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# BWLETIN POLISI CYTÛN

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## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IMPROVING ACROSS WALES

**A new report shows a picture of improving mental health services in Wales.**

The report, which looks at progress made so far against the aims of the Welsh Government's Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010, shows more local mental health services are now available and that care is being planned much more around the needs of the individual. The Mental Health (Wales) Measure is a unique piece of legislation designed to provide a legal framework to improve mental health services in Wales, making more services available locally and ensuring that people with mental health problems requiring hospital treatment are assigned a care co-ordinator and have a care and treatment plan.

The report shows that since the Measure came into force in 2012:

- The majority (89.9%) of people who require one have a care and treatment plan in place, and there has been an increase in the number of services available to people locally, such as open access courses and groups providing support.
- Waiting times for assessment have improved, so much so that the target has been reduced from the previous target of 56 days for referral to assessment, to 28 days (October 2013).
- The current number of local primary mental health practitioners per 20,000 of population is has increased to 1.96 and is almost double the suggested ratio of 1 per 20,000.
- All health boards have arrangements in place to provide an advocate to support every individual admitted to hospital with a mental health issue.
- 97% of those who responded to a Mind Cymru survey saying their experience of advocacy as excellent or mostly good.

A final report will be published before January 2016.

## **ACTION TO DELIVER MORE HOMES**

**Welsh Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Carl Sargeant has set out taking new action to increase housing supply in Wales.**

The Minister has told Assembly Members that his top priority is to increase the supply of much needed homes – both affordable homes and market homes. He has announced:

- The Welsh Government is making progress against its targets of delivering 7,500 more affordable homes and bringing 5,000 empty private sector dwellings back into use and is determined to do more.

- That he is appointing a Housing Supply Adviser to work with home builders, owners of land, local authorities and housing associations. Discussions will be held with interested parties regarding the precise terms of reference and scope of this role.

A revised target of 10,000 new affordable homes during this term of Government. To support delivery against this increased target a delivery pact is being put in place with Community Housing Cymru (CHC). The pact will clearly set out commitments from both the Welsh Government and CHC.

- £5m to fund a pilot Town Centre Property Fund which will focus on regenerating town centres and increasing housing supply.

## **HOUSING SUPPLY PACT LAUNCHED**

**The Welsh Government and Community Housing Cymru have joined together to launch a Housing Supply Delivery pact to deliver 10,000 affordable homes during this term of Government.**

The pact clearly sets out commitments for both parties. While 60% of the Welsh Government's affordable housing target of 7,500 homes was reached in the first two years of this administration, the majority delivered by housing associations, the need for new homes still significantly exceeds supply.

Welsh Housing and Regeneration Minister, Carl Sargeant, has responded by increasing the target during this term of government to 10,000 additional affordable homes and has called on housing organisations to do all they can to achieve this.

The pact supports the delivery of the increased target, setting out commitments from the Welsh Government and the housing association sector for the remainder of this administration.

## **NEW SERVICES FOR CAMBRIAN AND HEART OF WALES LINES**

**New peak hourly trains between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury will be among extra services to be funded by the Welsh Government on the Cambrian and Heart of Wales rail lines, Welsh Transport Minister Edwina Hart has announced.**

Four additional return services will operate between Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury on Mondays to Saturdays, with hourly services for peak morning and afternoon times. There will also be two new return Sunday services, and an improvement to evening services on the Cambrian Coast between Barmouth and Pwllheli.

On the Heart of Wales line, there will be extra journeys between Llandoverly and Gowerton/Swansea and between Llandrindod and Shrewsbury/Crewe offering good morning commuting opportunities on Mondays to Fridays. Other return services will become more conveniently timed and the Heart of Wales Line Forum gets funding to explore the possibility of further improvements to the line.

The new services will create 20 new train crew and depot jobs. The changes, which will be on an initial three-year trial basis, will come into place from May 2015.

## **OVER 1,700 FORMER SUBSTANCE MISUSERS HELPED INTO WORK AND EDUCATION**

**A new report has shown that a Welsh Government and European Social Funded (ESF) project has helped 862 former substance misusers gain employment and a further 923 enter further learning.**

The evaluation of the Peer Mentoring Wales project by the University of South Wales showed that the project had met nearly all of its targets and compared favourably with early outcome figures from the DWP Work Programme. The Peer Mentoring Wales project was established to assist people with substance misuse issues enter employment or further learning, with the support of 'peer mentors' many of whom have suffered from drug or alcohol issues themselves.

The Welsh Government is the project sponsor for the Wales wide £20m project (£11.1m grant and £9.3m match funding) which commenced in October 2009. The service is delivered by six different third sector agencies across Wales and over 4 years helped 9,627 individuals with over half gaining at least one positive outcome.

The report, showed that the providers had effectively developed links with employers and employment agencies, trained some clients as peer mentors to support others, and offered a variety of courses, opportunities for volunteering or work experience.

*The evaluation report can be found [here](#).*

## **WELSH RECYCLING RATE CONTINUES TO RISE**

**Welsh households and local councils are recycling more than ever and producing less black bin waste, according to the latest official figures.**

Between July and September last year, recycling, reuse and composting rates reached 57% in Wales, the highest in the UK.

The figures show that black bin waste has fallen 6% to 52kg per person compared to the same quarter in 2012.

Last year Wales reached its statutory target of recycling 52% of waste collected and the next recycling target is 58% of waste collected by local authorities in 2015/16.

*The figures can be found [here](#).*

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