



Environment Department



The department manages the main fields listed below:

- **Planning and Building Control**
- **Public Protection**
- **Transportation and Countryside**

Planning and Building Control

- **Planning Service**
- **Joint Policy Planning Service (Gwynedd and Anglesey)**
- **Building Control Service**

Planning Service

The purpose of this service is to facilitate and manage sustainable developments for the benefit of our communities, the economy and the environment within the Gwynedd planning authority area (which does not include the National Park area).

During 2018-19, over 2,300 general or pre-application planning enquiries were received.

We make decisions on **planning permissions** to develop land and deal with approximately 1,200 planning applications annually and, on average, over 88% of applications are granted permission.

On average, it takes 65 days to make a decision on applications, with a decision made on approximately 86% within the required timeframe.

A number of large developments have recently been approved including new schools, a number of housing developments including affordable housing and a many others. A very large number of applications for developments providing existing businesses with opportunities to expand and for new businesses to be established have also been approved, particularly in the field of tourism attractions and associated businesses. During this period the Planning Service has also been a key part of the Wylfa Newydd Development Consent Order applications process and the National Grid's North Wales Connection Scheme, along with advising on a number of other large National Grid projects within the county.

We take **enforcement steps** against developments that have not received planning permission and we deal with approximately 200 cases every year. We investigated 78% of the enforcement cases within 84 days and a number of enforcement notices have been issued.



Percentage of customers stating that they were satisfied with the level of service in the Planning Department

Joint Policy Planning Service (Gwynedd and Anglesey)

The purpose of this service is to prepare planning policy documents, including preparing and monitoring the Joint Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Local Development Plan promotes sustainable developing and includes maps and written policies used to make decisions on planning applications.

Since adopting the **Joint Local Development Plan** (Gwynedd and Anglesey), 8 (out of a series of 17) Supplementary Planning Guidance have been adopted with another having been subject to public consultation. The work to prepare the remainder is ongoing. The guidance add details to the planning policies, and strengthen the plan's ability to provide firm grounds to make decisions on planning applications in the future. The Annual Monitoring Report has been prepared for the period 1st August 2017-31 March 2019 and has been submitted to the Welsh Government. The Annual Monitoring Report reports on the performance of the plan during the period and assesses whether the plan's strategy and policies are working. The conclusion of the Annual Monitoring Report was that the plan is achieving the strategy and the plan's policies are working. There was no evidence of the need to review the plan early.

We also provide guidance on planning policy matters to the Gwynedd Planning Authority, the Isle of Anglesey County Council Planning Authority and to external organisations and the public.

Building Control Service

The purpose of the service is to ensure the minimum standards to ensure the health and safety of people within the vicinity of buildings whilst improving conservation of fuel and power, protect and enhance the environment and promote sustainable development. We also ensure necessary access and facilities are provided for people with disabilities in new buildings and as part of alterations.

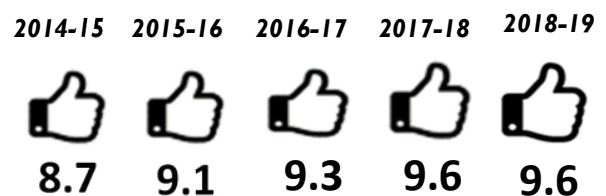
Building work must be completed in accordance with the specific requirements of Building Regulations. This is important and valuable to the people of Gwynedd, as it will ensure that any building work is safe and of the required standard.

We aim to go beyond the statutory requirements by providing a Building Control service which is customer-centred, by offering advice, technical support, plan assessments and site inspections for every type of construction work.

In terms of dangerous buildings, we offer a 24-hour service to ensure that the health and safety of Gwynedd residents is safeguarded.

For Full Building Regulation applications, the service aims to inspect the plans within 15 working days, with the decision being released as soon as possible. In order to approve the application (first decision), the Building Control officers offer to work closely with builders and architects in order to achieve a good standard of application.

Customer Satisfaction (score out of 10)



Public Protection

- **Pollution Control and Licensing Service**
- **Food and Safety Service**
- **Trading Standards Service**

The purpose of the service is to protect the public in relation to a range of environmental and health matters.

Pollution Control and Licensing Service

The purpose of this service is to ensure that businesses or individuals do not pollute the air, land or seas with undesirable substances or noise by investigating and responding to complaints of pollution and statutory nuisance.

We assess the safety of private drinking water supplies and the quality of bathing water and enforce improvements as required - 573 drinking samples were taken over the past year.



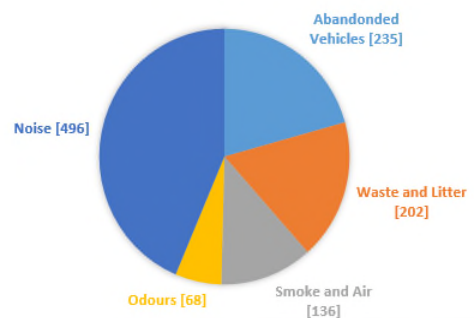
We investigate and monitor **industrial processes** on 46 sites and regulate industrial airborne emissions (oil waste burners, mobile crushers, cement machinery).

We also carry out burials in cases where there are no family members - we had 27 cases during the past year.

We license the following fields in order to protect consumers, businesses and communities of Gwynedd from any adverse effects; and take enforcement steps where necessary in order to keep the users of licensed services safe.

- Alcohol and entertainment licenses (including events) and gambling.
- Animal licenses including pet shops, riding establishments and dog breeding establishments.
- Taxi vehicles, drivers and operators.
- Caravan sites, and the licensing of scrap metal dealers.

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR SERVICE - NUMBER OF ENQUIRIES



Enforcing Licences

 1,010 Alcohol Premises	 47 Gambling Premises
 431 Taxi Vehicles and 532 Drivers	 35 Animal Permits
 409 Caravan Sites	 20 Scrap Metal Dealers

Food and Safety Service

The purpose of this service is to ensure that food and drink sold to eat and drink by people, which is produced, stored, distributed, treated or consumed in the county, is free of any risks to the consumer’s health and safety and complies with constitutional and label requirements.

To realise our purpose we educate individuals and businesses, conduct investigation, sampling and research programmes and complete reactive interventions as needed. The service also contributes to maintaining the local economy by assisting businesses to comply with regulations and deal with businesses who choose not to in order to ensure the below:


- Prevention of deaths, injuries and conditions associated with work areas
- Protection of residents and visitors to Gwynedd from infectious diseases and damaging chemicals
- That businesses in Wales meet the statutory requirements asked of them







Our work contributes to the Council’s well-being objectives to ensure Gwynedd is a healthy, safe and sustainable place to live and work.

We ensure that businesses in Gwynedd meet requirements in relation to food hygiene, food standards and health and safety in the workplace by responding to complaints, undertaking regular inspections and holding educational campaigns.

We protect residents and visitors to Gwynedd against infectious diseases and harmful chemicals.

We also investigate accidents and cases of infectious diseases promptly so that any further risks to individuals are removed.

Requests for Service		
 1,084 Food safety	 202 Health and Safety	 231 Infectious Diseases

Monitoring	
 More than 2,000 food business	
 95% of food businesses with a score of 4 or 5	
 300 Food samples	 64 Accidents
 40 Educational Visits	 Visit 2,000+ businesses annually

Trading Standards Service

The purpose of the service is to promote, maintain and ensure a fair and equitable trading environment whilst protecting the interests of Gwynedd consumers and businesses.

We are responsible for enforcing a wide range of laws relating to the supply and distribution of goods and services and cover a range of subject areas including:

- product safety
- scam awareness & illegal money lending
- doorstep crime
- underage sales
- business advice
- counterfeiting and intellectual property crime
- e-commerce & internet investigations
- estate agency law & property misdescriptions
- petroleum and explosives/fireworks
- animal health and welfare
- animal feed
- weights and measures

Monitoring



Over 8,000 traders



More than 2,000 farms



30 Businesses to store fireworks



44 Businesses to store petroleum

Requests for Service



2,081

Complaints about traders



161

Requests for advice from businesses



398

Animal Health Applications

Transport and Countryside

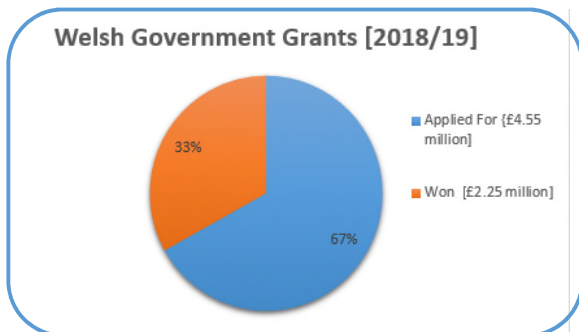
- Traffic and Project Service
- Integrated Transport & Road Safety Service
- Countryside & Access Service
- Parking Unit

Traffic and Project Service

The purpose of the service is to enable the public to use Gwynedd roads in a safe and unimpeded way.

We realise our purpose by the following main activities:

- Ensuring our roads are safe and unimpeded for all users, and offering appropriate measures to monitor and improve them
- Complying with our duties under the Active Travel Act 2013 by providing a network of walking and biking routes, and promoting active travel.
- Completing projects in relation to road safety, improving the network and integrated and sustainable transport in a cost effective, timely and safe manner.
- Ensuring there are no unnecessary barriers to the use of main roads as a result of events or activities, by appropriate management and coordination.
- Ensuring that new developments effecting our road network are safely designed and operated.

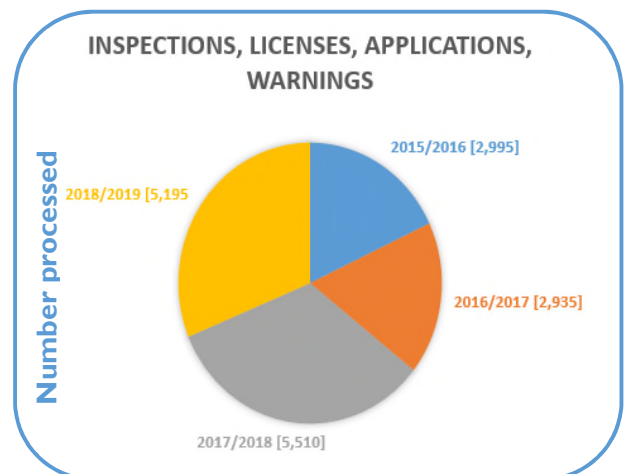


We also manage various road improvement projects across the county.

We are always looking for opportunities to fund our transport and safety plans from external sources and we often succeed to attract grant funding from various sources for these purposes.

We are responsible for coordinating and monitoring the activities carried out on the public highway network by statutory contractors (e.g. Welsh Water, BT) or their contractors. This involves processing applications for e.g. drilling roads to fix equipment and closing roads to facilitate the undertaking of maintenance work.

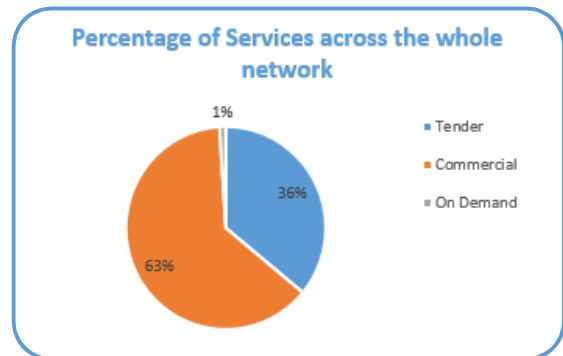
We also **license the siting of skips and scaffolding** on our roads as well as enforce property owners to fell trees, move obstructions off the road and so on.



Integrated Transport & Road Safety Service

The purpose of the service is to provide safe, quality transport that's cost effective for Gwynedd residents. To this end, the unit is responsible for all matters relating to transporting Gwynedd residents, whether on public transport, transporting pupils and students to educational establishments, community transport or transportation for social services.

Over half the **public transport routes** in Gwynedd receive financial assistance to run them because they are not commercially viable. To facilitate this, we prepare public transport contracts as well as prepare and create service timetables for the various routes. We are also responsible for arranging **education transport contracts** (including a seat purchasing scheme) in order to provide free transport for eligible pupils.



In areas where a conventional transport provision is not available, or for our residents who are unable to or find it difficult to use conventional public transport, we also consider opportunities for **community transport**.

As part of a **comprehensive review** of the services we offer, we have completed a consultation period with communities in order to fully understand their transport needs.

We now intend to ensure that our transport network, as well as the types of vehicles used, meets the needs of our residents. By innovating, we will establish quality services that are dependable, that offer value for money and are kind to the environment. **We will have established a new network and implemented parts of the provision during 2020-21.**

The purpose of the Road Safety service is to attempt to reduce injuries and accidents on our roads by undertaking educational initiatives, training and publicity.

We realise our purpose by focusing on the aspects below:

- Training on safe cycling (primary)
- Training on crossing the main road safely (secondary)
- Walking to school campaigns (primary and secondary)
- 'Pass Plus Wales' training (young drivers)
- Vehicle Control (young drivers)
- Living Well – Driving Well (older drivers)
- Campaigns in cooperation with other partners on aspects such as drink driving, speeding, safety belt, baby seats and mobile phones (adults)

Concerns were raised regarding road safety outside primary and secondary schools in Penygroes which serve the area of Nantlle Vale. A new route has been opened which enables pupils from Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle and Ysgol Bro Llew, Penygroes to walk to school and avoid busy areas of the main road. Work is also underway to consider options for improving parking and bus provision at peak times.

Similarly, concerns were raised about road safety outside some of the schools in Caernarfon. A plan to improve the safety of road users in the vicinity of Ysgol y Gelli, Ysgol Syr Huw Owen and the Byw'n lach Arfon centre is now underway. We are looking at improving the opportunities to travel to school or to the Byw'n lach centre from neighbouring communities by bike or on foot.

Countryside & Access Service

The purpose of the countryside and access service is to look after Gwynedd's route network, landscape beauty and nature on land and sea.

We **facilitate and maintain public rights of access** to the countryside and the coast, protect biodiversity and habitats on land and sea and protect the Llyn Peninsula Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We have taken advantage of funding opportunities to establish a Local Nature Partnership Scheme which is an opportunity to work with local communities and other bodies to strengthen habitats and restore green areas. The continuation of the work of projects such as Tir a Môr Llŷn is coming to fruition, for example through the marine education package that will be available to schools and the walk between the south and north of the Llŷn coast that is underway. We must respond to the challenge of ash dieback disease and an action plan will be prepared in the coming year.

Several access improvement plans have been completed -a new bridge over the Llyfni River; continuous improvements to the Coast Path and several minor improvements such as exchanging stiles for gates in the Cilan area.

Biodiversity in our Countryside



We ensure that we comply with the Council's duties to protect our biodiversity in Gwynedd. We provide specialist advice on planning applications and developments and have responded to over 1,000 requests over the 2018/19 year.

The department is responsible for coordinating the work of managing a designated European site for marine habitats and species of European importance in the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation, and for managing and implementing environmental projects such as the Marine Ecosystems Project.

The department also holds activities with local groups and the public to raise awareness of the importance of our biodiversity.

Access to the Countryside

The **Gwynedd public footpath network** is 3,800km long and we have given priority to maintaining those paths that have been identified by communities as the ones that are important to them.



We also develop and maintain the **national coast path** which stretches approximately 300km in Gwynedd.

Following improvement of the Coast Path provision in the town, progress has been made on improving routes connecting to it near Tŷ Moelwyn in Porthmadog. Specifically, we have completed work on the routes around the 'Cob Crwn'.

Following local calls to complete the cycle path between Tywyn and Aberdyfi, which is already one of the Council's priorities, the Department have been unable to find grant funding by the Welsh Government to enable us to move on with the work. We will continue to attempt to find sufficient funding to complete this important Active Travel link.

There were also calls to build a multi-use route between Pwllheli and Llanbedrog that would enable easy access for users across the Llŷn Peninsula's southern coast. Legal works are underway in an attempt to secure riding and cycling rights on that route in order to expand our Active Travel network.

We will also concentrate on creating fit for purpose coastal paths between Tal y Bont, Bangor and Porth Penrhyn, and also between Dinas Dinlle and Trefor, during 2020-21.



We deal with applications to divert and create paths and maintain and update the definitive map which shows the **county's rights of way network**.

We have also prepared a Rights of Way Improvement Plan which sets a framework for improving the network and manages lands, including six nature reserves and other lands.

The department protects and seeks to manage the quality of the **Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** in accordance with protocol. The AONB Management Plan is implemented by the Council and other organisations.



In future, our intention is to ensure that our cycling network is fit for purpose, and in that, solve aspects that prevent their full use. We will also take advantage of grant opportunities to expand the Active Travel network that offers health and environment benefits.

Parking Unit

The purpose of the unit is to encourage safe and organised parking to ensure road safety and to facilitate traffic flow and ensure appropriate parking spaces for all users.

We realise our purpose by working on the following aspects:

- Parking enforcement on and off our streets
- Maintain our car parks and ensure their safety
- Maintain our pay and display machines

Concerns were raised in the Caernarfon and Dyffryn Ogwen areas regarding the lack of parking spaces for local people. In response, a 'Parking for Residents' scheme is in operation in Tre Gof, Caernarfon where most residents have supported the scheme. We have consulted with residents in other areas of the town and have found little support to adopt a similar scheme.

The situation regarding parking for residents and workers in the Dyffryn Ogwen area continues to be monitored and no significant problems have emerged at present.

This department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment