



Library Plan 2023-28 – Living Libraries

Providing means for everyone to discover, learn, create, socialize and share information and ideas

The purpose of Gwynedd Libraries for the People of Gwynedd

“Help me find the books I want to read through the library, at home or online, give me access to computers and IT equipment, help me use IT, provide activities to help me learn or socialize, and help me find up-to-date information about things that are important to me.”

Key Facts about Gwynedd Libraries in 2021/22



29,466 people are members of Gwynedd Libraries



96% of users are completely satisfied with the service they receive



59,534 items were digitally downloaded



3373 packs were home delivered on request and on demand



186,222 books were borrowed and 25,585 titles were individually requested



Over 1550 free reusable menstrual products packs were delivered

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS AND CORE VALUES

Our core values underpin everything we do:

Equality

Providing access to those who cannot visit their library in person.
Providing an equal and inclusive service to all our users.
Providing equal access for all and embracing digital technology

Honesty and Trust

Maintain the name of Gwynedd Libraries for reliability
Respecting our customers' personal data, complying with Legislation and good practice

Performance

Maintain a culture of performance management to ensure the development of our staff and improve our services.
Engaging with the people of Gwynedd, putting them first to deliver relevant and high quality services
Improving our services by supporting our staff to achieve their full potential and through collaboration with our partners
Listening to our users, staff and partners in order to inform our decisions and plans for the future.

Sustainability

Providing and promoting services that people want to use, ensuring value for money, maximizing income generation opportunities, and working in partnership and attracting investment when it is appropriate to do so.
Working in a way that tries to consider the impact on the environment and the climate crisis in everything we do.
Contribute to the health and well-being of our communities by providing safe and trusted community spaces that are free and open to all and inspire people to read, learn and access reliable sources of information

BACKGROUND AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Local Authorities have a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 'to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service to all'. The Local Authority is responsible for providing an efficient library service that meets the needs of the residents of Gwynedd. In providing this service, Local Authorities must, among other things:

- encourage adults and children to make full use of the library service
- provide free Library membership to those who live, work or study in Gwynedd providing print materials to borrow at no cost to the user

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out the objectives of the Welsh government with the aims below:

A prosperous Wales • A resilient Wales • A healthier Wales • A more equal Wales • A Wales of cohesive communities • A Wales with a vibrant culture and a flourishing Welsh language • A globally responsible Wales

When drawing up this plan, we will operate within the context of local, regional and national policies and plans, including:-

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28

Connected and Ambitious libraries: the sixth Welsh public library standards quality framework 2017 to 2020

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act

Project 2050

New Culture Strategy tbc

The last strategy, More Than Books, came to an end in March 2020. Following the pandemic and lockdown period between 2020-2022, some fundamental changes were made to the provision of Library services in Gwynedd by removing fines entirely on overdue books, and review our Mobile Service to establish an on-demand Home Delivery Service in its place. The traditional mobile vehicles were to be replaced by smaller electric vehicles, which would be able to provide a monthly Home Service, and an on-demand and free Delivery Service for all Gwynedd residents.



In 2020 the Gwynedd Libraries Manager became responsible for Neuadd Dwyfor Theatre and Cinema in Pwllheli, where Pwllheli Library is co located, with the aim of strengthening and developing the collaboration between teams by ensuring a cohesive service for the public provided by the Theatre/Cinema team and the Library team.

ROLES OF GWYNEDD LIBRARIES SERVICE

Public Library Service - Provided through a county network - opening hours each week in brackets

Caernarfon Library (44)

Bangor Library (44)

Porthmadog Library (37) - co-located in Byw'n Iach building, Glaslyn

Pwllheli Library (31 + 12 hours outside basic staffing hours) - co-located with Neuadd Dwyfor Theatre/Cinema

Dolgellau Library (31)

Blaenau Ffestiniog Library (27.5) - co-located in the Maenofferen Center building

Tywyn Library (27)

Abermaw Library (26)

Bala Library (20) - co-located at Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn

Penygroes Library (16)

Cricieth Library (14) - co-located at Encil y Coed

Dyffryn Ogwen Library, Bethesda (15) - supported by Partneriaeth Ogwen who hold the Lease of the building

Nefyn Library (14) - supported by Nefyn Town Council who hold the Lease of the building

Each library offers a range of reading materials, public computers and wi - fi. The staff can also arrange 1:1 Digital Support sessions for users by our professional Librarians.

Story times and Ji Babi Bach sessions for babies are held in some of the Libraries along with sessions for adults such as Reading Clubs for Learners.

Delivery Service and Home Service (one vehicle each in Arfon, Dwyfor, Meirionnydd) A Home Library Service is offered free of charge on a monthly basis to individuals who are unable to visit their library, in addition to a free Delivery Service on demand for everyone in Gwynedd.

Library Link - The click and collect link is located at Hen Institiwt and Library Harlech where you can order a book through the online catalogue, collect it and return it for free through this link.

Digital Library – Users can access and download a wide variety of resources for free including e-books, e-audiobooks and e-magazines.

Access is provided through the Libraries to genealogy websites Find My Past and Ancestry, and the TheoryTest Pro website, as well as Learn My Way and Access to Research.

Items can also be ordered and renewed online and over 55% of book orders are now made online.

Schools Library Service - We provide a Library Service to Gwynedd Primary Schools via a Service Level Agreement with the Education Department, where teachers can request learning resources and where pupils can borrow books from Lori Ni, the mobile service that visits their school twice a year, plus access e-books through our e-resources platform.

OUR PERFORMANCE

Gwynedd Libraries report on performance regularly at the Council's performance monitoring meetings. Our performance indicators are:

1. Borrowing and Usage Statistics
 - a. Book loans
 - b. Digital resource loans
 - c. Number of requests for individual books
2. User Satisfaction

We do this through monthly loan reports and holding sample surveys during one week, four times a year.

We are required to submit an annual report on our performance for the Welsh Public Libraries Standards to the Welsh Government's Culture Division. An annual assessment report is made to the Council and this report is published on the Welsh Government website and Cyngor Gwynedd website.

According to the 2020/21 Welsh Public Libraries Standards Annual Assessment Report

Gwynedd has strong partnerships in a number of priority areas such as learning, health and wellbeing, and children and families. It has maintained its strong performance in terms of Welsh language provision, and the library appears to be in a good position to build on its improvements during the pandemic and attract more existing and new customers.

We strongly believe that all services and organizations benefit by work collaboratively. By working together we are able to develop strong services to meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd and make the best possible use of our resources.

We will also take advantage of every opportunity to collaborate at local, regional and national level in order to make the best use of resources, expertise and funding.

We are committed as a service to the Gwynedd Way of working and we will incorporate the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd in the way we plan our work and work in the future.

- We will follow the Ffordd Gwynedd way of working and ensure that all members of staff understand what this means and are empowered as individuals and teams to do the best for the people of Gwynedd according to our purpose and service demands.
- We will constantly review our performance and challenge ourselves to operate as efficiently as possible, by maintaining a high level of service. We will do this through performance metrics and regular user surveys.
- We will promote our services so that the people of Gwynedd are aware of all the services available and how to access them.
- We will revisit the ethos of Ffordd Gwynedd following the pandemic, including undertaking interviews with the entire staff team to understand their feelings about the work and understand the things which affect staff whilst serving the people of Gwynedd. These responses will be the basis of an action plan during the year and will guide us in terms of attention areas in order to improve the way we work and provide service to the people of Gwynedd.
- We will maintain a skilled and trained workforce and organise the ongoing programme of staff training, which is planned annually.
- We will continue to collaborate regionally and nationally, seeking out opportunities to ensure value for money and efficiencies for consumers
- We will ensure that our library buildings remain welcoming, attractive, fit for purpose, sustainable, and open at appropriate times.
- We will try to reduce any real or perceived barriers that prevent people accessing and using their local library

WHAT OUR USERS ARE SAYING

" Not owning a computer the library is vital to me. I also read a great deal. Being able to use any library in Gwynedd is wonderful. "

"I have used both libraries today in Pwllheli and Caernarfon. In Caernarfon for a computer course and books, Pwllheli to use the computer and more books. This service is vital for my well-being and life progress. Myself, like many would be very disadvantaged without this service and would lose a valuable asset of book reading should it be closed."

"The library helps me a great deal with college work, internet and books."

"Libraries - this is very important when housebound as it helps me through bad days and long nights."



"Thank you so much for the work that you do - it is a really important and life enhancing service that you bring to people and I have enjoyed the range of books you have selected which I wouldn't have otherwise chosen - really informative and interesting ."

"Wonderful visit to Bethesda Library today with the little one. A nice atmosphere for small children...plenty of toys to play with, and a worthwhile selection of children's books in both languages. It is also possible to borrow toys from the Petha Library."

"As I have become more physically disabled I find e-books and digital magazines invaluable. I would not be able to borrow books without them. I recommend the e-services to all my family, friends and their children."

"I use the computers to try and find a job."

"Had been looking for help with a bus pass ...In the end I called the library and got the correct information and forms I needed."

" I would like to bring to your attention the sterling work done by the library assistant at Tywyn Library. She seeks out new and interesting books for me over a wide range of genres and gives them to my partner to bring to me as I sit in our car. I am disabled and find even the lovely library is too much for me to cope with. (The Library Assistant) makes my life bearable."

OUR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Considering the strategic context and the needs of the people of Gwynedd, we will undertake to develop the areas below and the corresponding goals as the basis of our Library Plan for the next five years so that a comprehensive and efficient library service can be provided which will be able to adapt to the changing needs of our users, while incorporating local and national objectives.

The Libraries Service is managed within the Council's Economy and Communities Department.





READ

A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic circumstances).

We will continue to place supporting reading at the heart of our service offer. According to service surveys, around 60% of users visit libraries to borrow a book. We will continue to try to maintain a strong book fund in order to supply appropriate resources to provide the widest choice of books to meet the reading and learning needs of the people of Gwynedd.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
<p>Access to up to date and relevant reading materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase new books and resources regularly, making the most of the money available by working together as part of the All Wales Purchasing Consortium in order to get the best value for money in terms of the supply of reading materials in English and buy multiple copies of high demand books for adults and children. • Working with local Welsh bookshops to ensure the best terms for providing reading materials in Welsh as part of our provider specification, and buying multiple copies of high demand books for adults and children. • Collaborate with the Books Council of Wales to benefit fully from services such as gwales siop and ffolio • Being a member of the North Wales Library Consortium, maintaining a shared catalogue and ensuring that the people of Gwynedd can order books for free through an inter-lending arrangement. • To be a partner in the LINC scheme to ensure that the people of Gwynedd have free access to items in the catalogues of colleges of further and higher education in north Wales and that these items can be ordered through the Library.
<p>Promote books and reading for pleasure and support early literacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold song and story times by Library staff in 7 Libraries regularly during the school term. (Caernarfon, Porthmadog, Pwllheli, Dolgellau, Abermaw, Bethesda and Tywyn) Caernarfon Library – Weekly Session Bethesda Library – Weekly Session Pwllheli Library – Fortnightly session Porthmadog Library – Fortnightly session Tywyn Library – Fortnightly session Dolgellau Library – Monthly session Abermaw Library – Monthly session • Collaborate with our partner– Cymraeg i Blant - to regularly hold story times at 2 Libraries (Bangor, Blaenau) • Hold Ji Babi Bach sessions by Library staff in 2 Libraries weekly during the school term at Caernarfon Library and Pwllheli Library • Working as a partner with Booktrust Cymru to deliver Bookstart and collaborate with the Health Visitor Service to ensure that Baby and Early Years packages are given to families through the Bookstart scheme • Participating in family support schemes such as Cyfuno, providing Family Learning support sessions, and SHEP schemes (Education Department)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in partnership with the Early Years Unit on projects to promote reading and literacy • Hold a programme of Summer Fun activities for children and families in the libraries during the summer holidays free of charge • Encourage children aged 4-12 to continue reading books over the summer holidays by taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge and working with stakeholders to promote the national Summer Reading Challenge at all libraries. • Promote reading for pleasure for adults and encourages adults to expand their reading choices and experiences, for personal benefit and learning, and do this by supporting reading groups by giving them free access to our library facilities and access to book sets. • Holding Paned a Sgwrs activities for adults where emphasis is placed on attracting Welsh learners
Promote inclusion and equal access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain designated LGBT+ collections at Caernarfon and Bangor Libraries
Promote access to books in different formats and widen access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide digital resources such as e-audiobooks, e-books and e-magazines for adults and children in Welsh and English through the national offer • Collaborate with the North Wales Society for the Blind to provide audiobooks in Welsh for adults and children to Welsh Libraries and facilitate the availability of Welsh e-audiobooks on the national platform in the same way. • Provide a monthly Home Library Service for all those unable to visit their library in person, providing reading material to meet individual requirements in print, large print and audio form. • Provide an on-demand book Delivery Service for everyone who needs it to their home free of charge and enabling people to order books by phone/email and online
Deliver a Library Service to Primary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to work with the Council's Education Department via a Service Level Agreement to deliver a library service to Primary schools with the emphasis on providing the highest quality leisure reading materials for pupils and high quality and creative learning resources for teachers.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

We believe that the well-being of the people of Gwynedd is core to the work of Gwynedd Libraries. Libraries are accessible, safe and welcoming spaces at the heart of communities, and we want people to feel part of their community when using the library service. Libraries are places to socialise, and we also provide a quiet space for people to relax, work and study.

Gwynedd Libraries help the people of Gwynedd to take positive action in order to manage their own health and well-being by providing information and advice services in partnership with other organisations.

We also believe that Gwynedd Libraries play a role to provide opportunities and activities where people can come together in order to reduce the effects of loneliness.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Encouraging sustainability and reducing poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a solid working partnership with Benthyc and Dolan in order to offer a Library of Things - Petha - in Dyffryn Ogwen, Penygroes and Blaenau Ffestiniog Libraries. • Develop Petha by introducing a Petha delivery service and a school uniform loan service • Provide free menstrual products in libraries • Promote library buildings as warm welcome spaces in order to help with the costs of living in a period of energy crisis • Provide opportunities for adults to socialise by providing activities on a drop-in basis eg board games, colouring, cuppa
Supporting well-being through books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and promote the Reading Well scheme across Gwynedd Libraries in the subject collections- Dementia, Mental Health, Children's Mental Health, Young People's Mental Health • Maintain a Helping Hand collection, which is a collection of books for children and families that can help in difficult or special situations. We will maintain a central collection and two satellite collections in Caernarfon Library and Bangor Library. • Work with other service units within Cyngor Gwynedd with the aim of working together to improve use and access to well-being services within Gwynedd and to encourage people to improve their personal well-being through the five ways to well-being, to promote and promote collaboration in order to make the best and most effective use of resources and to reduce duplication. • We will invest in resources for users with disabilities and learning difficulties, such as the Bag Books collection • Collaborating with other organizations to develop our health and wellbeing offers for diverse audiences, including older people and people living with dementia and developing a Memory Boxes resource and making our Libraries Dementia friendly places. • Developing our Croeso Cynnes offer which provides an informal space for people to call into their library and socialise in a welcoming and informal atmosphere.
Encourage participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to host work experience opportunities and consider volunteering applications in accordance with our policy. • Develop the Caban space at Dolgellau Library as an activity and learning space for children and adults.
Responding to Welsh Government Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain awareness of local and national strategies and priorities and seek out opportunities to collaborate eg Age Friendly Gwynedd
Responding to the Climate Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from diesel vehicles to electric vehicles to deliver the Home Delivery service • Start a library staff sub-group to look at our way of working and to make recommendations on how we can work in a more environmentally friendly way • Developing a partnership with Natural Resources Wales to work on a Green Libraries network • Letting the grass grow uncut between the end of March and the end of August at Caernarfon and Dolgellau and encourage sowing with wild flower seeds.

- Develop and maintain a wellbeing garden at Dyffryn Ogwen Library
- Develop a green space and wild garden at Dolgellau Library



WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.

We believe that Gwynedd Libraries have an important role in promoting awareness of Welsh and Welsh culture and the use of the Welsh language, in order to support and reflect our national identity and our unique culture. Libraries can play a key role by supporting people to learn and speak Welsh, have access to reading materials and information in Welsh, learn about our culture and heritage and take part in Welsh and Welsh cultural activities.

We will work with key partners to ensure that Welsh language resources are available to support all types of reading and information needs, and to support the needs of users who need access to books and other materials in Welsh in different formats.

By providing access to Welsh books and resources, as well as activities in Welsh, we will contribute to the Welsh Government's ambition to increase the number of people who learn and speak Welsh and who see a benefit in learning and speaking Welsh in order improving skills and job opportunities, and strengthening a sense of national identity.

A high percentage of the population of Gwynedd are Welsh speakers, with 75.5% indicating that they can speak Welsh.¹

Library data shows that loans of Welsh books by children under the age of 7 often overtake loans of English books.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Promote Welsh as a living language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Council's Language officers to hold awareness courses to promote the use of the Welsh language and ensure that the Council's Language policy is fully implemented. • Ensure that activities for children and families are either held in Welsh or bilingually with the emphasis on Welsh as the main language. • Ensure that priority is given to adult activities where Welsh Learners are welcomed and encouraged to participate. • Provide and maintain designated collections of Learning Welsh resources in each library • Maintain a local history collection and magazine collection in our main Reserves and ensure that information about the collections is available to users. • Collaborate with Hunaniaith on specific plans and activities in the Libraries to attract families • Collaborate with Bangor University's Welsh Learning Centre to attract learners to join our reading groups after completing a block of Welsh learning courses.

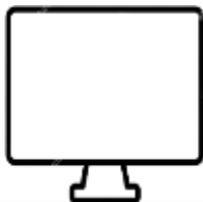
¹<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/Annual-Population-Survey-Welsh-Language/annualpopulationsurveyestimatesofpersonssaged3andoverwhosaytheycanspeakwelsh-by-localauthority-measure>

<p>Promote the availability of Welsh language materials and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwynedd Libraries will continue to take a leading role in delivering the Welsh Large Print Books scheme on behalf of Welsh Libraries, by coordinating the Welsh Large Print book publishing scheme with the intention of ensuring that large print resources are made available in Welsh to those users who have trouble reading normal size print. • We will collaborate with the North Wales Society for the Blind to ensure that audio Welsh books are available to borrow through Welsh Libraries and digitally through the national digital platform offer. • We will maintain book resources of historical value through our collection of 19th and 20th century Children's Books held in the main Library Reserves at Caernarfon.
<p>Promoting Welsh culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise the annual Darlith Llyfrgell Penygroes lecture held in collaboration with the Dyffryn Nantlle History Society • Organise the annual Darlith Goffa Dafydd Orwig memorial lecture in Dyffryn Ogwen Library • Collaborate with The People's Collection to identify content to the website and ensuring staff have the skills to be able to upload content in accordance with strategic objectives. • Participate in the BFI Replay scheme which is a service provide film content from the Archives through Libraries only • Support the visitor industry by being a reliable source of local information for visitors, and by directing users to the Visit Eryri website through the information kiosks in Pwllheli, Bangor, Caernarfon and Dolgellau Libraries.

INFORMATION AND DIGITAL

A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, safe, viable and well connected

Current information is increasingly to be found only online, with a digital sift being increasingly made by agencies, organisations, Local Government and Central Government. We believe that the role of libraries is essential in helping the people of Gwynedd to find the most reliable, relevant and current information they need, and to have the necessary digital skills needed to access any information online. In order to ensure that the people of Gwynedd get the most service and benefit from their library, we believe that a programme of ongoing staff training is key, and we will invest time, energy and resources in this area over the next five years.



OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
<p>Providing learning opportunities for adults through the Community Learning Grant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Adult Community Education grant provided through the Welsh Government and collaborate with providers and partners through the Gwynedd and Ynys Mon Community Learning Partnership to identify needs for courses locally and develop local partnerships to strengthen learning opportunities for adults. • Collaborate at national and regional level to develop and promote learning opportunities and attract adults back to further education by participating in events such as the North Wales Learning Festival.
<p>Ensuring that digital opportunities, help and support are available to users</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ways for users to get additional specialist support by offering 1:1 Digital Support sessions at libraries open 20 hours and more (9 Libraries) as well as offering home visits/phone calls/virtual to those who unable to visit their library. • Work with partners and key stakeholders to ensure that staff have the latest skills and knowledge to support users digitally • Develop learning sessions and modules through the Digital and Learning Officer to ensure that the skills and knowledge of the staff team is kept up to date • Support a VR hub at Caernarfon and Penygroes Libraries and work with partners and stakeholders to hold sessions for young people • Update the front page of public computers in order to point users to reliable sources of information under different key areas • Develop Coding and Lego Club sessions in the largest libraries and work with key partners to maximize volunteering opportunities.

<p>Ensure that IT equipment and suitable digital facilities are available in our Libraries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of public computers and free wi-fi in each Library during the Library's opening hours • Identify gaps and create more USB points in the libraries where possible. • Provide wireless printing in all libraries • Provide a card/contactless machine as a payment method in Caernarfon and Bangor Libraries and look to extend the provision to other libraries according to demand. • Take a lead role in the process of procuring a new LMS (Library management system) for Wales and work together as part of the North Wales Library Consortium on the proposal to create LMS Cymru. Lead on the project for Gwynedd act as Lead Authority for LMS Cymru Consortium.
<p>Providing first class e-resources and digital resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure access to e-resources includes e-books, audio e-books, e-magazines in Welsh and English for adults and children, and collaborate with partners and stakeholders to ensure that digital resources are available in Welsh to libraries. • Secure free access to online genealogy websites • Collaborate with The People's Collection to identify content to the website and ensuring staff have the skills to be able to upload content in accordance with strategic objectives. • Participate in the BFI Replay scheme which is a service provide film content from the Archives through Libraries only
<p>Promoting Library Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a full-time Digital and Learning Officer position in order to maintain Gwynedd Library's social media accounts including facebook, twitter, Instagram and Tik Tok