

# RAC Foundation for Motoring

## Local Authority Parking Finances in Wales

### 1. Introduction

This note covers parking finances for the 22 local authorities in Wales. As in England and Scotland, Welsh local authorities are required to submit details of their finances to the Welsh Government in a standard format. They are normally published in October, seven months after the financial year end. This report looks at the section on parking income and expenditure from 2011-12 to 2015-16.

The published data is less comprehensive than in England and does not split out on- and off-street parking or show penalty income separately. The figures do not include any commercial off-street parking.

In 2015-6, 19 councils showed surpluses and 3 showed deficits (the same three councils as 2014-15). All councils are now receiving income from parking, although Blaenau Gwent (which covers Ebbw Vale and Abertillery) and Torfaen (which covers Pontypool and Cwmbran) offer free parking but may still issue penalty charge notices.

### 2. Summary

Table 1 Summary of parking accounts for Wales<sup>1</sup>

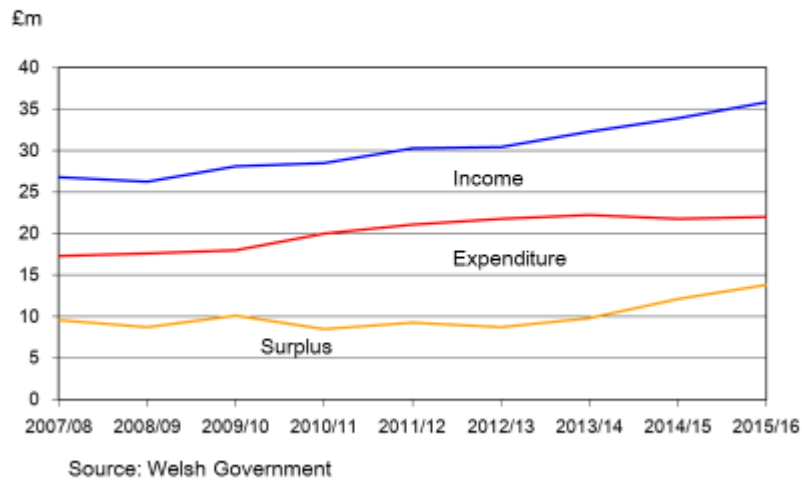
	£million	2011-12	2012-13	2013-4	2014-15	2015-16	Change 2015-16 on 2014-15
Parking	Income	30.3	30.4	32.3	33.9	35.8	5.6%
	Expenditure	21.1	21.8	22.5	21.8	22.0	0.9%
	Surplus	9.2	8.6	9.8	12.1	13.8	14.2%
All transport	Net expenditure	317.9	314.7	306.8	278.9	271.2	-2.8%
	Gross expenditure before parking surplus	327.2	323.4	316.5	291.0	285.0	-2.0%
	Parking surplus as % of all transport expenditure	2.8%	2.7%	3.1%	4.2%	4.8%	

Note: some numbers have been rounded

Income (meter and penalty income both for council-run on- and off-street parking) has risen by 5.6% over the past year while expenditure has risen by 0.9% so the net surplus has risen by 14.2% to £13.8 million. Total transport expenditure has fallen by 2.0% so the surplus now represents 4.8% of transport expenditure. Parking makes a much smaller contribution to overall transport expenditure in Wales compared with England where it is around 12% of total transport.

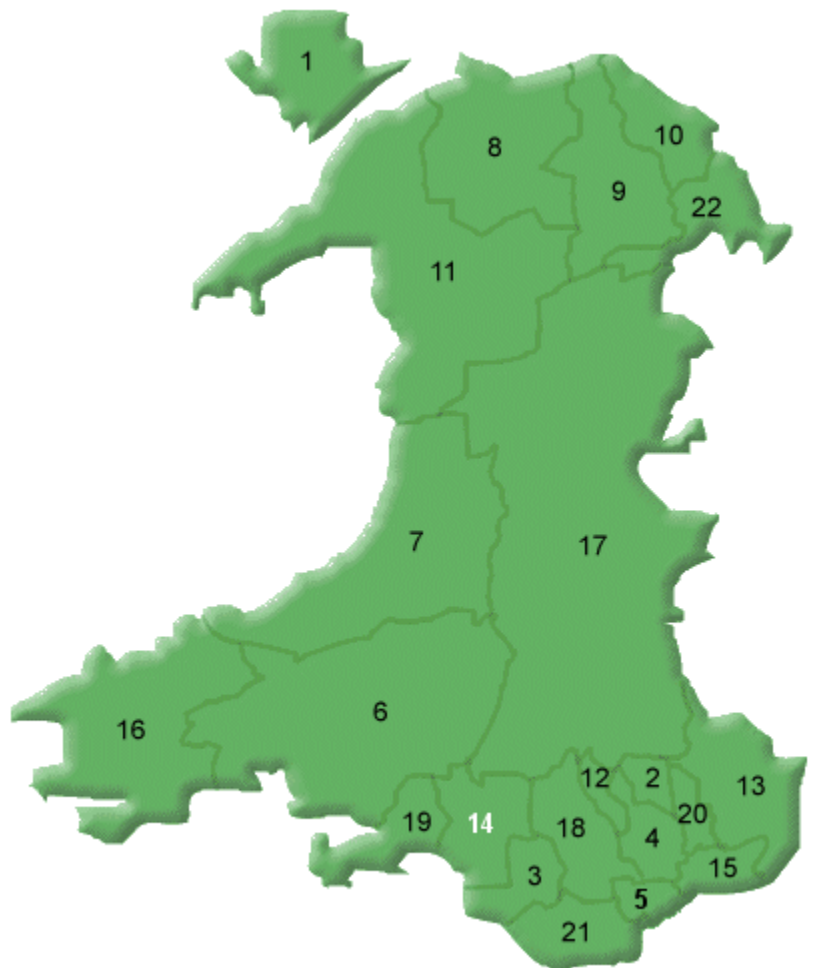
<sup>1</sup> Due to the rounding of values, some calculations in this report may not sum-up exactly.

Fig 1 Parking Revenues -Wales



1. Anglesey\*
2. Blaenau Gwent
3. Bridgend\*
4. Caerphilly
5. Cardiff
6. Carmarthenshire
7. Ceredigion\*
8. Conwy
9. Denbighshire\*
10. Flintshire\*
11. Gwynedd\*
12. Merthyr Tydfil
13. Monmouthshire
14. Neath Port Talbot
15. Newport
16. Pembrokeshire\*
17. Powys\*
18. Rhondda Cynon Taff
19. Swansea
20. Torfaen
21. Vale of Glamorgan\*
22. Wrexham\*

\* These councils participate in the Wales Penalty Processing Partnership



**3. Income**

Total council parking income from on- and off street charges and penalties in 2015-6 was £35.8 million, 5.6% higher than 2014-15. Penalty income is not shown separately and income does not include off-street income received by commercial off-street parking facilities. Eleven councils have increased their income over the past year and eleven decreased. Gwynedd and Conwy increased their parking income by over 25%, while Vale of Glamorgan, Ceredigion and Wrexham have reduced their income by 13-15%. Cardiff, Swansea and Carmarthen account for 44% of Welsh parking income, although the cities only represent a quarter of Wales' population.

As a rough measure of parking intensity, the 2015-16 income has been divided by the number of cars from the 2011 census for each authority (does not allow for commuters). The average is £22 per head but Cardiff and Swansea are more than double the average. For comparison, in London the equivalent figure is around £218, the rest of England around £38 and Scotland around £11.

Table 2 Local authorities ranked by parking income 2015-16

		Income (£000)						Cars 000 (2011 census)	Income per car £
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Change 2015-16/ 2014-15		
1	Cardiff	6,063	6,178	6,613	6,900	7,257	5%	152	48
2	Swansea	4,610	4,422	4,618	5,171	5,446	5%	119	46
3	Carmarthenshire	2,148	2,137	2,448	2,815	3,106	10%	105	30
4	Gwynedd	1,968	2,098	2,097	2,027	2,538	25%	67	38
5	Conwy	1,382	1,368	1,392	1,419	1,886	33%	64	30
6	Pembrokeshire	1,334	1,297	1,360	1,521	1,783	17%	72	25
7	Powys	1,251	1,207	1,196	1,363	1,602	18%	84	19
8	Monmouthshire	1,260	1,147	1,183	1,250	1,421	14%	56	25
9	Neath Port Talbot	1,664	1,736	1,507	1,494	1,376	-8%	69	20
10	Denbighshire	1,495	1,458	1,300	1,251	1,300	4%	51	25
11	Rhondda Cynon Taf	1,085	1,290	1,384	1,410	1,291	-8%	112	12
12	Bridgend	1,058	1,138	1,357	1,268	1,220	-4%	72	17
13	Ceredigion	879	1,032	1,123	1,150	980	-15%	43	23
14	Wrexham	1,132	847	889	1,045	896	-14%	71	13
15	Caerphilly	647	659	702	721	702	-3%	88	8
16	Merthyr Tydfil	727	885	832	745	690	-7%	26	27
17	Vale of Glamorgan	319	318	955	788	686	-13%	46	15
18	Newport	746	660	605	621	640	3%	69	9
19	Isle of Anglesey	344	330	388	456	523	15%	42	13
20	Flintshire	219	209	296	450	439	-2%	88	5
21	Blaenau Gwent	0	0	30	38	30	-22%	32	0.9
22	Torfaen	5	7	9	12	5	-58%	70	0.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30,336</b>	<b>30,423</b>	<b>32,283</b>	<b>33,915</b>	<b>35,817</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>1,598</b>	<b>22</b>

**4. Expenditure**

Overall expenditure has risen by £0.2 million after a fall of £0.7 million in the previous financial year, with 11 out of the 22 councils having increased and 10 reduced their expenditure with one unchanged. Flintshire increased its expenditure by £0.4 million as it has been increasing the number of paying car parks.

The table also shows the proportion of income taken up by expenditure in 2015-16. Nationally in Wales it is 61% with Monmouthshire, Powys and Conwy at less than 50%.

Table 3 Local authorities ranked by expenditure on parking 2015-16

		Expenditure (£000)					% of
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	income
1	Cardiff	3,275	3,592	3,688	3,474	3,763	52%
2	Swansea	3,184	3,166	3,362	3,220	3,044	56%
3	Carmarthenshire	1,761	1,650	1,652	2,026	1,712	55%
4	Pembrokeshire	1,072	1,033	984	1,029	1,200	67%
5	Neath Port Talbot	1,381	1,489	1,262	1,308	1,168	85%
6	Gwynedd	1,276	1,294	1,300	1,100	1,130	45%
7	Bridgend	622	838	861	1,156	988	81%
8	Ceredigion	527	745	845	825	964	98%
9	Flintshire	331	309	807	458	862	196%
10	Denbighshire	754	781	759	767	842	65%
11	Conwy	924	808	812	760	828	44%
12	Rhondda Cynon Taf	732	812	991	864	794	62%
13	Powys	1,006	849	761	748	763	48%
14	Wrexham	612	607	583	580	580	65%
15	Vale of Glamorgan	442	556	902	637	578	84%
16	Merthyr Tydfil	590	545	631	651	519	75%
17	Caerphilly	415	497	491	523	512	73%
18	Newport	937	867	589	556	503	79%
19	Monmouthshire	542	686	598	510	490	34%
20	Blaenau Gwent	285	311	274	262	340	1135%
21	Isle of Anglesey	293	275	303	299	337	64%
22	Torfaen	99	46	77	63	86	1720%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21,059</b>	<b>21,755</b>	<b>22,532</b>	<b>21,816</b>	<b>22,003</b>	<b>61%</b>

### 5. Surpluses

Table 4 shows the parking surpluses from 2010-11 to 2015-16 and the percentage change from 2014-15 to 2015-16. It also shows the proportion that parking surpluses represent of total transport expenditure.

Table 4 Local authorities ranked by level of parking surplus 2015-16

	£000	Surplus (£000)					Change 2014-15/ 2015-16	Surplus as % of transport expenditure 2015-16
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16		
1	Cardiff	2,788	2,586	2,924	3,426	3,494	2%	11.9%
2	Swansea	1,426	1,256	1,256	1,951	2,402	23%	10.2%
3	Gwynedd	692	804	797	927	1,408	52%	8.4%
4	Carmarthenshire	387	487	795	790	1,394	76%	7.5%
5	Conwy	458	560	580	659	1,058	61%	10.4%
6	Monmouthshire	719	461	585	741	931	26%	12.1%
7	Powys	245	358	436	616	839	36%	6.6%
8	Pembrokeshire	262	264	376	492	583	18%	5.8%
9	Rhondda Cynon Taf	353	478	393	545	497	-9%	2.8%
10	Denbighshire	741	677	541	484	458	-5%	4.8%
11	Wrexham	520	240	306	465	316	-32%	3.7%
12	Bridgend	436	300	496	111	232	108%	1.9%
13	Neath Port Talbot	283	247	245	186	208	12%	1.5%
14	Caerphilly	232	162	211	198	190	-4%	1.2%
15	Isle of Anglesey	51	55	85	157	186	18%	1.9%
16	Merthyr Tydfil	137	340	201	93	171	83%	3.3%
17	Newport	-191	-206	16	65	137	113%	1.4%
18	Vale of Glamorgan	-123	-238	53	151	108	-28%	1.1%
19	Ceredigion	351	287	278	325	16	-95%	0.1%
20	Torfaen	-94	-39	-68	-51	-81	59%	-1.0%
21	Blaenau Gwent	-285	-311	-244	-223	-310	39%	-5.8%
22	Flintshire	-112	-100	-511	-8	-423	4995%	-2.2%
	Total	9,277	8,668	9,751	12,100	13,814	14%	4.8%

The total net surplus was £13.8 million. 19 councils reported positive surpluses totalling £14.6 million. Of this Cardiff, Swansea and Gwynedd contributed 50%. Only three councils made a loss with the total parking *deficits* rising to £0.8million from £0.3 million in 2014-15, mainly because of a large loss in Flintshire which was reorganising its parking over the period.

Cardiff's parking surplus of £3.4 million provides 11.9% of Cardiff's total transport expenditure (contrast Edinburgh where it is around 50%) while Swansea's covers

November 2016

10.2%. For the rest of Wales, excluding Cardiff and Swansea, parking surpluses/deficits of £7.9 million provide only 3.4% of total transport expenditure.

The largest changes in surplus reflect both increases in income and decreases in cost.

Table 5 Reason for major increases in surpluses between 2014-15 and 2015-16

Change	Income	Expend- iture	Surplus	Income	Expend- iture	Surplus
	£000			%		
Carmarthenshire	291	-314	604	10%	-15%	76%
Gwynedd	511	30	481	25%	3%	52%
Conwy	467	68	399	33%	9%	61%
Monmouthshire	171	-20	190	14%	-4%	26%

Note: These figures represent the *changes* in income, expenditure and surpluses between the two years.

Table 6 Reason for major decrease in surplus between 2014-15 and 2015-16

Change	Income	Expend- iture	Surplus	Income	Expend- iture	Surplus
	£000			%		
Ceredigion	-170	139	-309	-15%	17%	-95%
Flintshire	-11	404	-415	-2%	88%	5188%

Note: These figures represent the *changes* in income, expenditure and surpluses between the two years.

## **6. Reporting on Parking**

Councils are required to report on the number of PCNs issued and their income and expenditure, preferably by an annual report. Searching the council's websites showed that as at October 2016, only one council, Powys had published an annual report for 2015-16 but six councils had published annual reports at some time, often three or four years ago and not subsequently.

The limited financial data published directly by Powys and Swansea, the only two authorities to report some financial information, show some differences from those in the table above as reported to the Welsh Government. This may be due to different treatment of overheads but there should be greater consistency and transparent with a reconciliation to show where the differences arise.

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13 November 2016

Full tables: <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Revenue/Transport/RoadsAndTransportRevenueExpenditure-by-Service>