



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Building Resilient Communities

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Taking forward the  
Tackling Poverty Action Plan  
Annual Report 2015

# Building Resilient Communities: Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan

<b>Audience</b>	This document is aimed at members of the public and stakeholders with an interest in the tackling poverty agenda. The wide ranging policy areas covered by the Annual Report mean representatives from across the public, private and third sectors will have an interest in the document.
<b>Overview</b>	The document sets out progress made to date by the Welsh Government against commitments made in Building Resilient Communities: Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan published in July 2013. It also includes new actions and commitments in respect of key areas identified in the recently published Child Poverty Strategy.
<b>Action Required</b>	None – for information only.
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<b>Additional copies</b>	This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <a href="http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/tackling-poverty/taking-forward-tackling-poverty-action-plan/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/tackling-poverty/taking-forward-tackling-poverty-action-plan/?lang=en</a>
<b>Related documents</b>	Building Resilient Communities: Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan - <a href="http://wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/tacklingpoverty/publications/taking-forward-tack-pov-plan/?lang=en">http://wales.gov.uk/topics/people-and-communities/tacklingpoverty/publications/taking-forward-tack-pov-plan/?lang=en</a>  Child Poverty Strategy - <a href="http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/child-poverty/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/child-poverty/?lang=en</a>

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# Ministerial Foreword

We want to ensure people can meet and raise their aspirations, fulfil their potential and contribute to the success of Wales. We cannot afford to waste the skills and talents of any of our citizens, now or in the future. Poverty damages both individuals and the economic and social health of our country. Tackling poverty is at the heart of our work as a Welsh Government.

Tackling poverty is a priority for all Ministers and Welsh Government Departments, as we made clear when we published the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. This is reflected in the range of targets and work to meet them being taken forward across the Welsh Government. I am pleased to see the breadth and depth of activity, as we can only make a significant impact with this whole-Government approach.

Building on the 2014 Annual Report, we have set out the progress we are making in respect of every target in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. We have been honest about this, with the Report showing we are making excellent progress in a number of areas. It also demonstrates where we need to do more to achieve our objectives and improve outcomes for people living in low income households. Welsh Government is committed to building on successes and taking action where more needs to be done.

The Report allows us to refresh the agenda. Poverty is complex, stubborn and never static, so I recognise the need to continually look at the problems people are facing and the actions we are taking.

In March 2015, I published a revised Child Poverty Strategy. We received an excellent response to the consultation, which highlighted some of the key areas where Government could do more. As a consequence, I included new objectives in the Strategy and I am using this Annual Report to set out new commitments and actions the Welsh Government will take forward.

I have also reiterated our commitment to the ambition of eradicating child poverty by 2020 in the Child Poverty Strategy. I recognise this will be extremely challenging, particularly against a backdrop of welfare reforms, which have hit households with children and those around the poverty line particularly hard. In addition, more cuts to welfare spending are planned by the UK Government, however, I do not want to lose our focus on child poverty and believe it signals our intent as a Government a commitment which has been widely welcomed.

Since I became Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, I have been impressed with the commitment from organisations and individuals across Wales to making a difference and helping to tackle poverty. I have recently established a Tackling Poverty Practitioners' Group, consisting of people working directly with those facing the challenges of poverty. I want to understand what the issues are on the ground and practical approaches which could be implemented.

I have also made changes to the Tackling Poverty Implementation Board, which is my key mechanism for holding senior officials accountable for their efforts to tackle poverty. I have ensured the Board will now focus on strategic priorities and relevant Ministers will be invited to each meeting. In addition, I continue to rely on the expert advice of the Tackling Poverty External Advisory Group.

We face real challenges in reducing the level of poverty in Wales. However, I believe our focus on achieving the targets we have set and taking forward new commitments will have a real impact.

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**Lesley Griffiths AM,  
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty**

# Section 1 - Introduction

Poverty remains a persistent and challenging problem. The dynamics of poverty have also changed over time, with far more people now living with in-work poverty. Our focus is on preventing poverty in the longer term through interventions in the areas where we have the levers to make a difference.

When we published the refreshed Tackling Poverty Action Plan in 2013, we committed to report annually on progress towards the targets set. In Section 2 of this report we have set out progress in key areas<sup>1</sup> and brief details on our principal programmes which are making a difference.

The revised Child Poverty Strategy retains and reaffirms our commitment to the three objectives in the 2011 Strategy. These objectives, concerning reducing worklessness, increasing skills and reducing inequalities, underpin the targets we have already committed to in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. The Action Plan is the mechanism for delivering these objectives. We also included two new objectives in the Strategy, following feedback from stakeholders:

- To use all available means to create a strong economy and labour market in Wales to reduce in-work poverty.
- To help families increase their household income through effective debt and financial advice. This includes action to tackle the 'poverty premium' which often causes low income households to pay more for goods and services.

In Section 3 of this report we have set out the actions and new commitments we will take forward to support these new objectives identified. We have also set out commitments we will take forward in respect of rural poverty, having identified this as an additional priority in the 2014 Annual Report.

## Links with the equalities agenda

We recognise the well documented close links between poverty and certain groups with protected characteristics. To see significant improvements in the levels of poverty in Wales, protected characteristics must be considered, as groups such as disabled people are disproportionately at risk of living in poverty.

Due to these close links, objectives to support people living in poverty and those which aim to help people with protected characteristics, are often similar. There are shared priorities across the Tackling Poverty Action Plan, Child Poverty Strategy and our Strategic Equality Plan in areas such as supporting young people, ensuring access to advice services and reducing health inequalities.

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<sup>1</sup> In Annex A we have also set out progress towards the other targets in the Action Plan not directly related to the six priorities, along with the milestones we said we would reach in 2014/15.

The Child Poverty Strategy commits the Welsh Government to develop an integrated approach to assessing impact, where poverty and equality are considered together. This is currently being taken forward by officials in the Fairer Futures and Tackling Poverty Divisions.

We have a statutory duty to review and refresh our Equality Objectives by 1 April 2016. Throughout 2015 we will be engaging with Welsh Public Bodies, the Third Sector, stakeholders representing protected characteristic groups and the public. The information and evidence provided will help develop a refreshed set of Equality Objectives and inform actions in our Strategic Equality Plan to achieve better outcomes for the people of Wales. We will use this opportunity to highlight the close links between poverty and equality, and ensure this is taken into consideration as part of the consultation process.

### **The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Act comes into force in April 2016. Wales faces a number of challenges now and in the future, such as poverty, climate change, health inequalities and jobs and growth. The Act aims to enable public bodies to tackle these challenges through thinking more about the long-term and working more effectively with other organisations and with communities.

The Act puts in place seven well-being goals which set out the Wales we want to see in the future. The goals are: a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of cohesive Communities; a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and a globally responsible Wales. Tackling poverty is an element of all of these goals, particularly the goals of 'a more equal Wales', 'a healthier Wales' and 'a prosperous Wales'. The Act also requires public bodies to take account of five ways of working – long term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement. These all have clear links with tackling poverty, particularly taking a preventative approach to try to tackle persistent, intergenerational poverty from occurring or getting worse.

We will ensure guidance for Public Service Boards developing Local Wellbeing Plans reflects the duties in the 2010 Children and Families (Wales) Measure around setting objectives to support a reduction in child poverty. We are currently in the process of reviewing Single Integrated Plans and their Annual Reports to see how Local Authorities are currently reporting on poverty and including objectives for tackling child poverty. This will feed into the development of draft guidance on Local Wellbeing Plans, which will be published for consultation later this year.

### **Community Benefits**

The Community Benefits policy approach is at the heart of the Wales Procurement Policy Statement. It promotes the use of procurement as a lever to deliver benefits, including job creation, education and training, opening up supply chain opportunities and positive engagement with local communities. There is particular emphasis on disadvantaged groups and those furthest from the labour market. The approach is

being delivered through significant key programmes in Wales such as 21st Century Schools, Vibrant and Viable Places, Wales Housing Quality Standard, Health, the A465 Section 2 road scheme and the projects within the Welsh Infrastructure Investment Programme.

The Community Benefits Measurement tool is a standardised methodology which measures the impact of projects which deliver wider social and economic benefits. Measurement of the first 74 projects, worth £658 million, shows 84% has been re-invested in Wales, £155 million directly on salaries to Welsh citizens, and £390 million with Wales-based businesses. Some 771 disadvantaged people were helped into employment or training, with 21,763 weeks of training provided.

A general designation on procurement for Wales means Welsh Ministers are now able to introduce secondary legislation to regulate on public procurement. The Wales Procurement Policy Statement will require public bodies to:

- Appoint a Community Benefits Champion;
- Apply the Community Benefits approach to all public sector procurements;
- Apply the Measurement Tool to all such contracts over £1 million; and
- Provide justification for all contracts over £1 million, where the approach has not been used.

The Minister for Finance and Government Business is establishing a Task and Finish Group, which will produce a pipeline of procurement projects and grant programmes to strengthen the delivery of Community Benefits.

## **Communities First**

Communities First is the Welsh Government's flagship, community-focused tackling poverty programme which works in the most deprived communities in Wales. The programme underpins the Tackling Poverty Action Plan and is a major lever in realising its ambitions. Its three strategic objectives: Learning, Prosperous, and Healthier Communities and the infrastructure it provides within deprived communities enable it to play a critical role in tackling poverty. This is through narrowing the economic, education/skills and health gaps between individuals in our most deprived and more affluent areas.

In the twelve months to March 2015, as a result of the Communities First programme:

- 3,534 participants entered employment.
- 1,897 participants gained basic IT skills.
- 8,507 participants were supported to access the benefits they are entitled to.
- 6,043 children increased school attendance.
- 11,050 children improved academic performance.
- 5,181 people gained a qualification.
- 14,981 participants increased physical activity.
- 5,446 participants eat fresh fruit and veg daily, thus improving diets and moving towards better health outcomes.



Through its shared outcomes projects Communities First works collaboratively with a range of partners including Third Sector organisations and other Welsh Government departments to deliver key tackling poverty priorities. A recent evaluation report concluded Communities First is seen as a valuable programme by many of those involved in its delivery, and by beneficiary communities. Changes made to the design of the programme since 2012 have generally enhanced chances of meeting its aims and monitoring progress.

## Section 2 – Reporting on existing commitments

In this section we have set out progress towards the targets in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan and the policies and programmes influencing these targets.

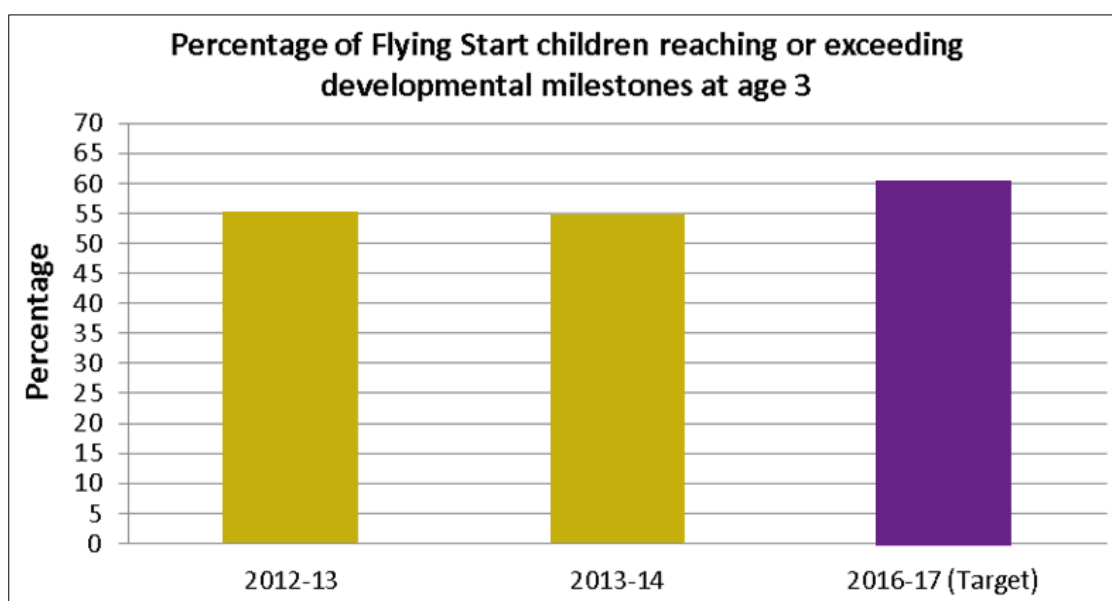
### Early Years

There is widespread agreement early childhood experiences are crucially important for children's long-term development and their achievements in later life. We want every child, regardless of their circumstances, to fulfil their potential.

#### Target in the Action Plan:

- By 2016, increase the proportion of 3-year-olds receiving Flying Start services that have achieved or exceeded their developmental milestones by 5 percentage points. (55 per cent of children in the Flying Start programme reached or exceeded their developmental milestone at age 3 in 2012/13).

#### Where are we now?



The second annual summary statistics for the Flying Start programme were published in July 2014. The data presented above relates to assessments of children across 7 skills domains: Locomotor, Manipulative, Visual, Hearing and Language, Speech and Language, Interactive Social Skills; and Self care social skills.

The data shows 55 per cent of 3 year olds reached or exceeded their developmental milestone in 2013-14 in every domain, maintaining the performance of the previous year. More detailed management data indicates particular success in certain areas, including 85 per cent of Flying Start 3 year olds meeting or exceeding their developmental norms for speech and language skills and 92 per cent of Flying Start 3 year olds meeting or exceeding developmental norms in Interactive Social Skills.

## **Key Programmes/Policies:**

### **Early Years and Childcare Plan**

The Early Years and Childcare Plan set out an agreed course of objectives to improve our early years and childcare provision over the next 10 years. We committed to developing and consulting on an Early Years Outcomes Framework. This will draw on evidence to demonstrate the progress we are making on delivering the actions in the Early Years and Childcare Plan. The data included in the Framework will be collated and presented with the Early Years and Childcare Plan progress report in July 2015.

### **Flying Start**

We have committed to double the number of children and their families benefiting from Flying Start during the course of this Assembly term to 36,000. In the period of 1 April to 31 December 2014 32,627 children benefited from Flying Start services, representing 99 per cent of our target for 2014-15. Overall, 86 per cent of full or reduced offers of childcare in a Flying Start childcare setting were taken up in 2013-14. Work by Welsh Government and Local Authorities is continuing to ensure all offers of childcare are taken up.

We have developed guidance on Early Language Development (ELD) which was published in mid May. The guidance sets out how we require Local Authorities to deliver ELD support within their Flying Start settings.

### **Families First**

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2014 over 7,300 families completed a Joint Assessment Family Framework which assesses a family's strengths and needs in a number of areas, and is used to design a tailored intervention plan to overcome the problems they face. Over 5,100 families had signed a Team Around the Family (TAF) Action Plan, a model which brings together a wide range of professionals with the family to help them address the breadth of challenges they face. More than 2,700 TAF Action Plans were closed with a successful outcome.

During the same period, more than 200 strategically commissioned projects were accessed by 465,681 individuals. This illustrates effectively the reach of the programme and underlines the importance of tailoring services to meet the needs of local communities.

## **Pupil Deprivation Grant for Under 5s**

In recognition of the most effective interventions being early interventions, the Welsh Government has made £300 of Pupil Deprivation Grant funding available for each eligible 3 and 4 year old child who is in a Foundation Phase setting.

Guidance has been published which sets out how the grant is distributed and provides information to enable practitioners to plan how they will most effectively spend their allocation.

A 'What Really Works in the Early Years?' guide for practitioners has also been drafted. It provides an accessible resource detailing practical measures which evidence shows to be most effective in tackling the impact of poverty in early years education.

## Breaking the link between poverty and educational attainment

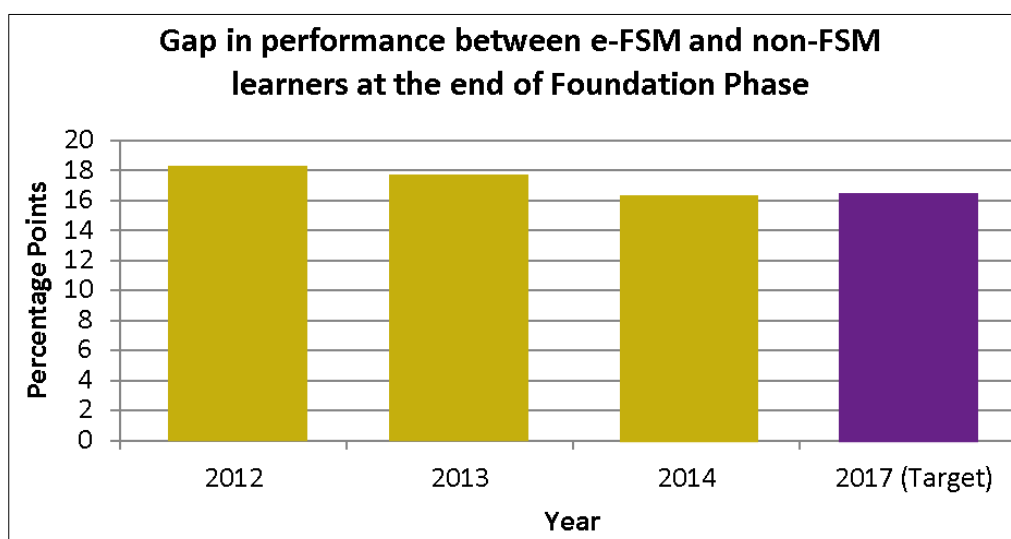
While we want all children to do better at school, we want to increase the pace of improvement for those pupils eligible for free school meals to narrow the gap between children in poverty and their counterparts.

### Targets in the Action Plan:

- To narrow the gap in attainment levels between learners aged 7 eligible for free school meals and those that are not eligible for free school meals, who achieve the expected levels at the end of the Foundation Phase, as measured by the Foundation Phase Indicator, by 10 per cent by 2017.
- To improve the overall attainment levels of students eligible for free school meals, measured as the proportion of learners eligible for free school meals at age 15 who achieve Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4 (five GCSE at grade C or above in English or Welsh and Mathematics or equivalent), to 37 per cent by 2017.

### Where are we now?

**Gap in proportion of 7 year olds achieving the expected level at the end of the Foundation phase (between those entitled to FSM and those not entitled to FSM, percentage points)**

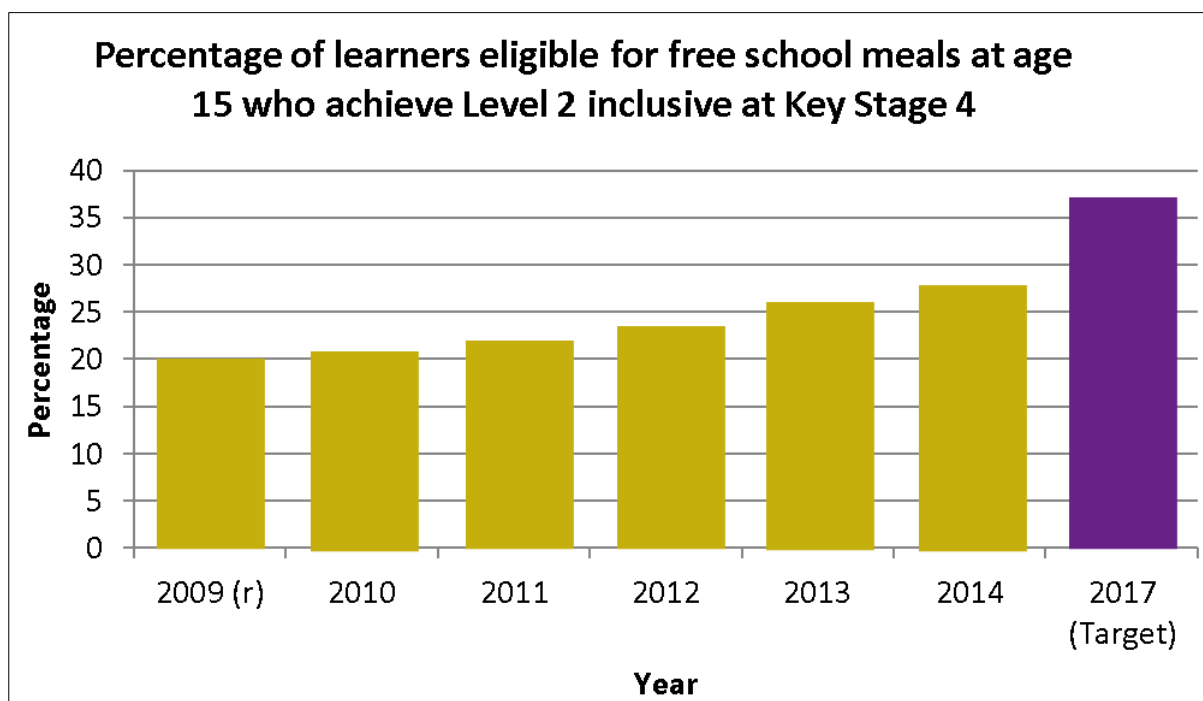


The difference in attainment between those eligible for free school meals and non-eligible pupils in 2012, which is the baseline year for this target, was 18.3 percentage points. The target is for the gap to reduce by 10 per cent (i.e. to 16.5 per cent by 2017).

The gap for the Foundation Phase Indicator for 2013-14 was 16.3 percentage points, compared with 17.6 percentage points in 2012-13. The current target has therefore

been reached 3 years early. **The Welsh Government will be considering a new target during Summer 2015.**

### **Percentage of learners eligible for free school meals at age 15 who achieve Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4**



In 2013-14, 27.8 per cent of students eligible for free school meals at age 15 achieved Level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4. Over the past 5 years there has been a steady increase in this percentage. This proportion will need to increase at a faster rate over the next 2 years to reach the target of 37 per cent by 2017.

The gap between those eligible for free school meals and those not eligible in Level 2 inclusive performance increased every year between 2006 and 2010 before decreasing over the next three years. The gap increased again between 2013 and 2014 and now stands at 33.8 percentage points.

### **Current Position in Key Programmes/Policies:**

#### **Rewriting the Future: raising ambition and attainment in Welsh schools**

Rewriting the Future is aimed at raising the academic attainment of pupils from low income households. An annual report on the progress made during the first year of the programme will be published in July 2015.

We will be taking forward work on tackling the barriers pupils from low income households face as they begin their early education, and encouraging high expectations throughout their school careers and beyond.

Further work includes developing an understanding of the reasons behind why the overall points score per learner is closing at Key Stage 4, while the gap in achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects between learners eligible for free school meals and other learners is not. This will allow us to determine what further action is required.

We have also challenged schools to aim higher for learners from deprived backgrounds, including through the school categorisation process. School categorisation is a way of working out which schools in Wales need extra help and support. One of the things we look at is whether pupils from deprived backgrounds are doing well at the school. If they aren't, schools will be given some extra help to improve.

### **Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG)**

The PDG is intended to improve attainment for learners aged between 5 and 15, who are eligible for free school meals or who are Looked after Children. In 2015/2016, the per-pupil allocation of the PDG increased to £1,050, rising to £1,150 in 2016/2017.

The Communities First match funding for the Pupil Deprivation Grant is aimed at encouraging schools and communities in areas of poverty to work more closely together, to raise the educational attainment of pupils from low income households. 38 projects have been funded.

### **Schools Challenge Cymru**

We are investing up to £20 million per year, for 2 years, alongside proven expertise, to support 40 Pathways to Success schools to achieve rapid and sustainable improvement. This national programme has the potential to impact on the lives of more than 30,000 secondary pupils every year, including more than 8,000 pupils this year who are eligible for free school meals.

### **The role of the family**

The Welsh Government's FaCE (Families and Community Engagement) guidance is a web-based resource which will include a comprehensive toolkit of practical resources specifically designed to help schools to engage more effectively with parents in order to deliver improved outcomes for learners.

### **Culture and poverty**

Delivery of the 'Creative Learning through the Arts, an Action plan for Wales' will bring significant improvements in the range and quality of opportunities children and young people are given in schools to participate in creative activities and to engage with and learn about the arts and culture. Implementation in schools is scheduled to commence in September 2015, and will support the three educational priorities of literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

Work is being taken forward to implement the recommendations of the 'Culture and Poverty: Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social

justice in Wales' report. In 2015-16 we will establish six Pioneer Areas across Wales, where cultural organisations will focus on helping individuals, families and communities living in one or more Communities First areas to benefit from lasting engagement with culture and heritage.

### **Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales**

A joint draft strategy, "Raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales", sets out proposed arrangements to further support the educational attainment of children who are looked after, primarily of compulsory school age, but also includes transition to further and higher education. Some aims of the strategy include raising the educational aspirations of children who are looked after and of those who care for them, and ensuring education remains a priority even during unsettling periods in a child's life.

The strategy was launched for consultation between January and May 2015. Responses to the consultation are currently being analysed and a final strategy, together with an action plan will be published towards the end of this year.



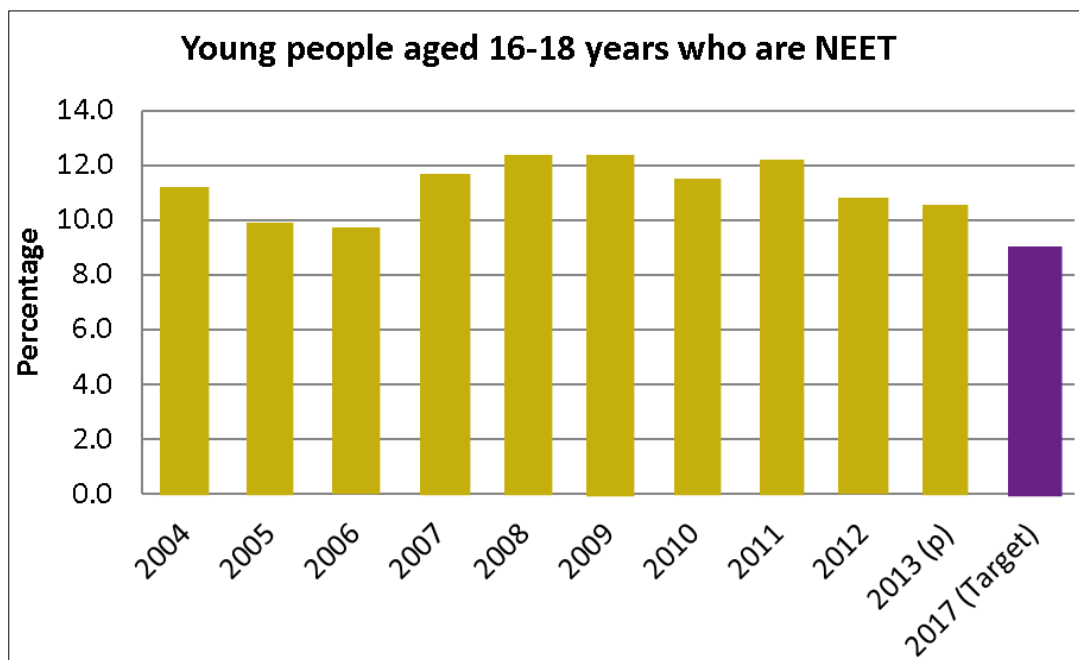
## Young People who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)

Young people are more likely to do well and fulfil their potential if they engage in education, training, or employment. Reducing the number of those not engaged will have a long term impact on the lives of not just today's young people, but generations to come.

### Targets in the Action Plan:

- To reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training aged 16-18 to 9 per cent by 2017
- To reduce the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training aged 19-24 in Wales relative to the UK as a whole by 2017

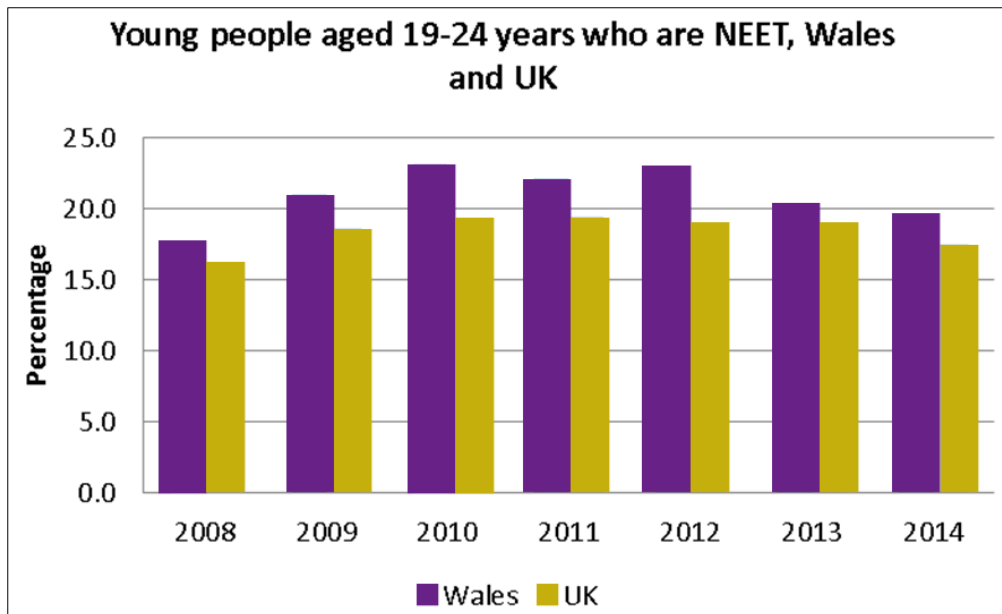
### Where are we now?



Source: Welsh Government Participation in education and labour market

**Note:** (p) Provisional data.

The proportion of young people aged 16 to 18 not in education, employment or training (NEET) at end 2013 was 10 per cent, a slight decrease on the previous year, and 1 percentage point from the target.



Source: Annual Population Survey

Based on survey data (to allow a comparison with the UK position), 19.7 per cent of 19-24 year olds were estimated to be NEET for the year ending Quarter 4 2014, compared with 20.4 per cent for the year ending Q4 2013. The gap between Wales and UK is narrower than at the 2012 baseline, although slightly increased from the previous year.

## Current Position in Key Programmes/Policies:

### Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

The Framework introduced a new action to develop a proactive Youth Guarantee, which is the offer, acceptance and commencement of a suitable place in education or training for a young person making the first time transition from compulsory education at age 16. The Youth Guarantee will be rolled out from September 2015 and as part of the roll out we have also committed to deliver 100 Youth Guarantee training opportunities to young people aged 15-18 who come from workless families within the Lift Programme cluster areas.

Welsh Government agreed a further £1.1 million grant funding to support local authorities in its delivery through to March 2016.

### Jobs Growth Wales

The scheme started in April 2012 and aims to create 16,000 job opportunities over 4 years for unemployed 16-24 year olds throughout Wales. As of the end of March 2015, the programme had delivered 14,989 job opportunities across Wales. £25 million of European funding has been approved to support the continuation of our Jobs Growth Wales Programme.

The Welsh Government supported additional job opportunities for Communities First areas during 2014. In 2015, the Welsh Government's Lift programme will be supported by Job Growth Wales and it will continue to be one of the avenues available to Communities First areas under the Welsh Government's proposals for Communities for Work.

Data presenting information on the number of job opportunities created and filled, and other management information from the Jobs Growth Wales scheme can be found here: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/jobs-growth-wales/?lang=en>

### **Apprenticeships**

We are investing £144 million of Welsh Government and European funding to create over 50,000 apprenticeships in Wales over the next four years. Apprenticeships allow people to earn a wage and develop their skills with an employer while also accessing formal training from one of an approved network of providers. Investment will cover a range of traditional and non-traditional areas including construction, engineering, IT and retail.

### **Traineeships**

We will take forward the Traineeships Programme which supports young people to gain sustained employment, by helping them with their confidence and motivation, and looks to address barriers to learning, all of which may prevent a young person moving into employment or learning at a higher level.

### **Concessionary Fare Schemes**

An 18 month pilot concessionary fare scheme for all 16-18 year olds across Wales will start in September 2015. The scheme will offer a one-third reduction in all bus journeys. More details will be announced by the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport in due course.

## Creating opportunities for people from workless households

Evidence tells us people in long-term unemployment require more personalised support to return to work. There is a much greater possibility of return to work if sufficient time, encouragement and support are offered.

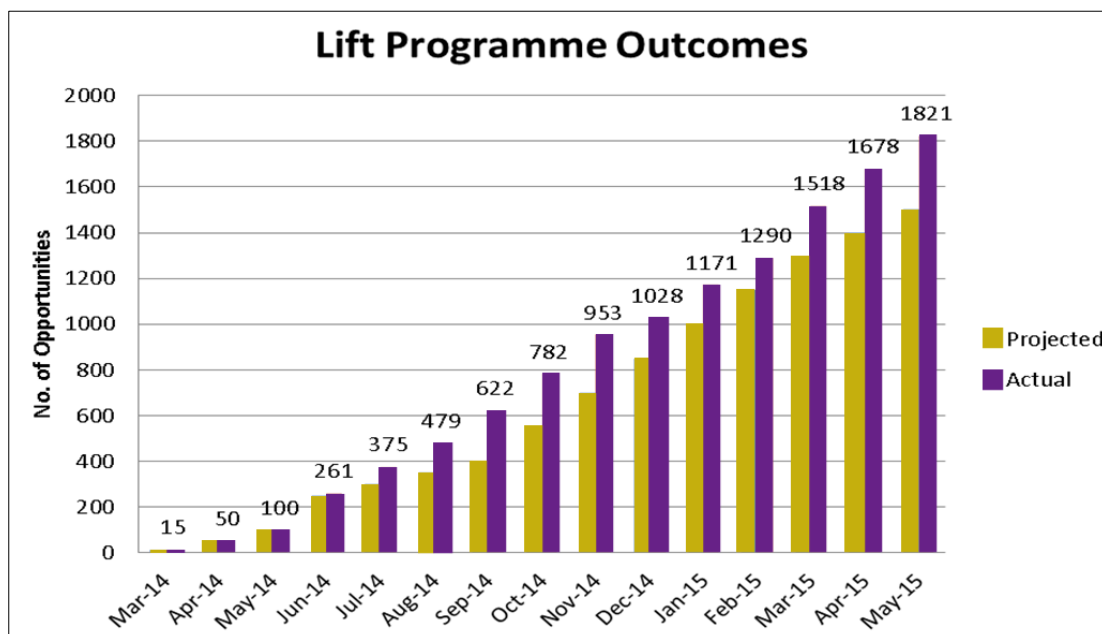
The percentage of workless households in Wales fell from 23% in 2009 to 19.8% in 2013. During the same period we also saw the percentage of children living in workless households fall from 20% to 16.5%. Wales is maintaining an employment rate well above its historical average, with the level up 179,000 since the start of the Assembly.

### Target in the Action Plan:

- To offer 5,000 training and employment opportunities to people in workless households by the end of the 2017 calendar year.

The Lift Programme was established and formally launched on 24 March 2014 to deliver this commitment.

### Where are we now?



The Programme is progressing well and as at 31 May 2015, had provided 1,821 training and employment opportunities to people from workless households, with 314 people supported into employment.

## The Delivery Model

The Programme is being delivered in nine areas, based on 12 Communities First Clusters across Wales. It provides support tailored to individual needs. Opportunities which count towards the overall Programme target include participants supported into:

- Basic skills training (essential skills);
- Vocational training;
- Work experience placement;
- Preparation for full-time employment (work trials, permitted work or volunteering linked to employment outcomes); and
- Employment (minimum of 16 hours per week).

All Welsh Government Departments have been asked to consider how they can support the Programme by identifying training or employment opportunities through their various programmes and funding streams.

For example, the Department for Health and Social Services has confirmed NHS Wales will aim to provide 1,000 training, work experience or employment opportunities by the end of 2017. The Department for Education and Skills have ring-fenced 1,600 opportunities within their existing programmes, while Natural Resources are providing at least 30 opportunities through their Arbed scheme. Homes and Places Division have also secured a commitment from Registered Social Landlords to provide 1,000 opportunities over the lifetime of the Programme.

## Communities for Work

Building on the success and experience of the Lift Programme, the Department for Work and Pensions' Want to Work project, the Communities First Youth Employment Mentors and the Parent Employment Adviser initiative, we are developing an ESF project, Communities for Work. It aims to tackle poverty in communities through sustainable employment. The project will be delivered in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and Communities First Lead Delivery Bodies.

It will engage with long-term unemployed and economically inactive groups living in Communities First Cluster areas, supporting them into work. Communities for Work will provide intensive support and training for 16-24-year-olds not in employment, education or training and innovative solutions to complex barriers to employment for those over 25-years-old.

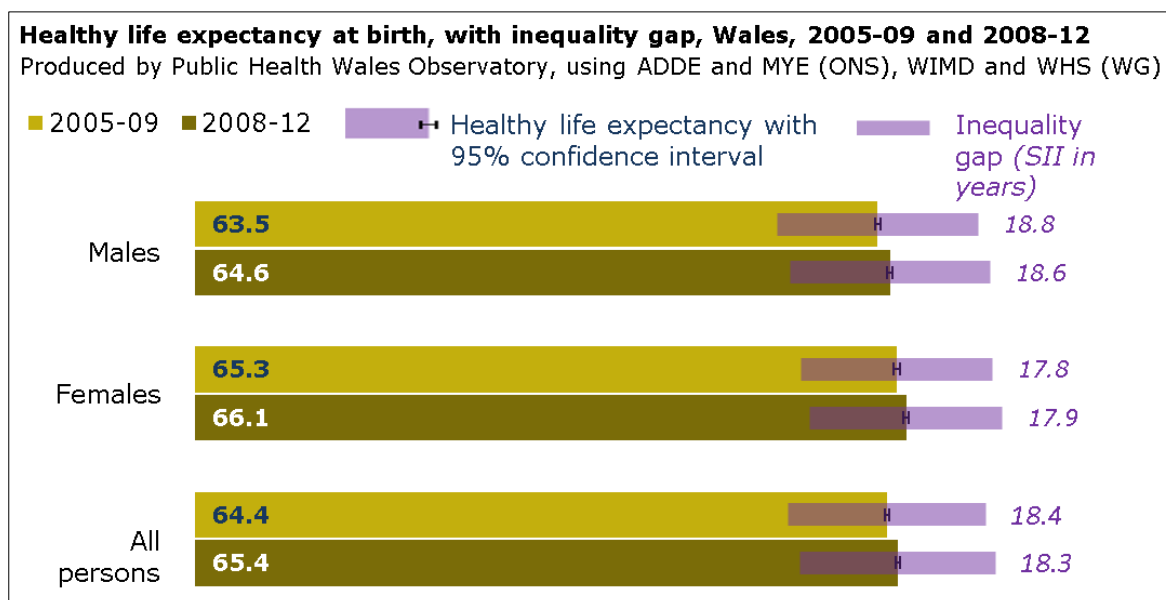
## Health inequality

People in poverty are less likely to have access to high quality health care, despite the fact they are likely to have greater need for health care. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘inverse care law’. We want to reduce inequality in access to healthcare as part of the overall action to reduce inequality in health and well being.

### Where are we now?

#### Healthy Life Expectancy:

- Healthy life expectancy at birth (HLE) represents the number of years a person can expect to live in good health. If the population is grouped into fifths in terms of increasing levels of deprivation, there are significant gaps in healthy life expectancy between each fifth, with the less deprived areas doing much better. We aim to close these gaps by an average of 2.5 per cent – by 2020.<sup>2</sup>



The chart<sup>3</sup> shows for males and females HLE has increased by 1.1 years and 0.8 years respectively. The inequality gap as measured by the Slope Index of Inequality has remained largely unchanged. However, this is in the context where some forecast deterioration as a result of the global financial crisis.

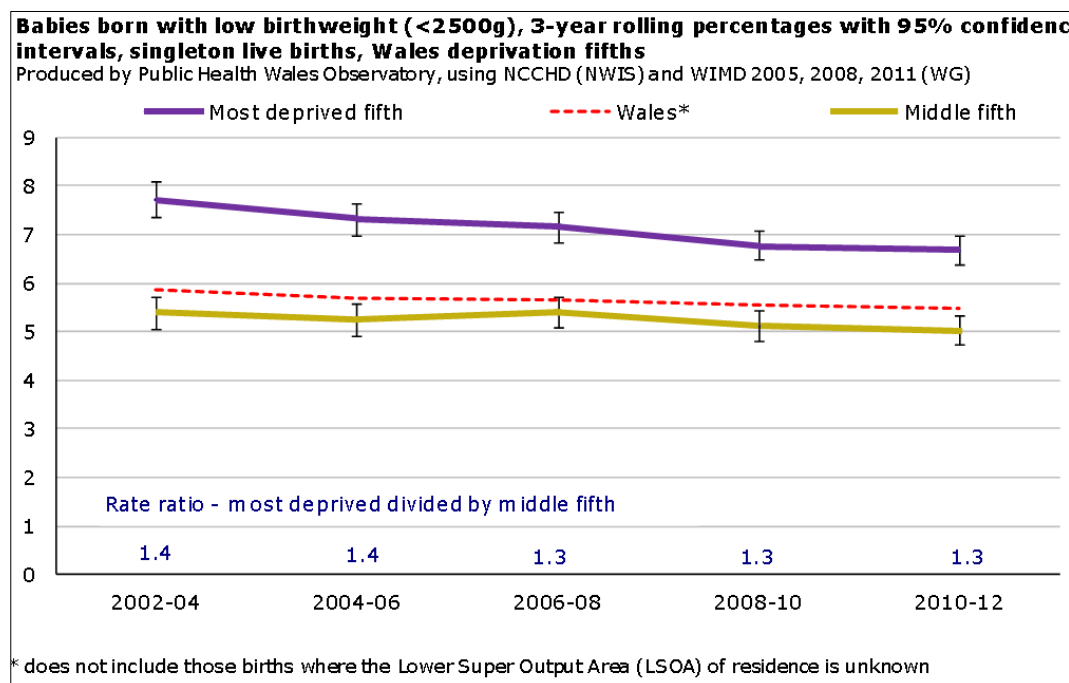
It is expected new and updated HLE figures will be published in early 2016 which will incorporate the results of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2014.

<sup>2</sup> The way the target is expressed has been amended to make it clearer, without changing the essence.

<sup>3</sup> The chart indicates the change in the inequality gap between the periods 2005-09 and 2008-12. It measures the inequality gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) using the Slope Index of Inequality (SII). The SII is a measure of the difference in HLE (in years) between the most deprived and the least deprived whilst taking into account the distribution across all deprivation fifths

## Low Birth Weight:

- To reduce the proportion of babies born under 2500g in the most deprived fifth of the population by 19 per cent – by 2020.



The proportion of babies born with a low birth weight in the most deprived fifth of areas has fallen steadily from 7.7 per cent in 2002-04 to 6.7 per cent in 2010-12, a 13% improvement. The ratios between the most deprived fifth and the middle fifth and between the most and least deprived fifths have not significantly changed. This is the same data published in 2014, as no updated data is available this year.

## Dental health

- To improve the dental health of 5 and 12 year olds in the most deprived fifth of the population to that found in the middle fifth-by 2020.

5 year olds\*

### Most deprived fifth

	2007/08 (baseline data)	2011/12	By 2020
Mean number of decayed, missing or filled deciduous/milk teeth	2.65	2.16	1.77
% of 5 year olds with at least one decayed, missing or filled deciduous/milk tooth	57.6%	51.5%	44.1%

**\*Positive consent is required from parents for 5 year olds to partake in dental surveys. This consent from parents may differ across areas of deprivation.**

Oral health surveys measure caries levels and 'DMFT – teeth 'decayed, missing or filled'. In 2011/12 the average DMFT for the most deprived fifth was 2.16, representing good progress towards the 2020 target.

12 year olds

### **Most deprived fifth**

	<b>2004-05 (baseline data)</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>By 2020</b>
Mean number of decayed, missing or filled adult teeth	1.35	1.31	1.10	1.12
% of 12 year olds with at least one decayed, missing or filled adult tooth	53.8%	52.4%	43.9%	45.5%

Oral health surveys are carried out for 5 and 12-year olds. Results of the survey of 12 year olds for 2012-13 show in the most deprived fifth in Wales the mean average DMFT was 1.10. For the same period the percentage of 12 year olds with at least one DMFT was below the target for 2020. The percentage across all 12-year olds in the most deprived fifth may actually be higher though due to the confidence intervals applied to the survey data.

## **Current Position in Key Programmes/Policies:**

### **Health inequality and the Inverse Care Law**

Equity is a fundamental principle guiding our approach and a range of activities are targeted at reducing inequalities in access to care as well as to opportunities for good health and wellbeing. So as a result:

- we are reorienting primary care resources towards need;
- we are focused on population health for instance by maximising the NHS' contribution in the early years; and
- we are testing new approaches to tackle inverse care, for instance through the Living Well programme in the Aneurin Bevan Health Board area.

### **Inverse Care Law Pilots**

Health Boards are now rapidly developing their Primary Care Clusters which are key to better identifying local need and planning services proportionately to match need.



Through their Primary Care Clusters, Aneurin Bevan and Cwm Taf University Health Boards are working to better identify and treat people in more deprived communities who are at increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

For example, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board's new *Living Well Living Longer* programme, which was launched in January 2015, is working on its first phase which aims to reverse the impact of the inverse care law by providing targeted support to those communities at greatest need to: -

- Develop a sustainable system for identifying those at greatest risk of cardiovascular disease; and
- Systematically offer evidence based interventions at a scale which will achieve a percentage change in population outcomes.

When completed in Blaenau Gwent West, the programme will move to Caerphilly North, Blaenau Gwent East, Newport East and Newport West over a three-year period.

## **Legislation**

The Public Health (Wales) Bill takes a preventative approach which seeks to intervene at points with potential for long-term benefits in the health of individuals and their communities. The Bill makes an important contribution to the tackling poverty agenda as a number of the issues addressed can disproportionately affect the most disadvantaged individuals, families and communities.

The draft Public Health (Minimum Pricing for Alcohol) Bill which will be published for consultation shortly will further set out the Welsh Government's proposals for improving public health by introducing a mandatory minimum unit price (MUP) for alcohol sold or supplied in Wales. These outcomes will ultimately help to reduce the costs to the Health Service of treating the avoidable morbidity associated with alcohol misuse.

## **Guidance and Planning for Health Boards**

Our latest NHS planning guidance obligated all integrated medium term Health Board plans to analyse need and take appropriate action to set out local priorities and interventions in relation to tackling health inequalities.

## **Redistributing funding**

Phase 1 of our commitment to redistribute funding involved changing the current direct needs formula to reflect the latest available datasets on population, latest needs data and NHS expenditure on different age groups. Phase 1 work was used to inform the distribution of the majority of the recently announced £225 million funding to Local Health Boards. It was also applied in the distribution of an additional £200 million allocation issued in December 2014.

The second phase of the work will involve reviewing and fine tuning the current direct needs formula and addressing any weaknesses and limitations in quality, reliability

and scope of information and datasets. The scope, approach and resources to take forward Phase 2 of the Resource Allocation Review will be considered by the Minister for Health and Social Services in early 2015/16.

## **Prudent Healthcare**

Prudent healthcare is a way of reshaping the NHS around the things which matter most – continuing to provide care for all, based on clinical need.

The Bevan Commission has finalised a set of prudent healthcare principles for Wales. These principles will help to ensure everyone involved in securing a healthier future for the population of Wales follows the same set of principles. These principles are:

- Achieve health and wellbeing with the public, patients and professionals as equal partners through co-production;
- Care for those with the greatest health need first, making the most effective use of all skills and resources;
- Do only what is needed, no more, no less; and do no harm;
- Reduce inappropriate variation using evidence based practices consistently and transparently

The Welsh Government and NHS Wales are focusing on putting these prudent healthcare principles into practice, for example through implementing the commitments in the national primary care plan and through maintaining the impetus in remodelling the relationship between the people who use health services in Wales and those who provide them.

## **Physical Activity**

The Physical Activity Executive Group has begun the development of a pan-Wales physical activity plan, which gained full Cabinet support in December 2014. The plan will focus on four areas of activity: supporting infrastructure; overarching policies; sector specific policies and programmes; and developing partnerships for action.

The development and delivery of the plan will be taken forward by a Programme Board, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer and supported by the new programme director (a post jointly funded by the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Sports Wales), who will help co-ordinate and maximise the benefits from current activity; as well as assess and address gaps.

## **Low Birth Weight Babies**

In October 2014, Health Boards were asked to provide details of work targeted at reducing the number of babies born with a low birth weight. Examples included:

- A commitment in the Hywel Dda area to offer Level 3 Pharmacy smoking cessation services in 25 pharmacies

- Betsi Cadwaladr has conducted a review of evidence of the causes of low birth weight and the relative risks and main contributory factors in order to inform a systematic approach to implementation
- Anuerin Bevan Public Health Team has engaged local partners to discuss joint-working to tackle low birth-weight.

As part of the work of the Welsh initiative for still birth reduction, led by the All Wales Maternity Network, all Health Boards have agreed to adopt a standardised approach to monitoring foetal growth. This will help in early identification and management of babies which are small for gestational age.

## **Mental Health**

Together for Mental Health, our all-age strategy to further improve mental health service delivery and wider well-being acknowledges the benefits of 'good' work to both physical and mental well-being. For example, families where no-one works are more likely to live in poverty and suffer from poor health.

With this in mind, Welsh Government's Healthy Working Wales aims to improve health at work; prevents people being made ill at work; encourages the retention or rehabilitation of those made ill at work; and addresses work-related ill health and economic inactivity.

To further support our ambitions, we are submitting a bid to the European Social Fund to provide a range of 'in-work' and 'out-of-work' support, with the aim of supporting people with a health condition to retain their job, and removing ill-health as a barrier to returning to work. The project will focus on mental health issues, alongside musculoskeletal disorders and drug and alcohol misuse.

Recognising the links between mental health and poverty, a cross-department group has been established to look at opportunities to strengthen support. We have committed to map the range of community support, incentives and interventions available, and to further consider how tackling poverty programmes can supporting individuals with low level mental health issues.

## Housing and Regeneration

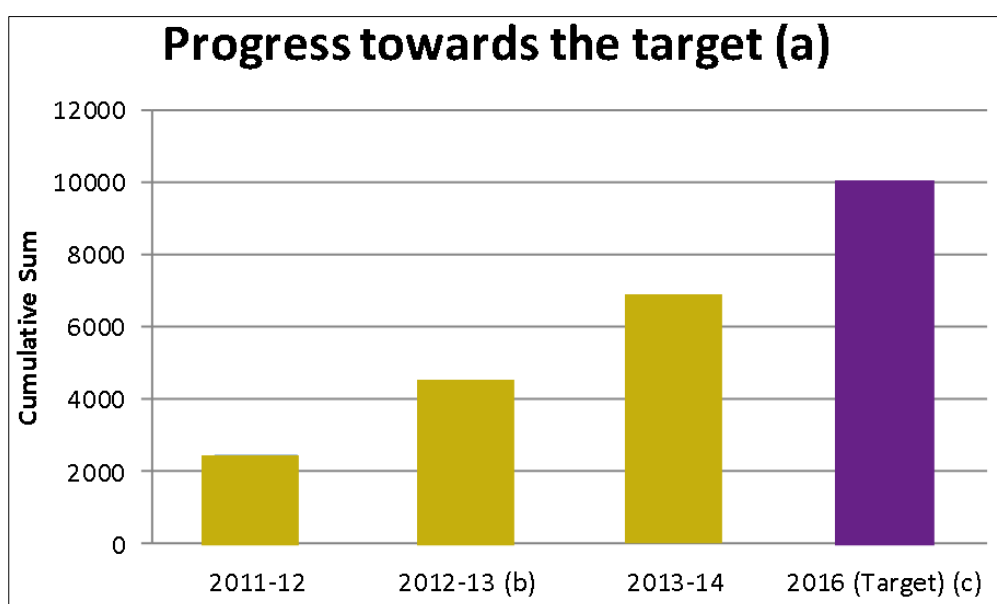
Ensuring everyone has a home which is in good condition and affordable is a fundamental part of a fair and supportive society. It is about much more than putting a roof over someone's head. It affects people's health and well being and their ability to find and keep a job.

### Targets in the Action Plan:

- To achieve 10,000 additional affordable homes (social and intermediate) – by 2016.
- To increase the number of empty houses brought back into use by 5,000 – by 2016.

### Where are we now?

#### Number of additional affordable homes



Source: Affordable Housing provision data collection, Welsh Government.

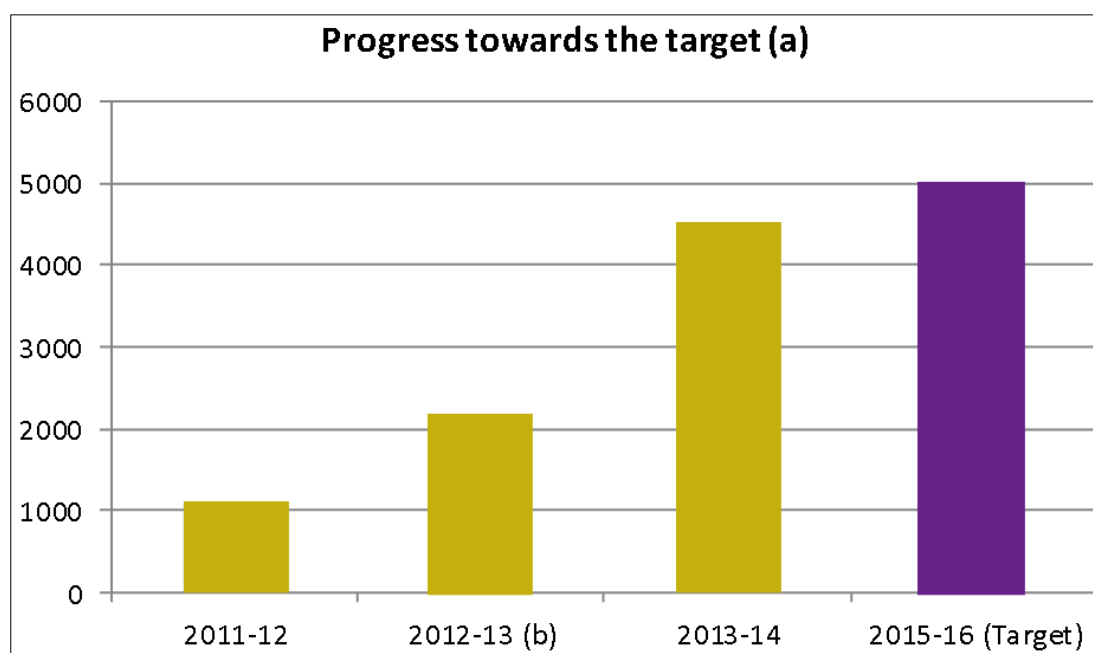
#### Notes:

- (a) This is a cumulative sum of the number of additional affordable homes since the baseline year.  
(b) The total for 2013-14 is the sum of the number of additional affordable homes delivered in 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14.  
(c) In March 2014, a revised target of 10,000 additional affordable homes was announced.

The starting point for this target is 1 April 2011. During the three year period between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2014, a total of 6,890 additional affordable housing units were delivered across Wales which represents 69 per cent of the increased target of 10,000 additional affordable homes.

## Empty homes:

### Number of empty properties brought back to use



Source: National Strategic Indicator PSR/004.

**Notes:** (a) The target to increase the number of empty homes brought back into use by 5,000 by 2016 is a cumulative sum over the years from 2011-12.

(b) Figures for this year are not based on all 22 local authorities. Data is missing for Monmouthshire.

(c) The total for 2013-14 is the sum of the number of empty houses brought back into use in 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14.

We are on course to exceed the target of bringing 5,000 empty properties back to use in this term of Government. Since 1 April 2011, 4,471 long-term empty private sector dwellings have been brought back into use, which is only 529 short of the target after three years of the five year term.

## Current Position in Key Programmes/Policies:

### Supporting People Programme

The Supporting People programme is investing in services which contribute to help people tackle the threat of homelessness. Local Authorities have been working with service providers to improve our understanding of the needs and outcomes for people who receive support. Between April and October 2014 they collected need and outcome data for 49,280 people who receive services. The data shows:

- 20,369 needed help with managing their money to help avoid losing tenancies or home.
- 80% of people under the age of 25 needed support with managing their money, and,
- 83% of single parent families needed help to manage their money

Of the people who had identified they needed help managing their money, during the 6 month period over 50% have felt able to manage their money, or had received support towards meeting that need.

## **Homelessness**

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities to help people who are at risk of losing their home at a much earlier stage, allowing more time for a solution to be found to their problems. An additional £5.6 million has been made available to Local Authorities to help them to implement the new legislation, developing services and support people need if they become homeless or if they are at risk of becoming homeless.

Our latest data shows during the October to December quarter 2014-15, the number of households accepted as homeless fell to 1,210 households. This was the lowest number recorded in any quarter since the October to December quarter 2001-02. The number of households placed in temporary accommodation at the end of December 2014, was the lowest number since the end of June 2003.

## **Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)**

A significant £108 million investment in Wales' social housing stock has recently been announced. The funding will be used by Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to improve people's homes and ensure they are safe, secure and meet the WHQS.

WHQS is about making sure by 2020 tenants living in the 220,000 homes in Wales have better quality accommodation, which will also help to improve their health and well being. By 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, 67 per cent of the social housing stock in Wales had achieved compliance with the WHQS (including acceptable fails) – 149,755 homes out of a total number of 222,247.

## **Improving Standards in the Private Sector**

Home Improvement Loans was launched in January 2015 to tackle the poor quality housing in Wales' private sector. This new scheme provides loan finance to home owners and the private rented sector to improve sub standard homes, so everyone has access to a decent home.

## **Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP)**

Our Flagship programme to tackle poverty "Vibrant and Viable Places" will be delivered across 18 Local Authorities supporting 21 Communities First cluster areas and include projects to tackle fuel poverty, child poverty, and support the financial inclusion agenda. Programmes will also include projects which improve the supply and quality of affordable housing and support those impacted by welfare reform in particular the bedroom tax by providing additional one and two bedroom properties. All programmes will provide training and employment opportunities through public sector procurement.

## **Town Centre Partnerships (TCPs)**

The Welsh Government is supporting the development of TCPs to act as the catalyst for the formation of Partnerships focused on addressing local concerns and the creation of Action Plans for each settlement area.

In Aberdare, the Partnership is developing an events programme to encourage more people to visit the town, they are developing a mobile phone app to promote events and activities in the town and they are looking to tackle empty properties by supporting the establishment of pop-up shops. In Maesteg, they are looking at developing masterclasses for local traders in developing customer service and in Prestatyn they are uploading films on social media to promote their town to a wider audience.

## **Town Centre Loans Scheme**

In 2015/16 £5 million of funding is to be shared between seven Local Authorities in our Tackling Poverty Fund areas, identified as areas with a high level of deprivation and in need of support.

The capital funding will be loaned to Local Authorities across Wales for up to 15 years. The loan funding can be used to develop sites, buy and upgrade properties to be sold on the open market and provide loans to third party organisations such as property owners, housing associations and private landlords.

Such improvements will help create jobs and encourage economic growth, increase the number of homes available within town centres and make them attractive places to visit.

## **Energy Efficiency**

The Welsh Government remains committed to doing all we can to eradicate fuel poverty. We are continuing to deliver our Warm Homes Nest and Warm Homes Arbed schemes and maximizing funding from the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) into Wales. In addition to helping to eradicate fuel poverty, our Warm Homes schemes are also helping to tackle climate change and deliver growth and jobs.

In 2014-15, the demand-led Warm Homes Nest scheme improved over 4,260 homes, bringing the total number of low income homes improved since 2011 to over 17,790. The energy improvements installed in these homes are estimated to deliver energy bill savings averaging over £470 per household per year, making a real difference to low income households. In addition to providing home energy improvements, Warm Homes Nest helped householders access a range of advice and support to reduce their fuel bills and increase their income, including referral to their energy supplier for a Warm Homes Discount (WHD) and referral for a Benefit Entitlement Check (BEC). In 2014-15, Nest helped 274 householders to secure a WHD rebate of £140, a total value of over £38,360, and helped 115 householders to secure new or additional benefits that increased their income by an average of over £2,000 per year.

Our area based Warm Homes Arbed scheme is providing improvements to households in some of the most deprived communities across Wales. In 2014/15, Warm Homes Arbed improved over 5,850 homes, bringing the total number of homes in deprived communities improved since 2012 to over 13,360 homes. Warm Homes Arbed has also delivered economic benefits, creating over 470 new and sustainable jobs and delivering over 60,000 hours of training since 2012.

### **New actions and commitments**

Due to the important role housing and regeneration plays in tackling poverty, it had already been identified as a priority in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan. However, it has also recently been identified in the Child Poverty Strategy as an area where there is the opportunity to do more. As a consequence, below are the new actions we plan to take forwards.

We will:

- Undertake further work to link data on energy efficiency improvements anonymously with health outcome data to identify the potential health impacts of investment in our energy efficiency and fuel poverty schemes.
- Procure research on the characteristics of low income households who are most at risk of the cold and who would benefit most from the support available through our energy efficiency and fuel poverty schemes.
- Continue to implement Vibrant and Viable Places programmes, with a continuous focus on tackling poverty. Key outputs will include:
  - 1,000+ people completing employment related courses
  - 2000+ economically inactive employed or engaged in projects
  - 2000+ jobs created in the construction sector
  - 700+ additional affordable housing units delivered
  - 2000+ households will receive help to tackle fuel poverty through improved energy efficiency
- Create additional opportunities for childcare and play through the Vibrant and Viable Places programmes.
- Work towards implementing the second phase of the innovative Housing Finance Grant, to bring forward the development of new affordable homes. The second phase of the initiative will begin in 2017/18 and is expected to deliver approximately 2,000 new affordable homes all across Wales and create 5,000 new jobs in the process.
- Work with Local Authorities and Third Sector organisations to ensure effective implementation of the new homelessness legislation.
- Help Local Authorities to strengthen links between the Supporting People programme and other programmes to tackle poverty, such as Families First.



## Section 3 – new commitments

In this section we have set out where we are making new commitments, particularly in respect of the new objectives in the Child Poverty Strategy.

### A strong economy which supports the tackling poverty agenda

Supporting a strong economy, which generates sustainable employment opportunities, accessible to all, is a fundamental part of our approach to tackling poverty. The evidence is clear well-paid work is the best route out of poverty, and the greatest protection against poverty for those at risk.

The Welsh Government is taking action to protect and maintain existing jobs, support the creation of new employment opportunities and improve the overall conditions for sustainable economic growth. These include actions to stimulate economic activity and jobs in the short term, as well as activity to increase the long term productive capacity of the Welsh economy. The Welsh Government is making a real difference and in the last few years Wales has been one of the fastest growing parts of the UK.

Our prioritised support to key sectors is stimulating demand for a range of skill levels. For example, the tourism sector can be a valuable source of employment opportunities across Wales for those with lower skills or who require flexible, part time hours.

Access to finance initiatives is also supporting valuable employment opportunities. For example, over three quarters of the jobs supported by Phase 1 of the Wales Economic Growth Fund were in Local Authorities with above average unemployment rates.

We will:

- Invest EU funding to help over 180,000 employed adults to work towards job-specific, technical or essential skills qualifications. This funding will support projects to be led by a range of partners, including Welsh Government departments, Local Authorities, FE and HE institutions.
- Invest specifically in improving the position of women in the workforce. We aim to help over 5,000 female workers to work towards qualifications and an improved labour market situation.
- Look to integrate and promote the importance of responsible business activity into the Business Wales services.
- Develop a suite of work life balance policies which will be housed on the Business Wales website. These will be available from September 2015 for Business Wales Advisers and SMEs to access.

- The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty will engage directly with representatives from the private and business sectors in Wales to identify opportunities for collaborative working.
- The Skills Priorities Programme will develop and pilot new employer-led skills provision in line with the commitments made within the Policy Statement on Skills. It is aimed at the identification and delivery of the skills needs of employers and employed individuals
- Develop an ambitious, collaborative and well-connected City Regions, with the capacity to transform the life chances of people and communities in the Swansea Bay City Region, the Cardiff Capital Region and the rest of Wales.

## Welfare Reform

We must continue to do all we can to mitigate the impacts of welfare reform, particularly for low income households. We recognise the hard work and commitment of partners to support those affected and to help people manage and prepare for changes and the importance of working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to maximise opportunities and deliver better outcomes.

We will continue to support financially excluded people who may not be able to access mainstream financial products through Credit Unions. We will also continue to provide funding under the Discretionary Assistance Fund to support people in an emergency and to help them live independently in the community.

We will:

- In 2015/16 revise the Financial Inclusion Strategy to take into account the changes to the economy, welfare reform and the ability of service providers to support people and families to maximise their income.
- Support free and independent front-line advice services to, amongst many other activities, help people with managing their debts, resolving their housing issues and tackling discrimination. A further £2 million has been committed to supporting these services in 2015/16.
- We have agreed to continue the existing Council Tax arrangements and maintain entitlements for a further two years (2015-16 and 2016/17).
- Work jointly with DWP on wider health issues to explore opportunities which could improve arrangements to mitigate the impact on people with disabilities, with the introduction of Personal Independence Payment, support them with the Work Capability Assessment process for applications for Employment Support Allowance.
- Provide training support during 2015/16 for Local Authority front-line staff. This will help them to better support vulnerable claimants in Wales as the expansion of Universal Credit continues.

- Through Vibrant and Viable Places, include projects which improve the supply and quality of affordable housing and support those impacted by welfare reform, particularly the bedroom tax, by providing additional one and two bedroom properties.

## Food Poverty

Food Poverty has been identified as a growing issue within low income households within Wales in recent years. It is a complex issue underpinned by a number of different factors, including affordability, availability, cooking skills and education.

The Welsh Government recognises the need to tackle food poverty and bring key partners together to develop ways of joint working. This is why we established a cross departmental internal group to bring together all aspects of the food poverty agenda and held a Food Poverty Think Tank in April 2015 to agree strategic actions going forwards.

We will:

- With the agreement of key partners, develop an agreed definition of food poverty and a set of indicators, informed by the feedback at the Food Poverty Think Tank.
- Establish an external Food Poverty group to take forward agreed objectives across the Public, Private and Third Sectors, building on the work of the Food Poverty Think Tank.
- In partnership with Public Health Wales, map current policies and programmes concerned with tackling food poverty.

## In-Work Poverty

The 2014 Annual Report on the Tackling Poverty Action Plan recognised how the characteristics of poverty in Wales are changing. There are now more households living in poverty where someone is working, than not. There are a range of different policy levers which can contribute to tackling in-work poverty, including supporting adults to access full-time employment opportunities, supporting second earners into work, childcare, supporting young people into employment through apprenticeships and traineeships, and increasing skills to enable people to secure in-work progression.

We will:

- Implement the findings from research being carried out by the What Works Centre for Tackling Poverty, which include a focus on in-work poverty. One of the What Works projects is focused on the role of different sectors in contributing to tackling poverty.

- Invest EU funding to help 4,000 employed adults with work-limiting health conditions to remain in work and to help 4,000 under-employed adults to improve their position in the labour market e.g. through increased hours or a more secure contract of employment.
- Deliver the detailed activities contained within our Skills Implementation Plan and the overarching focus of our Policy Statement on Skills. This will include enhancing our Skills Gateway, by linking with Communities First and the Lift programme, and ensuring individuals and employers continue to have access to employment and skills support which meets their needs.
- The Flexible Skills Programme will be a targeted fund aimed at delivering on the employment and skills needs of companies of strategic economic importance where needs cannot be met through existing provision and/or where there is a clear case for Welsh Government intervention. It will focus on addressing the skills needs of Anchor Companies, Inward Investors and High Growth Businesses particularly those in the priority sectors and/or located in Enterprise Zones.
- Continue to support families living in low income households through Families First. Services provided by Families First are commissioned to meet identified needs within local areas. This may mean services are commissioned which can help families who may be experiencing in-work poverty maximise their income through debt management, effective budgeting and increased financial literacy. Services may also be able to support second earners into employment through providing access to education and training and skills improvement.
- Continue to support employers in the private, public and Third Sectors to consider becoming Living Wage employers. As of September 2014, all NHS staff are paid at least the living wage. This means about 2,400 of the lowest paid employees in the NHS in Wales will receive an increase in their basic salary of up to £470 in some cases.
- Engage with the DWP, which as part of Universal Credit, is actively supporting claimants who are in low-paid work to earn more and become more independent and self sufficient.

## Childcare

The provision of accessible, affordable, quality childcare can have a positive influence on a child's development and future educational attainment, and is already a priority for the Welsh Government. It is crucial to supporting parents into employment and training opportunities. Childcare is particularly important for those who want to take on additional hours of work, enabling them to increase the amount of money they can earn, and thereby helping families to move out of poverty.

The Welsh Government is committed to researching and developing options for increasing the provision of childcare in Wales and in the next twelve months, we will:

- Improve the flexibility, accessibility and affordability of early education and childcare and work with the sector to address the key concerns of parents and providers.
- Continue to fund the childcare consortium CWLWM and work with the Welsh Local Government Association to develop innovative solutions for providing flexible childcare which meets the needs of families, looking at best practice and the sustainability of the childcare sector.
- Publish a 10-Year Plan for the Early Years Childcare and Play Workforce by the end of 2015. This will respond to workforce and training recommendations from two recent independent reports on Childcare and Early Education Registration, Regulation and Inspection.
- Respond to our consultation on proposals to extend the regulation of childcare providers to include care for children aged eight and over. This will help to ensure the childcare registration framework is appropriate and provide assurances about the standard of childcare provided.
- Use the Rural Community Development Fund to provide investment support to increase and improve non-statutory services such as childcare and dependent care.
- Continue the development of key proposals for European Social Fund programmes which are childcare related or include a childcare aspect. These are:
  - *Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE)*: this will help facilitate a route into work for participants including helping second earners into work. Approximately 70% of participants will be lone parents and 30% will be parents from couple households.
  - *Progress for Success*: aimed at early years workforce development.
- Allocate the Out of School Childcare Grant of £2.3 million to Local Authorities for 2015-16 to help address gaps in out of school childcare provision and provide wrap around childcare and play during out of school hours and holiday periods.
- Learn from pilot projects to promote access to childcare in areas of need. Initial findings from the pilots have identified a need for tailored business advice for childcare providers, to increase their capacity and potential for growth.
- Take work forward to develop a bespoke package of support for providers, to be trialled in the pilot areas. If successful, the support will be rolled out across Wales alongside the wider Welsh Government business support offer.

## Rural Poverty

As we recognised in last year's report, evidence shows people living in poverty within rural areas need the same assistance as those experiencing poverty elsewhere.

We recognise the need for a mix of programmes which are both geographically based and targetted at individuals, regardless of where they live. Furthermore, families in rural areas are particularly faced with higher living costs and often struggle to access services available to them. We know higher fuel and transport costs, as well as reduced access to the internet, create additional costs for the household. We must address these challenges to better support the rural areas of Wales.

We will:

- Work closely with the Public Policy Institute for Wales (PPIW) to review the evidence around successful interventions in rural communities. We expect to report on our findings in early 2016.
- Through the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, create a Rural Community Development Fund for community-led projects to support basic services and village renewal. This will support a range of activities including support for job creation and skills development, entrepreneurship, improvements to the agriculture and food sectors, community energy, rural transport and broadband.
- Fund a pilot project in Ceredigion which aims to increase the number of oil buying clubs in the county and to develop a methodology for establishing sustainable, volunteer-led oil buying syndicates across Wales.
- Continue to support the role of Rural Housing Enablers (RHEs) across Wales over the next two years, developing affordable homes across rural areas.
- Work with organisations across Wales to support 15,000 digitally excluded people engage with technology each year through our new Digital Communities Wales programme.
- Ensure Advice Services funded through Welsh Government continue to meet the diverse needs of the people of Wales, regardless of where they live. This includes making practical support available through telephone, face-to-face at outreach and regional premises or through home-visits where needed.
- Ensure the new Jobs Growth Wales Programme supports those living in rural areas, as it aligns with the Economic Growth Framework.
- Continue to fund Local Authorities for the provision of socially necessary bus services which cannot be provided on a commercial basis. In addition, direct funding is also provided for local rural services such as Bwcabus and Cardibach.
- Continue to support households living in rural areas through our energy efficiency programme, including the Nest and Arbed schemes. In recognition of the higher

costs faced by these households, Nest provides a higher maximum level of Welsh Government funding for off-gas properties, which are predominantly in rural areas (£12,000), than for on-gas properties, which are predominantly in urban areas (£8,000).

## Annex A: Additional milestones and targets in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan

Milestone	Commentary
<p>1. To increase the number of children benefitting from Flying Start Health Visitor services to 27,657 in 2014 and 32,657 in 2015.</p>	<p>In 2013-14, 31,322 children were in receipt of Flying Start services, exceeding our target for the year.</p> <p>Data released in February 2015 showed 32,627 children were in receipt of Flying Start services in Wales at some point between 1 April 2014 and 31 December 2014. The children seen to date in the year represents 99 per cent of the expectations for the year as a whole.</p> <p>Data for the whole of 2014-15 will be published in July 2015.</p>
<p>2. Develop and pilot the Quality Judgement Framework for use in Nurseries in 2013/2014 with a view to full implementation and roll out to other areas – by end of the calendar year 2014.</p>	<p>The pilot was completed on target. The Quality Judgement Framework will be considered as part of the work being taken forward in response to the recommendations of the Review of Early Years Regulation and Inspection and the development of the Single Quality Framework. A full response to the Review will be issued once other ongoing evaluations and reviews of education have reported.</p>
<p>3. Develop and test an outcomes framework that will measure how agencies are contributing to improving the health, education and social and economic well-being outcomes of children looked after – by 2015.</p>	<p>The national outcomes framework for people who need care and support and carers who need support in Wales was published as a working document on 26 June 2014.</p>
<p>4. Consider how new reading and numeracy tests might support us in raising expectations for learners eligible for free school meals – by 2015.</p>	<p>The tests are primarily diagnostic and their purpose is to allow an assessment of reading and numeracy at a pupil level to ensure appropriate interventions can be made by the teacher or the school, this will include learners eligible for Free School Meals.</p>



	In 2015, test data will be available at school, families of schools, Local Authority and Wales levels, enabling schools to compare their learners' attainment to that of learners in schools with similar socio-economic circumstances. As part of national categorisation, consortia will look at how schools are using this information, as part of effective school management.
5. Work with Local Authorities to prioritise childcare support for low income families, families with disabled children, and those families wishing to access childcare through the medium of Welsh – by 2015.	Out of School Childcare grant funding totalling £2.3m per year has been made available to the 22 Local Authorities in Wales since 2012. Local Authorities have used this grant to focus on offering out of school childcare, including holiday play schemes, to children from low income families, and to children who have specific needs such as disabled children.
6. Pilot different models of childcare including wrap around care; care during a-typical hours and school holidays and social enterprise models – by 2015.	A new application for European Social Fund assistance is currently being developed. PaCE (Parents, Childcare and Employment) will aim to support economically inactive parents into training and/or work, where childcare is their main barrier.
7. To continue the Healthy Working Wales initiative aimed at reducing the number of people who leave work due to ill health and flow into economic inactivity – by 2015.	More than 2,400 organisations have received support and advice through the Healthy Working Wales programme, supporting almost 31% of the working population of Wales.
8. Deliver Financial Inclusion Training to 250 front line staff from the Third and Public Sector in Wales who have not previously undertaken Financial Inclusion Awareness Training – by 2015.	As at March 2015 Financial Inclusion Training has been delivered to 293 front line staff under the Wales Cooperative Financial Inclusion Champions contract.
9. Establish a consistent all-Wales approach to assess the health, development and wellbeing of all children in Wales, in the early years, so that problems are identified	The Welsh Government are working with appropriate stakeholders to finalise plans for implementation of the Healthy Child Wales Programme in 2015/16.

<p>early and the necessary support given – by December 2013.</p>	
<p>10. Arbed and Nest – Our energy efficiency programmes install energy efficiency improvement in households across Wales, whilst creating and safeguarding job and supporting local businesses. A target of improving at least 6,000 homes under Nest and Arbed in 2014/15 had been set.</p>	<p>In 2014/2015 the Welsh Government's energy efficiency programme, which includes Nest and Arbed, improved 10,100 homes with energy efficiency improvements.</p>
<p>11. Increase the take up of Flying Start provisions to 95% - by 2015. Interim milestones – to increase the take up of Flying Start provision to 85% in 2013 and to 90% in 2014.</p>	<p>In 2013-14 there were 7,534 children who were newly eligible and were offered childcare. Of the 7,534 offers, the number of children taking up a full or reduced offer of childcare was 6,450 (86%).</p> <p>Account Managers continue to work with Local Authorities to ensure the offers reach as many eligible families as possible.</p>

## Additional targets in the Action Plan

<p>Communities First - Prosperous Target: 45,000 interventions with people, 26,250 better off (58 per cent).</p>	<p>Actual as of 31 March 2015: 106,627 interventions with people, 37,768 better off (35 per cent).</p>
<p>Communities First - Learning Target: 30,000 interventions with people, 18,750 better off (63 per cent).</p>	<p>Actual as of 31 March 2015: 96,396 interventions with people, 40,350 better off (42 per cent).</p>
<p>Communities First - Health Targets: 26,250 interventions with people, 16,875 better off (64 per cent).</p>	<p>Actual as of 31 March 2015: 99,227 interventions with people, 52,654 better off (53 per cent).</p>
<p>143,000 Credit Union members across Wales and £75 million in assets – by 2020.</p> <p>As at March 2013, total membership including junior savers was estimated at more than 68,400. Assets of Welsh Credit Unions were estimated to be £32 million.</p>	<p>As at March 2015, total membership including junior savers was estimated at 77,264. Assets of Welsh Credit Unions were estimated to be £37.2 million.</p>
<p>To generate £8 million in additional confirmed benefits for individuals per year through advice services.</p>	<p>In 2014/15 the project generated £19 million in confirmed gains for individuals, far exceeding the target of £8 million and provided advice to 19,763 people. The project is has been extended until March 2016.</p>
<p>By 2015: to increase digital inclusion in Wales to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93 per cent of unemployed people;</li> <li>• 84 per cent of working age economically inactive people;</li> <li>• 72 per cent of residents of social housing; and</li> <li>• 65 per cent of people aged over 50</li> </ul>	<p>In June 2014, we published a revised Digital Inclusion Delivery Plan.</p> <p>The revised targets for 2017 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 96 per cent of unemployed people;</li> <li>• 88 per cent of working age economically inactive people;</li> <li>• 78 per cent of residents of social housing; and</li> </ul>

<p>Figures from the National Survey for Wales 2014/2015 are expected to be published in June 2015. These results will allow officials to report against targets contained within the Digital Inclusion Delivery Plan and Tackling Poverty Action Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 per cent of people aged over 50</li> </ul> <p>The Digital Inclusion Strategic Framework, which was first published in December 2010, will be revised during the second half of 2015, along with the ongoing updates to the Delivery Plan.</p>
<p>Increase the percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment to 51 per cent by 2017.</p>	<p>In 2013-14 there were 458 young people in this cohort. 51 per cent of this cohort was known to be in education, training or employment. As this target has been achieved and maintained for the past 2 years it has now been revised.</p> <p>The target is now to increase the percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment to 75 per cent by 2018.</p>

## ANNEX B: Child Poverty Strategy - accountability and reporting on progress

We committed to report on the indicators below when we published the Child Poverty Strategy. They are based on current data available relating to these indicators. These are in addition to the targets set within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan.

- 31% of children living in relative income poverty (After Housing Costs).
- 49% of children living in relative income poverty where at least one adult is working (After Housing Costs).
- 16.5% of children living in workless households.
- 9% of working age adults with no qualifications.
- 78% of working age adults holding qualifications at levels 2, 3 or 4 and above.
- 72.4% of 7 year old pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieving the expected level at the end of the Foundation Phase.
- 27.8% of pupils eligible for Free Schools Meals who achieve the Level 2 threshold including English / Welsh and Maths at Key Stage 4.
- 10% of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET.
- 20% of young people aged 19-24 who are NEET.
- 6.7% of babies (live births) in the most deprived fifth of areas born with a low birth weight (defined as under 2,500 grams).
- Data forthcoming – children living in low income households who are reaching health, social and cognitive development milestones when entering formal education.

## ANNEX C – Case Studies

**Examples of case studies relating to key programmes / policies which are supporting progress to delivery of the targets set within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan.**

### **Families First**

This family had already hit crisis point prior to engaging with Families First: the children had previously been taken into care following a judgement they were being neglected, the mother had lost her work during a period of mental health problems, and the house and garden were in a state of neglect. Previous experiences of support were not positive: services were not targeted, and there was no delineation of responsibilities across the organisations involved. Services either listed the family's problems rather than trying to help resolve them, or did everything for the mother so she felt helpless when they were not there to support her.

The Families First key worker listened to each member of the family and put together a plan. The plan focused on a few priority issues to address, with strict time limits and responsibilities for each. While the family was nervous before the first TAF meeting, they found it a positive experience because they could tell each service provider what they needed. The key worker was described as 'amazing' because she was a great communicator, was aware of the services available in the area, and helped the family focus on priority issues which would quickly make a big difference.

There were lots of immediate practical impacts from working with Families First. The mother received help with managing debt, and now has a payment plan she can manage and no longer receives phone calls from debt collectors. The daughter has received help with bullying and has returned to school, and the son is happier after moving schools. Family relationships have improved, particularly as the key worker taught them no-cost ways of having fun together such as going to the park. Plans for the future include the mother's aspiration to return to work, and continuing to support her children to get the support they need.

### **Lift Programme**

John Crosbie was referred to the Lift Programme in July 2014 by his Jobcentre Plus advisor. His barriers included lack of confidence, low self esteem, financial, travel issues, lack of experience and up to date skills.

The Lift Programme supported John to build his confidence and self esteem and recognised his ambition to 'work with numbers'. His Lift Mentor recognised his skills and qualities and spoke to the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to identify a relevant placement for John.

John said:

"Before being referred to the Lift Programme I was unemployed for over 6 years. I have a young family, and it was very hard not being able to find employment. At

first I think I just wasn't getting the opportunity to put myself across to employers. I hardly ever got a job interview and when anybody actually replied to why they couldn't offer me an interview it was because of a lack of experience. This really damaged my confidence and determination to find employment. I felt like nobody would give me a chance.

The Lift Programme gave me an opportunity. They asked me about my preferences and my background and tried to match me to a suitable job opportunity. Finally they held a NHS Jobs Roadshow which I was eager to attend and hopefully impress possible Placement Managers. I was lucky enough to meet the Learning and Development Manager for NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP). Sharon gave me a huge opportunity to work in a financial role within the NWSSP.

My placement in the NHS was brilliant. The Finance Team at NWSSP in Nantgarw made me feel very welcome and part of the team. I was taught new skills such as pivot tables and how to compile an end of year Performance Report for each of the ten Health Boards. My placement also increased my ability to use all Microsoft packages, and helped me feel comfortable in an office environment, a place I had never worked before”.

John has since secured employment with NHS Wales. He had support from the Lift Programme to ensure the transition from ‘out of work’ benefits to ‘in work benefits’ meant he was better off financially and he and his family did not go into financial poverty as a result of going into work. The NHS and Lift Programme worked closely to negotiate hours of work and start dates as assist John’s transition into paid employment.

John was asked how he feels now, he said:  
"My proudest moment is achieving a full time job within the NHS due to my efforts on my work placement. It made me feel happy that I was given an opportunity and impressed enough to be kept on. I have a sense of pride. I feel better about myself and my confidence is at a much higher level than before I went on the Lift Programme”.

### **Vibrant Viable Places (VVP) working in partnership with Communities First and Flying Start programmes – Anglesey**

VVP investment will be used to improve the health and social wellbeing of local people through improvements to community support, training, cultural and leisure facilities serving the town and surrounding catchment area. This will include adding value to and expanding the work of Mon Communities First and Flying Start in the town which targets households and individuals in the greatest need.

The capital investment of £300,000 is being used to refurbish the Jesse Hughes Community Centre, which provides key education and training opportunities for young people in Holyhead, and to create a new linked Flying Start centre on the site.

The funding will see the creation of a Flying Start childcare setting which will enable 48 toddlers to benefit each day from the programme, plus office accommodation and a venue for group work.