

Youth work in Wales, 2022-23

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SFR 18/2023

About this release

Youth work provides and facilitates an environment within which young people can relax, have fun, and feel secure, supported and valued. It is intended that through non-formal and informal educational opportunities and experiences youth workers challenge young people to enhance their life chances.

Young people aged 11 to 25 can be registered members of the youth work sector and have the opportunity to gain national accreditations such as the Duke of Edinburgh award.

Youth work in Wales is delivered through the 22 local authorities each year and also through the voluntary sector. This release relates to information collated by the statutory youth work sector in Wales.

This release contains comparisons with previous years that were within the period of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Figures for 2020-21 and 2021-22, in particular those that relate to registered members, were substantially impacted as outreach was affected by the pandemic and restrictions in place. This should be kept in mind when making comparisons to previous years.

This annual statistical release presents detailed information about the statutory youth work sector in Wales for the 2022-23 financial year. The release includes some comparisons with previous years.

Please refer to the [Key Quality Information section for any known issues relating to data quality in the years reported](#).

Detailed data can be found on [StatsWales](#).

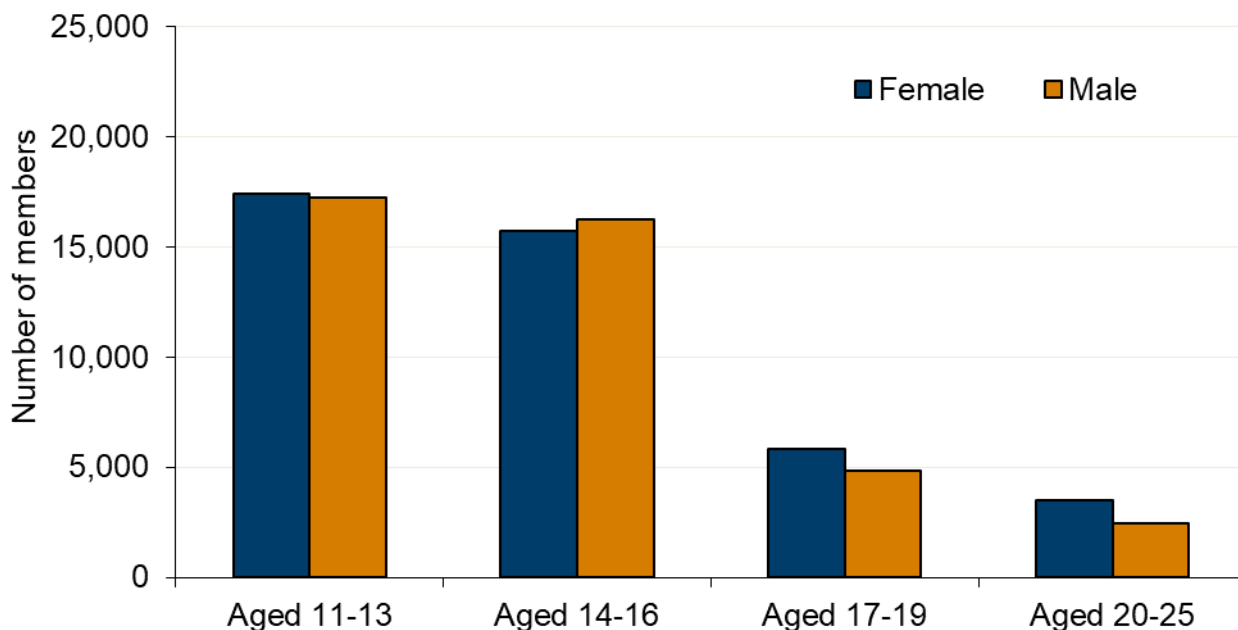
Main points

In this release

- There were 83,218 registered members of statutory youth work sector provision in 2022-23, up 21% on 2021-22 and a return to levels seen before the pandemic.
- At March 2023, there were around 713 full-time equivalent youth work management and delivery staff working in local authorities in Wales, a decrease of 11% compared with the previous year.
- The total income for youth work provision across Wales in 2022-23 was £44.4 million. Total income increased by 4% compared with 2021-22, with core budget increasing by 2% and additional income increasing by 5% compared with 2021-22.
- The total spend for youth work provision across Wales in 2022-23 was £45.5 million, an increase of 7% compared with the previous year.

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Figure 1: Registered members of youth work provision by age and gender, 2022-23



Description of Figure 1: Bar chart showing that the age 11 to 13 age group has the highest number of registered members of youth work provision in Wales. The 20 to 25 age group has the lowest.

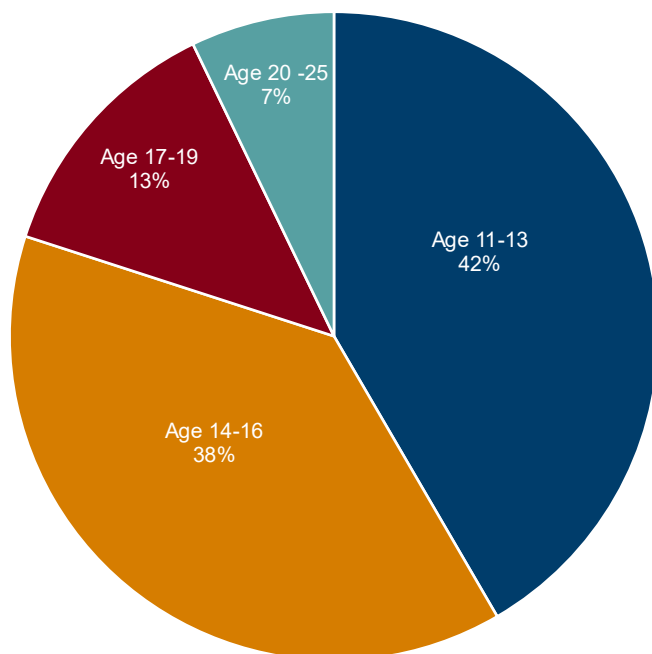
[Registered members by local authority, age and gender on StatsWales](#)

There were 83,218 registered members of youth work provision in 2022-23, an increase of 21% compared to 2021-22. This marks a return to pre-pandemic membership levels (82,766¹ in 2019-20).

The total of registered members comprised of 51% female and 49% male, a slight change from last year (50% female and 50% male). Of all 11 to 25 year olds, 15% were registered members of youth work provision in 2022-23, up from 13% in 2021-22. 42% of all registered members were in the 11 to 13 age group.

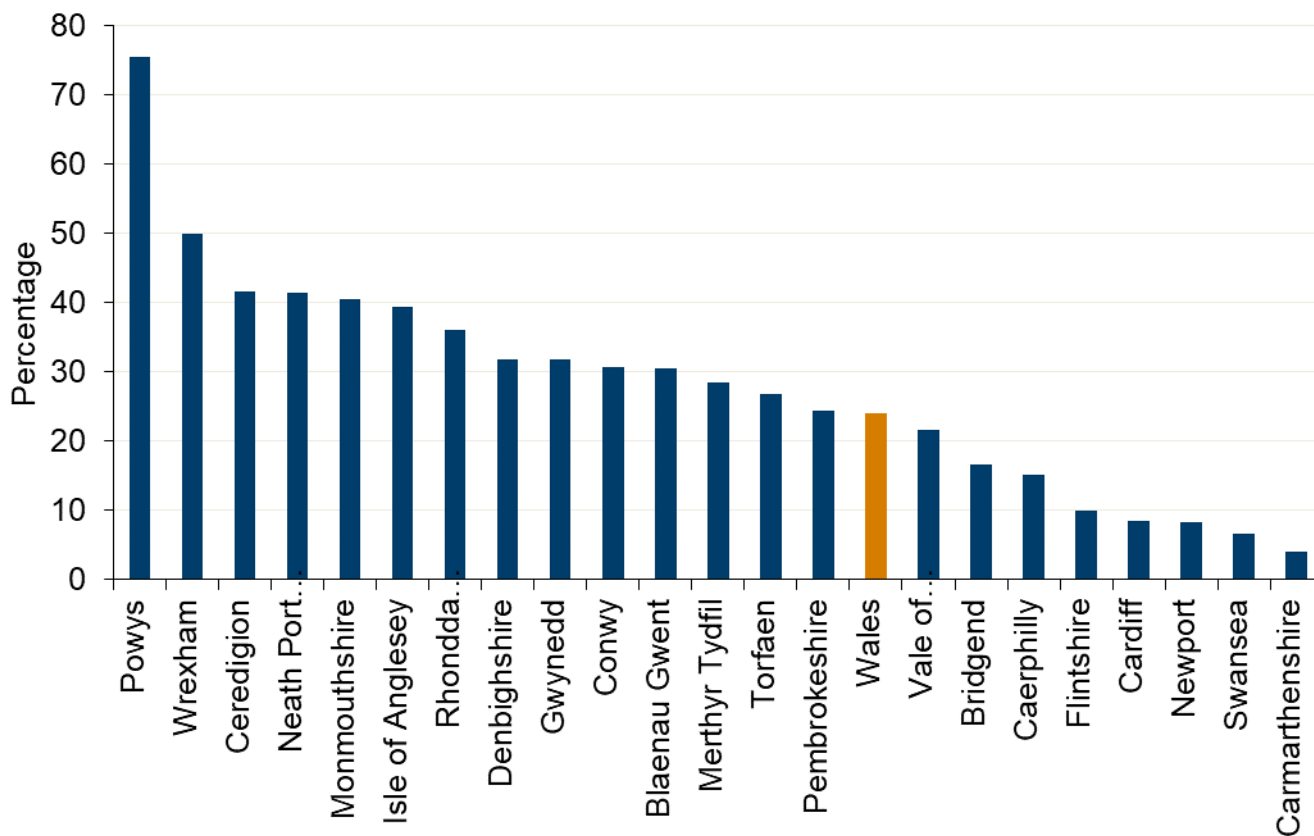
¹ This figure excludes Isle of Anglesey who did not submit data for 2019-20.

Figure 2: Proportion of registered members of youth work provision by age 2022-23



Description of Figure 3: Pie chart showing that 11 to 13 year olds accounted for the largest proportion of members of youth work provision in 2022-23 followed closely by 14 to 16 year olds.

Figure 3: Registered members of youth work provision as a proportion of the population, aged 11 to 19, 2022-23



Description of Figure 3: Bar chart showing that Powys has the highest proportion of registered members as a percentage of the population aged 11 to 19 and Carmarthenshire had the lowest.

[Registered members by local authority, age and gender on StatsWales](#)

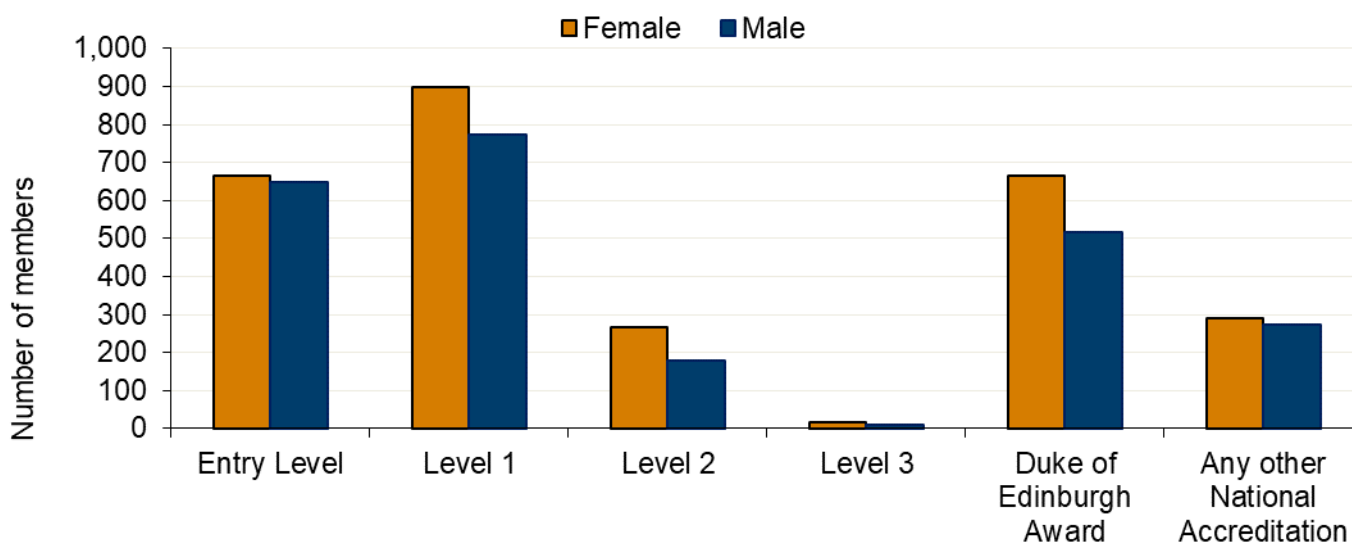
Registered members aged 11 to 19 years represented 24% of the 11-19 population in 2022-23, up 4 percentage points on 2021-22. The proportion ranged from 75% in Powys to 4% in Carmarthenshire. Membership rates increased in 17 out of 22 local authorities. The greatest increase was seen in Wrexham where the proportion of registered members was up by 25 percentage points compared to last year. Monmouthshire saw the biggest drop, 27 percentage points.

Accreditation of members

The survey collects information on individuals gaining accreditations through youth work provision differentiated between national and locally recognised accreditations. There were 5,198 young people who were reported as having gained a national accreditation in 2022-23, 6% of all registered members. This is the same proportion as in 2021-22.

There were 10,379 young people reported as having gained a local accreditation (12% of members, less than half a percentage point decrease on 2021-22). A young person can gain both national and local accreditations.

Figure 4: Members gaining national accreditations within youth work provision by level and award, 2022-23

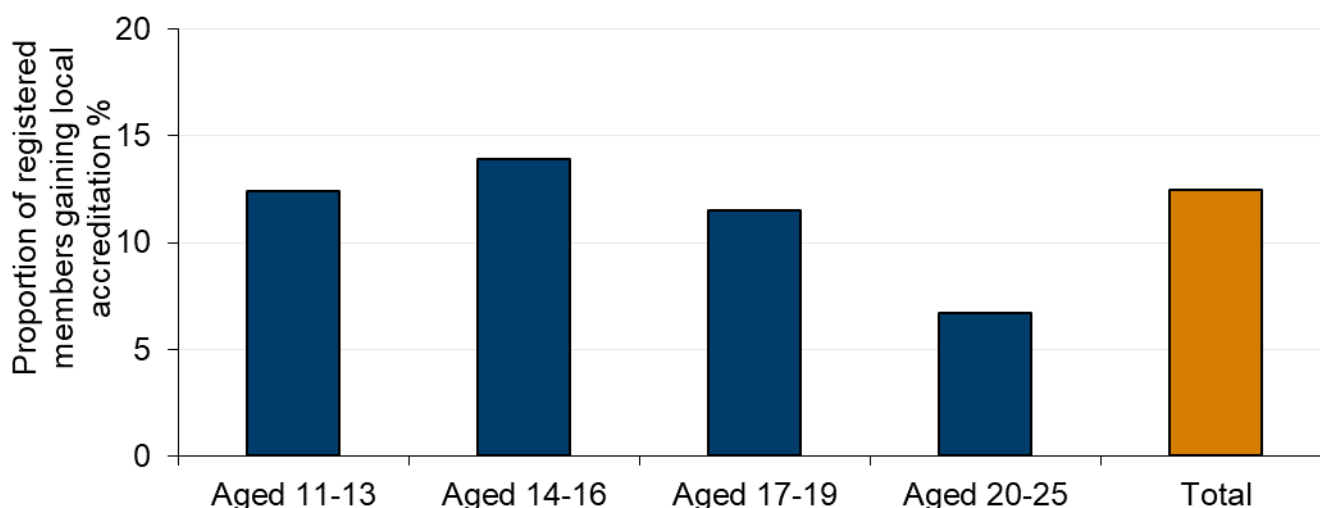


Description of Figure 4: Bar chart showing that the most achieved level of accreditation was Level 1 with Level 3 being the least achieved.

[Members gaining national accreditation by local authority and measure on StatsWales](#)

Level 1 accounted for the highest proportion of accreditations in 2022-23. The number of Duke of Edinburgh Awards accredited through the statutory youth work sector increased to 1,182 compared to 919 in 2021-22. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is also offered through the voluntary sector, and some schools and colleges. The number of level 2 and level 3 qualifications achieved was lower in 2022-23 than in 2021-22. There were increases in the number of accreditations gained in all of the other categories. Overall, the number of members gaining national accreditations was up 17% on 2021-22.

Figure 5: Proportion of members gaining local accreditations within the youth work provision by age group, 2022-23



Description of Figure 5: Bar chart showing that the age group with the highest proportion of members gaining a local accreditation was 14 to 16 followed by 11 to 13.

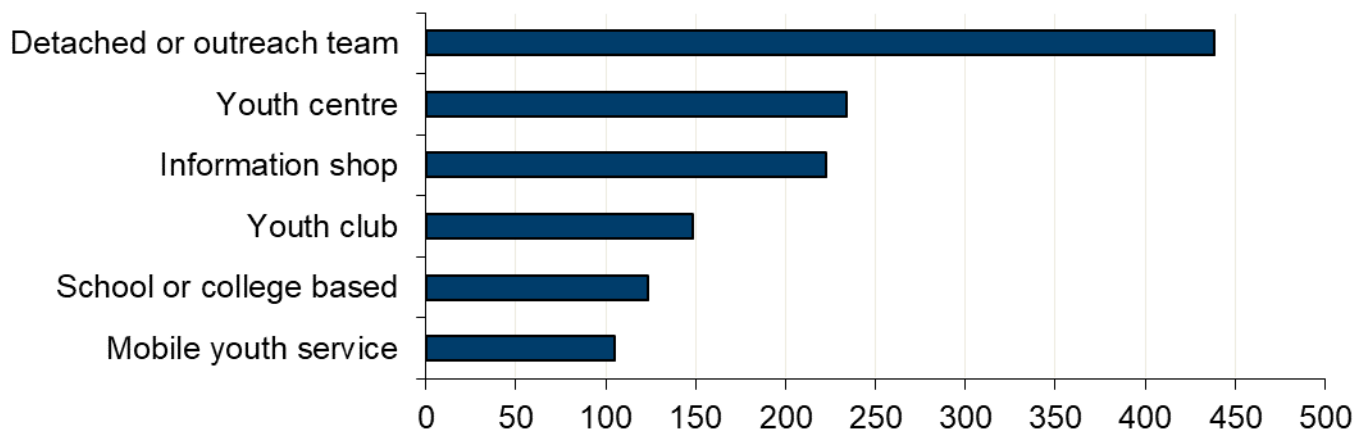
[Members gaining local accreditation by local authority, age and measure on StatsWales](#)

In 2022-23, 12% of all members gained a local accreditation. The highest proportion was by those aged 14 to 16 (14%) with the lowest by those aged 20 to 25 (7%). The total number of local accreditations gained increased from 8,762 in 2021-22 to 10,379 in 2022-23 but there was hardly any change in the overall proportion.

Youth work settings and projects

The survey collects information about the settings and projects for youth work provision that were running across Wales. Youth work projects may be delivered by the local authority alone, or in partnership with other statutory or voluntary bodies.

Figure 6: Average number of members per youth work setting, 2022-23



Description of figure 6: Bar chart showing that the average number of members per setting varies between different types of setting with detached or outreach teams having the highest number of members.

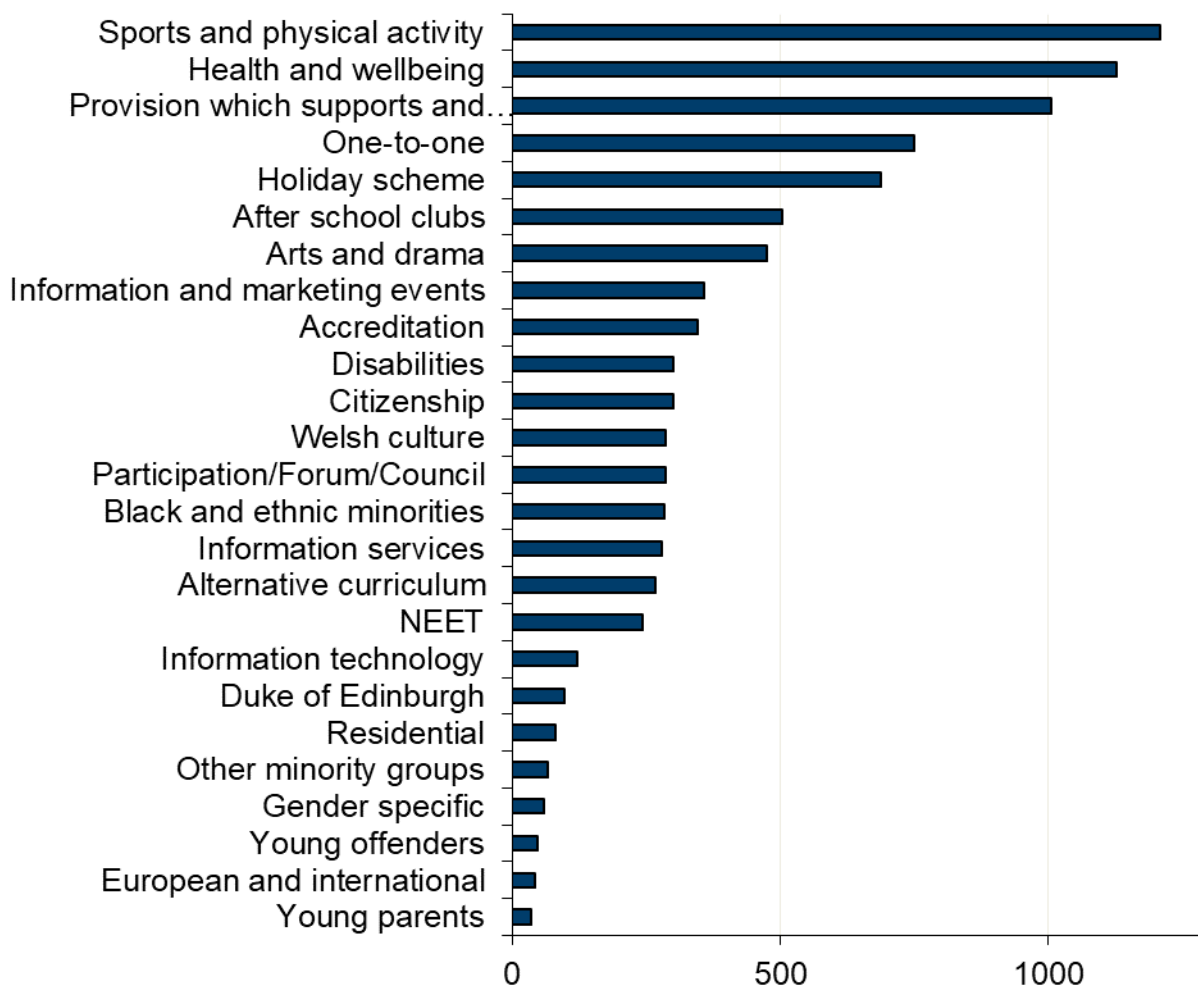
Detached or outreach teams had the highest average number of members per setting in 2022-23 at 439 registered members per setting. Mobile youth services had the lowest, with an average of 105 registered members per setting. This is in contrast to last year when youth clubs had the lowest number of members per setting and mobile youth services had the highest. Numbers have increased for all settings with the exception of mobile youth services and school or college based settings. Youth clubs saw a 77% increase in the average number of members per setting from 84 to 148.

Table 1: Registered members attending projects at different settings, 2022-23

Setting Type	Total number of Settings	Total number of registered members attending
Youth club	284	42,099
Detached or outreach team	91	39,918
School or college based	300	37,083
Youth centre	88	20,580
Information shop	40	8,892
Mobile youth service	42	4,399
Total	845	152,971

There will be some overlap of membership, with members able to interact with each of the different settings, and for example with more than one youth club or centre.

Figure 7: Number of youth work projects, by type of provision, 2022-23

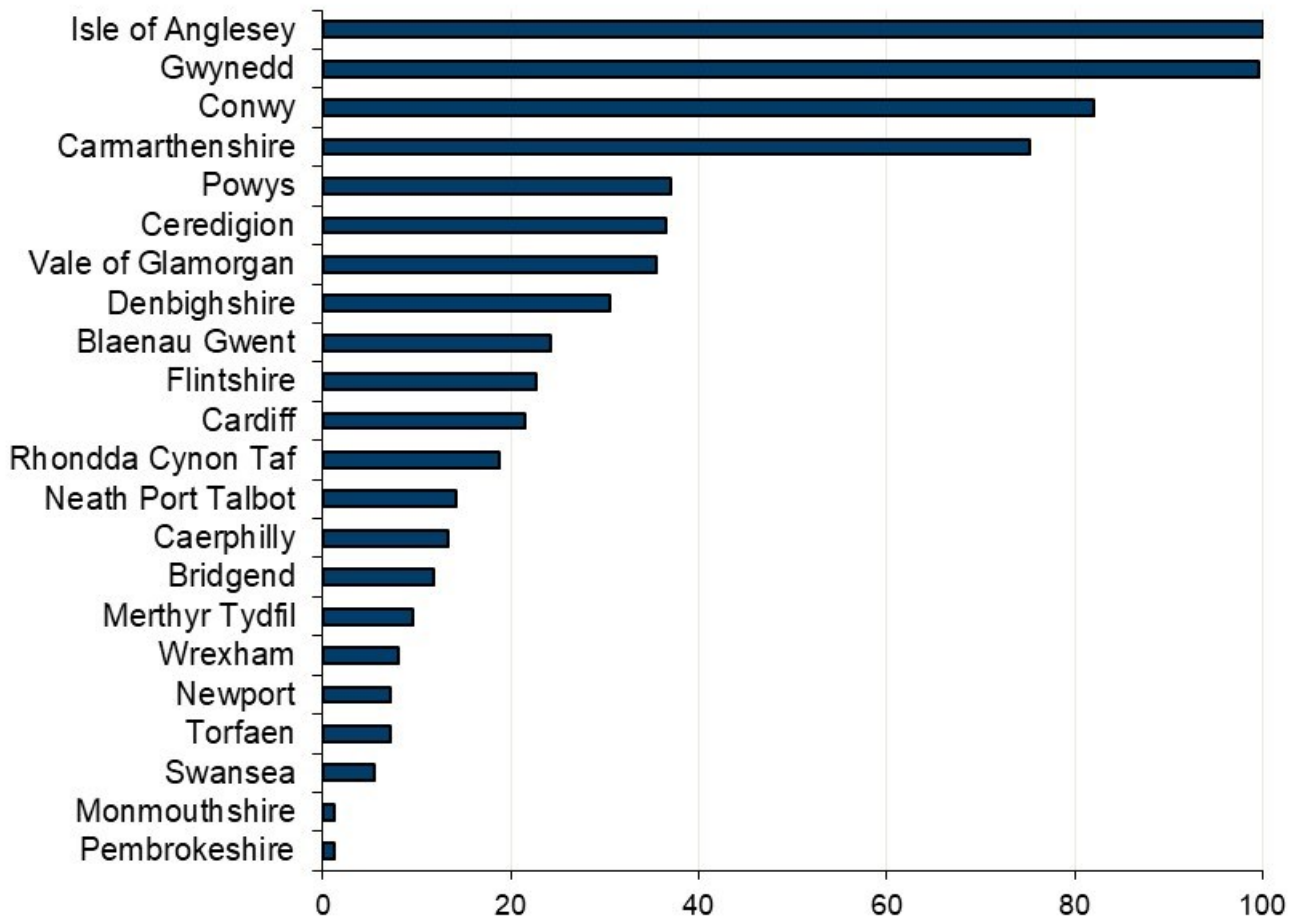


Description of Figure 7: Bar chart showing that the numbers of different types of projects delivered varied from 1,209 sports and physical activity projects to 35 young parents projects.

[Projects by local authority and provision type on StatsWales](#)

Health and wellbeing projects were the second most common with 1,127, followed by provision which supports and enables Welsh language at 1,006. Projects are recorded multiple times if they are relevant to more than one category. For example, the same project could be recorded within arts and drama, Welsh culture and residential.

Figure 8: Percentage of youth work projects delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh, 2022-23



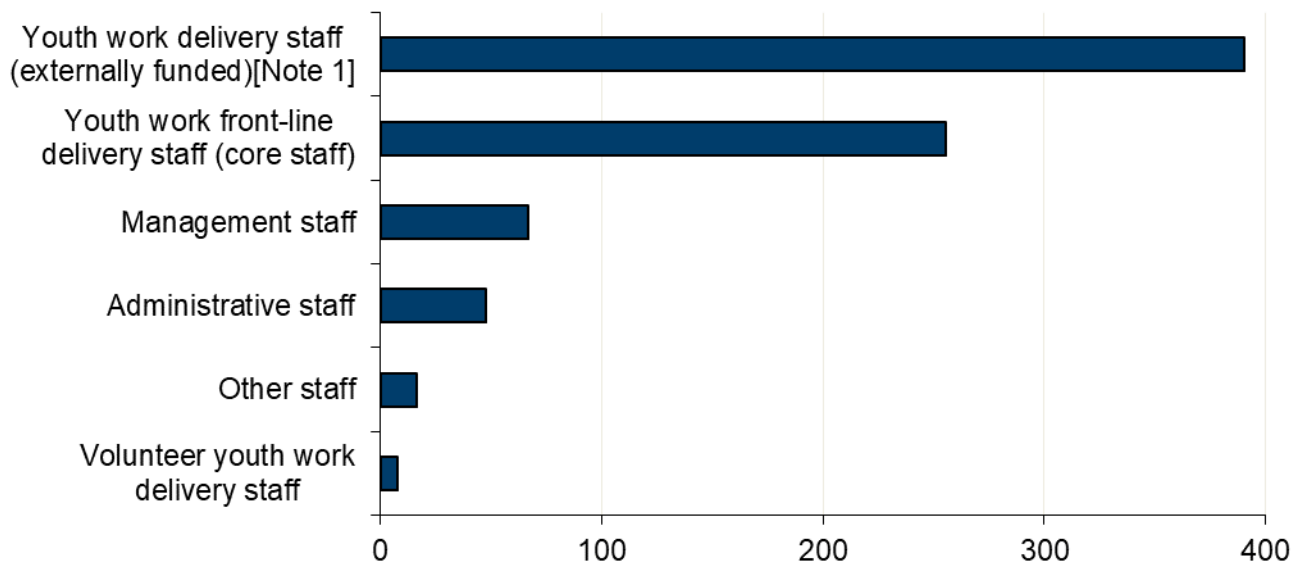
Description of Figure 8: Bar chart showing that the proportion of projects delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh varies across the different local authorities.

[Projects and attendances by provision and measure on StatsWales](#)

Of all projects delivered, 30% were delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh, this is an increase of 7 percentage points compared to 2021-22. The proportion of projects delivered entirely or mainly through the Welsh language was highest in Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd (both 100%). It was lowest in Pembrokeshire and Monmouthshire (both 1%).

Youth work staff

Figure 9: Number of full-time equivalent youth work staff, 2022-23



Description of Figure 9: Bar chart showing that externally funded youth work delivery staff make up the highest proportion of youth work staff (FTE) followed by youth work front-line delivery staff.

[Total staff by workforce type and working hours on StatsWales](#)

[Note 1] Comprised of 325 non-European funded posts and 65 European funded posts.

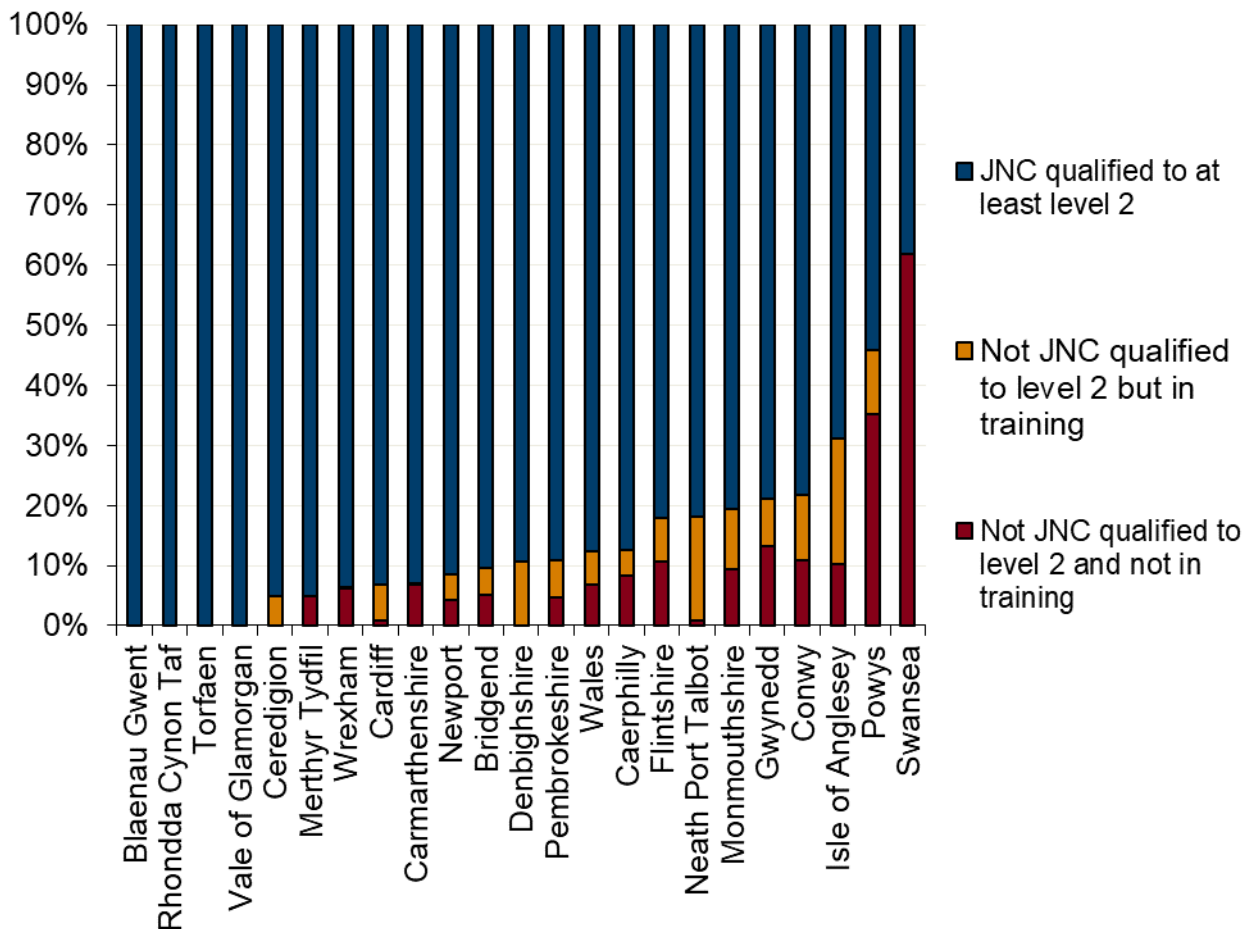
At March 2023, there were 713 full-time equivalent (FTE) youth work delivery staff working across local authorities in Wales (excluding volunteer staff). The FTE delivery posts comprised of 9% management staff and 91% youth work front-line staff (covering both core and externally funded staff).

Compared with the previous year, there was a 11% decrease of FTE youth work delivery staff numbers in Wales. Within this decrease the number of externally funded delivery staff decreased by 15%, core front line delivery staff decreased by 2% and management staff decreased by 18%.

There were a further 8 FTE volunteer youth work delivery staff, and 64 FTE administrative and other staff, giving a total of 785 FTE youth work staff in Wales at March 2023.

Qualifications

Figure 10: Percentage of youth work delivery staff (FTE) by JNC qualification, 2022-23



Description of Figure 10: The chart shows that 100 percent of youth service delivery staff in Blaenau Gwent, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan were JNC qualified to at least level 2 in 2022-23. In Swansea, the proportion was 38%.

Management and delivery staff by local authority and qualification level on StatsWales

In 2022-23, 88% of all youth work delivery staff (FTE) held at least level 2 Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) professional qualifications², the same proportion as in 2021-22. Of those without a level 2 or above JNC qualification, 44% were in training (32% in 2021-22).

Staff ratios

The ratio of FTE management staff to other FTE youth work delivery staff in Wales in 2022-23 was around 1:10.

The ratio of registered members aged 11 to 25 to FTE youth work delivery staff (excluding volunteer and management staff) was 129 young people per worker in 2022-23. For members aged 11 to 19, the ratio was 120:1. These ratios reflect the total registered membership and not

² Degree level, diploma, NOCN3, or any other qualification from JNC level 2 upwards. The JNC endorses professional qualifications for youth and community workers.

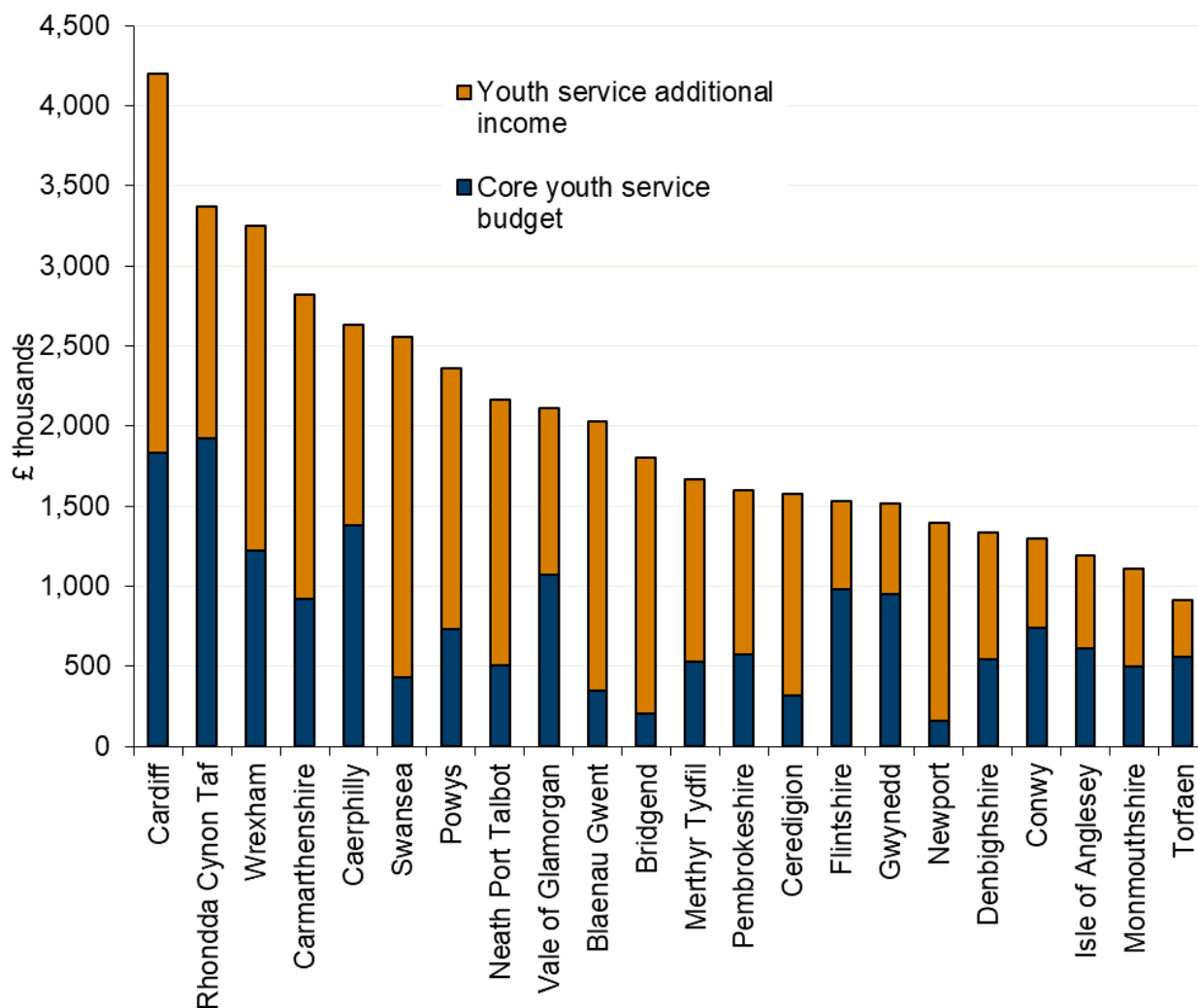
attendance at sessions. The ratios are higher than in 2021-22 as there was an increase in registered members and a decrease in staff numbers.

Youth work finance

The total income for youth work in 2022-23 was £44.4 million. Compared with the previous year, total income increased by around 4%. Total income varied across local authorities, 13 local authorities saw an increase compared to last year and 9 reported a decrease.

The total of core youth work budgets in 2022-23 was £17.1million, a 2% increase compared with 2021-22. The contribution made by core youth work budgets to the total youth work income across Wales varied between authorities, ranging from 64% in Flintshire to 11% in Newport and Bridgend.

Figure 11: Core youth work budget and youth and additional income, 2022-23

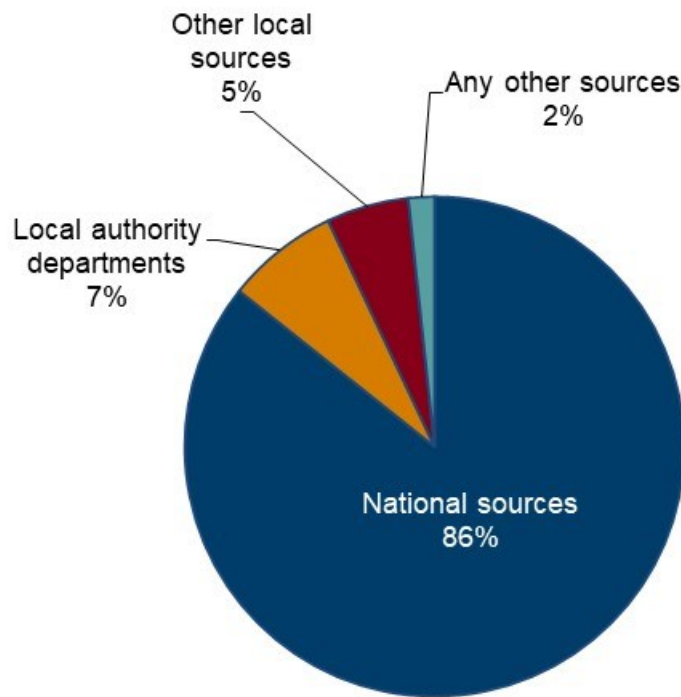


Description of Figure 11: Stacked bar chart showing total income split between core youth service budget and additional income. Cardiff had the highest total income (£4.2m) and Torfaen had the lowest (£0.9m).

[Income summary by local authority on StatsWales](#)

In addition to the core youth work budget, the total budget for youth work in Wales for 2022-23 included income of £27.4 million from other sources. 'National sources' contributed the majority (£23.5 million or 86%) of these funds. Within that, £4.9 million was provided by Families First and £10 million from the Youth Work Strategy Support Grant.

Figure 12: Source of additional income as percentage of total additional income, 2022-23



Description of Figure 12: Pie chart showing that national sources accounted for 86% of additional income in 2022-23. Local authority departments contributed 7%.

Expenditure

The total spend by youth work provision in Wales in 2022-23 was £45.5 million, an increase of around 7% compared with 2021-22. Expenditure ranged from £4.2 million in Cardiff to £0.9 million in Torfaen.

The majority of spending was on employees, at 74% of all expenditure. The remaining expenditure included 9% on resources and 4% on accommodation.

A further 2% of expenditure was grant aid from statutory youth work sector budgets to the voluntary sector. Including contributions from the wider local authority budget, local authorities provided around £928,000 in grant aid to voluntary youth services in Wales during the year.

Spend per head of population

In 2022-23, the total spend by youth work provision per person aged 11 to 25 years was £84, a 7% increase compared with 2021-22. The core youth work budget per person aged 11 to 25 was £31 in 2022-23, an increase of 2% compared with 2021-22. Full details can be seen in Table 4 in the data tables published alongside this release.

Quality information

This statistical release, and the accompanying data tables, presents detailed information about the statutory youth work sector in Wales for the year 2022-23. The release is produced annually with the statistics used within the Welsh Government, by local government and practitioners to monitor trends in membership, finance and youth work staff in Wales. The [Youth Work Strategy for Wales](#) was launched in the summer of 2019 and sets out a vision for the future of youth work in Wales. Youth work provides and facilitates an environment within which young people can relax, have fun, feel secure, supported and valued. It is intended that through non-formal and informal educational opportunities and experiences youth workers challenge young people to enhance their life chances.

The Interim Youth Work Board produced its [final report](#) on achieving a sustainable delivery model for youth work services in Wales in September 2021.

Data are collected as part of the statutory youth work sector provision in Wales by a survey carried out each year amongst the 22 local authorities in Wales during the summer. Full returns were obtained from 22 authorities in 2022-23, 2021-22 and 2020-21. Previous editions of this release have contained issues with data completeness and therefore comparisons between years generally need to be made with caution.

Information is collected via Excel spreadsheets which are transferred via the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current [youth work data collection form and guidance](#) are available.

The spreadsheets allow respondents to validate their own data before sending to the Welsh Government. Local authorities are asked to provide explanatory comments where large changes have occurred. This helps ensure that the data received by the Welsh Government is already of a high quality. Examples of validation checks within the forms include year-on-year changes, cross checks with other relevant data tables and checks to ensure data is logically consistent, for example comparison of registered membership against population estimates.

Once data is received by Welsh Government, it goes through further validation and verification checks, for example, common sense checks, arithmetic consistency checks, cross checks against the data for the previous year and tolerance checks. Validation errors are followed up with local authorities to seek resolution, in the small number of cases we fail to get an answer within a reasonable timescale, we may use imputation if appropriate to fix the error. The method of imputation and the affected data is highlighted through this 'quality information' section.

The quality of the data collected through the statutory youth work sector provision in Wales survey continues to develop, as centrally we improve the guidance and definitions used within the survey, and local authorities providing youth work provision continue to refine their management systems and data, to ensure that all the data gathered for the audit is

robust, consistent, current and accurate. Both of these issues impact upon the comparability of data from year to year.

Known data quality issues are highlighted by section below.

Prior to 2009-10, the collection and publication of statistics about Youth Work in Wales was carried out by the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales on behalf of the Welsh [Assembly] Government. On 1st April 2010, responsibility for this work transferred to Knowledge and Analytical Services of the Welsh Government. The data have not yet been assessed as National Statistics.

Membership

From the 2010-11 survey onwards, local authorities were asked to only include young people registered on the Reach system as active during the year (i.e. those for whom a name, address and date of birth was known.) (Reach is the term used to measure the number of young people engaged in youth work provision from the youth population within a designated area/local authority.) In previous years some local authorities may have additionally included anonymous members. Given this, and improvements to some authorities recording systems, it is not appropriate to compare this data on a like for like basis with earlier years.

Accreditations

The 2010-11 survey, for the first time, differentiated between young people who had received nationally and locally recognised accreditations:-

Nationally recognised accreditations are those successfully completed under nationally recognised programmes that are assessed and verified, for example: Duke of Edinburgh (DofE), BELA; Agored Cymru/OCN; ASDAN; and Personal Social Development (PSD).

Locally recognised awards are those successfully completed that are not part of the national programme and are assessed locally, for example: individual modules of DofE or PSD; Mayor's Awards; In-house Certification; Children/Youth University and John Muir Award.

Note that an individual may receive nationally and locally recognised accreditations and as such the data from 2010-11 onwards are not comparable with previous years, which was a count of all those with any accreditation.

Prior to 2012-13 information on accreditations was collected by broad age group. For the 2012-13 survey onwards local accreditations continue to be collected on this basis, but national accreditations are now collected by level or award.

Projects

Prior to 2010-11 there is thought to have been inconsistent interpretations in the recording of projects by local authorities, whereby some authorities may have counted one project within a number of project types, whereas others have limited to including each project into one or two project types. From the 2010-11 survey, the location or setting of projects

(youth club etc.) has been separated from the type of provision (holiday scheme, Welsh language). Again, this change in the method of collection means that a direct comparison should not be made with previous years.

Note that the count of settings is not the total of projects, as there may be several projects running at each setting. Similarly, the type of project information cannot be summed to give a total number of projects, as the same project can be multiple counted.

From 2013-14, information on the medium of delivery of projects has been collected (although only included in release from 2014-15), with local authorities identifying projects delivered mainly or entirely (70% or above) through the medium of Welsh.

Workforce

From the 2010-11 survey onwards the definition of Management staff has been clarified to be those with less than 10 per cent face-to-face contact with young people. There was also a change in definition from

“Youth work delivery staff – core and Youth work delivery staff – external” to

“Youth work front line staff – core and Youth work staff – externally funded”

This has affected comparability of data with earlier years.

Finance

Improved definitions and validation processes have been applied to the collection of finance information for 2010-11 onwards, resulting in some discontinuity between that data and finance data for prior years.

Other data sources

The release includes population estimate data for 2018 to 2021 from Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates by local authority and age, as available at October 2023. Where figures are expressed as proportion of the population, 2021 mid-year estimates have been used for data from 2022-23 and 2021-22 as 2022 mid-year estimates are not yet available.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the

Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/youth-work>, with supporting [StatsWales data](#).

Next update

October 2024 (provisional)

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to post16ed.stats@gov.wales.

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