

Well-being Objective 2 – Live & Age Well

Enabling our residents to live and age well



Overarching judgement

Just over a third of Carmarthenshire households are thought to be living in poverty, a situation which will likely be made worse by the cost of living crisis. In response to this the Council has developed a stronger and more integrated approach to support residents.

Following the pandemic, we have seen increased demand for all social care services, made more challenging by the increasing complexity of cases, however, we have continued to innovate, develop and protect the most vulnerable. We are also clear regarding priorities and service improvements going forward.

We have delivered over 1,000 additional affordable homes since 2019/20 in recognition that the additional supply of homes in our rural and urban communities is key to enabling community resilience and cohesion.

Why this is important

We want to enable our residents to live and age well and participate fully in society. To achieve this, we need to:

- Tackle poverty and reduce its detrimental impact.
- help people to maintain their independence at home for as long as possible.
- Ensure good quality affordable homes.

The key overarching indicators and measures we set ourselves for this overall objective

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures which will be monitored for Well-being Objective 2.

Population Indicators in the main are publicly available data that have been identified to develop an understanding of trends and Carmarthenshire's position relative to the other local authorities in Wales. Through our well-being objectives the Council has an important role to play in making progress against these indicators, however, it should be noted that these are not solely indicative of the Council's performance and will be influenced by many external factors.

Performance Measures are inclusive of statutory returns, internal Council measures and consultation findings that we utilise to measure and monitor performance on a regular basis. These are the direct responsibility of the Council.

Population Indicators			
Indicator	Trend		Explaining the Data
	Male	Female	
Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) at Birth			<p>Healthy Life Expectancy is Decreasing for Males and Increasing for Females</p> <p><i>The trendlines adjacent cover the periods 2017/19 to 2018/20.</i></p> <p>HLE measures the number of years someone is expected to live in good health. Generally, people are living longer than ever before due to advancements in health care and a general improvement in living standards.</p> <p>However, there are variations between sex and where a person lives. HLE for males in Carmarthenshire is lower than that for females and saw a decrease between 2017-19 and 2018-20 from 60.4 to 59.7. This is the 18th lowest level of all local authorities in Wales and is less than the Wales average of 61.5.</p> <p>Female HLE increased slightly over the same time period from 61.1 to 61.8. This is the 13th lowest level of all local authorities and is also less than the Wales average of 62.4.</p> <p>This is an important consideration in Carmarthenshire as the county is home to an above average level of people aged over 65, which, when coupled with a HLE which is below average, could result in increased pressure on health and social care services.</p>
% of People Living in Material Deprivation			<p>Levels of Material Deprivation are Rising</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.</i></p> <p>Material deprivation is a measure which is designed to capture the consequences of long-term poverty on households.</p> <p>The most recent data (2022/23) indicates that 16.7% of households in Carmarthenshire are living in material deprivation. This is the 7th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and an increase on figures for 2020/21 (12%).</p> <p>This increasing trend is in line with generally increasing trends for poverty rates. The ongoing cost of living crisis is also likely having a detrimental impact on household deprivation levels.</p> <p>The Council is undertaking significant cross-departmental work to support residents affected by the cost of living crisis and improving the lives of those living in poverty. Intelligence gathered has resulted in the development of a Tackling Poverty Plan which encourages an integrated approach.</p>

<p>Adult Mental Well-being Score</p>		<p>The Score for Adult Mental Wellbeing is on a Downward Trend which is Consistent with National Trends</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2016/17 to 2022/23.²(Scores³ are out of 70, with a higher score indicating a better result).</i></p> <p>The score for Carmarthenshire as of 2022/23 was 48.3, a decrease on previous figures for 2021/22 (48.8). This is perhaps indicative of the effects of the pandemic, in which we saw the most significant change to normal life in decades. Decreases were seen at a Wales level also.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire’s position relative to the other local authorities in Wales is the 10th lowest, compared with 11th lowest for the previous year.</p> <p>Findings of a recent residents’ consultation indicate that there was overall agreement from respondents that consideration should be given to supporting people’s mental health in the county.</p> <p>The Council recognises this and is committed to working with partners to provide readily accessible and appropriate levels of support to individuals with mental health issues, focusing on an expansion of access and support to children and vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>Adults who have 2 or more healthy lifestyle behaviours</p>		<p>The Number of Adults with 2 (or more) Healthy Lifestyle Behaviours is Increasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.</i></p> <p>Healthy lifestyle behaviours are directly related to HLE as noted above and are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not smoking, • Being a healthy weight, • Eating five fruits/vegetables a day, • Not excessively drinking alcohol, and • Undertaking physical exercise in line with guidelines. <p>Carmarthenshire has seen a very slight improvement on figures for the previous year moving from 92.4% to 92.5%. This has translated to the county exhibiting the 9th highest figure of all local authorities in Wales, an improvement from 13th the previous year.</p> <p>This is slightly higher than the Wales average which sits at 92.3%. Continued improvement for this measure would likely translate to an improvement in HLE.</p>

² This question was not asked for 2019/20 therefore there is no comparable data for this year

³ This score is derived from the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale and is intended to measure mental well-being as opposed to mental illness or disorder.

Outcomes we set ourselves

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
<p>Help and support to alleviate the effects of the 'cost of living' crises and poverty in the County</p>	<p>Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do.</p> <p>At a household level the most recently available paycheck data suggests that 34.5% of all households in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty⁴, this translates to around 28,730 households. This is a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year which mirrors trends seen nationally</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Seamless integrated services between Health and Social Care</p>	<p>We continue to have an integrated service between the Health Board and Carmarthenshire County Council for older people and people with physical disabilities. Over the last year, we have relooked at our integrated management structure to ensure that our services can benefit all Carmarthenshire residents equally regardless of where they live.</p> <p>We have continued to develop our Home First approach to help those in hospital get home quicker and support those in crisis in the community to prevent them going to hospital in the first place. We now have a multi-disciplinary team based at our offices at Eastgate made up of a range of health, social care and third sector professionals to support those leaving hospital and those in crisis in the community. This team includes an Advanced Paramedic Practitioner who can support with diverting ambulances from the Emergency Department and Llesiant Delta Well-being (our council owned arms-length company) who are able to provide short term support for those in crisis through their rapid response service. Llesiant Delta Wellbeing are now supporting thousands of elderly people with proactive digital support in their own homes.</p> <p>To support this approach, we have further developed our 14-bed unit Ty Pili-Pala, attached to Llys Y Bryn care home, where patients leaving hospital can benefit from a period of assessment and rehabilitation. This development has proved highly successful with 70% of people leaving the service with no need for ongoing formal care. We have also launched our integrated reablement home care service, to provide short-term care to those leaving hospital and 90% of people accessing this service have no long-term care requirements on leaving the service.</p> <p>Our overall approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care, which is particularly important at the moment with all of the challenges relating to securing care and support at home due to the ongoing recruitment and retention issues in the</p>	<p>Yes</p>

⁴ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	care sector. This approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care.	
Accessible, inclusive, sustainable services, which promote and facilitate learning, culture, heritage, information, well-being and leisure.	We are progressing an ambitious programme of change in our learning day services provision; buildings are now being utilised for those with the most complex needs and we are working with colleagues in leisure and environment to offer community activities which promote independence and social inclusion.	Yes
Improved preventative services to meet the demands of an ageing population.	A multi-agency Prevention Board has been established comprising of representatives from the Council, Health Board, Public Health and the Third Sector. This Board will start to map existing preventative services in the County, with a view to identifying key gaps and an action plan for development. A new Senior Delivery Manager for Prevention is also in the process of being recruited who will provide leadership across agencies to drive this action plan forward. We have established well-being pathways within the Community Mental Health Teams.	Yes
A reduction and working towards an end to homelessness.	<p>A Rapid Re-Housing Plan has been developed which outlines the vision on how we intend to transform the homeless service.</p> <p>Workstreams as part of the Rapid Re-housing plan have been established to look at key areas which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Allocations Policy • Reviewing and Developing housing related support • Temporary accommodation • Developing settled accommodation <p>We have improved the Prevention of Homelessness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the Housing Hwb Team • Reviewing and Developing the Emergency Allocations Policy • Utilising the Discretionary Housing Prevention Fund <p>The Pre-tenancy team has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided more support to new tenants by maximising their benefits/income to help them maintain tenancies. • Expanded the support available to tenants in the private rented sector. • Re-introduced training packages for young people to help them maintain tenancies. • Pilot training program with the DWP as part of the claimant commitment. 	Yes
Availability of good quality and energy efficient affordable homes in the County	The Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan confirms our commitment and approach to increasing the supply of good quality and energy efficient affordable homes throughout the county. In 2022/23 we delivered an additional 323 affordable homes (exceeding our target by over 100 homes), using a range of solutions including:	Yes

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building new Council homes • bringing empty homes back into use • increasing our housing stock by buying private sector homes on the open market • working with our Housing Association partners and supporting them to build more homes in the County • managing private homes through our inhouse Simple Lettings Agency • delivering affordable homes for low-cost home ownership through the planning system <p>Since the beginning of our affordable housing programme, we have now delivered an additional 1,760 homes, creating homes and communities for local people</p>	
<p>Recognise and seek to limit the disproportionate barriers faced by marginalised groups in accessing services and support which allow them to live and age well.</p>	<p>The Age-friendly Communities approach was developed by the World Health Organisation in 2007, in consultation with older people around the world. It is built on the evidence of what supports healthy and active ageing in a place and supports older residents to shape the place that they live.</p> <p>By following this approach, local groups, leaders, councils, businesses and older residents will all work together to identify and make changes in both the physical and social environments. This includes improving transport, outdoor spaces, volunteering and employment, leisure and community services.</p> <p>All Local Authorities in Wales have received funding from Welsh Government in order to become members of the Age-friendly communities' programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2022/23, we have undertaken a detailed mapping exercise against the domains of the programme and this evidence will form basis for our future action planning. <p>In recognising that some people groups may face difficulties accessing services and support , we have put a number of things in place to mitigate this . Some examples are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carmarthenshire is part of a regional independent advocacy scheme which supports people to access services, and as part of their ongoing support . • Information is provided in easy read format and in language of choice. • Interpretation can be facilitated where necessary <p>For individuals with hearing impairments requiring TEC services and alarm monitoring, we can use SMS as means of communication and email/home visits to gather necessary information to enable us to set the service. There is also a lot of TEC available to support individuals with visual and hearing impairments</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Corporate Strategy Outcomes	Progress during 2022/23	Improved Yes/No?
Improved opportunities for all residents in literacy, numeracy and digital skills to upskill for employment.	We have established a skills hub for people with disabilities which will provide opportunities for accredited learning and digital skills to upskill them for volunteering and ultimately employment.	Yes
People are supported to take advantage of local opportunities whether it be through starting a business, gaining qualifications or gaining meaningful employment	The Employability Programmes in Carmarthenshire support individuals who are unemployed or who have been made redundant. The support includes one to one mentoring; training; confidence building; helping with CV' writing and finding suitable employment and volunteering opportunities. The programmes (C4W plus and Workways +) have both helped secure employment for individuals from Carmarthenshire as well as offering training to meet the needs of employers.	Yes

As a Council we focus on the following thematic and service priorities

WBO2a Thematic Priority: Tackling poverty

WBO2b Service Priority: Housing

WBO2c Service Priority: Social Care

Enabling our residents to live and age well

Thematic Priority 2a - Tackling Poverty

34.5% (28,730) of households are living in poverty⁵, a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year.

Whilst this is the case Carmarthenshire still exhibits the 8th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and poverty levels remain higher than the Welsh average by 1.1%.

Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are, can and need to do.

Why this is important?

- ⦿ Poverty and deprivation have serious detrimental effects, impacting all aspects of well-being. It limits the opportunities and prospects for children and young people and damages the quality of life for families and communities.
- ⦿ Poverty can be a barrier to full participation in society and is too often an intergenerational experience which poses a significant threat to experiencing positive well-being both now and in the future.
- ⦿ With the added pressures of the cost-of-living crisis there is a need for a fully integrated and collaborative approach to responding and supporting in the areas that we can influence.
- ⦿ In addition, 34.6% of children in Carmarthenshire are thought to be living in poverty, this translates to around 11,247 children. This exceeds national levels and is the 12th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint sixth highest rate of change over the last five years.
- ⦿ To corroborate this a large proportion of respondents to a recent consultation agreed that poverty is a problem in their respective area. In addition, the vast majority of the respondents highlighted the cost of living crisis and themes aligned to this as being one of the main challenges being faced by them and their families at the time of survey.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

The table below shows the overall population indicators and performance measures monitored for the Tackling Poverty thematic priority.

⁵ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income -

Population Indicators		
Measure	Trend	Explaining the Data
Households Living in Poverty		<p>Slightly Less Households are in Poverty than the Previous Year but Levels Still Exceed National Averages</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2014-2022. It depicts a changeable picture characterised by a general downward trend with increases seen in 2018, 2020 and 2021.</i></p> <p>The most recently available data (2022) suggests that 34.5% of all households in Carmarthenshire are living in poverty⁶, this translates to around 28,730 households. This is a slight decrease of 1.1% since last year which mirrors trends seen nationally. It is thought that this is largely to do with the time period covered by the data which coincides with the pandemic.</p> <p>Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do.</p> <p>Departments are working hard to support those in most need through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving supported savings in the form of income maximization and grants; • Supporting households to claim what they're entitled to; • Better signposting to relevant support agencies and information.
Median Weekly Pay (Full Time Workers)		<p>Weekly Pay for People Living in Carmarthenshire is Increasing</p> <p><i>The trendline adjacent covers the period 2012-2022 and depicts a generally increasing trend.</i></p> <p>The most recent data for 2021 indicates that Wales' average gross weekly earnings is £603.50 which is significantly lower than the GB average of £642.20⁷.</p> <p>In Carmarthenshire, the average weekly wage is £623.40, higher than the average for Wales but still noticeably lower than the GB average.</p>

⁶ Household income totals less than 60% of the GB median income - £20,021

		<p>Earnings have a direct effect on a person’s life, impacting every decision that is made. This becomes particularly difficult if a person’s earnings do not allow them to meet their basic needs and made worse if wage growth does not coincide with the rate of inflation, the effects of which many are facing right now.</p> <p>As noted previously, the Council is committed to supporting people to maximise their incomes and access the support that they are entitled to.</p>
<p>Housing Affordability Ratio</p>		<p>Housing Affordability is Amongst the Best in Wales</p> <p><i>The adjacent trendline covers the period 2014-2022 and depicts a fluctuating trend. Increases in the county have not been as significant as other areas in Wales.</i></p> <p>Dividing the house price for a given area by its earnings, produces a ratio which serves as an indicator of relative affordability. A higher ratio indicates that on average, it is less affordable for a resident to purchase a house in their local authority. Conversely, a lower ratio indicates higher affordability in a local authority.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire’s current ratio is 5.61 which is significantly lower than the highest ratio in Wales of 9.47. This is the 6th lowest level of all local authorities as of 2022. Whilst increases have been seen over recent years these increases are not as significant as have been seen in other areas. It should be noted that housing affordability will vary between smaller areas within the county.</p> <p>Access to affordable housing is important as it leads to improvements in both physical and mental health and well-being. Put simply, the more affordable housing is then the more money households have to spend on the other things that they need which in turn increases their quality of life.</p> <p>Residents indicated via a recent consultation that it is important that local people are supported to buy homes locally.</p>

Performance Measure		
Poverty is a problem in my area - Residents Consultation	2022	<p>Poverty rates are generally on the rise, both at a national level and at a Carmarthenshire level, a trend which is likely to be exacerbated by the rising cost of living.</p> <p>Responses to this statement were mixed, however a higher proportion overall agree that poverty is a problem in their area. Further analysis indicates that agreement was more acute amongst some groups, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents with disabilities, • Respondents with caring responsibilities, • Members of the LGBTQ+ community, • Respondents whose household incomes are below £30,000 per year • Respondents who are either serving members of the armed forces or are veterans.
	0.23	

Progress in 2022/23

Child Poverty

- Children are consistently the age group most likely to be in relative income poverty; this is true across all four UK nations. Data for 2019/20 indicated that 31.3% of children in Carmarthenshire were living in poverty, compared with 30.6% at a Wales level.
- The latest data for 2021 estimates that 34% of children in Wales are living in poverty, a percentage point increase of 4.8 over the last five years. This is compared to an UK level of 27%. The figures for Carmarthenshire show a 4.7 percentage point increase over the same time period, with 34.6% of children living in poverty.⁸ This translates to around 11,247 children. This is the 12th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint sixth highest rate of change over the last five years.⁹
- The largest proportion of children living in poverty live in workless households. However, more concerning is the increasing rate at which children living in working households are living in poverty. At a Wales level the risk of a child being in poverty in a household whereby all adults are in work is 17%. This is an increase of 5 percentage points from 12% over the last ten years.¹⁰

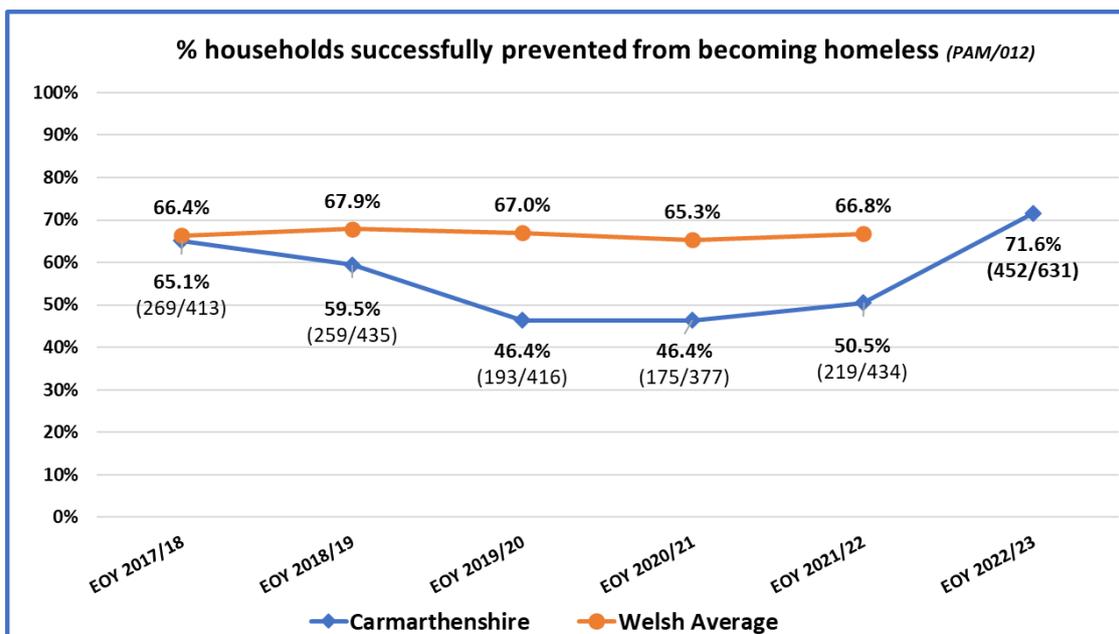
Toybox Appeal 2022

Over 9,900 toys and gifts to 1,650 children

This is an increase of 28% in the number of nominations. We are once again extremely grateful to the people of Carmarthenshire for their astounding generosity. The support has come from county councillors, town and community councils, churches and chapels, schools, shops, businesses, and extremely generous individuals from all corners of the county. This has enabled us to provide support for children and young people during the Christmas period and is a real example of the whole community working together to support families in need.

Homelessness Prevention

- % of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless in Carmarthenshire has improved from 50.5% (2021/22) to 71.63% (2022/23), this is the highest recorded prevention figure since reporting commenced in 2017/18.



⁸ [Child-Poverty-AHC-estimates-2015-2021-FINAL.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

⁹ The HBAI figures for 2020/21 are less reliable than earlier years due to sampling issues related to the pandemic. This should be kept in mind when interpreting the statistics

¹⁰ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Poverty/childreninrelativeincomepoverty-by-economicstatusofhousehold>

We have achieved this by:

- developing the Housing Hwb Team – we now have more emphasis at the first point of contact where we are able to assess households' circumstances in more detail to tailor the support and advice they require. By creating our in-house support team and re-aligning existing resources we have moved from a reactive service to a more preventative service.
- the introduction of the Emergency Allocations Policy. This has enabled us to directly match homes to applicants most in need, such as those who are homeless, are at risk of homelessness or are in urgent housing need. We are able to allocate homes more quickly and ensure the property they are matched to meets their needs and is in an area they have a community connection to.
- utilising Welsh Government grant funding known as the Discretionary Homelessness Prevention Fund. This funding has helped to prevent and relieve homelessness by utilising the money made available to top up rent where there is a shortfall, pay rent in advance to secure a new home where an individual wishes to move to, help to reduce rent arrears to enable existing tenants remain in their homes. By using this funding and offering other support services available from within the team we have been able to prevent more households from becoming homeless and help them to sustain their tenancies.
- Converting 8 3-bedroom houses into 2-bedroom en-suit properties suitable for 2 people to share accommodation. This has helped to alleviate the pressure on single person accommodation within the county.

Living in material deprivation

- ⊙ Five of Carmarthenshire's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are identified as being in the top 10% most deprived in Wales and rank highly in a number of the domains most closely related to poverty, namely, income, employment, health, education and housing. These areas are: Tyisha 2, Glan-y-môr 4, Bigyn 4, Tyisha 3, Llwynhendy 3.
- ⊙ Since 2011 the number of areas in Carmarthenshire included in the 30% most deprived in Wales has increased by 25% which further corroborates the increasing poverty rates evident in the county.
- ⊙ A more detailed analysis of the 2019 WIMD data for Carmarthenshire can be accessed [here](#).

Review of our approach to Tackling Poverty

- ⊙ Our new Data Insight Team developed a poverty profile for Carmarthenshire so that we could understand the issues involved.
- ⊙ Cross departmental work to tackle the Cost-of-Living crisis has developed a stronger more integrated approach within the Council and has better consolidated and identified what we are doing, can do and need to do. We have prepared a Tackling Poverty Plan which *will be revised when Welsh Government publish their Child Poverty Strategy within the next 12-months*.
- ⊙ During the year Audit Wales published a report on poverty and made 2 recommendations for Welsh Government and 6 for local authorities. This was an all-Wales report and we had already been doing many of the best practice ideas recommended by the all Wales study.

This report looks at the challenge of poverty in Wales and how government is responding.

It acknowledges that effectively tackling poverty is not easy and is exceedingly difficult for both Welsh Government and councils in Wales. This is the first of three reviews on the challenge of alleviating and tackling poverty

Comment

The report identified best practice and we had already achieved a number of its recommendations.

	Recommendations for Local Authorities Abbreviated	Status	Comment
A	That councils use their Well-being Plans to provide a comprehensive focus on tackling poverty to co-ordinate their efforts, meet local needs and support the revised national plan targets and actions	✓	The Council will set tackling poverty as a thematic priority within one of its well-being objectives within the new Corporate Strategy and the PSB has also included tackling poverty in its draft Well-being Plan. Actions and measures to make progress against these objectives will be determined with clarity between organisational and partnership response to avoid duplication.
B	That each council designate a cabinet member as the council's poverty champion and designate a senior officer to lead and be accountable for the anti-poverty agenda	✓	CLlr Linda Davies Evans, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty already appointed following May 2022 elections. The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy identified as lead senior officer.
C	That councils improve their understanding of their residents' 'lived experience' through meaningful involvement in decision-making using 'experience mapping' and/or 'Poverty Truth Commissions' to review and improve accessibility to and use of council services.		Agreement to develop a Carmarthenshire engagement programme to seek views of residents. (By December 2023)
D	To ensure people are able to get the information and advice they need, we recommend that councils optimise their digital services by creating a single landing page on their website	✓	This is available through the Council's Website on the 'Claim What's Yours' page
E	To streamline and improve application and information services for people in poverty		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work already underway centred around the Council's Hwb model. • Collation and use of data is being considered as part of wider Council data suite. • Specific issues relating to data sharing will be considered. (by September 2023)
F	That councils review their integrated impact assessments or equivalent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of up to date Carmarthenshire data profiles is underway. • Review of Integrated Impact Assessment to ensure capture of these elements will be undertaken. (by September 2023)

Preventing Poverty

We have re-introduced our in-person pre-accommodation training courses which can be accessed by anyone cross tenure within Carmarthenshire. This has helped to identify support needs at an earlier point, signpost to appropriate support including income maximisation and informing people of what help is available to them.

We have Private Rented Sector Support Workers located in the 3 Job Centre Plus offices to provide help and advice to anyone with a housing cost attached to their Universal Credit (UC) claim.

Poverty and Work

Whilst it is well evidenced that being in paid employment reduces the risk of poverty compared to being in a workless household, trend data indicates that levels of what is termed as 'in-work' poverty are rising. For context, the risk of being in poverty for working age adults living in a household where all adults work has increased by 2 percentage points between 2010 and 2020.¹¹

Further evidence shows that the risk of poverty is higher for disabled workers, BAME workers, single parents and families with children. Falling benefit incomes and rising living costs continue to pull low-income working families into poverty.¹²

Job quality (remuneration), job quantity (labour market participation of household members) and household expenditure (cost of dependents) are some of the contributory factors to in-work poverty. We recognise therefore, the importance of meaningful employment and in line with this ensuring that people are supported into work or to improve their employability prospects is a priority for us. Through our Communities 4 Work Plus programmes we have achieved the following:

- ⦿ **532 adults** received **employability support** during 2022/23 with all (100%) of them feeling more positive with improved confidence about seeking work. *(EconD/020)*
- ⦿ **414 adults** received **digital inclusion support** during 2022/23 with all (100%) of them feeling more confident in using a computer and gaining IT skills. *(EconD/021)*
- ⦿ **502 accredited qualifications** were achieved by residents attending Employment related courses during 2022/23. *(EconD/022)*
- ⦿ **204** individuals were supported through Council employability schemes to earn the real living wages during 2022/23, this is an increase on the previous year of 153. *(EconD/023)*

Improving the lives of those living in poverty

Hwb Advisor Support

- ⦿ Specialist help, support and advice to help with the cost of living and other matters is available at each of our customer service Hwbs in Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen, on the phone through our contact centre or online through the Claim What's Yours website page.
- ⦿ Hwb advisers, working alongside budgeting officers, are available every day to provide tailored packages of support to residents with access to a range of council and other partner support services available to residents.

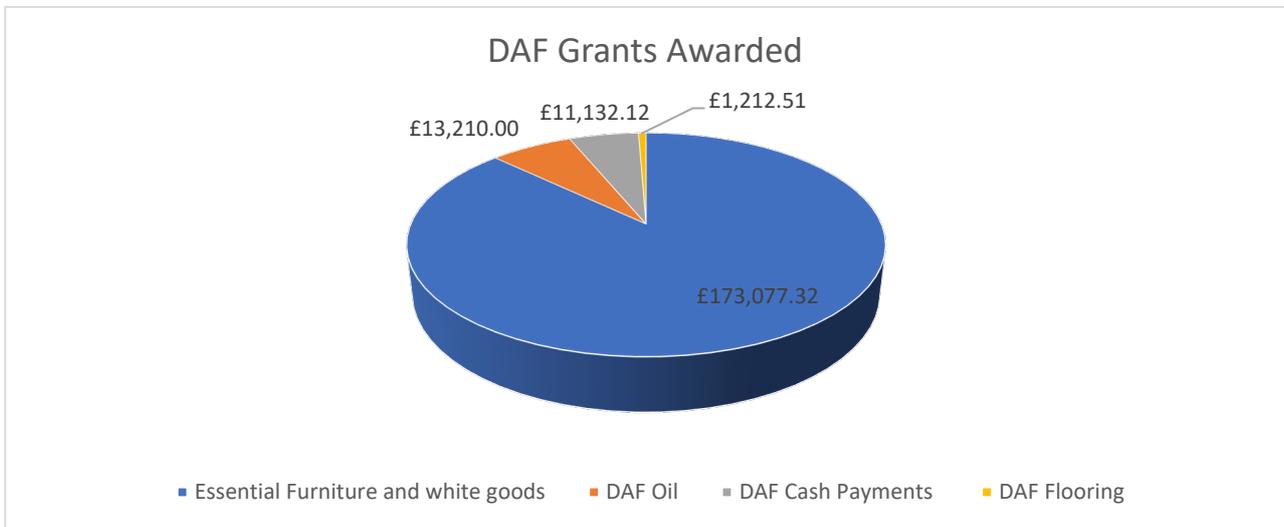
Pre-Accommodation Support

- ⦿ For the financial year April 2022/2023, we have supported a total of 847 new tenants' cross tenure (helping achieve £787,900 of supported savings in the form of income maximisation and grants). This is higher than the previous year due to an expansion of the service and, we are now recording Council Tax Reduction / Discounts - £345,641 for 2022/23.

¹¹ [Working age adults in relative income poverty by economic status of household \(gov.wales\)](#)

¹² [UK Poverty 2019/20: Work | JRF](#)

- Pre-Accommodation staff helped with income maximisation and completing several different benefit applications that financially impacted the tenants. We are trusted partners to apply to the Welsh Government Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF) providing grants for white goods, off grid fuel and Emergency Assistance Payments, as well as verified assessors for Welsh Water, where we can apply for reduced water rates to qualifying households.



- We issue Foodbank vouchers and make referrals as required for more complex cases.
- Pre-Accommodation support has been expanded into the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and we have also supported 138 tenancies in the PRS (included in figure above), through Housing Support Grant funding.
- Our PRS Support Officers are now located in the 3 main Job Centre Offices, taking referrals for anyone making a claim for Universal Credit and have housing costs in the PRS.
- We have re-started our training programme for people who join our housing register. We have provided training to: Youth Training - 19 young people; General training (in person) - 81 Households; General advice provided via phone email - 51 households.
- We have also extended the training to include a module for University of Wales Trinity Saint David as part of a Youth Workers course.
- We have started a pilot of partnership working with the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to provide training to young jobseekers as part of their claimant commitment.
- Satisfaction with our service for 2022/23 was 4.85 out of 5 based on responses returned.

Warm Places

- As a result of the pressing cost of living crisis and rising energy costs the Council established dedicated warm places in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford libraries. Newspapers, magazines, computers / iPads and a television are available in a comfortable seating area. By the end of March 2023 just over 8,000 attendances, within these warm places.
- In addition to the Council run facilities a Welsh Government Poverty Grant of £274,000 was administered by the Council to support the establishment of 45 community led warm spaces and 6 food related projects. The community-based service up to the end of March 2023, recorded approximately 10,000 attendances across these provisions.

Supporting families to claim all the financial support they are entitled to.

- ⦿ We continue to support families to claim all the support they are entitled to and actively pursue information to enable Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims to be processed as quickly as possible. We ensure we promote Discretionary Housing Payments and also actively encourage take up. There is close multi-Council service working and links with housing associations. An extra £100k has been allocated to the DHP fund via the cost -of -living discretionary scheme. In addition, we will undertake the relevant signposting and referrals to ensure that families receive the relevant advice and support.
- ! The average time taken to process new Housing /Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims **(6.6.1.2)** during 2022/23 is 18.46 days. Although this is higher than in 2021/22 when it was just over 16 days, this is still well within the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) requirements of 30 days to process new claims.
- ⦿ The average time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Reduction Scheme notifications of changes of circumstances continues to be very good at 3.62 days. **(6.6.1.3)**

Is anyone better off?

Hwb Advisor impact

Mrs H called into Hwb as she had received a summons for her council tax, as the Hwb Advisor was talking to her they could see that Mrs H was facing other financial difficulties, so the Hwb Advisor offered support to work through circumstances.

Mrs H was a single parent of 3 and a homeowner. Her only income was Employment Support Allowance (ESA), industrial injuries, Personal Independent Allowance (PIP - lower rate) and child benefit.

She was struggling with day-to-day bills and school dinners. She had applied for Free School meals but had been turned down.

Action Taken by Hwb Advisor

1. Issued with a council tax reduction (CTR) form and to apply for back dating
2. Checked council tax and could see there was no Single Occupancy Discount (SPD) in place, husband had left 2 years previous, issued SPD form
3. Advised to apply for Universal Credit (UC)
4. Advised to appeal Personal Independence Allowance (PIP) and apply for enhanced rate
5. Advised to apply for a blue badge due to health condition
6. Contacted Free School Meals services who advised to apply again if UC awarded and for Uniform Grant

Outcome

1. Council tax reduction awarded and backdated 3 months
2. Single Person Discount (SPD) awarded and backdated – refunded £1200
3. Awarded Universal Credit (UC)
4. Awarded the enhanced PIP
5. Awarded a blue badge
6. Free School Meals and Pupil Development Grant awarded

Mrs H was pleased with the help and support that she had received from the Hwb Advisor and noted that she was now approximately £800 a month better off and not struggling.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- **Cross-party Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel** – The Tackling Poverty Advisory Panel provides important support to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for tackling poverty. The Panel which is made up of a cross-party group of elected members oversees and monitors the Council’s Tackling Poverty Action Plan, overarching policy and wider tackling poverty agenda.
- During November 2022 the Council established a Head of Service level **Tackling Poverty Officers Working Group** in order to ensure a multi-service response to the cost of living crises. This approach has proved to be extremely beneficial and the collaboration and integration between Council services and with external stakeholders has been extremely beneficial in developing our response to cost of living pressures for residents.

2b - Service Priority- Housing

We have delivered over 1,000 additional affordable homes over the last four years

Good quality affordable homes are the bedrock of healthy and sustainable communities. Delivery through our plans and our new Housing and Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan continues to exceed targets.

Why this is important?

- Good quality affordable homes as well as continued significant investment in existing homes promotes health and well-being, meeting the individual needs of the residents, building resilient and cohesive communities and places where people want to live. Investment in existing and the additional supply of homes in our rural and urban communities across the County will be key to enabling community resilience and cohesion.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? [Sources of evidence](#)

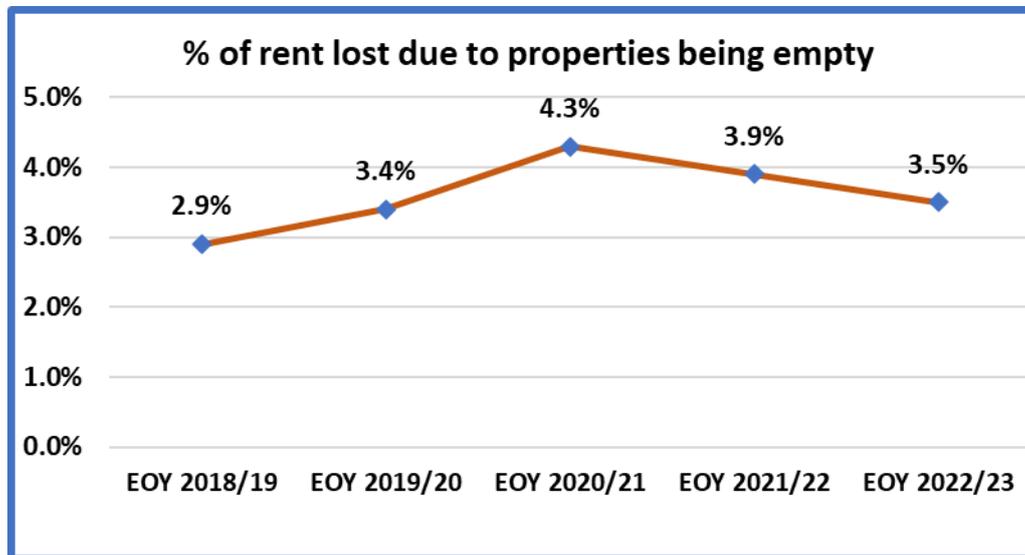
Success Measures / Explaining the Results

During 2022/23 we provided pre-accommodation support to 847 people cross tenure within Carmarthenshire. Within our own stock, we were able to support over 99% of new tenancies which started between 1st of April 2022 and 31st of March 2023.

- 323 additional affordable homes** were delivered in Carmarthenshire during 2022/23 (7.3.2.24)



- 3.5% of council house rent was lost due to properties being empty (Voids) during 2022/23 (PAM/039) this is an improvement on the last couple of years but not quite back to pre-COVID levels yet. We will continue to implement further improvement actions over the months to come, as laid out in our Void Action Plan and approved by Improvement Board. This has seen recent rates fall below 2018/19 levels.



 Internal Audit	<p>Housing Voids (Final report Issued:23rd August)) <i>Assurance Rating: Acceptable</i></p> <p>Objective of the review: The objective of the review was to ensure that the systems and procedures in place for Voids and Allocations are robust and comply with the Authority’s approved policies and procedures and current legislation.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>High</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Acceptable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> </tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
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- It took an average of just over **6 calendar days to complete housing repairs** during 2022/23 (PAM/037), this is an improvement on the previous year of 15.1 days which was caused by a backlog of repairs on the aftermath of COVID and restrictions that came with it.



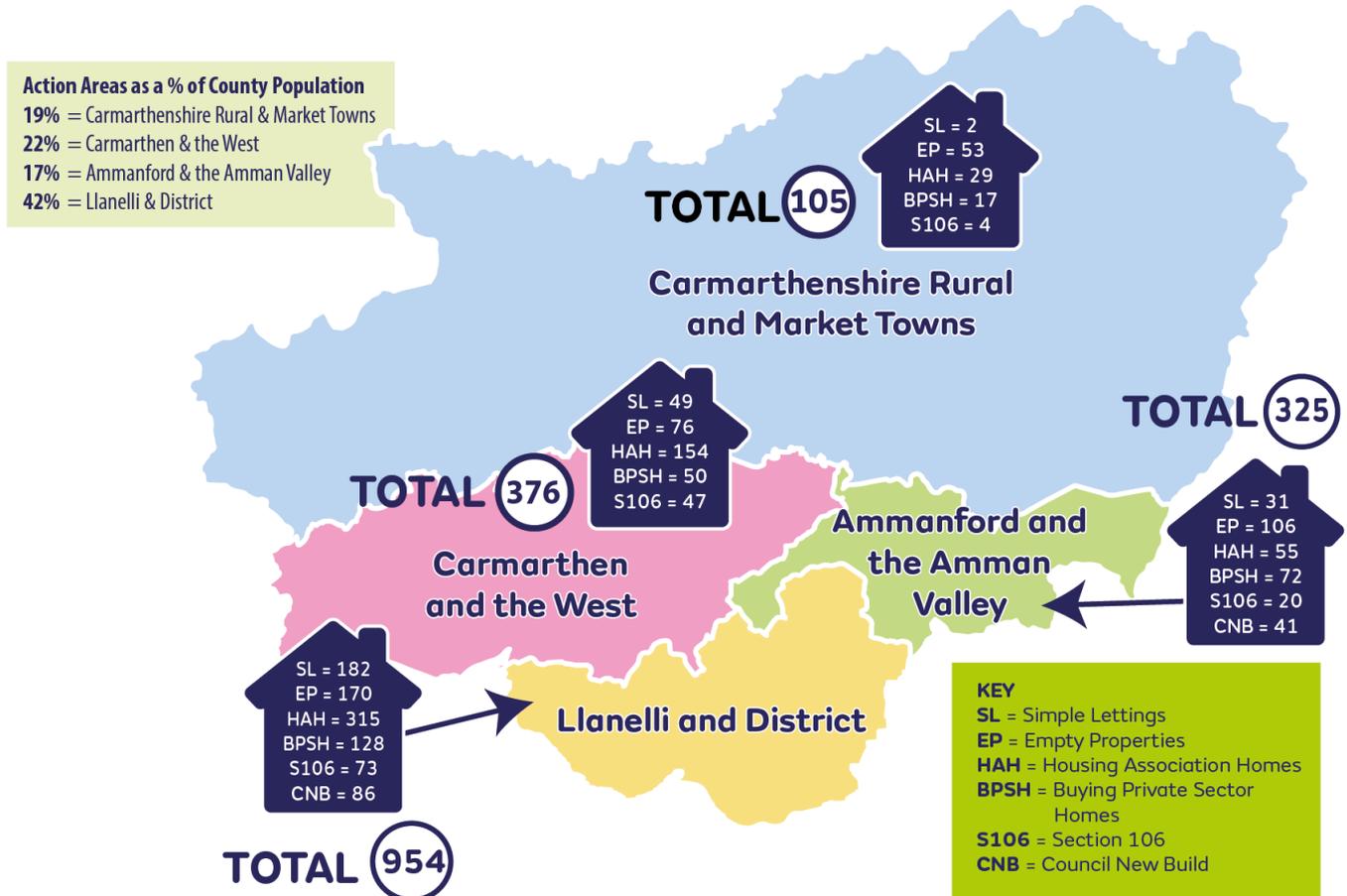
- There are many properties in the County that have been vacant for 6 months or more, as an Authority we provide advice and guidance as well as Welsh Government funded Empty Property Grants, to help to bring these empty properties back into use. Therefore, of the 1,980 empty properties that were empty in April 2022, we have helped **143 properties to be brought back into use** (PAM013), this equates to **7.2%** which is an improvement on 6% in 2021/22. The delivery of the Western Valleys Task Force, Valleys Task Force, Houses into Homes schemes, and a strong enforcement regime has allowed us to meet our target at the end of the year. There are however barriers that we have had to overcome like the economic crisis, supply and contractor availability and understanding the data/landscape of empty properties across the county that has slowed progress. The general decrease in the number of empty homes over the past 5 years and meeting this year’s target gives us a solid foundation to work from to deliver on the objectives within the empty homes policy over the next 3 years.

Progress in 2022/23

Affordable Homes

- Through our plans and our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan we have delivered a total of 1,760 additional affordable homes since 2016, exceeding our targets every year. As noted previously, 1,105 of those have been delivered in the last four years. Our current homes have been delivered throughout the County using a range of solutions as shown in the map.

Countywide Affordable Housing Delivery



- A brand new supported accommodation project has been launched in Coleshill Terrace which provides 24-hour support for residents. This project is a collaborative approach between Housing and Social Care and forms part of the Council's five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.
- The Council's first five new build developments have been completed and let creating 127 new homes in Llanelli, Burry Port, Pembrey, Ammanford and Llandybie.

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Affordable Homes (Final Report Issued: 6th July 2022) Assurance Rating: Acceptable</p> <p>Objective of the review: To ensure that systems and procedures for the management and administration of ‘affordable housing’ complied with those detailed in the approved Policies and Procedures. The audit also reviewed the adequacy of controls in place to verify the information declared in applications and confirmed that income is appropriately accounted for.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1257 212 1460 362"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
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Housing Property

- ⦿ We have undertaken 643 detailed surveys in our council homes in order to establish a programme of investment for our tenants.

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) <i>Objective of the review:</i> The objective of the review was to ensure that effective systems and procedures are in place for the management, administration, and reporting of Disabled Facilities Grants.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1276 795 1460 913"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table>	High	Acceptable	Low
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Is anyone better off?

First tenants move into new supported housing project in Llanelli

Carmarthenshire County Council has opened a brand-new supported accommodation project with 24-hour support for its residents in Coleshill Terrace, Llanelli. The Council has transformed the former Registrar Office and Cash Desk into quality supported accommodation for eight individuals, helping them to live independently in the community.

The works to transform the building have been jointly funded by Welsh Government’s Integrated Care Fund and Carmarthenshire County Council. The new facility contains four self-contained flats and a separate shared accommodation unit for four tenants.

The Coleshill Terrace project forms part of our commitment to increasing the supply of affordable, quality supported accommodation that is owned by the Council, as part of our affordable housing delivery plan.

This is a collaborative approach between Housing and social care that will help individuals live independently in their own homes. We will also provide appropriate support to manage their own tenancy to achieve greater freedom and control in their lives.

This project forms part of the Council’s five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan which will see the creation of over 2,000 homes within five years and an investment of over £300million.



What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

A range of cross Divisional Groups have been established to ensure the effective governance of Divisional plans in addition to the formal political structures. These include:

- Housing and Regeneration Steering Group- Affordable Homes Programme
- Participation in RDT and Transformation Board
- Quarterly performance management sessions with Cabinet members across the Housing and Public Protection Division
- Improvement Board for Housing Voids and repairs
- Weekly SMT/DMTs

2c - Service Priority- Social Care

Following the pandemic, we have seen increased demand for all social care services, made more challenging by the increasing complexity of cases, however, we have continued to innovate, develop and protect the most vulnerable. We are also clear regarding priorities and service improvements going forward.

Why is this important?

- Social care services across a range of client group areas are likely to see an increase in demand over coming years and with the sector facing significant pressures in terms of workforce capacity there is a need to focus attention and respond innovatively.
- The further development of collaboration and integration with health will be essential in order to deliver the key principles and standards relating to prevention, system flow, proactive care and planned care, and long-term care. The long-term aim is to wherever possible help people to maintain their independence at home for as long as possible, prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and support timely discharge home from hospital to ensure that those that need good hospital care can access it.

How well are we doing (and how do we know)? ⓘ Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

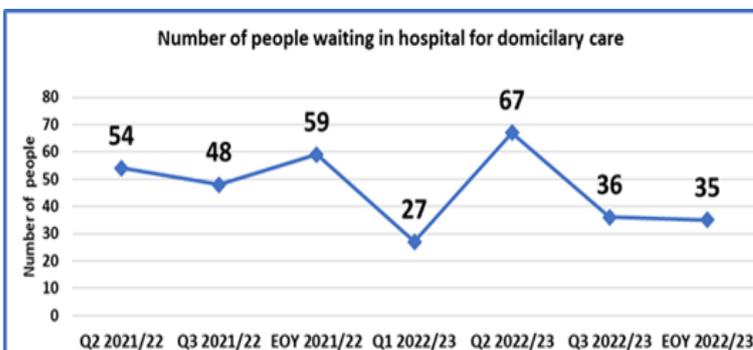


66%

Agree there's a good social care service available in their area
(Previously 47.5%)

Source: National Survey for Wales

According to the 2020/21 [National Survey for Wales](#) 66% of participants believed that there is **good Social Care Service available in the area**. This is an improvement on the last survey result of 47.5% and above the Welsh average of 63.9%.



The number of people waiting in hospital for domiciliary care varies during the year and is an 'as at' figure captured at the end of each month.

We continue our efforts to increase care capacity available via both internal and external recruitment and retention initiatives. We are increasing capacity through our enhanced integrated reablement service, which will help increase capacity available. There is a positive impact in reducing those waiting in hospital from our Home First approach, and providing short-term services where capacity allows. **(ASC/001)**

It takes us an average of **277** calendar days to deliver a

Disabled Facilities Grant



(Previously 259 days)

A backlog of delivering Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations occurred due to COVID-19 restrictions with delays and the ability to complete ongoing site work, since then the average number of days to complete these adaptations remains as we try to clear that backlog. This together with experiencing issues around contractor capacity, work is generally taking longer to complete. We are working on a new contractor framework and discussing ways to increase capacity in the interim



51.8% (198/382) of people referred to the National Exercise Referral scheme that completed the 16-week programme

(Pre-COVID this was at 57.4%-374/652)
(PAM/041)

The ability to run the full programme of NERS sessions (over the full 16-week programme) has been affected by capacity issues within the wider Health and Fitness team, and specifically the specialist NERS team. Exercise referrals cannot be taken and managed without qualified NERS instructors and upskilling a pool of staff to improve this position. Whilst both the number of overall referrals and then the number that complete the 16-week programme (a national indicator that reflects likely long-term adherence to healthier habits) are not back to pre-covid figures, both are improving, as we build back capacity and resilience in the team.

Progress in 2022/23

- Despite all of the workforce challenges across social care, we have effectively managed the risk to Carmarthenshire residents. Similarly, to the rest of Wales and the UK, due to the ongoing shortage of qualified and non-qualified social care staff, we have many more people than we would like, waiting for social work assessment and care. Whilst we are doing everything we can to address these workforce challenges, it has been important that we keep those that are waiting safe. We have done this through effective and regular triage and prioritisation of those waiting for assessment to ensure that those in greatest need are assessed first. We have then ensured that once someone is assessed and waiting for care, we keep in regular contact through our Care and Support Coordinators to monitor any escalation of need which needs to be addressed.
- We have established our Home First approach which supports earlier discharge from hospital and is starting to respond to people in crisis in the community. We are consequently providing patients with a period of assessment either at home or in a bed-based setting, prior to determining the long-term care arrangements required. This approach has led to a significant decrease in the number of patients in hospital waiting for care, which is particularly important at the moment with all of the challenges relating to securing care and support at home.
- In 2022 the new integrated Home First Team, which is a collaboration between the Local Authority and Hywel Dda University Health Board, were finalists in the **UK Public Sector Transformation Awards**.

- The Council's Reablement service is a critical pillar of Intermediate Care and is heavily involved with the Home First approach, which is proving to be an innovative and successful way of improving person centred outcomes for citizens. The success of the integrated approach with Hywel Dda University Health Board has been recognised in a number of local and national awards received in 2022/23.



- ❖ HDUHB team of the month – February 2022
- ❖ Public Sector Transformation Awards March 2022 – silver award in the Transformation in Health & Social Care Category
- ❖ NHS Wales October 2022 – Delivering Person Centred Care
- ❖ NHS Wales awards October 2022 – Outstanding Contribution to the Transformation of Health and Care
- The Council's in house Homecare Service deploys 275 carers to deliver over 3,500 hours of essential care and support to over 330 citizens across the county. A Care Inspectorate Wales inspection report of 2022 found that:
 - ❖ People and their relatives speak highly about the care and support they receive.
 - ❖ The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.
 - ❖ Care Staff are knowledgeable, caring and take pride in the care and support they provide.
 - ❖ Care staff are well trained, have a good knowledge of the people they care for and are enthusiastic about working in the service.
 - ❖ The service has a strong leadership team with a clear vision for the service.
- The success of the Carmarthenshire in-house long-term Homecare Service was celebrated when they became winners of the Great British Care Awards Wales, Homecare Team Award in January 2023.
- Tŷ Pili Pala is a bed-based reablement unit which was established in joint partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board, supporting people to be discharged from hospital with the aim of enabling people to return home safely and maintain their independence. During 2022/23, 125 people were admitted and 119 have returned home either with reablement, low-level support provided by the Red Cross, home care or no service at all.
- Delta Well-being and Hywel Dda University Health Board have won a 'Partnership in Tec' award for a telehealth project which supports patients to manage their health and make sure they are fit for surgery. The project supports patients to monitor cardiac, lung function and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease remotely from their own homes using a range of health equipment paired to a mobile phone.
- Delta Well-being's Rapid Response Team is helping to prevent unnecessary ambulance callouts and hospital admissions by attending non-medical emergencies and supporting people in their own homes. In 2022/23, they supported 152 people in this way as well as helped bridge care arrangements which were due to start within the next week to support patients to come home from hospital sooner.

- ⦿ A Skills hub for adults with disabilities has opened in Cross Hands. The Hub offers structured opportunities to learn new skills and will offer accredited training to enable people to progress volunteering and potential employment opportunities going forward.
- ⦿ We have continued to develop new and innovative ways to grow our workforce and address some of the recruitment challenges that we continue to face:
 - A Care Academi which offers exciting opportunities to those looking for a career in social work or social care was established. 7 people are currently on the programme and recruitment for the next cohort is underway. Individuals will have experience in the different social care settings through placement rotations. We are also growing our own social workers through an increase in the number of traineeships within the Council.
 - We continue to work with the external domiciliary sector to look at ways to develop their workforce. This has included the retendering of our domiciliary care framework to ensure that we have effective coverage across the county. Following a successful pilot in Pembrokeshire, we are starting to develop micro-enterprises to deliver care in discreet communities.
- ⦿ We are starting to develop our overall approach to prevention and supporting people earlier before they need a statutory intervention. In line with this, we have recently retendered our preventative services aligned the 5 localities supported under our domiciliary care framework. Third sector organisations are starting to work in each locality to understand what they need in relation to preventative services to develop a bespoke offer which addresses the need of individual communities.
- ⦿ We have collaborated with colleagues in housing and commissioning to progress several accommodation projects and utilised external funding such as the Integrated Care (Capital) Fund to progress bespoke housing projects: We have developed six accommodation schemes for individuals with a learning disability.
- ⦿ In relation to substance misuse our specialist team have been raising awareness of the impact of substance misuse across the county. The team have provided training for staff working with adults and children including front line care staff. This year the team have also provided intensive support for people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage. Prevention is a key objective for the team.

Is anyone better off?

‘Living her best life’

R is a young woman aged 20 who has successfully moved into supported living from residential care . Following her long transition to living a more independent life, R has been supported by a dedicated team and a loving family. R is now said to be ‘living her best life’. People close to R made sure that her wishes and feelings were at the forefront of any decision-making process.

At her previous accommodation R preferred to spend time in her room and living area, knowing this the team ensured her new room was decorated and refurbished to her requirements. Following her move R has amazed everyone by choosing to spend significant periods of time with the other people in the communal areas within the house.

Watching her cut the ribbon at her own front door on the day of her move with a beaming smile brought a tear to the eyes of all who have supported her.

In R’s words her enthusiasm for being in her new home is expressed by an exuberant ‘All right Butt’ when she meets people on a day-to-day basis. All who know and understand how R communicates see this as her saying very clearly ‘I’m happy and I feel safe’.

What and how we can do better

See our delivery plan to achieve this objective in Appendix 7

Governance Arrangements

- Monthly Integrated Services Quality Assurance Senior Management Team meetings.
- Performance Management Framework and scheduled dedicated Performance focused meetings as well as regular review of performance via Communities DMT and Integrated Services Quality Assurance SMT.
- We produce a Directors Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions which is audited by the Care Inspectorate Wales.
- Assurance meetings with CIW 3 times a year.