



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu
Cenedlaethol

National
Adoption
Service

National Adoption Service

Annual Report, 2014-2015

The short version

**A summary for children, young people
and adults**



There is also a full report. Just ask for a copy, or download it from...

www.adoptcymru.com

What is the National Adoption Service?



An umbrella that brings together...



Nationally



Regionally

5 regional collaboratives
(you can check out what
they are on page 3)



Locally

22 Local Authorities



1

The National Adoption Service was launched in November 2014. So this is the first annual report.

Nationally



Nationally

Strategic Voluntary Adoption Partnership

St David's
Children
Society



Barnardo's



BAAF
Cymru



Adoption
UK



After
Adoption



What we did in 2014-2015



Set up the national bits



Worked with voluntary adoption agencies



Set up the 5 regional collaboratives



Listened to adopters and adopted children and young people



Looked at adoption support



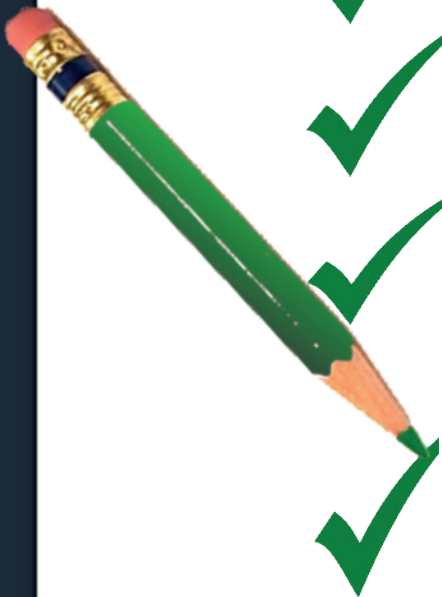
Worked with health services



The Task & Finish group that had set things up handed everything over to the new National Adoption Service

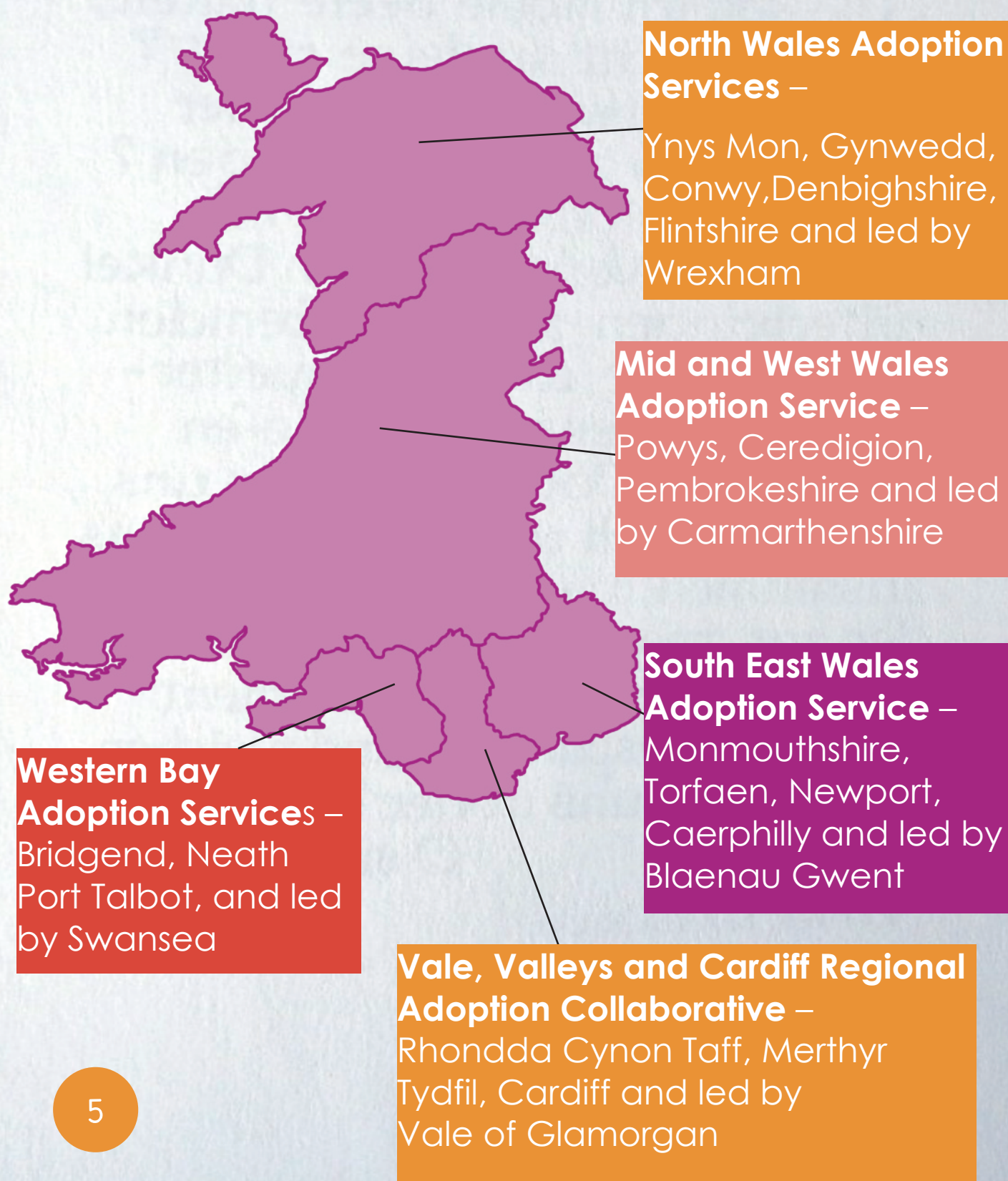


Built relationships with staff and managers, built our media profile, and developed relationships with key people like the Minister for Health & Social Services



So, what are these 5 regional collaboratives?

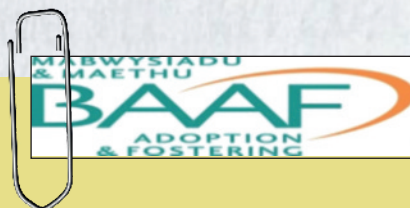
They bring together a number of local authorities and have strong links with voluntary agencies, health and education.



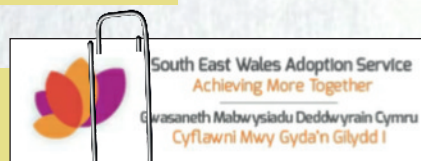
Reports from Regions and Voluntary Organisations



We're working well, and we're fully staffed. We went to the National Adoption Service Staff Conference.



We're running the Wales Adoption Register (which helps match children who need to be adopted and adults who want to adopt), and the Independent Review Mechanism Cymru (for adopters or foster carers who don't agree with decisions about whether they can adopt or foster).



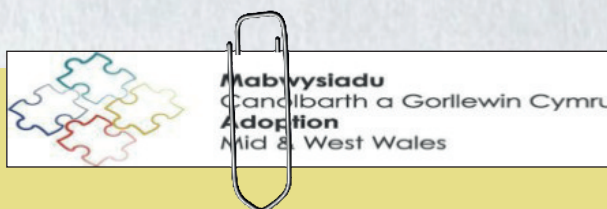
We've got specialist teams to get enough adopters, match adopters and children, and then provide adoption support. We only got fully going on 1st June 2014, and we will check how things are working at the end of 2015.



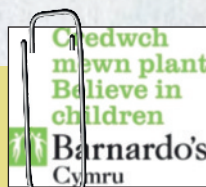
We are set up to get enough adopters, find the right families for children and provide adoption support. We've got a website.



The local authorities in our group are working together to train and approve adopters and find families for children. We've got the same policies and ways of working. We only got fully going on 1st June 2015. We've shared a webpage and 0800 phone number since November 2014 for any enquiries about adopting.



We launched in April 2014. We've got new information leaflets and our work has been on a TV programme. O'r Glan Teulu. We have an adoption support worker, and we're focusing on making it easier to enquire about adopting and working with birth parents.



We run a small service – we provided adopters for 15 children last year. Next year, we are going to focus on providing adopters for children who need to be adopted with their brothers or sisters, and older children.



We support around 350 adoptive families in Wales with a newsletter, helpline and 11 support groups.



We run a TalkAdoption group for adopted young people, and the National Adoption Service has been listening to the group. We have worked hard to help get the National Adoption Service started, and we look forward to working closely with the central team and the regions.



Last year we approved 36 adopters, and 41 children were placed with our adopters. We work closely with the National Adoption Service.

The stats: Getting adopted in Wales – the Wales average

*The full report tells you how each region did. There was quite a difference between the regions.

Can't live with parents

Local Authority decide "should be placed"

Court make a placement order

Get matched and placed with adopters

Court make an adoption order

In 2013-2014, **345** children were adopted out of **5,755** looked after children.

For 2 out of 3 children, it took over **6 months** from the "should be placed" decision to going to live with adopters.

On average across Wales, it took well over a year (**16.5 months**) from becoming looked after to going to live with adopters. Some regions were quicker, some were slower.

Once a child went to live with adopters, they almost always got adopted by that family.

A small number of adoptions break down.

Children need information about their life before adoption. This is called "**life journey materials**". But less than a quarter of children have this information by their second adoption review.

Children whose plans change

Children who don't get matched quickly have their details put on the **Wales Adoption Register**.

At the end of March 2015, **201** children were on the Register. **139** of them were part way through being matched with adopters; **62** were still waiting.

Children who are still waiting

Fewer children are having their plans changed.

Sometimes that is because there aren't any suitable adopters, so their plan is changed to **long term foster care**.

Sometimes it's because they get a family a different way – like a **Special Guardianship Order** or **Residence Order**.

The stats: Wanting to adopt – the Wales average

Enquire

Get a first visit from the agency who tell you more

Apply to adopt

Get training and get assessed

Adoption order

Get matched and the child comes to live with you

Go to a panel and get approved as adopters

The stats: Wanting to adopt – the Wales average

*The full report tells you how each region did. There was quite a difference between the regions.

Agencies said there had been 1,181 enquiries in 2014-2015. That's up 27% from 2011-2012.

Last year, 297 people were approved as adopters.

Almost 1 in 3 people who get a first visit from the agency don't apply to adopt with that agency.

153 of them went on to the Wales Adoption Register to help them get matched with a child.

Some of them apply to a different agency. Some wait and apply the next year. And some decide that adoption is not for them.

Most of them (755) wanted to adopt **one** child aged **under 5 years**. But most of the children on the Wales Adoption Register were **over 5 years** or needed to be adopted **with one or more sibling**.

Welsh Government want it to take 8 months at most to get approved, but on average it takes 9.4 months.

The stats: Birth parents – the Wales average

*The full report tells you how each region did. There was quite a difference between the regions.

All birth parents should be offered counselling to understand the adoption procedure and given a chance to say how they would like their child brought up by adoptive parents.

Most were offered counselling. But not many chose to accept.

Our top priorities for 2015-2016

What

More adopters, including more who are happy to adopt children older than 4, and happy to adopt brothers and sisters.

Why

That's because we need children to have a wider choice of great adopters.

No delays in finding adoptive families for children once we know they need to be adopted.

That means we need to get better at matching children with approved adopters, and making the whole adoption process smoother.

All children get support and most children have life journey materials. We stay in touch with adopters at least once a year.

This will keep adoption breakdowns to a minimum.

What

Listen to and work with children and adults who use any part of the National Adoption Service.

Why

If we do this, our services will get better.

Collect better data about how we are doing.

If we do this, we will know what we are doing well and what we need to do better.

Make sure all parts of the National Adoption Service are well run. This means checking that we are doing everything we should be, and involving voluntary organisations, health and others.

If we get it right, it will be easier for everyone to work well together – and that's good news for adopted children and young people, adopters and birth parents.