



Vale of Glamorgan Local Service Board Unified Needs Assessment

Priority Outcome One – Community Engagement

December 2013

**Produced by the
Business Intelligence Group**

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Priority Outcome One

People of all ages are actively engaged in life in the Vale and have the capacity and confidence to identify their own needs as individuals and within communities.

Approach

In order to explore the extent to which people of all ages are actively engaged in life in the Vale of Glamorgan, we need to identify suitable indicators upon which to make a judgement. Since no single direct indicator exists to measure this outcome we have identified a number of proxy indicators which might serve to assess the position in the Vale.

Indicators

We have considered indicators in the following areas:

Electoral participation rates;

Confidence in ability to influence decisions;

Sense of community;

Pride in the Vale of Glamorgan;

Volunteering;

Economic activity rates;

Benefit claimants; and

Engagement in education and training, age 16+.

Electoral participation rates

Electoral participation rates are higher within the Vale of Glamorgan than the national average. This has been consistently the case in recent years and this suggests a higher level of engagement in the political process within the Vale of Glamorgan than in other areas.

At a local authority level, for the parliamentary election on May 5 2010, the Vale of Glamorgan had a turnout of 69.48%. This compared favourably with the national turnout figure of 64.75%.

For the more recent local government elections in 2012 the Vale of Glamorgan had a turnout of 39.26%. This compares with a Welsh average turnout of 38.1%.

For the Police and Crime Commissioner elections in 2012 the turnout in the Vale of Glamorgan was 19.62% compared with an average of 15.16% across the South Wales Police Force Area.

Table 1: Turnout at elections in the Vale of Glamorgan and nationally

Election	Vale of Glamorgan turnout	National turnout	Difference
2010 General Election	69.5	64.8	+4.7
2012 Local Election	39.3	38.1	+1.2
2012 Police and Crime Commissioner Election	19.6	15.2	+4.2

*Source: Vale of Glamorgan Council
(http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/council/Elections/Elections.aspx)*

However, there are wards within the Vale of Glamorgan where there is a significantly lower level of electoral participation. The turnout in the last local government election in the Cadoc ward was 30.05% and in the St Athan ward it was just 29.92%, both approximately 10% below the Vale of Glamorgan average. Conversely the turnout within the Dinas Powys ward was 51.76%.

The variation within the turnout figures demonstrates that the level of political engagement varies markedly within the Vale of Glamorgan and suggests that there are geographical communities within the Vale of Glamorgan that are less engaged than others. It can also be suggested that those in the most deprived LSOAs within the Vale of Glamorgan, as identified in the Introduction, are less likely to be engaged in the political process than those in the least deprived areas.

Confidence in ability to influence decisions

The Vale of Glamorgan Council Public Opinion Survey¹ is a two yearly survey of 1000 Vale residents. The survey is conducted face-to-face using a broad and representative sample of Vale residents aged over 16. All interviews were conducted between December 2011 and January 2012.

One of the key questions in the Vale of Glamorgan Council Public Opinion Survey addresses residents' confidence in their ability to influence local decisions. The question asked is not specific to Council services; however, in the context of the survey many respondents may answer on this assumption. Regardless, it is certainly indicative of Vale of Glamorgan residents' view of their ability to influence the work of all partner organisations. For this reason it is very relevant to priority outcome one.

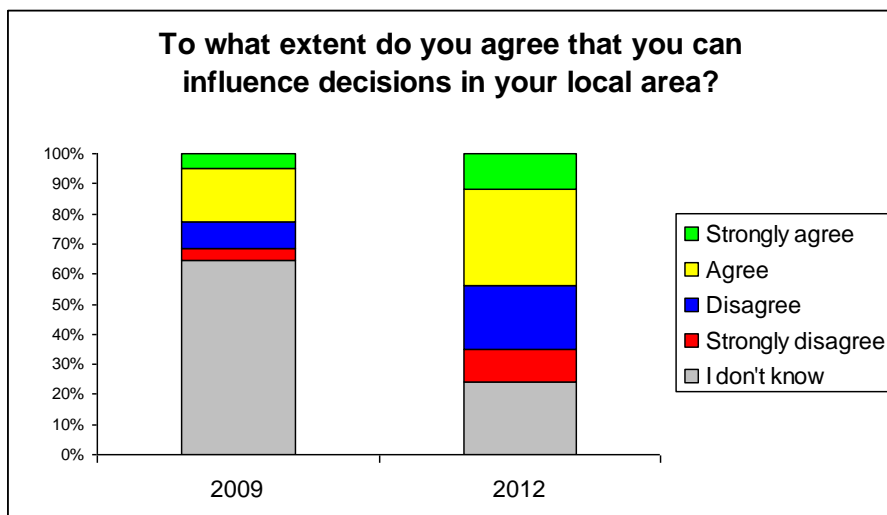
In 2012, 44% of residents agreed that they have the ability to influence decisions in their local area, 1 in 10 (12%) agreed strongly with this. This was a significant increase on 2009 where only 23% agreed they have the ability to influence local decisions. However, a third (32%) did not feel they can influence decisions that affect them locally.

There was a significant increase not only in the number of people answering positively to the question but also in the number of respondents expressing an opinion at all. In 2009, only a third of residents felt strongly enough to give an

¹ The full report on the 2012 Vale of Glamorgan Council Public Opinion Survey is available on the Vale of Glamorgan Council website (http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/achieving_our_vision/consultation/public_opinion_survey/public_opinion_survey_2012.aspx)

opinion one way or the other as to whether they agreed or disagreed that they could influence local decisions. In 2012, three quarters of residents expressed an opinion.

Figure 1: Confidence of local residents in ability to influence decisions



Source: Vale of Glamorgan Council

The increase in both of these figures suggests that residents now feel a greater sense of engagement with the Council and other partner organisations and that there is a greater awareness in general of what it means to be able to influence local decisions and the means by which this can be done.

A large amount of work was undertaken by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to promote opportunities to influence local decisions during the intervening period and this could well be seen as the key driver for this shift in opinion. New engagement methods such as service user groups have been established; the work of existing groups such as the citizens panel and corporate equalities forum have been promoted; much greater coverage of consultation activities and increased response rates have been achieved through effective use of the internet and social media; and closer working with partner organisations has begun to reduce the consultation fatigue experienced by some hard to reach groups.

Pride in the Vale of Glamorgan

The Vale of Glamorgan Council Public Opinion Survey also asks residents whether they feel proud to live in the Vale of Glamorgan. In 2012, 97% of respondents to the survey answered that they did. This was a slight decrease from 99% in 2009 but still a huge majority.

The results for this indicator have been consistently very high for a number of years and so demonstrate that Vale of Glamorgan residents identify strongly with the Vale of Glamorgan as a region and have a strong sense of pride in the area.

Sense of community

The National Survey for Wales is a face-to-face survey of people across Wales². This is an ongoing project, commissioned by the Welsh Government, and each year 14,500 people aged 16 and over will be asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. Respondents are selected at random to ensure the results are representative. 660 residents from the Vale of Glamorgan were interviewed as part of the survey between April 2012 and March 2013.

The National Survey uses a random sampling technique at national level and this sample is then stratified at local authority level. This enables us to effectively compare the results of individual local authority populations. The sample of 660 residents for each local authority area does provide robust data although like all surveys there is a margin of error.

The survey provides a range of data at local authority level that can be used to inform priority outcome one including responses given by Vale residents when asked about their sense of community.

77% of residents in the Vale agreed they felt a sense of belonging to their local area. This was 1% higher than the national average. 73% of Vale residents surveyed agreed that people in their local area from different backgrounds get on well together. This was 2% higher than the national average.

The results of the National Survey for Wales suggest that while the sense of the community within the Vale of Glamorgan is comparable with the Welsh average there is still significant scope for improvement. The survey provides the Vale LSB with two additional reliable indicators for priority outcome one and the results of the survey will be monitored closely in future.

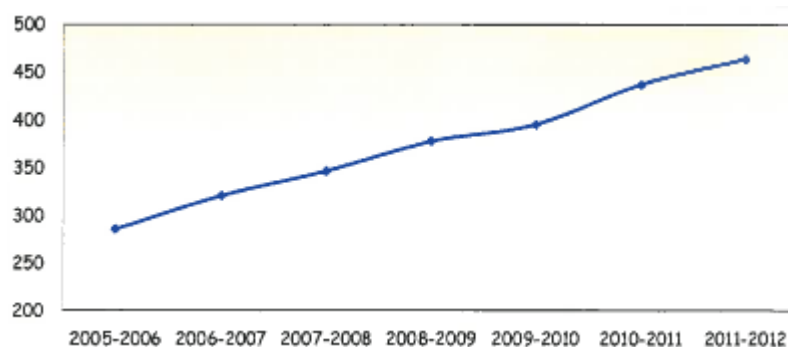
Volunteering

Number of voluntary organisations active in the Vale

The success of priority outcome one is premised on there being a vibrant voluntary sector in the Vale of Glamorgan. There are currently 464 voluntary and community organisations operating in the Vale of Glamorgan that are registered with the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services (VCVS). VCVS has a flourishing membership of voluntary and community organisations that are working to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities within the Vale of Glamorgan.

² The available data tables for the National Survey for Wales are available on the Welsh Government website. (<http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/nationalsurveyforwales/publications/;jsessionid=D99DE4015DA607CB279D8497D72FA927?lang=en>).

Figure 2: Number of voluntary organisations active in the Vale



Source: Vale Centre for Voluntary Services

VCVS membership increased by 6% from 438 groups in 2010/11 to 464 groups in 2011/12. This figure has been steadily increasing since the formation of VCVS and demonstrates that there is a vibrant and growing third sector in the Vale.

When surveyed in 2012 the overwhelming majority of respondents to the VCVS customer satisfaction survey³ felt very positively about the service offered by the organisation. In fact 100% of organisations registered with VCVS that responded to the survey (71 organisations) felt that the overall service provided by VCVS was either good or excellent.

Number of registered volunteers in the Vale

Volunteering is increasingly important to the Vale of Glamorgan and the number of volunteers active in the county is a good indicator of the extent to which Vale of Glamorgan residents actively engage in improving their communities.

In 2011, there were 521 people registered with the Vale Volunteer Bureau. In 2012 this number increased by 63% to 821. Within this increase there was also a slight change in the general demographic of those registered, with an increased proportion of young people volunteering in the Vale.

The increase in the number of volunteers in the Vale of Glamorgan demonstrates the continued growth of volunteering in the Vale and suggests a change in the way that Vale residents choose to engage in life in their communities.

The monetary value of volunteering in the Vale

The monetary value of volunteering in the Vale of Glamorgan for 2012/13 was £34,942,857. This represented an increase of over £6.5m from the previous year.

There have been consistent increases in the monetary value of volunteering in the Vale of Glamorgan since 2009/10. This serves to demonstrate both the increased rate of volunteering among Vale of Glamorgan residents and the growing importance of volunteering to the Vale of Glamorgan.

³ Information provided by VCVS annual report and VCVS member satisfaction survey.

Table 2: Value of volunteering in the Vale of Glamorgan

Year	Total Value
2012/13	£34,942,857
2011/12	£29,487,731
2010/11	£28,218,456
2009/10	£25,653,586

Source: Vale Volunteer Bureau

Economic activity rates

At the close of March 2013, 60.3% of working age residents of the Vale of Glamorgan were registered as employed. This is slightly higher than the Welsh average of 58.2%. 8.9% of residents were registered as self employed and this is very similar to the national average of 8.7%. 8.0% of Vale of Glamorgan residents of working age were registered as unemployed, slightly lower than the national average of 8.5%.

In total 76.1% of working age Vale residents were economically active in March 2013. This is above the national average of 73.8%.

Benefit claimants

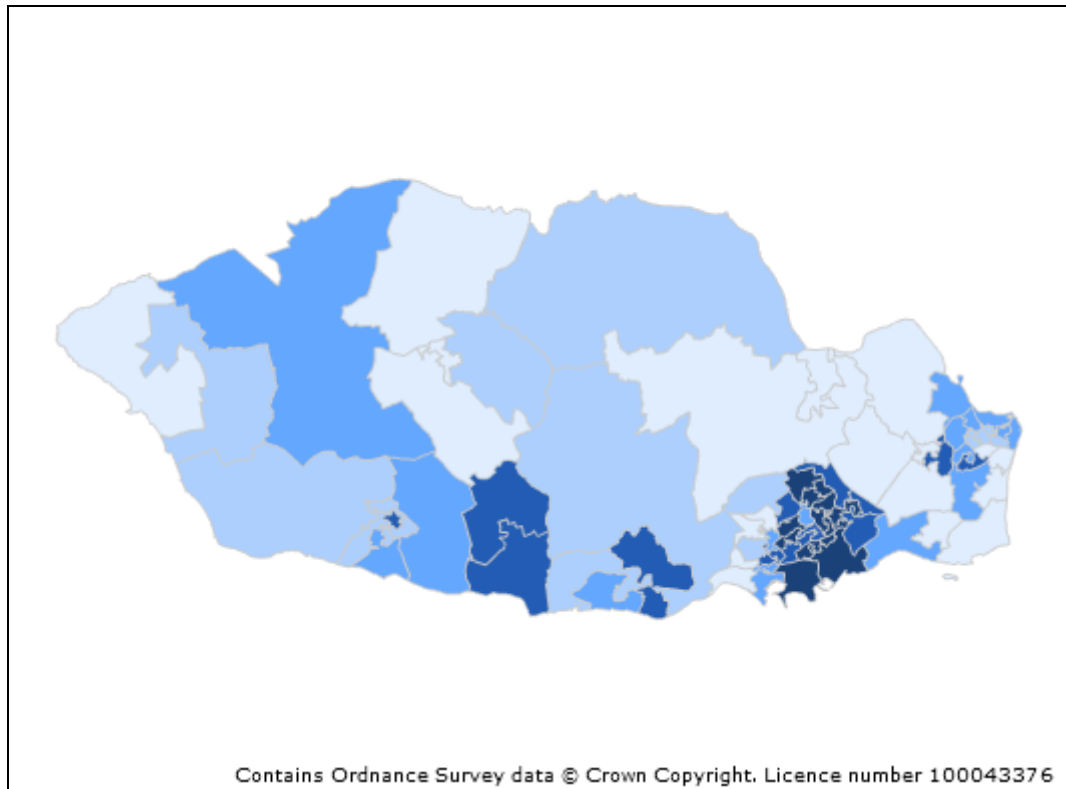
14.3% of the working age population of the Vale of Glamorgan were registered as benefit claimants in August 2012⁴. This compares favourably with the national average of 17.6%. However, again there are some major variations within the Vale of Glamorgan. In Barry 22.3% of working age residents are benefit claimants - 4.1% above the national average and 7.5% above the average for the Vale of Glamorgan – and in the Cadoc 4 LSOA the figure is 36.2%. In comparison, in one of the Vale of Glamorgan’s more affluent communities, Peterston Super Ely, only 5.8% of residents of working age are benefit claimants and within the LSOA Cowbridge 2 the figure is just 4.3%. This demonstrates the significant economic disparity between communities within the Vale. This disparity is displayed on the following map.

With regards to community engagement it is interesting to note that the areas with the highest number of benefit claimants are also those which displayed the lowest levels of engagement in terms of electoral participation rates as shown earlier.

⁴ A more detailed breakdown of claimant numbers by benefit type is available under priority outcome 7.

Figure 3: Percentage of working age population claiming benefits

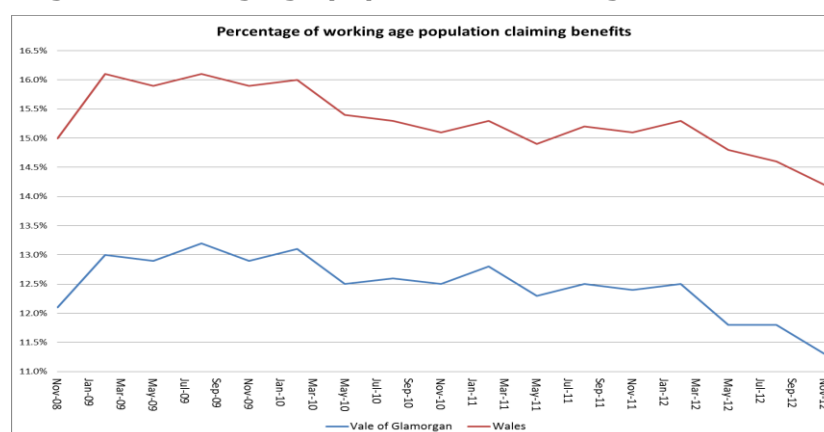
(Darker blues indicate higher rates)



Source: Infobase Vale

The figure below shows that there has been a steady decline in the number of Vale of Glamorgan residents claiming benefits. The figure has fallen by 1.6% since August 2009 and this mirrors the 1.2% fall that has taken place nationally.

Figure 4: Percentage of working age population claiming benefits

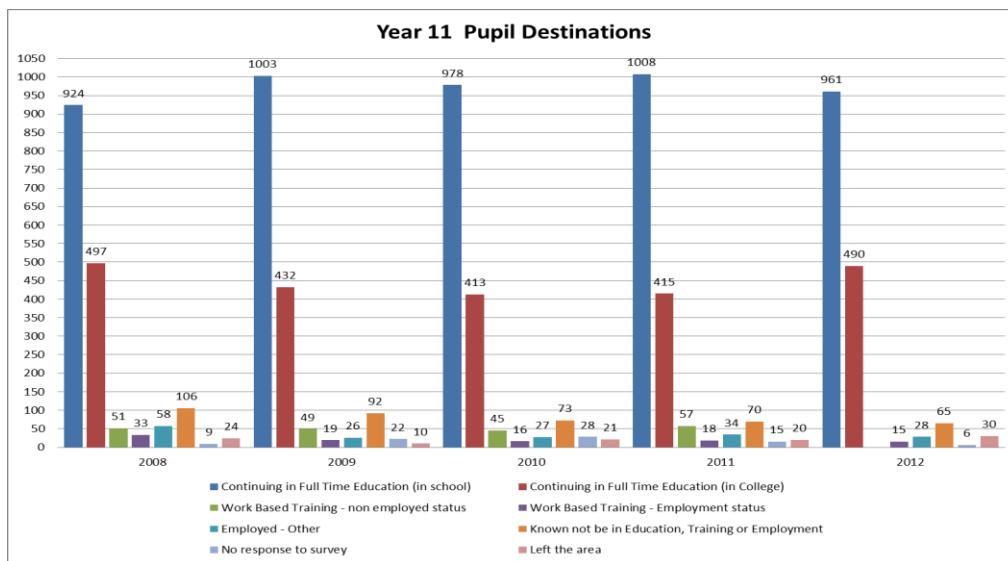


Source: Infobase Vale

Engagement in education and training, age 16+

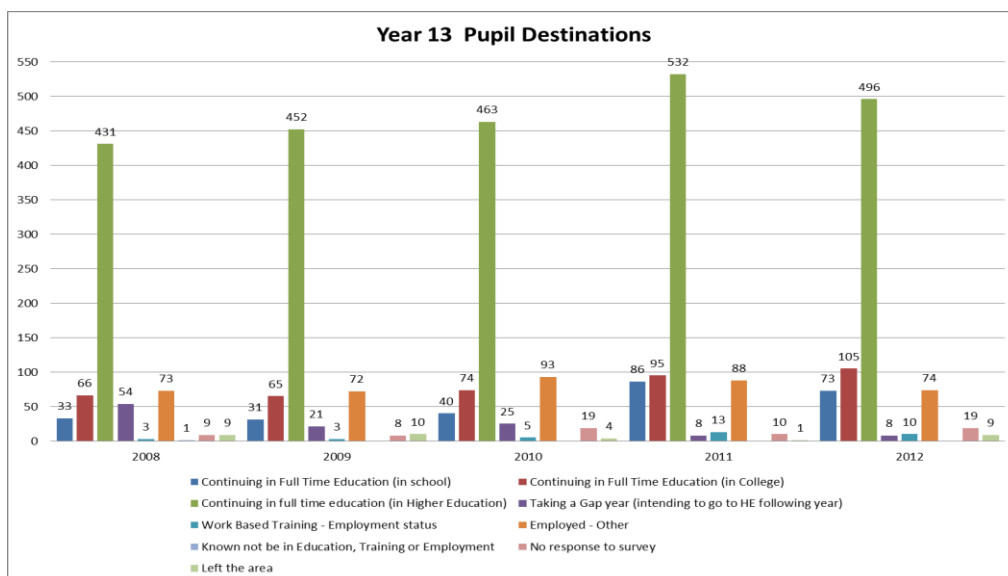
The ability of pupils to access and be successful in post-16 education may contribute to enabling young people to reach their potential and acquire suitable employment. We have examined data on the 'destinations' of the young people in the Vale of Glamorgan post-16. As can be seen, in the Vale of Glamorgan, the vast majority of year 11 pupils over the past 5 years have either stayed in school or gone onto college, while the vast majority of year 13 pupils over the past 5 years have continued into Higher Education.

Figure 5: Year 11 Pupil destinations, 2012



Source: Careers Wales

Figure 6: Year 13 Pupil destinations, 2012

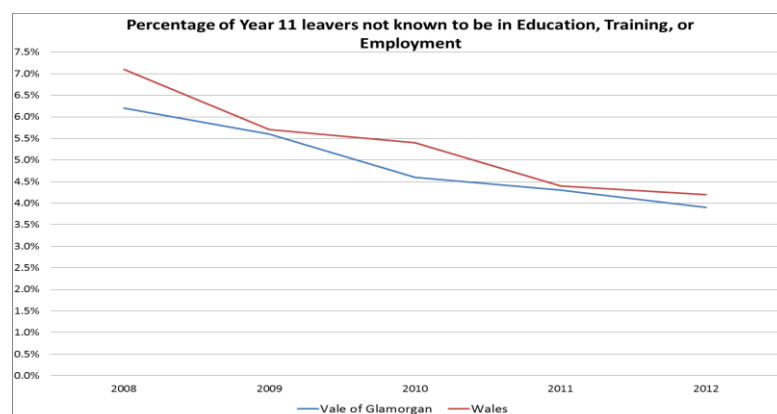


Source: Careers Wales

As seen in the chart below the number of Year 11 pupils who become NEET (Not in Education, Training or Employment) has declined consistently over the past 5 years. The Vale of Glamorgan has also performed marginally better than the Welsh average.

The number of Year 13 pupils who become NEET has also declined over the past 5 years. However, the decline in numbers for this age group has been fairly erratic due to the small cohort of numbers.

Figure 7: Percentage of Year 11 leavers not known to be in education, training or employment (NEET)



Source: Infobase Vale

Conclusions

Electoral participation rates are higher in the Vale of Glamorgan than the national average. However there is variation within the electoral participation rates at sub-local authority level which highlights that the level of political engagement varies markedly across the Vale of Glamorgan area. For example, turnout in the 2012 local government election in the Cadoc ward was 30.05% and in the St Athan ward 29.92%, compared to 51.76% in Dinas Powys.

In March 2013, 60.3% of working age residents of the Vale of Glamorgan were registered as employed. This is slightly higher than the Welsh average of 58.2%. 8.0% of Vale of Glamorgan residents of working age were registered as unemployed, slightly lower than the national average of 8.5%.

There was an increase in the number of residents answering that they agree that they have the ability to influence decisions in their local area in the Public Opinion Survey from 23% in 2009 to 44% in 2012. In 2012, 12% of those surveyed stated that they strongly agree they have the ability to influence local decisions, a significant increase on 2009 (5%).

There was also a large increase in the number of people who expressed an opinion from one third in 2009 to three quarters in 2012. This increase in people's willingness to give an opinion may be as a result of the large amount of work done locally to promote opportunities for the public to be able to influence local decisions. Also, 97% of respondents to the survey indicated that they felt proud to live in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Results from the National Survey for Wales highlighted that 77% of Vale residents agreed they felt a sense of belonging to their local area which was

slightly higher (1%) than the national average. 73% of Vale residents surveyed agreed that people in their local area from different backgrounds get on well together and this was 2% higher than the national average. Unfortunately data is not available at sub-local authority level for this indicator.