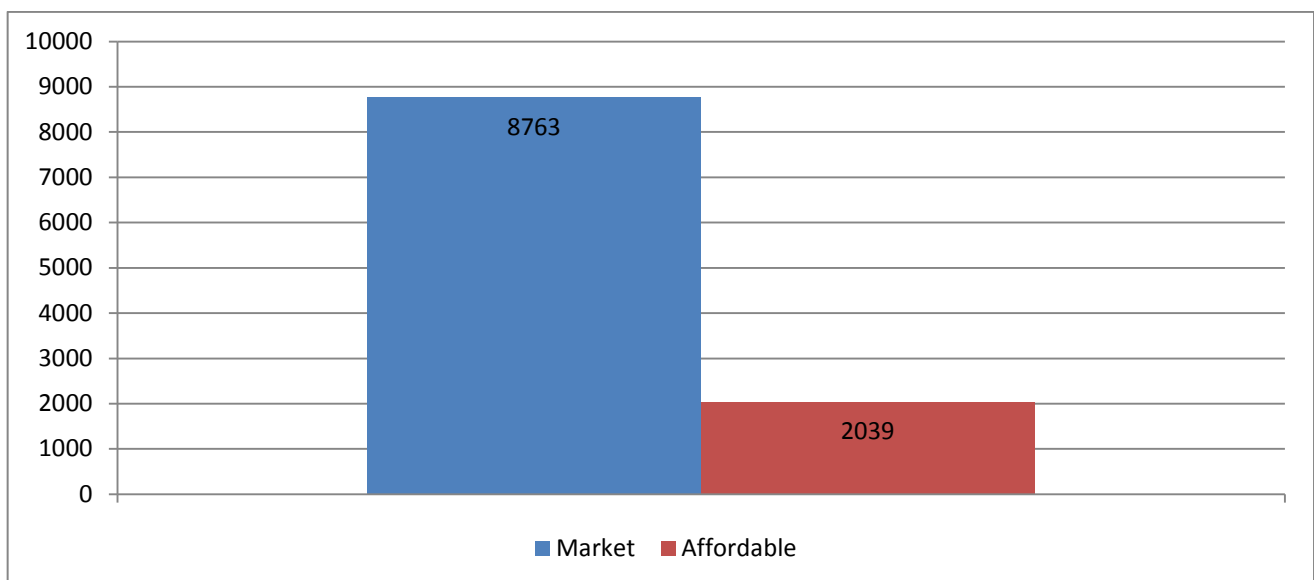
Indicator	SD3. The number of dwellings granted planning permission during the year.
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Market housing (number of units)

Performance	8,763
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Affordable housing (number of units)

Performance	2,039
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The planning system can facilitate the provision of market and affordable housing to meet local housing requirements. This indicator provides information on the contribution of the planning system to delivering new housing.

The data shows 10,802 dwellings have been granted planning permission. However, given some Local Planning Authorities have not provided data, the number of dwellings approved is likely to be higher. From the data provided, there has been an increase of 2,462 in comparison to last year's data

The data shows 2,039 affordable dwellings (as defined in Technical Advice Note 2: Planning and Affordable Housing) have been granted planning permission. Of the total number of dwellings granted planning permission, 19% were affordable housing which is comparable with last year's data.

In comparing the data with the Welsh Government's 'Affordable Housing Provision in Wales 2015/16' statistics, whilst the two data sets are different, it shows the majority of affordable housing is being delivered by Registered Social Landlords. The APR responses cite issues around viability and this appears to be constraining the level of affordable housing secured through planning obligations and conditions. We have published research into the longitudinal viability of housing sites in Wales which bears this out.

It should be noted this data relates to the number of dwellings granted planning permission, not constructed, and is not comparable with housing completion data published by StatsWales.

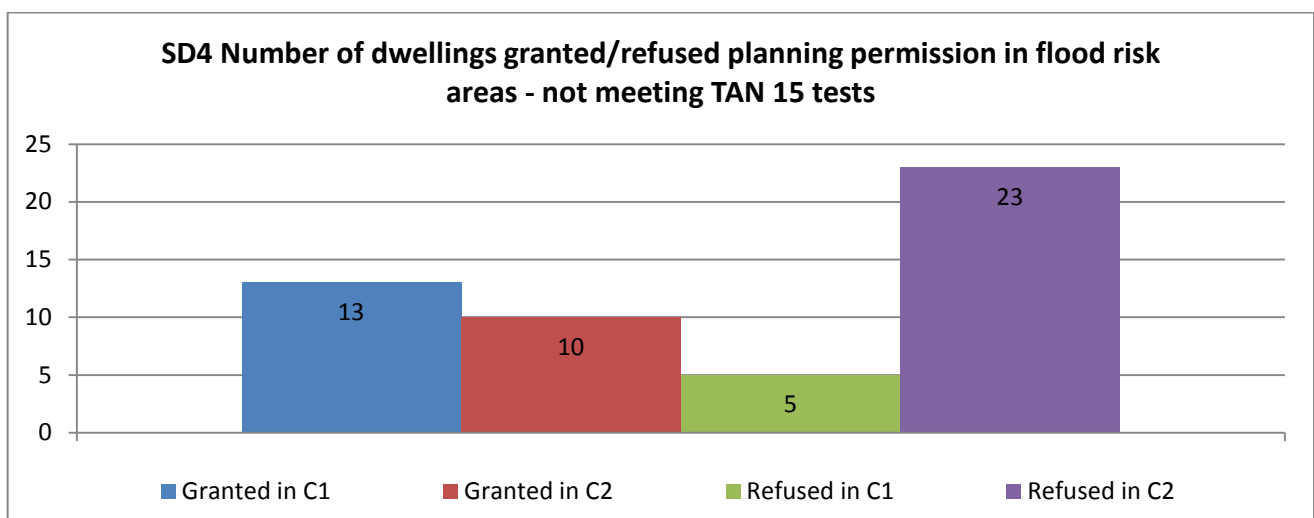
Indicator	SD4. Planning permission granted and refused for development in C1 and C2 floodplain areas during the year.
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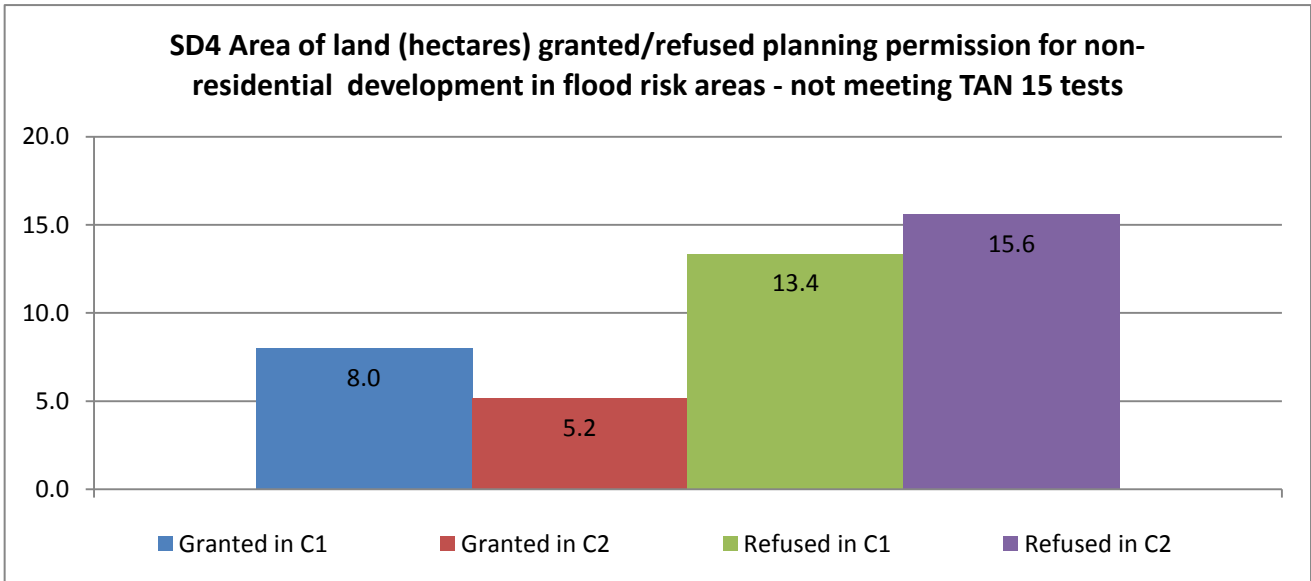
Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) which DID NOT meet all TAN 15 tests which were GRANTED permission

Performance	23 dwellings (13.2 hectares of non-residential units)
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Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) which did not meet all TAN 15 tests which were REFUSED permission on flood risk grounds

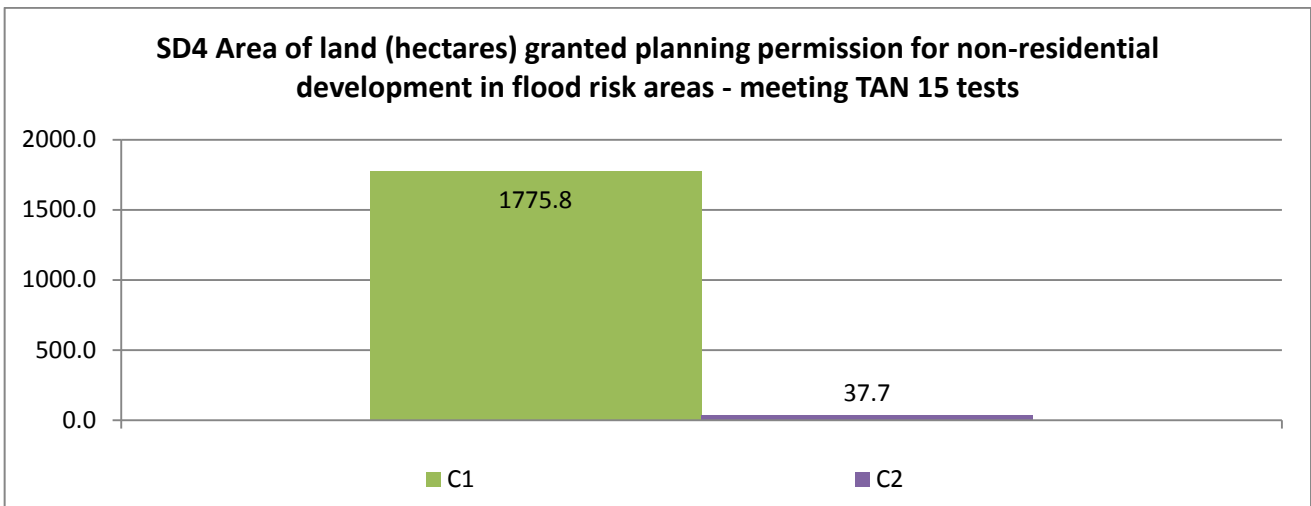
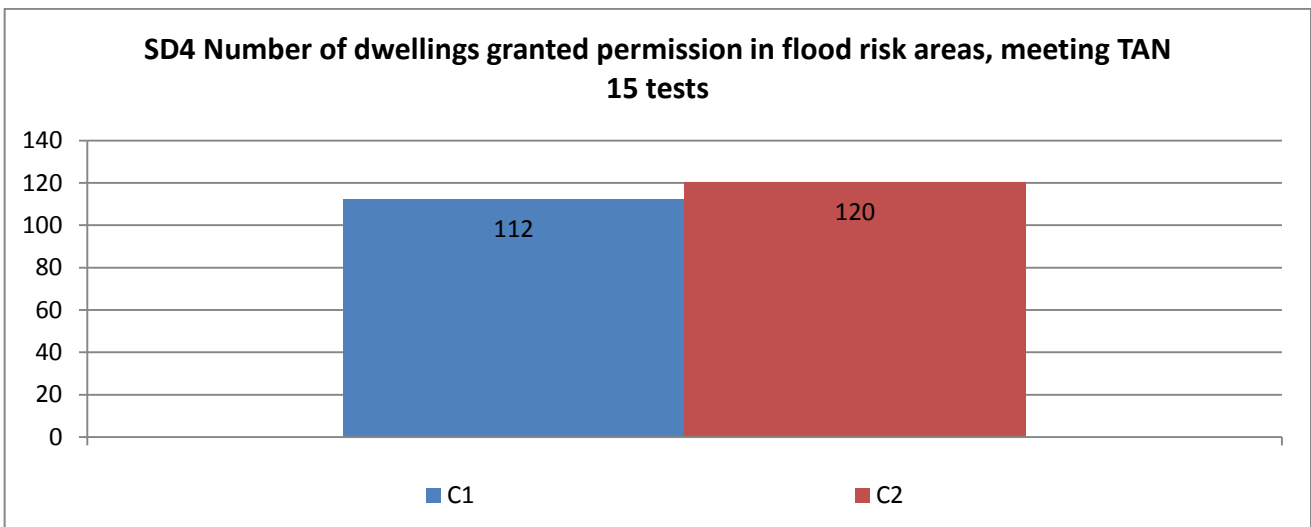
Performance	28 dwellings (28.9 hectares of non-residential units)
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Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) which MET all TAN 15 tests which were GRANTED permission

Performance	232 dwellings (1,813.5 hectares of non-residential units)
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The planning system has an important role in ensuring new development is not exposed unnecessarily to flooding and can guide development to locations at little or no risk from flooding. This indicator provides information on how planning applications for development in floodplain areas are being managed.

The results from those authorities which provided data demonstrate very few applications for residential dwellings, which do not meet the TAN 15 tests, were approved in C1 and C2 flood zones (23 dwellings in all). A further 28 proposed dwellings on the floodplain were refused permission, which suggests planning policy is effective in discouraging applications for new homes in areas at high risk of flooding. A total of 232 new dwellings were approved on the floodplain where the TAN 15 tests were satisfied.

Most types of non-residential developments are classed as less vulnerable to flooding in TAN 15. Over 1800 hectares of land was approved for development where the TAN 15 tests were met, with only 13 hectares approved for development where the tests were not met.

In comparison to last year's data, there have been 1,168 less dwellings approved in the flood plain. However, there have been 7 more dwellings approved which do not meet the TAN 15 tests. There has been an increase of 1,660 hectares of land approved for non-residential development where the TAN 15 tests were met. There has been a decrease of 1 hectare of land approved for non-residential development where the tests were not met.

The data for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 indicate Local Planning Authorities recognise the risk of allowing new development in areas at risk of flooding, and the advice of Natural Resources Wales informs the vast majority of decisions on planning applications. The results also indicate however a small number of developments continue to be approved contrary to the policies and tests set out in TAN 15.

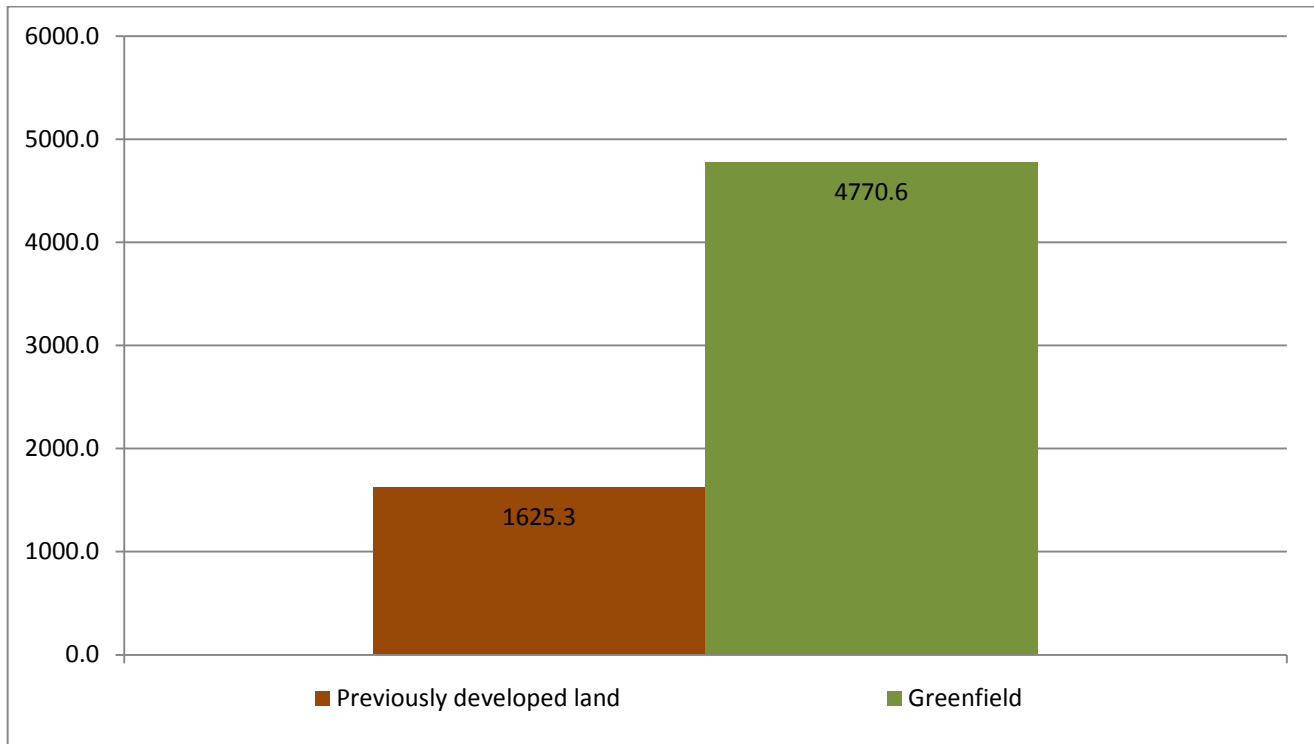
Indicator	SD5. The area of land (ha) granted planning permission for new development on previously developed land and greenfield land during the year.
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Previously developed land (hectares)

Performance	1,625.3 hectares
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Greenfield land (hectares)

Performance	4,770.6 hectares
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The planning system can ensure, wherever possible, previously developed land is used in preference to greenfield sites, particularly those of high agricultural or ecological value. This indicator tells us whether the planning system is directing new development to previously developed land.

From the data provided, new development appears to be primarily being approved on greenfield land. The data shows 74.6% of land granted planning permission for new development was on greenfield land. This significantly contrasts with the 2014/15 data, which showed 84% of land granted planning permission for new development was on previously developed land. Whilst a shift from development on brownfield land to greenfield land could be as a result of site allocations in Local Development Plans, it is likely such a significant change is as a result of inaccuracies in the previous year's data. It also needs to be noted there are still gaps in the data, which will affect the level of development and the split between greenfield and brownfield land recorded in the data.

The APR responses highlight the following reasons for the large proportion of development being approved on greenfield land:

- limited opportunities for development on previously developed land, particularly in rural authorities;
- large greenfield strategic site allocations in LDPs; and
- renewable energy development, particularly solar farms, which occupy large areas of greenfield land.

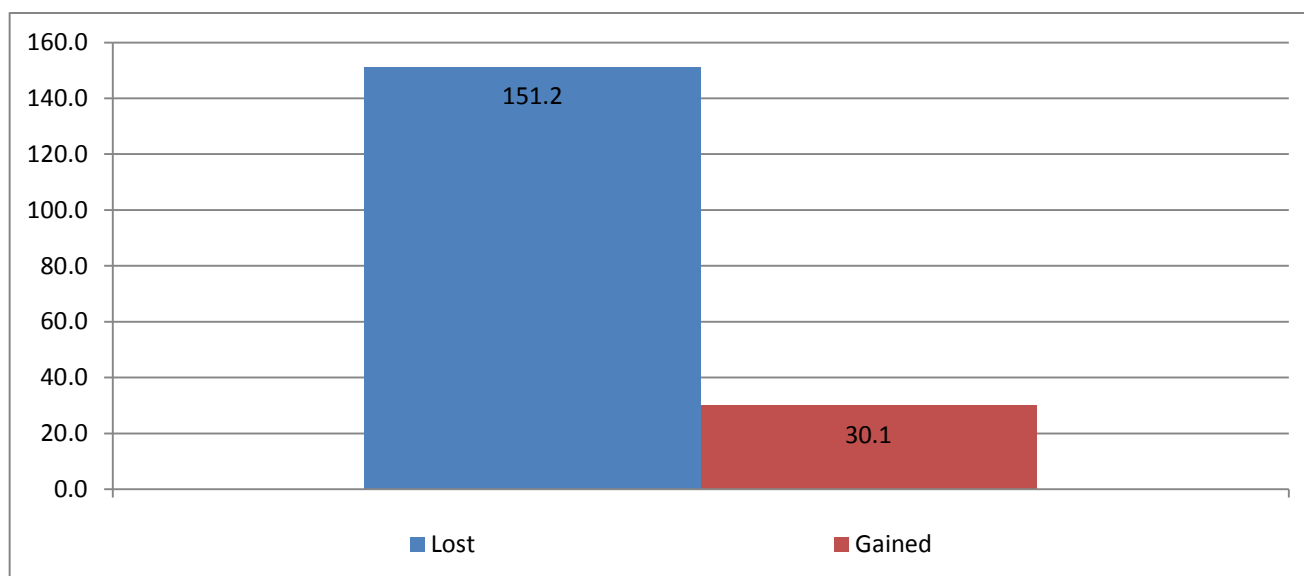
Indicator	SD6. The area of public open space (ha) which would be lost and gained as a result of development granted planning permission during the quarter.
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Open space lost (hectares)

Performance	151.2 hectares
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Open space gained (hectares)

Performance	30.1 hectares
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Open spaces provide recreational, amenity and environmental value as well as having a role in climate protection and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. This indicator measures how the planning system is protecting existing, and facilitating the provision of new, open spaces.

The data shows, from the Local Planning Authorities who have provided data, five times as much open space was lost as was gained during the year, though over 143 hectares of the total lost is attributable to one application. Planning policy only allows open space to be lost where it is replaced by an equivalent or better quality facility, or where there is no longer a need for the space. This is reflected in the APR responses, which highlight, where open space has been lost, it has enabled an improvement in facilities elsewhere on the site. The responses also highlight viability issues are a barrier to securing new open space, however, contributions are being secured to improve existing areas of open space rather than creating new areas.

It should be noted the majority of the open space lost (144 hectares) relates to one Local Planning Authority's returns who, in their APR response, suggest the data they have provided may be inaccurate as it does not correspond with their LDP monitoring.

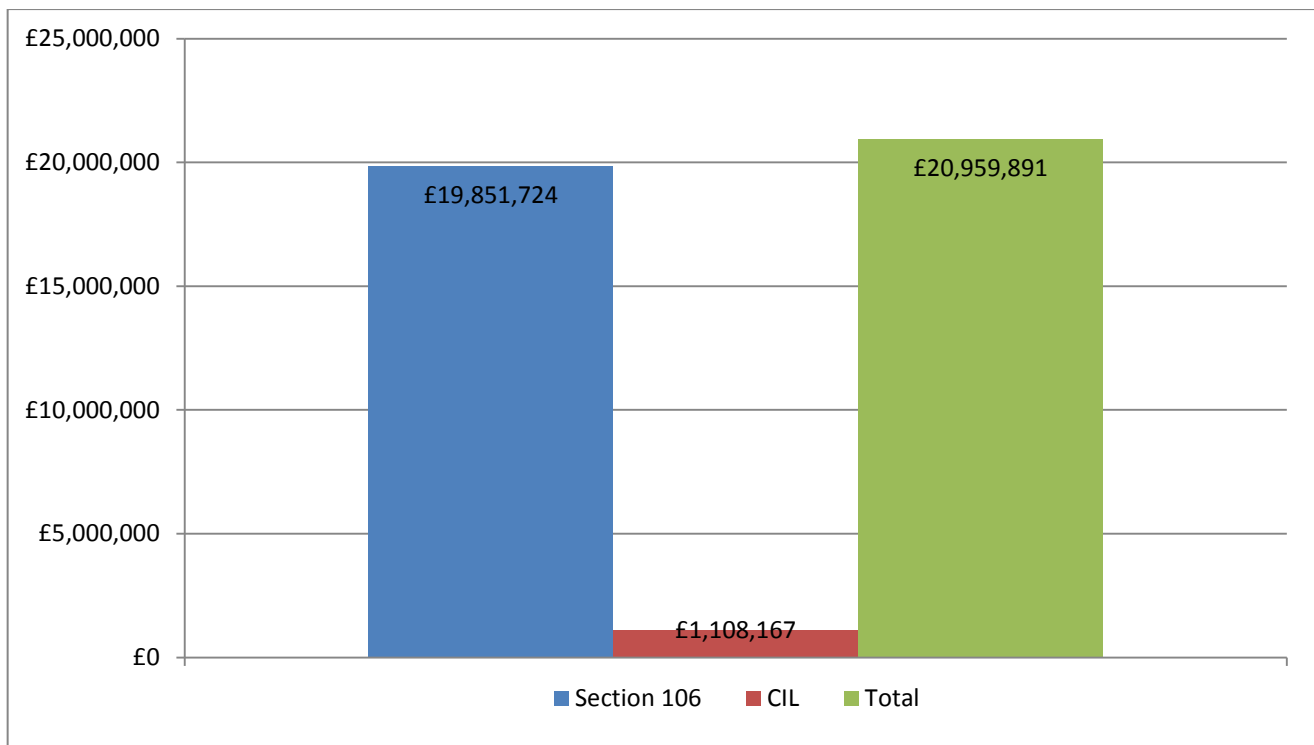
Indicator	SD7. The total financial contributions (£) agreed from new development granted planning permission during the quarter for the provision of community infrastructure.
------------------	---

Gained via Section 106 agreements (£)

Performance	£19,851,724
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Gained via Community Infrastructure Levy (£)

Performance	£1,108,167
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Financial contributions can be used to fund the provision of community infrastructure required to support sustainable development. This indicator measures the level of financial contributions agreed for the provision of community infrastructure.

The data shows the Local Planning Authorities which have provided returns have secured a significant amount of financial contributions to fund community infrastructure, primarily through Section 106 Agreements.

In comparison to last year's data, there has been an increase of £6,752,732 in Section 106 Agreements and £645,021 in CIL. Overall there has been an increase of £7,402,753 in financial contributions.

The Annual Performance Reports identified a number of Local Planning Authorities have recently adopted, or are in the process of developing, a Community Infrastructure Levy.

5 – CONCLUSION

Through a combination of innovation, collaboration and determination, Local Planning Authorities have managed to improve their service delivery performance in several areas over the reporting period, in the face of increasing financial constraints.

The use of Planning Performance Agreements and agreed extensions has had a marked positive effect on the ratio of applications being determined on time, and created opportunities to secure additional resources for local planning teams. The redeployment of tasking as a consequence of staff departures has also, in the short term, maintained a reasonable level of performance in those service areas. This efficiency measure is expected, however, to be unsustainable in the long term and those respective service areas are predicted to show slight falls in performance as a result of the loss of resource.

Some interesting work continues in the arena of closer collaborative working, which may yield significant positive results as well as options for formalised joint working at a later date, particularly in the North Wales region. Where this joint working has been formalised, such as in the case of Flintshire and Carmarthenshire joint minerals and waste services, they continue to yield positive outcomes.

We know Local Planning Authorities will continue to face significant resource shortage and resilience issues arising from budget reductions as a consequence austerity, for the foreseeable future. These challenges are likely to increase, both as a result of continuing public sector funding restraint and the impact of the UK referendum decision to leave the European Union on the economy.

The greater collaborative working presents significant opportunities for synergy, access to expertise and creation of resilience across Local Planning Authorities, as well as offering a variety of options for service delivery models. Whilst collaborative work to date is welcomed, significant service redesign will be necessary to match available resources to service aspirations.

In these circumstances, where it is more important than ever to ensure local planning services can continue to deliver, closer collaborative working offers economies of scale and additional resilience for service demands and access to specialist expertise. It is time to identify the best template for collaborative working for planning service delivery as part of his broader work on the regionalisation of Local Government services.

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE	WALES AVERAGE	Blaenau Gwent	Brecon Beacons National Park	Bridgend	Caerphilly	Cardiff	Cardiganshire	Ceredigion	Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Gwynedd	Isle of Anglesey	Merthyr Tydfil	Monmouthshire	Neath Port Talbot	Newport	Pembrokeshire	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park	Powys	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Snowdonia National Park	Swansea	Torfaen	Vale of Glamorgan	Wrexham	
Plan making																														
Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	
LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	<12	13-17	18+	47											16	84							24			36		73		
Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes			
The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	5+		<5	3.9	2	5.8	5.4	1.9	5.2	3.7	3.3	4	2.1	0	3.3	0	2.8	5	5.5	6.3	5	1.8	1.9	2.4	7	3	4.8	0	0	
Efficiency																														
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required				35	55	0	30	20	27	17	22	23	13	29	51	45	81	65	28	14	33	11	37	38	0	36	38	38	79	
				267 of 756	6 of 11	0 of 7	9 of 30	9 of 45	14 of 52	9 of 52	4 of 18	8 of 35	3 of 23	13 of 45	18 of 35	10 of 22	13 of 16	13 of 20	7 of 25	5 of 36	10 of 30	1 of 9	19 of 51	12 of 32	0 of 2	15 of 42	5 of 13	18 of 47	46 of 58	
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days				212.7	267.0	196.0	270.0	169.8	266.0	268.0	412.0	160.8	189.3	178.0	231.3	152.3	107.8	120.5	368.5	229.0	144.3	203.5	146.3	345.8	265.0	197.0	144.0	140.0	180.0	
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	80+	60.1-79.9	<60	76.7	87.3	88.7	76.8	66.2	74.7	70.4	63.9	77.7	71.8	77.3	83.0	69.6	96.9	79.4	80.0	72.7	78.1	71.8	58.6	79.5	71.5	84.2	83.4	85.7	90.3	
				19361 of 25247	316 of 362	533 of 601	615 of 801	684 of 1034	2282 of 3053	1028 of 1461	553 of 865	621 of 799	647 of 901	928 of 1200	852 of 1026	596 of 856	373 of 385	862 of 1085	650 of 813	820 of 1128	774 of 991	377 of 525	653 of 1115	1064 of 1338	343 of 480	1554 of 1846	501 of 601	1003 of 1170	732 of 811	
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+	77.2	61.0	66.5	59.7	105.3	79.0	92.8	116.5	74.0	71.5	72.3	60.0	85.5	48.3	67.8	66.5	75.5	91.8	61.3	138.3	74.0	84.0	61.3	64.3	66.7	94.2	
Quality																														
Percentage of applications determined under delegated powers				93.1	89.8	91.7	91.4	91.4	97.0	94.1	91.2	92.9	93.1	95.0	90.9	88.4	92.5	93.7	97.5	94.9	93.3	91.6	91.2	91.0	93.5	96.7	92.7	95.4	78.3	
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	5-9	9+	9.0	10.8	8.0	1.4	7.9	1.1	10.5	50.0	5.3	32.3	11.7	14.0	1.0	0.0	1.5	15.0	5.3	6.1	4.5	5.1	14.2	16.1	9.8	0.0	0.0	1.7	
				157 of 1737	4 of 37	4 of 50	1 of 69	7 of 89	1 of 91	9 of 86	38 of 76	3 of 57	20 of 62	7 of 60	13 of 93	1 of 99	0 of 29	1 of 68	3 of 20	3 of 57	4 of 66	2 of 44	5 of 98	17 of 120	5 of 31	6 of 61	0 of 44	0 of 54	3 of 176	
Percentage of appeals dismissed	66+	55.1-65.9	<55	66.5	57.1	0.0	80.0	46.7	62.9	70.8	62.5	66.7	66.7	53.8	70.4	43.8	71.4	70.0	63.6	90.5	88.9	100.0	72.7	66.7	50.0	54.5	50.0	85.7	80.0	
				294 of 442	4 of 7	0 of 3	8 of 10	7 of 15	22 of 35	17 of 24	5 of 8	10 of 15	10 of 15	14 of 26	19 of 27	7 of 16	5 of 7	14 of 20	7 of 11	19 of 21	16 of 18	3 of 3	8 of 11	14 of 21	3 of 6	36 of 66	2 of 4	24 of 28	20 of 25	
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2+	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Engagement																														
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
Enforcement																														
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days				79.4	91.8	88.6	87.9	95.1	No Data	63.0	91.8	100.0	80.0	78.3	88.5	89.3	100.0	100.0	97.7	92.2	37.4	78.2	26.4	92.6	98.9	32.4	99.1	90.8	100.0	
Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases				88.1	35.5	56.3	36.3	43.0	No Data	142.7	35.8	13.0	38.0	114.8	85.0	55.0	3.3	16.3	7.8	34.5	394.0	129.7	451.3	No Data	14.3	170.8	6.5	8.0	3.3	
Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application received within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)?				72.8	80.1	59.3	91.7	63.7	81.0	78.0	37.2	81.0	44.4	83.7	77.1	79.3	86.8	69.6	91.1	79.3	43.7	73.4	37.8	70.4	69.0	42.0	75.9	75.0	77.4	
Average time taken to take enforcement action				210.1	103.0	372.3	68.0	238.5	No Data	141.8	311.3	194.0	510.0	114.8	149.3	130.3	89.0	142.8	59.8	151.3	439.5	332.3	520.8	112.7	312.0	272.3	177.5	163.7	78.1	

Annex B

List of links to local planning authority Annual Performance Reports for 2015-16

Below is a list of web links, where available, to the Annual Performance Reports of each local planning authority.

[Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council](#)

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

[Bridgend County Borough Council](#)

[Caerphilly County Borough Council](#)

[The City of Cardiff Council](#)

[Carmarthenshire County Council](#)

Ceredigion County Council

Conwy County Borough Council

[Denbighshire County Council](#)

[Flintshire County Council](#)

[Gwynedd Council](#)

[Isle of Anglesey County Council](#)

[Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council](#)

[Monmouthshire County Council](#)

[Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council](#)

[Newport City Council](#)

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

[Pembrokeshire County Council](#)

Powys County Council

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

[Snowdonia National Park Authority](#)

City and County of Swansea

[Torfaen County Borough Council](#)

Vale of Glamorgan Council

Wrexham County Borough Council