

Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Annual Assessment Report 2014-15

This report has been prepared based on information provided in Caerphilly's annual return, case studies and narrative report submitted to Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of the Welsh Government.

The return was not approved by the authority prior to submission; such approval is expected in October 2015.

1) Executive summary

Caerphilly is meeting 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full and one in part.

Of the seven quality indicators with targets, Caerphilly is achieving six in full, and one in part.

Caerphilly library service is a strong performer and is to be congratulated on its high visits and active borrower figures per capita. It is also meeting several targets which most other authorities are failing.

- 63% of children said that the library helped them to learn and find things out, while 89% of attendees at training sessions said that attendance helped them to achieve their goals. Four impact case studies highlight the range of added value services provided across the authority, although the direct impacts could be better articulated in two of the four studies in particular.
- Caerphilly's most recent adult customer survey was in May 2013. A survey of children was undertaken in July 2014, with children awarding an average score of 9.3 out of 10, the second highest in Wales. The number of training sessions hosted has increased, but informal training per capita is the lowest in Wales, and may be under-recorded.
- Caerphilly meets the target for access to service points, and has the second highest visits per capita in Wales. 28.8% of the population are active borrowers, the highest percentage in Wales.
- Caerphilly meets all the targets for acquisitions. ICT provision is poorly used, and one third of the service points do not provide Wi-Fi access for the public. The percentage of requests supplied within 15 days is the second highest in Wales.
- Caerphilly meets the targets for staffing levels, training, and qualifications, and for opening hours. Total expenditure per capita is above the median for Wales. The average cost per visit is £2.45, below the median, suggesting that the authority is operating efficiently.
- Compared to the rest of Wales, Caerphilly generally performs well in the broad areas of *Access for all* and *Learning for life*, although some individual indicators in these areas are below the medians.
- Caerphilly appears to be maintaining its strong performance from previous frameworks.

2) Performance against the standards

The standards framework comprises of core entitlements, quality indicators with targets, quality indicators with benchmarks and impact measures. Section 2 summarises achievements against the core entitlements, the quality indicators which have targets, the quality indicators showing performance against others, and impact measures. A narrative assessment of the authority's performance is made in Section 3.

a) Core entitlements

Caerphilly is meeting 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full, and partially meeting one. The only area where Caerphilly is not achieving the core entitlement falls within the area of *Learning for life*, where it is only partially meeting the entitlement to free use of the internet and computers, including Wi-Fi, which is only available in two-thirds of the authority's service points at present.

b) Quality indicators with targets

There are 16 quality indicators (QI) within the framework. Of the 7 which have targets, Caerphilly is achieving six in full, and one in part:

Quality Indicator	Met?	
QI 3 Individual development:		Fully met
a) ICT support	✓	
b) Skills training	✓	
c) Information literacy	✓	
d) E-government support	✓	
e) Reader development	✓	
QI 5 Location of service points	✓	Fully met
QI 8 Up-to-date reading material:		Fully met
a) Acquisitions per capita	✓	
<u>or</u> Materials spend per capita	✗	
b) Replenishment rate	✓	
QI 9 Appropriate reading material:		Fully met
a) % of material budget on children	✓	
b) % of material budget spent on Welsh	✓	
<u>or</u> Spend on Welsh per capita	✓	
QI 10 Online access:		Partially met
a) All service points	✓	
Computers per capita	✓	
b) Wi-Fi provision	✗	
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications:		Fully met
a) Staff per capita	✓	
b) Professional staff per capita	✓	
c) Head of service qualification/training	✓	
d) CPD percentage	✓	
QI 16 Opening hours per capita	✓	Fully met

c) *Impact measures*

The framework contains three indicators which seek to gather evidence of the impact that using the library service has on people's lives. Through these and other indicators it is possible to see how the library service is contributing towards educational, social, economic and health and wellbeing local and national agendas. These indicators do not have targets. Not all authorities collected data for the impact indicators, and ranks are included out of 22, unless stated otherwise, where 1 is the highest, and 22 the lowest scoring authority.

Caerphilly last carried out a customer survey of adults in May 2013, and the data below relating to adults are taken from that survey. It carried out a survey of children in July 2014.

Performance indicator	Caerphilly	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
Q1 1 Making a difference					
b) % of children who think that the library helps them learn and find things out:	63%	7 / 7	63%	93%	95%
e) % of adults who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	n/a		73%	87%	92%
% of children who think that the library has made a difference to their lives:	n/a		43%	79%	90%
Q1 4 b) % of attendees of training sessions who said that the training had helped them achieve their goals:	89%	12 / 17	65%	93%	100%

Caerphilly described four impact case studies:

- support at Abercarn library for adult learning and job seeking;
- activities for young people at Bargoed Hanbury Chapel library;
- a 'Knit and Natter' group which has helped one customer find her way back into the local community; and
- the use of the virtual library services by customers with mobility issues who felt they could no longer use the physical resources.

In the first two in particular, although the service provided is well described and clearly appreciated, more emphasis could be given to the direct impact on users.

d) *Quality performance indicators and benchmarks*

The remaining indicators do not have targets, but allow performance to be compared between authorities. The following table summarises Caerphilly's position for 2014-15. Ranks are included out of 22, where 1 is the highest, and 22 the lowest scoring authority, unless stated otherwise. (Indicators where fewer than 22 authorities supplied data are obtained from customer surveys which only need to be carried out once during the three year framework period, or those where relevant data elements were not available to some authorities.)

Caerphilly last carried out a customer survey of adults in May 2013, and the data for Q1 1 and Q1 2 relating to adults are taken from that survey. It carried out a survey of children in July 2014.

APPENDIX 2

Performance indicator	Caerphilly	Rank	Lowest	Median	Highest
QI 1 Making a difference					
a) new skills	55%	9 / 9	55%	72%	93%
c) health and well-being	29%	9 / 9	29%	58%	91%
d) enjoyable, safe and inclusive	n/a		84%	97%	98%
QI 2 Customer satisfaction					
a) 'very good' or 'good' choice of books	89%	5 / 10	82%	89%	97%
b) 'very good' or 'good' customer care	99%	1 / 10	93%	98%	99%
c) 'very good' or 'good' overall;	96%	5 / 10	94%	96%	99%
d) child rating out of ten	9.3	2 / 9	8.0	9.2	9.4
QI 4 User training					
a) attendances per capita	22	12	2	24	278
c) informal training per capita	16	21 / 21	16	162	484
QI 6 Library use					
a) visits per capita	5,826	2	2,637	4,177	5,955
b) virtual visits per capita	599	18	212	923	2,449
c) active borrowers per capita	288	1	71	155	288
QI 7 attendances at events per capita	317	5	21	192	464
QI 11 Use of ICT - % of available time used by the public					
a) equipment	28%	20	23%	36%	70%
b) Wi-Fi services	38%	3 / 7	4%	37%	74%
QI 12 Supply of requests					
a) % available within 7 days	78%	4	62%	69%	81%
b) % available within 15 days	91%	2	74%	84%	94%
QI 13 Staffing levels and qualifications					
(v) a) total volunteers	17	8	0	14	74
b) total volunteer hours	510	12	0	527	2696
QI 14 Operational expenditure					
a) total expenditure per capita	£15,728	7	£8,966	£14,054	£20,796
b) % on staff,	64%	5	45%	57%	77%
% on information resources	13%	10	5%	13%	21%
% on equipment and buildings	3%	14	0%	4%	27%
% on other operational costs;	19%	13	4%	22%	37%
c) capital expenditure per capita	£0	16	£0	£266	£2,126
QI 15 Cost per visit	£2.45	17	£2.07	£2.87	£3.92
QI 16 Opening hours (<i>see note</i>)					
(ii) a) % hours unplanned closure of static service points	0.0%	1	0.0%	0.02%	0.52%
b) % mobile stops / home deliveries missed	0.3%	8 / 19	0.0%	0.4%	5.4%

Note: Rankings here have been reversed, so that 1 is the lowest scoring authority.

3) Analysis of performance

The core entitlements and quality indicators are divided into four key areas. This section of the report outlines performance against the quality indicators within these four areas.

a) Customers and communities

Caerphilly undertook a user survey of children in May 2014, and achieved a good satisfaction score, the second highest in Wales. An adult survey was undertaken in May 2015, and will be reported next year. All service points provide the full range of support for individual development. The service provides an active programme of events in partnership with a range of organisations, and has increased the number of training sessions hosted or delivered. Informal training for customers per capita is the lowest in Wales although considering the context of the service as a whole, this could be due to under-reporting..

b) Access for all

Caerphilly meets the target for physical access to service points. Visits to library premises have increased since last year, and now stand at over one million in total, the second highest per capita rate in Wales. This includes an increase of over one third in the number of attendances at library events, reflecting improvements in the offer. Other indicators of use – virtual visits and issues – have both fallen, however, and this is noted as being a strategic target for the authority over the next three years. 28.8% of the population are active borrowers, the highest proportion in Wales.

c) Learning for life

Caerphilly is meeting the targets for acquisitions, overall, for children and in the Welsh language. It continues to maintain its ICT provision, although six of the 18 service points do not provide Wi-Fi access at present and there are no plans to expand this, owing to budgetary constraints. Use of ICT equipment is relatively low, with only two authorities recording a lower rate of use. Although there has been a small drop in the percentage of requests met within 7 days, there has been a significant improvement in the percentage met within 15 days, which is now the second highest in Wales.

d) Leadership and development

Caerphilly meets all the targets in this area, and has been able to fill two long-standing vacancies with support from the authority. The service has increased its number of volunteers slightly, to 17, who give an average of 30 hours each – a fall from last year. Volunteering opportunities are offered only as work experience placements, under two schemes, and the service is working towards NOS accreditation.

Total expenditure per capita is above the median for Wales, but the high level of visits means that the average cost per visit, at £2.45, is below the median, showing an efficient service. Opening hours meet the target set. The authority noted 96 hours of closure (0.3% of the total) which were beyond its control, being caused by a flood and fire evacuation, and union strike which affected all but two libraries.

4) Strategic context

The library service clearly articulated its contribution to three local authority strategies, in sustaining vibrant town and village centres; supporting residents to learn new skills, and offering a range of well-being resources and services. It also clearly articulated its contribution to Welsh Government priorities, in particular the Libraries Inspire framework.

5) Conclusion

Caerphilly library service is a strong performer and is to be congratulated on its high visits and active borrower figures per capita. It is also meeting several targets which most other authorities are failing.