

Gwynedd

Overview and locations

Library services in Gwynedd are delivered by Cyngor Gwynedd. The service includes 13 branches and a housebound service, with 80% of residents living within three miles of a library.

Library service performance

Gwynedd provided evidence that showed it had fully met all 12 of the core entitlements.

Core entitlement	Service self-assessment	Independent assessment
1 Libraries in Wales will be free to join and open to all.	Fully met	Fully met
2 Libraries in Wales will ensure friendly, knowledgeable and qualified staff are on hand to help.	Fully met	Fully met
3 Libraries in Wales will provide access to a range of services, activities and high quality resources in a range of formats to support learning, personal well-being and development, community participation, and culture and recreation.	Fully met	Fully met
4 Libraries in Wales will provide appropriate services, facilities and information resources for individuals and groups with special needs.	Fully met	Fully met
5 Libraries will provide appropriate safe, attractive and accessible physical spaces with suitable staffed opening hours.	Fully met	Fully met
6 Libraries in Wales will lend books for free and deliver free access to information, including online information resources available 24 hours a day.	Fully met	Fully met
7 Libraries in Wales will provide free use of the Internet and computers, including Wi-Fi.	Fully met	Fully met
8 Libraries in Wales will provide access to services, cultural activities and high quality resources in the Welsh language.	Fully met	Fully met
9 Libraries in Wales will work in partnership to share catalogues and facilitate access to the resources of all Welsh libraries.	Fully met	Fully met
10 Libraries in Wales will work with a range of partners to promote and deliver services to new and diverse audiences, enabling more people to benefit from their services.	Fully met	Fully met

11 Libraries in Wales will regularly consult users to gather their views on the service and information about their changing needs.	Fully met	Fully met
12 Libraries in Wales will provide access to the library service's strategy, policies, objectives and vision, in print and online, in a range of languages appropriate for the community.	Fully met	Fully met
Total - fully met	12	12
Total - partially met	0	0
Total - not met	0	0

Library use

Over the reporting year, the service had 120 active borrowers per 1,000 population, representing a 107% increase from the previous year. Adult book issues increased by 122% to 980 issues per 1,000 population, while children's book issues increased by 212% to 469 issues per 1,000 population.

The service only runs static service points with no mobile library vehicles now in use but a free delivery service that has 100% reach of residents is provided. In addition, Gwynedd libraries has the second highest 'Click and Collect' requests across all Welsh library services.

Highlights

Some significant actions across the last year include:

- 87 activity sessions for children were delivered (online and in person) with 747 children attending. These sessions varied in nature from creating podcasts with young people in the Ogwen Valley to running music sessions. The service commissioned a family reading programme and has set up a 'library of things' in partnership with a local partner which lends items aimed at families and children.
- Gwynedd continued to co-ordinate the national scheme for Welsh language large print books with Y Lolfa to produce large print versions of books specifically for Welsh libraries.
- Pwllheli library was successfully renovated, and increased its opening hours from 31 to 43.
- Gwynedd continue to be a member of the LINC inter-lending scheme between public library authorities and further and higher education colleges in North Wales.

Materials, Welsh language and overall spend

Gwynedd ranked second in terms of materials spend per 1000 population. 18% of its budget was spent on children's resources, the median for all services.

Ensuring digital resources are available in Welsh is among Gwynedd libraries' priorities. Welsh language issues per 1,000 Welsh speakers is one of the highest in Wales, and Gwynedd continues to try to improve its Welsh language resources as

well as playing a national leadership role in developing the provision of Welsh language materials in libraries. The percentage of materials expenditure on Welsh materials has increased by 2% on the previous year and it is in the third quartile for spend per 1000 population. Gwynedd place significant emphasis on supplying resources which reflect the needs of communities. Stock is frequently reviewed and rotated in consultation with staff in each service area and in 2021/22, it supplied 2,528 bilingual literacy packs to families in order to promote books and reading.

Staffing

Although there has been a slight reduction in staffing in 2021/22, the position will be reviewed in 2022/23. The service has put a lot of effort into improving the digital offer including employing a new digital and learning officer who supports other staff on a daily basis. Gwynedd libraries have also taken part in a pilot scheme run by Digital Communities Wales to improve front-line staff's digital skills and knowledge. It has plans to continue to improve the development offer to staff in the near future.

Digital

Whilst Gwynedd provided minimal digital data including on 'Click and Collect', online sessions held, and number of individuals who viewed live or recorded sessions, it was the only library service to increase all its digital data metrics from the previous year. 'Click and collect' services increased by 11%, and the home delivery service can be booked through the website. It is in the top quartile for 'Click and Collect' services. In terms of online sessions, Gwynedd offered digital sessions focusing on children's services including Story Time, Rhyme Time, and Online Story and Craft.

Future plans

Gwynedd libraries plan to rebuild its service offer to match pre-pandemic levels. It is hoped that the removal of fines in 2021 will continue to help in increasing library use as financial challenges escalate in the coming months. Gwynedd are looking to develop a new library plan in 2022/23, this work having been on hold since 2020. This will develop and agree on future priorities that will meet community needs and ensure a surviving and thriving library service for the near future.

An internal training plan for library staff is intended to support the development of their service offer and efficiency. It has received a Capital Transformation Fund grant which will be used to improve the libraries in Penygroes and the Ogwen Valley during the next year, with a plan to establish a new Petha (Library of Things) service at three libraries, and create a VR hub in Penygroes, and a wellbeing garden in Bethesda.

Case studies

Gwynedd provided four case studies including quotes from users. This included the impact of the pilot scheme from Digital Communities Wales focusing on essential digital skills and the success of the Welsh-medium 'Stori a Chân' (Story and Song) sessions for children under 5.