



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Youth work: April 2023 to March 2024

Information on the statutory youth work sector in Wales, including registered members, accreditation, projects, workforce and finance for April 2023 to March 2024.

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Introduction

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.

The data in this report is collected by the Welsh Government from local authorities in an aggregated annual return.

Main points

There were 81,293 registered members of statutory youth work sector provision in 2023-24, down 2% compared with 2022-23 and similar to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic.

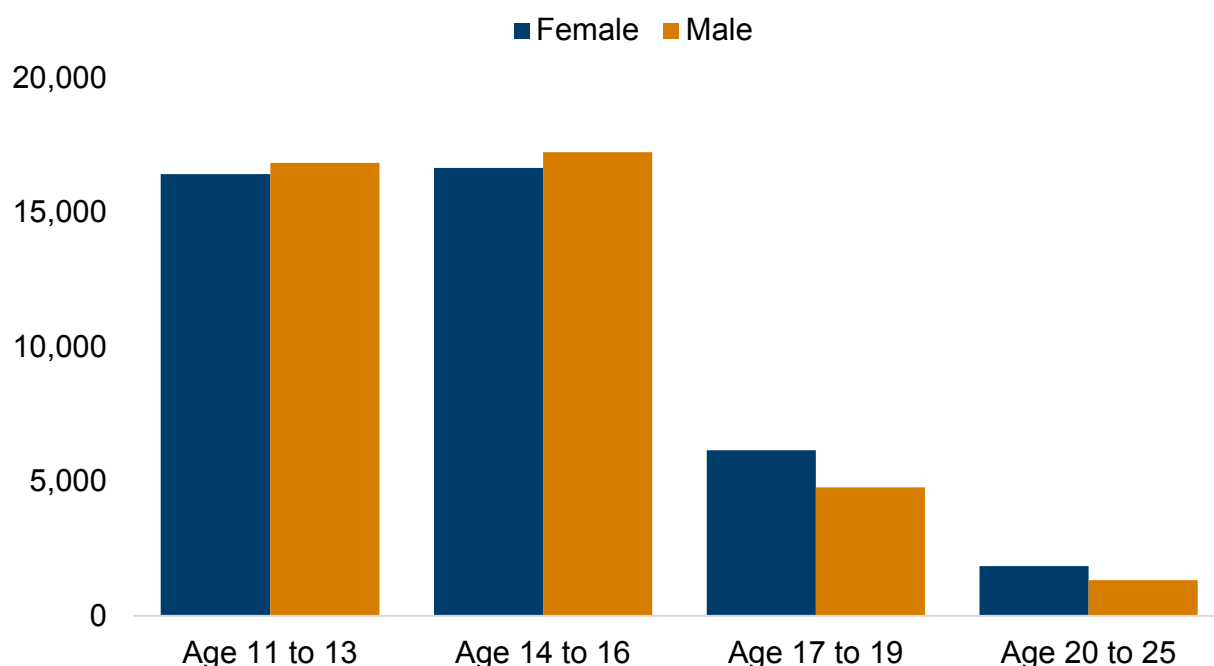
At March 2024, there were 740 full-time equivalent youth work management and delivery staff working in local authorities in Wales, up 4% compared with the previous year.

The total income for youth work provision across Wales in 2023-24 was £46.3 million. Total income increased by 4% compared with 2022-23, with core budget increasing by 6% and additional income increasing by 3% compared with 2022-23.

The total expenditure for youth work provision across Wales in 2023-24 was £44.4 million, down 3% compared with the previous year.

Members

Figure 1: Registered members of youth work provision by age and sex, 2023-24



Description of Figure 1: Bar chart showing that the 14 to 16 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 sex (StatsWales)

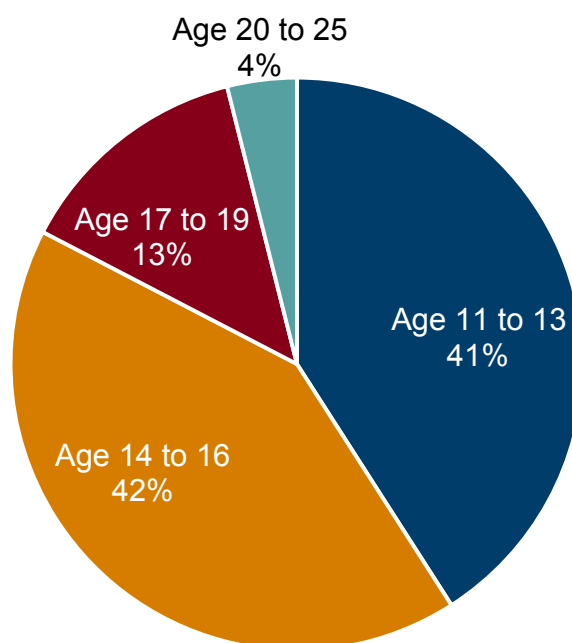
There were 81,293 registered members of statutory youth work sector provision in 2023-24, down 2% compared with 2022-23 and similar to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic.

51% of registered members were female and 49% were male in 2023-24,

unchanged from the previous year.

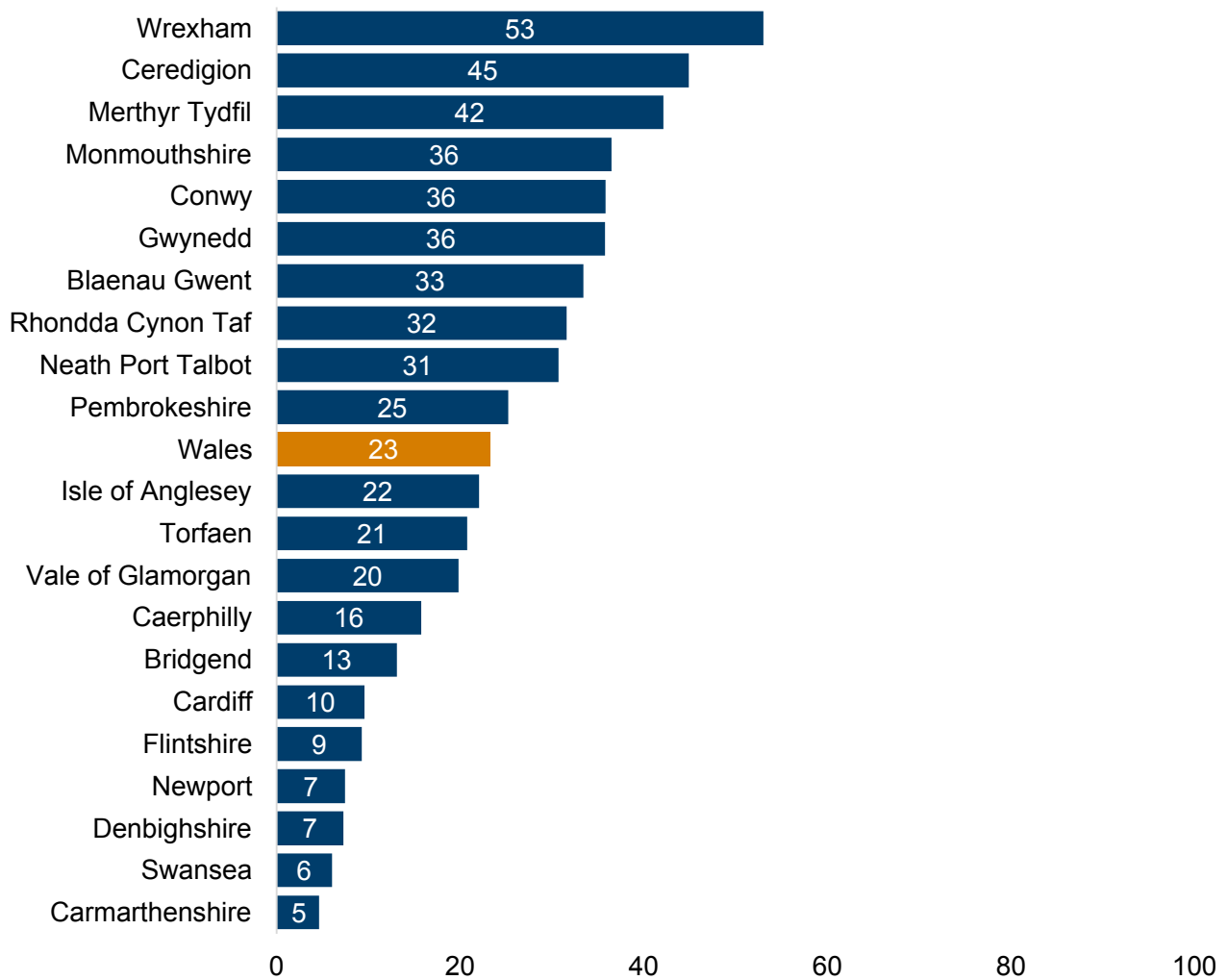
There are more males than females in the 11 to 13 and 14 to 16 age groups, but more females than males in the 17 to 19 and 20 to 25 age groups.

Figure 2: Percentage of registered members of youth work provision by age, 2023-24



Description of Figure 2: Pie chart showing that 14 to 16 year olds accounted for the largest percentage of members of youth work provision in 2023-24, followed closely by 11 to 13 year olds.

Figure 3: Registered members of youth work provision as a percentage of the population aged 11 to 19, 2023-24
[Note 1]



Description of Figure 3: Bar chart showing that Wrexham had the highest proportion of registered members as a percentage of the population aged 11 to 19 in 2023-24 and Carmarthenshire had the lowest.

Registered members by local authority, age and sex (StatsWales)

[Note 1] Powys is not shown in this chart but is included in the figure for Wales. Due to cross border working with 13 other local authorities, Powys works with approximately 1,160 additional young people who access services within Powys but reside in other counties.

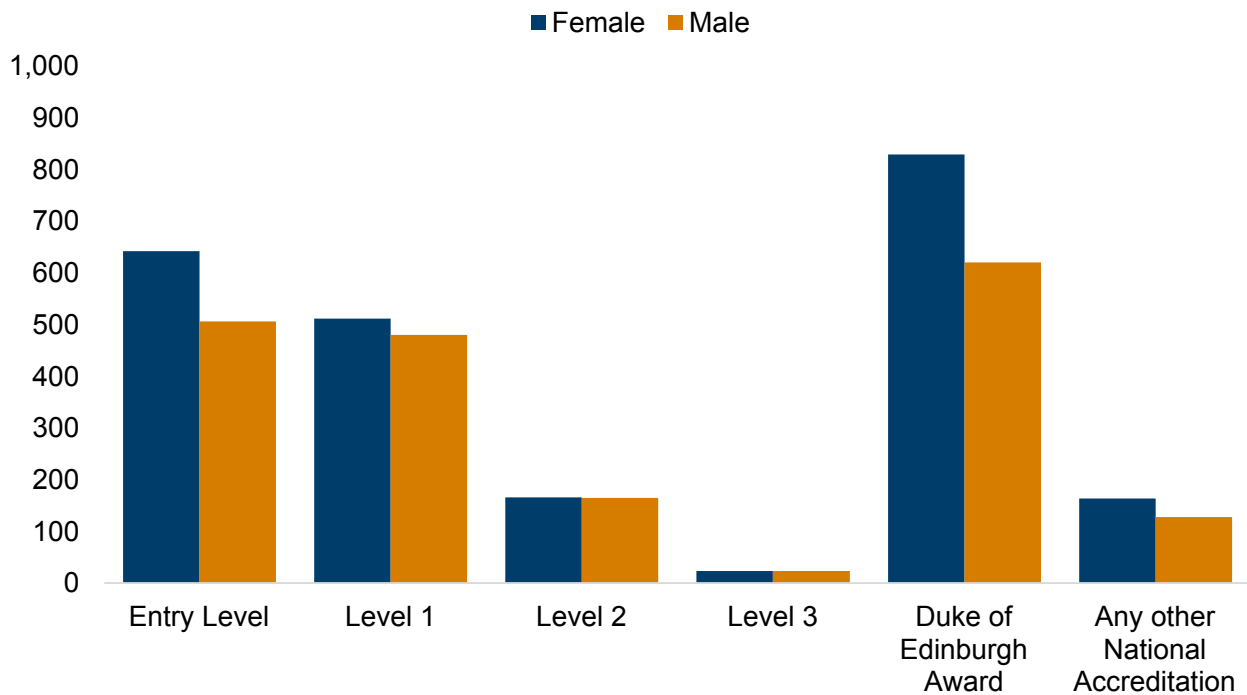
Registered members aged 11 to 19 years represented 23% of the population aged 11 to 19 in 2023-24, down 1 percentage point compared with 2022-23. The percentage ranged from 5% in Carmarthenshire to 53% in Wrexham.

Accreditation of members

The survey collects information on individuals gaining accreditations through youth work provision differentiated between national and locally recognised accreditations. There were 4,257 young people who were reported as having gained a national accreditation in 2023-24. This is 5% of all registered members, down 1 percentage point compared with 2022-23.

There were 9,815 young people reported as having gained a local accreditation in 2023-24 (12% of members, the same as in 2022-23). A young person can gain both national and local accreditations.

Figure 4: Number of members gaining national accreditations within youth work provision by level or award and sex, 2023-24



Description of Figure 4: Bar chart showing that the Duke of Edinburgh Award was the most achieved level of accreditation in 2023-24 and Level 3 was the least achieved.

Members gaining national accreditation by local authority and measure (StatsWales)

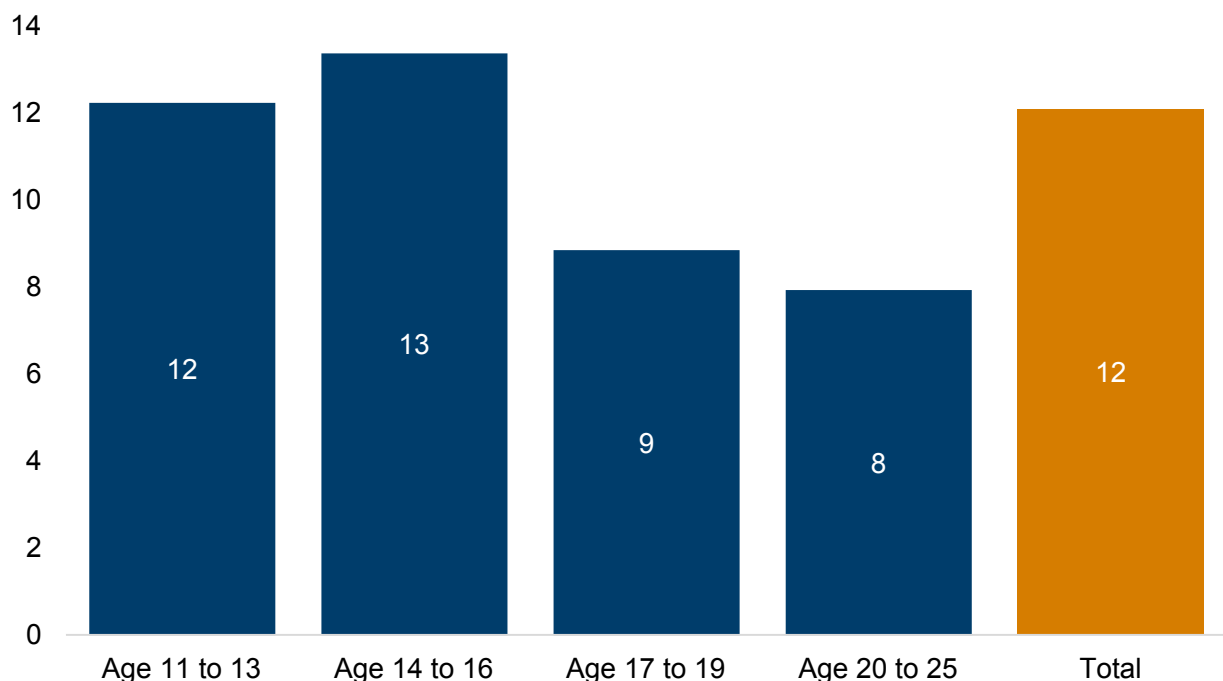
The Duke of Edinburgh Award accounted for the highest proportion of national accreditations in 2023-24. The number of Duke of Edinburgh Awards accredited through the statutory youth work sector was 1,448, up from 1,182 in 2022-23. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is also offered through the voluntary sector, and some schools and colleges.

The number of entry level, level 1 and level 2 national accreditations achieved

were lower in 2023-24 than in 2022-23.

Females accounted for 55% of national accreditations gained in 2023-24 and males accounted for 45%.

Figure 5: Percentage of registered members gaining local accreditations within youth work provision by age, 2023-24



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 (StatsWales)

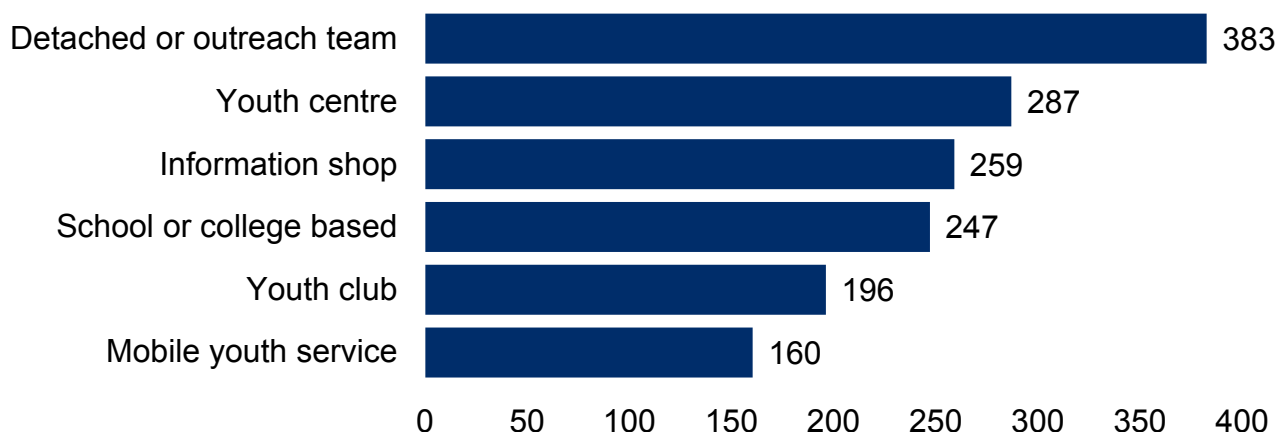
In 2023-24, 12% of all members gained a local accreditation. The highest percentage was by those aged 14 to 16 (13%) and the lowest was those aged

20 to 25 (8%). The total number of local accreditations gained was 9,815 in 2023-24, down from 10,379 in 2022-23.

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, 2023-24



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 2023-24 at 383 registered members per setting, down from 439 in 2022-23. Mobile youth services had the lowest, with an average of 160

registered members per setting, up from 105 in 2022-23. School or college based members have almost doubled since 2022-23.

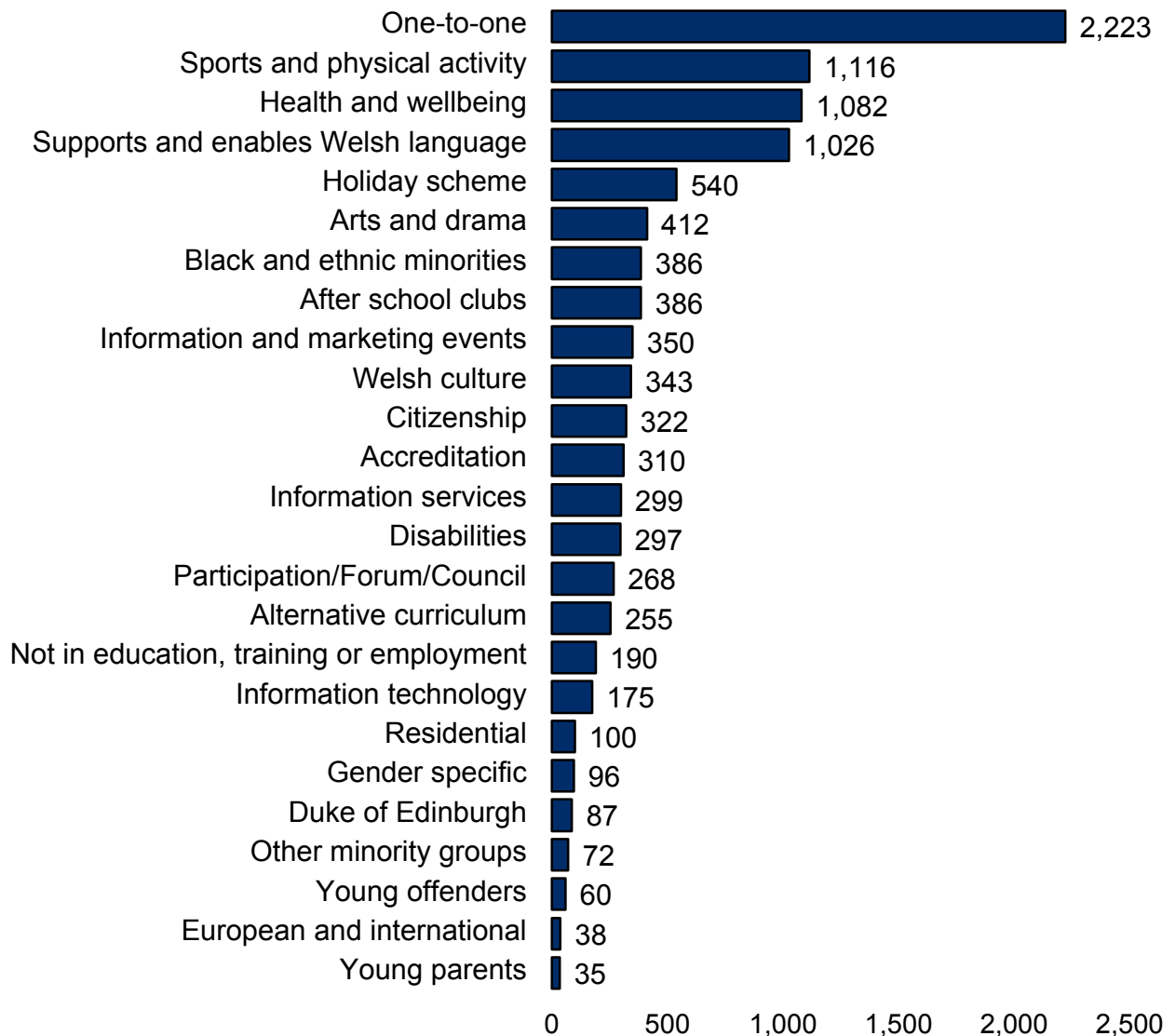
Table 1: Registered members attending projects at different settings, 2023-24

Setting type	Number of settings	Number of members attending
School or college based	290	71,607
Youth club	295	57,811
Detached or outreach team	87	33,281
Youth centre	91	26,110
Information shop	32	8,284
Mobile youth service	35	5,608
Total	830	202,701

Table 1 shows that school or college based settings had the highest number of members attending projects, followed by youth clubs. These settings accounted for 64% of all members attending projects.

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, 2023-24



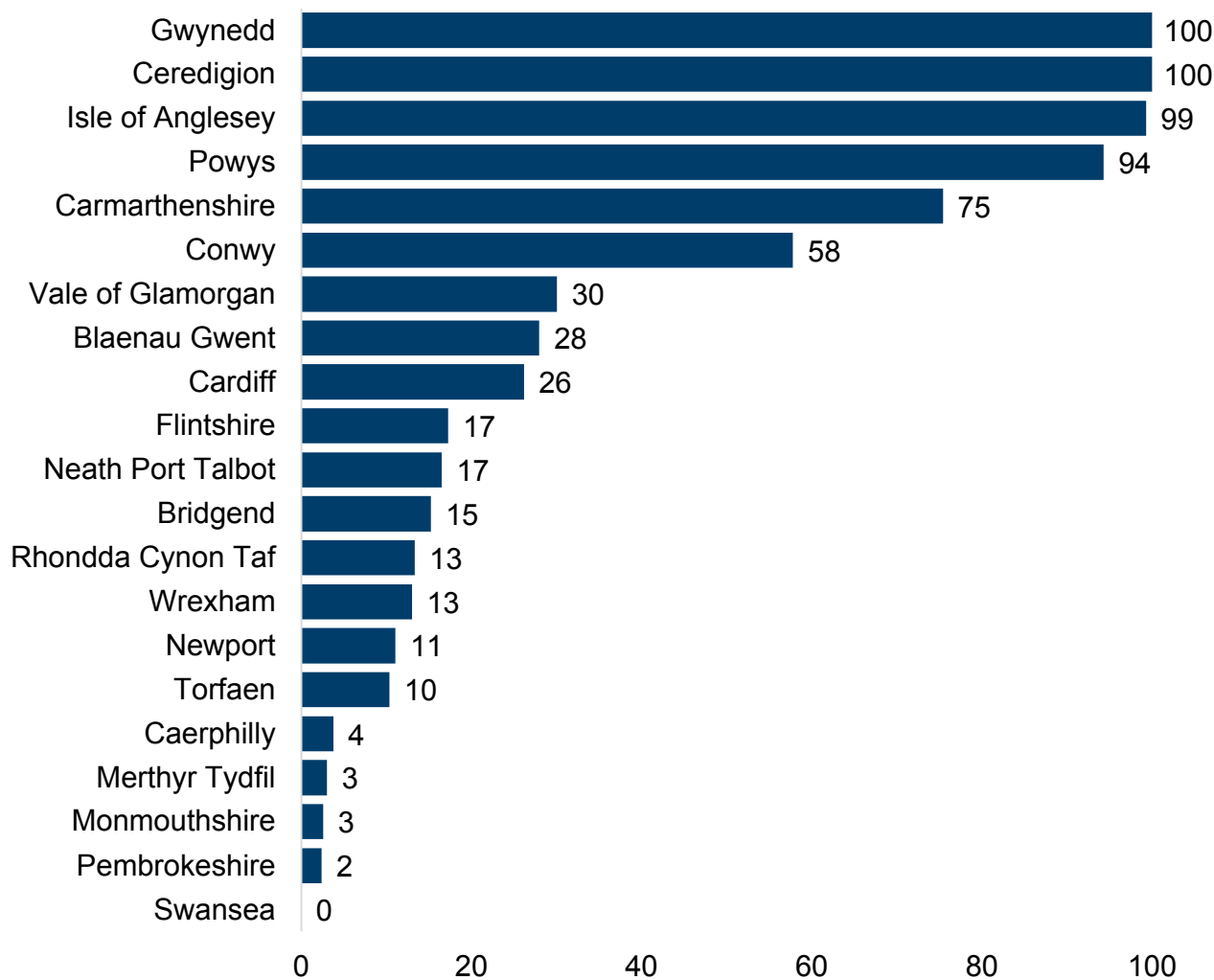
Description of Figure 7: Bar chart showing that the numbers of different types of projects delivered varied from 35 young parents projects to 2,223 one-to-one projects.

Projects by local authority and provision type (StatsWales)

Sport and physical activity projects were the second most common with 1,116, followed by health and wellbeing projects at 1,082.

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 by local authority, 2023-24 [Note 1]



Description of Figure 8: Bar chart showing that the percentage of projects delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh varies by local authority, from 0% in Swansea to 100% in Gwynedd and Ceredigion.

Projects and attendances by provision and measure (StatsWales)

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[Note 1] Denbighshire were not able to provide this data.

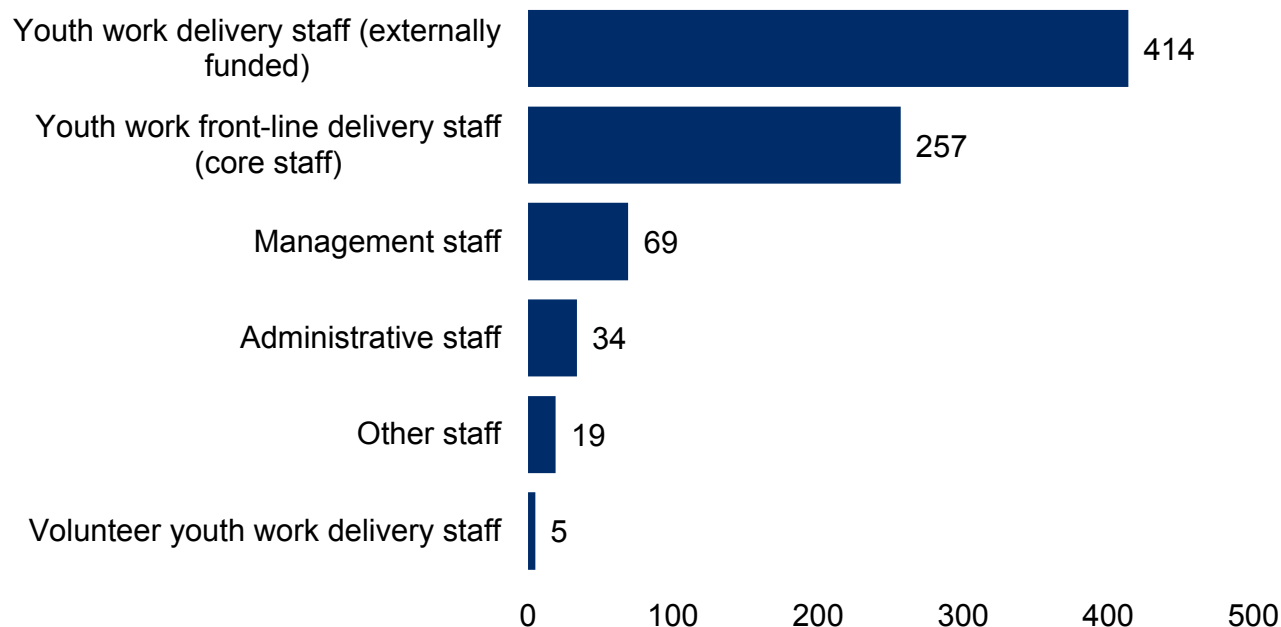
Of all projects delivered, 38% were delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh in 2023-24, up 8 percentage points compared with 2022-23.

Over 90% of projects were delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh in Gwynedd, Ceredigion, Isle of Anglesey and Powys.

Less than 5% of projects were delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh in Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea.

Staff

Figure 9: Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) youth work staff, 2023-24



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

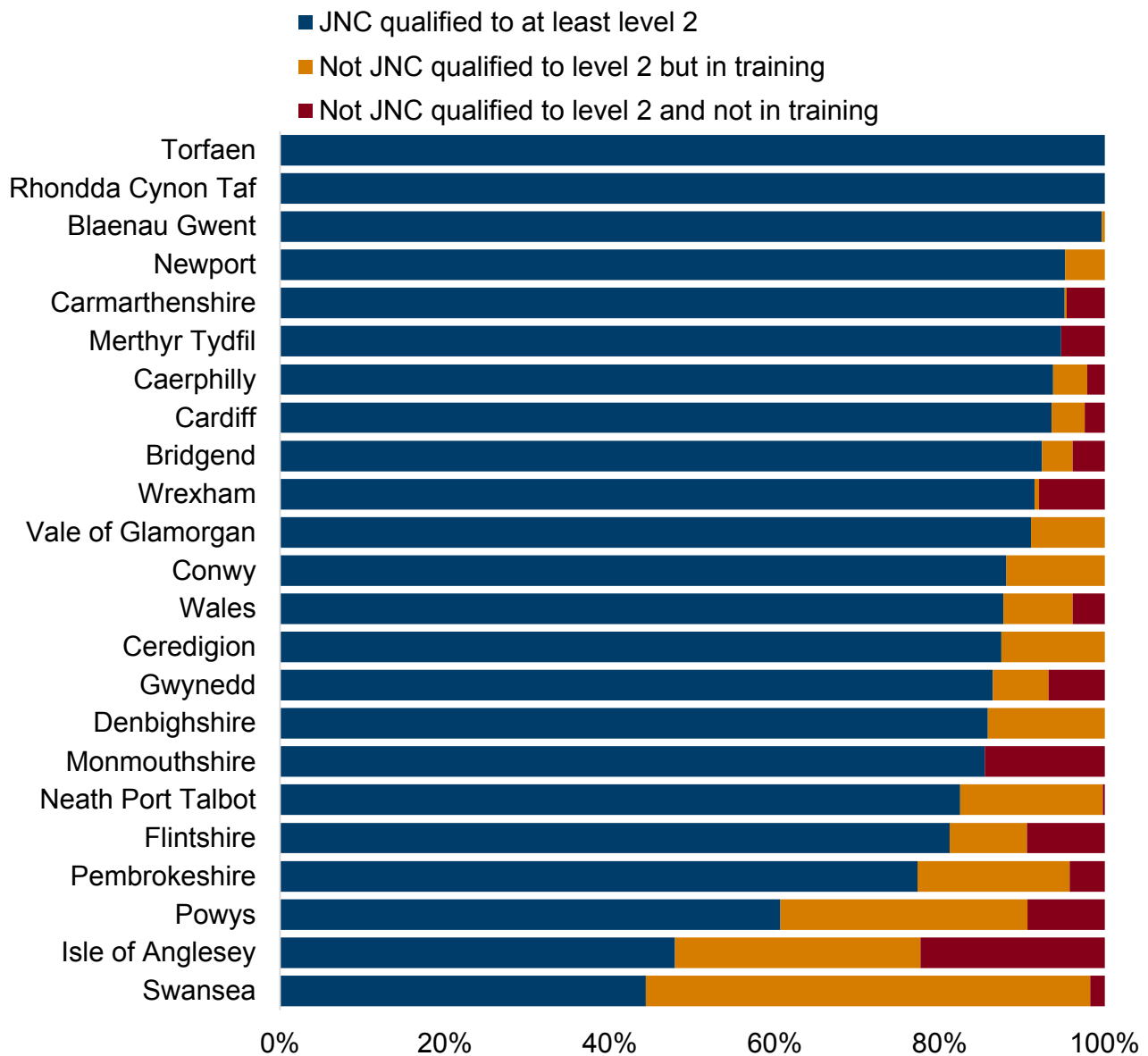
Total staff by workforce type and working hours (StatsWales)

At March 2024, there were 740 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 4% increase in FTE youth work delivery staff numbers in Wales. The number of externally funded delivery staff increased by 6%, core front line delivery staff increased by 1% and management staff increased by 3%. These increases follow decreases in each of these types of staff in the previous year.

There were a further 5 FTE volunteer youth work delivery staff, and 53 FTE administrative and other staff, giving a total of 797 FTE youth work staff in Wales at March 2024.

Figure 10: Percentage of youth work delivery staff by JNC qualification, 2023-24



Description of Figure 10: The chart shows that the percentage of youth service delivery staff who were JNC qualified to at least level 2 in 2023-24 ranged from

44% in Swansea to 100% in Torfaen and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Management and delivery staff by local authority and qualification level (StatsWales)

In 2023-24, 88% of all youth work delivery staff (FTE) held at least level 2 Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) professional qualifications, the same as in 2022-23. Of those without a level 2 or above JNC qualification, 69% were in training (44% in 2022-23).

Staff ratios

The ratio of FTE management staff to other FTE youth work delivery staff in Wales in 2023-24 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 121 young people per worker in 2023-24. For members aged 11 to 19, the ratio was 116:1.

Finance

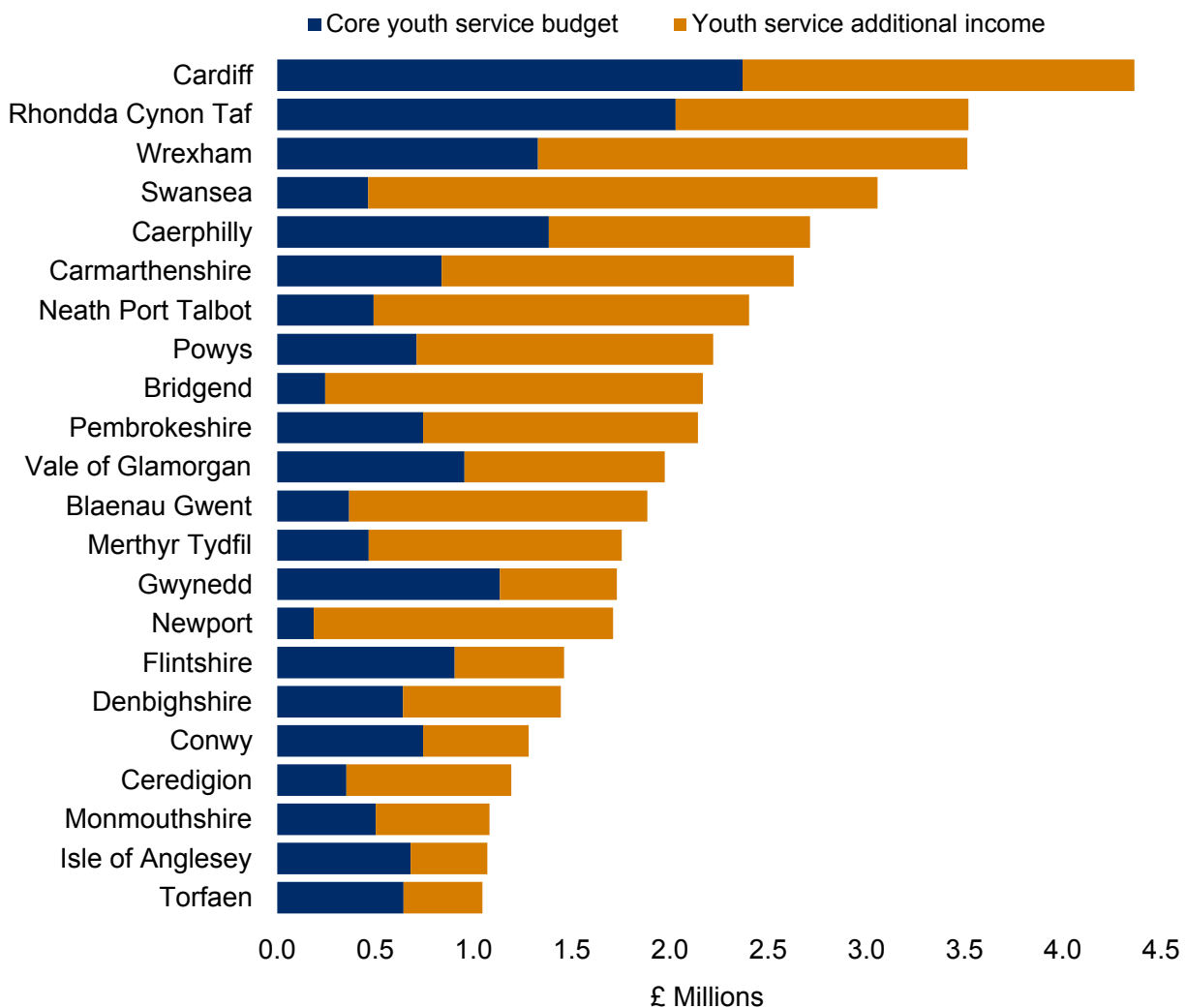
Income

The total income for youth work in 2023-24 was £46.3 million, up by 4% compared with 2022-23. 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 2023-24 was £18.2 million, up 6% compared with 2022-23. The contribution made by core youth work budgets to the total youth work income across Wales varied between authorities, ranging

from 11% in Newport and Bridgend to 66% in Gwynedd.

Figure 11: Core youth service budget and additional income by local authority, 2023-24

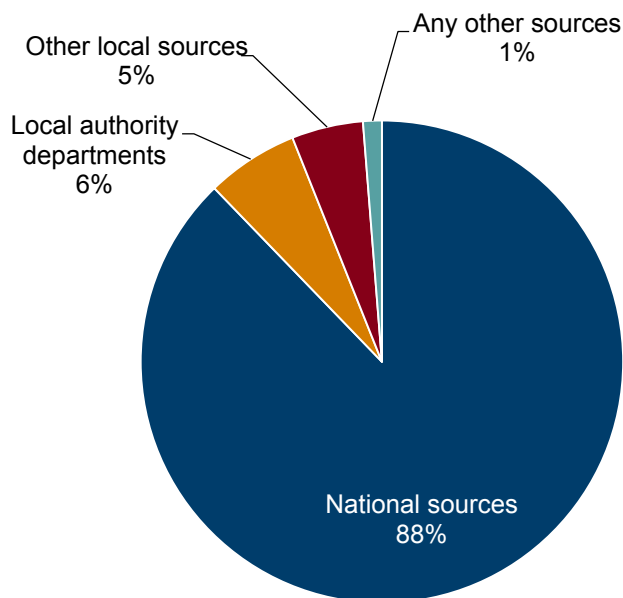


Description of Figure 11: Stacked bar chart showing total income split between core youth service budget and additional income. Cardiff had the highest total income (£4.4m) and Torfaen had the lowest (£1.0m).

Income summary by local authority (StatsWales)

In addition to the core youth work budget, the total budget for youth work in Wales for 2023-24 included income of £28.2 million from other sources. 'National sources' contributed the majority (£24.7 million or 88%) of these funds. Within that, £4.9 million was provided by Families First and £10.6 million from the Youth Work Strategy Support Grant.

Figure 12: Source of additional income as a percentage of total additional income, 2023-24



Description of Figure 12: Pie chart showing that national sources accounted for 88% of additional income in 2023-24. Local authority departments contributed 6%.

Expenditure

The total expenditure by youth work provision in Wales in 2023-24 was £44.4 million, down 3% compared with 2022-23. Expenditure ranged from £1.0 million in Torfaen to £4.3 million in Cardiff.

The majority of spending was on employees, at 75% of all expenditure. The remaining expenditure included 9% on resources and 5% 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 £0.8 million in grant aid to voluntary youth services in Wales during the year.

Spend per head of population

In 2023-24, the total spend by youth work provision per person aged 11 to 25 years was £79, down 4% compared with 2022-23. The core youth work budget per person aged 11 to 25 was £32 in 2023-24, up 2% compared with 2022-23.

Full details can be seen in Table 4 in the data tables published alongside this release.

Quality and methodology information

Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of

Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in the Welsh Government's [Statement of Compliance](#).

These official statistics demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

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 all 22 local authorities in each of the last 4 years. 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 Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. 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.

These statistics are published in an accessible, orderly, pre-announced manner on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of publication.

This output adheres to the Code of Practice by pre-announcing the date of publication through the [upcoming calendar](#) web pages.

Quality

The published figures provided are compiled by professional analysts using the latest available data and applying methods using their professional judgement and analytical skillset. Statistics published by Welsh Government adhere to the Statistical Quality Management Strategy which supplements the Quality pillar of the [Code of Practice for Statistics \(UK Statistical Authority\)](#) and the European Statistical System principles of quality for statistical outputs.

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. Known data quality issues are highlighted by section below.

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 counted multiple times.

From 2013-14, information on the medium of delivery of projects has been collected (although only included in the 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.

Value

This 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.

This release is accompanied by an Open Document Spreadsheet which can be shared and reused widely and which complies with the **Government Analysis Function guidance on Releasing statistics in spreadsheets**. **More detailed tables are available on StatsWales**, a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

The commentary and notes in the release have been developed to try to make the information as accessible as possible to the widest range of users.

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 Well-being 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 [Wellbeing 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.

Contact details

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