



The Leader's Annual Report for 24/25

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present my annual report for 24/25. The themes in this report reflect my priorities following my election as Leader in September 2024 and align with the 6 strategic objectives of the Council as outlined in the Council Plan 2023 – 2028.

The progress noted in this report is an indicator of the leadership of my fellow members, the dedication and hard work of Council staff, and the collaboration of communities on the Island and key stakeholders. I extend my deep thanks to all of them.

We have managed to achieve progress despite a very challenging financial situation again this year. We had to overcome a significant financial gap and, as in previous years, we focused on trying to ensure a fair balance between protecting key services, cuts to some services, and raising the Council Tax. Under these challenging circumstances, I am extremely proud of the good and innovative work the Council is doing to protect and support residents and local communities.

Education

New Developments

It has been a year of change in education, with arrangements in place to integrate the Regional School Improvement consortia. Locally, we have seen changes with new headteachers in 1 secondary school and 3 primary schools, and we welcomed a new Director to the Learning Service in March 2025. The Graig Fach Unit opened at Ysgol y Graig in June 2024, and students, staff, and visitors are very happy with the new building. It is nice to see the island's children receiving teaching opportunities in modern buildings.

RAAC

The repair work on buildings that included RAAC at Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and Ysgol David Hughes has been completed. Many of the Council's services have worked effectively together to ensure that the schools continue to be able to provide education and support learners. Our thanks go to the Headteachers, staff, students, and their families for working closely with us as an Authority during a very difficult time.

Estyn

In 2024, Anglesey's Estyn profile was positive. The ongoing work of ensuring educational quality and the well-being of students continues to be maintained by schools, and I would like to thank all the staff in our schools and in the Learning Service for ensuring this success.

Grants

A grant of £400,000 was received from Sport Wales for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) which enabled the Council to carry out work in several schools to support learners with ALN to increase accessibility, promote inclusive practices, and support the learning and well-being of students. A small 2G pitch and a small 3G pitch with floodlights were successfully opened at Bodedern High School.

Community Focused Schools

Three officers have been focusing their work this year in the areas of Holyhead, Llangefni, and Amlwch by doing more community work. With a larger budget for the next financial year, there are plans to fund an additional officer.

Healthy Schools

There has been progress for the Healthy Schools Team. The team supports schools on the Island with any aspect of health and wellbeing, including a whole school approach to mental health. The team also leads on the Period Dignity work which has gone from strength to strength across the island.

Welsh in Education

We are in our third year of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-32. Schools that have requested and need more support with the provision of Welsh Medium Education are all working with Project Groups led by the senior manager. These groups meet every half term and include governors, senior officers, the Language Centre Leader, the Language Charter Officer, and Headteachers. Currently, 3 schools are part of the plans.

Language Centres

The Language Centre is fully operational during 2025-2026. During the summer term, members of the Centre will visit former students and provide aftercare support across the island. Additionally, members of the Centre will hold an immersion class for year 6 in the Holyhead area as part of efforts to support Welsh Medium Education in the area and ensure that children have proficiency in the language before starting secondary school. A Senior Officer has recently worked on a package to Promote Welsh Medium Education and is engaging with the Welsh Government, other Councils, and the language forum to collaborate effectively.

Oriel Môn

The Oriel has been successful with its accreditation application again this year and the service continues to monitor and ensure that they succeed in maintaining their accreditation status. Educational packages and digital packages available to schools have been reviewed, and the number of visitors to the Oriel continues to increase with a number of exhibitions being very popular.

Archives

The archive continues to perform well, and visitor feedback from the archive's annual surveys has been positive. The number of visitors to the archive continues to increase following an uncertain period after COVID.

Libraries

Usage figures have increased again this year in libraries and also on the mobile service and the home service. The service has continued to work with partners to develop a range of learning opportunities available to adults in their communities. A successful application for a grant from the Shared Prosperity Fund has enabled the service to host a successful series of events and activities for children, young people, and adults. Over 150 events were held with more than 4,000 people. The grant also allowed us to upgrade the storage facility at Llangefni Library to create a welcoming space that can be used by the community and organisations to host events and activities. Twenty-five events and activities were held with 388 participants.

Social Care and Wellbeing

Supporting Families Unit

A Play Sufficiency Assessment has been completed, and a new role has been created through the Shared Prosperity Fund that has strengthened cohesion across the Council and with external partners. Welsh Government's programmes, such as Flying Start and Out of Court Parenting Support, continue to support our vulnerable families. The parenting programmes are available for parents and carers across the Island, and many Council staff and partners have received training for the leading "Triple P" programme to support families from the very start. Children care programmes continue to support parents to lower childcare costs as well as access to work, such as the Childcare Offer and Childcare for 2-Year-Old Children.

Cartrefi Clyd

By now, we have invested in 4 Cartrefi Clyd, and we are in the process of investing in a respite scheme to support carers. All units are managed by a small team of staff who ensure that care of the best quality is given to the children who live there. By now, we are looking for our next Cartref Clyd on Anglesey and are seeking grant funding to fund the project.

Integrated Method for Supporting the Education of Children in Care

Every child of school age (3-15) receives a "Motional" assessment as part of their Personal Education Plan (PEP), where progress is measured against a method that is trauma informed. The standard of the PEP's is good, or very good, with quality checking visits arranged each term through a drop-in surgery, in schools. A successful and well-deserved Prom was held to celebrate the end of an era for our year 11's in Chateau Rhianfa.

Fostering Wales

The team continues to work with Fostering Wales and Wales' local authorities in relation to recruiting and keeping foster carers. Many new foster carers are in the assessment process, and we hope that they will be approved later in the year.

Releasing Care Orders

The Service has used Welsh Government Grant funding to lower the number of children who are subject to care orders and have placed them safely with parents. This has led to a decrease of over twenty children in public care over a period of eighteen months.

Youth Service and Engagement

The “Hive” Youth Club Café has been further developed with around 40 young people aged 14-16 attending the café on a weekly basis – this is additional to the usual youth clubs. The location has been a safe space with focus on wellbeing, skills development, developing safe relationships and working with local partners such as the Police. The Schools Youth Workers have also developed the “Llwyddo” programme in the wellbeing and mental health field – a targeted 12-week course that includes an Agored Cymru accreditation, that also uses Virtual Reality. It’s offered in 5 Secondary Schools and contributes to young people’s qualifications framework.

New Youth Empowerment Programme

A pilot programme in Ysgol David Hughes is working with 8 learners aged 11-16 for a period of 12 weeks. It’s a structured curriculum that has been planned to empower young people with essential life skills in relation to resilience, reflection, confidence, motivation and developing their emotional intelligence according to the trauma framework.

Trauma Informed Anglesey

Around 750 additional individuals have received standard and expert training under the scheme, and now 70% of foster parents for the authority are qualified with the first Certificate in the UK being developed and rolled out on Anglesey. The first community course was held for the Trauma Informed Island scheme with 27 key partners present.

Virtual Reality Professional Development

The Service has invested in a VR training package to raise awareness of trauma as well as other specific areas such as drugs and young people carrying knives. This method has proven successful, with 100 people attending and many authorities expressing interest. 15 members of staff have developed their skills to roll out the programme for the next 6 months.

Improvement Check Visit – Adult Services

In September 2024, Care Inspectorate Wales held an Improvement Check visit following the Performance Evaluations Review in October 2022. The findings were positive:

1. Anglesey’s adult services have a strong leadership team, that has introduced positive changes and rolled them out.
2. Practitioners describe members of the leadership team as proactive, accessible and supportive individuals.
3. Staff teams are more stable, as well as the home support providers teams and home care teams.
4. The service has continued to benefit from corporate and political support. It’s essential that this continues to ensure that progress is made and maintained, and that the improvement areas are supported and that there are sufficient resources.

Day Services

Making better use of community resources to encourage integration in the community is a priority for the Learning Disabilities Service. The service has used Community Hubs and has completed an engagement exercise in the Holyhead area. The feedback from everyone present has been positive. People appreciate that they are offered a variety of activities, and

that leads to better experiences and more choice and control over their lives. In order to realise this vision for the Day Services, the authority has approved a transformation process in relation to provision in the community, by moving resources from Morswyn centre to facilitate the work of further developing community resources. Additionally, we have invested in improving the current provision, including outdoor facilities in Gors Felen. This included developing staff areas, and a sensory garden.

Supported living

The service has ambitious plans to transform and update accommodation options for people with learning disabilities through a programme of new developments. Working with the Housing Department and local housing agencies, we have invested in many schemes and continue to prepare plans to update more properties. It is expected that the plans we have invested in over the last 24 months will be in use by summer 2025.

Dementia Actif Môn

This project has made significant progress over the last 3 years and has created more opportunities for physical activities and socialising for groups and individuals across the Island. By now, we have invested in employing a second full time staff member to further develop the service and to reach more individuals, including our care homes and day services.

Social Care and Wellbeing

Môn Actif has invested over £1 million in our leisure facilities during the year. This has included work on Plas Arthur Leisure Centre to finish the cladding, replace the windows, insulating, work on the roof and installing a bike rack to promote active travel. Additionally, a new floor has been installed in the sports hall funded mostly by the capital grant from Sports Wales. Work has also taken shape in Amlwch and Holyhead Leisure Centres. Amlwch Leisure Centre received new windows and new LED lights in the 3G pitch. A new floor was installed in the office as well as external LED lights in Holyhead Leisure Centre.

Public Protection

Public Protection held many campaigns to take illegal vapes off the market that arrive here through Holyhead port and are sold in our shops. To date, we have stopped over 55,000 illegal and dangerous vapes from reaching the people of Anglesey.

The Public Protection team has also visited our communities and engaged with residents in order to raise awareness of financial scams that have a negative effect on lives, living standards and mental health. 'Call Blockers' were installed in residential homes to prevent older and vulnerable individuals from receiving nuisance and fraudulent phone calls.

Economy

The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)

During the year, the Council spent £16 million of the Shared Prosperity Fund on projects that will make a difference in local communities. In cooperation with local partners, 25 projects were chosen across the Island. Around £3 million has also been earmarked to improve adults' numeracy skills, as part of the UK Governments 'Multiply' project.

We have seen the effects on individuals and businesses across the county.

- Almost 400 businesses, enterprises and organisations have received grants from the scheme, and 631 have received additional support.

- We have seen around 1,500m² of green spaces, public facilities being improved and have planted over 5,000 trees.
- Over approximately 1,000 people have attained new qualifications, opening doors to better work opportunities.

The Holyhead Regeneration Programme

Holyhead has benefited from £22.2m expenditure from the UK Government's Regeneration Fund. The fund has supported projects such as the extension in Ucheldre, the Empire building, the old HSBC building, as well as many locations in the Town Centre and the new kiosks on Newry. Strong and consistent engagement with the community has taken place to give them an opportunity to voice their opinion about the development.

North of the Island

Planning permission has been granted for 10 new business units in Amlwch. Work is also underway to revamp the old Maritime building, 'The Marine Terminal' in Amlwch Port. Discussion and arrangements are also taking place to secure funding to support interventions and project following 2025/26.

Freeport

Anglesey's Freeport will be an exciting opportunity to improve the economy in North Wales by attracting significant investment that will drive economic activity, providing high skilled jobs and higher pay to the local workforce. The Tax Sites in Central Anglesey and Holyhead were designated in January 2025, and significant work to demolish and restore is making progress on the old Anglesey Aluminium site and the 2-Sisters site in Llangefni. As the work on these sites makes progress, the Freeport will continue to secure benefits of which the Island can take full advantage.

Arfor

The aim of this programme by Welsh Government is to support the use of the Welsh language, and almost £1 million has been invested in 30 local businesses. The programme has helped to create 50 jobs and has contributed to developing the economy and strengthening the Welsh language on the Island.

Town Centres

We have been operating the Anglesey's Town Centres Improvement Strategy for 2023-28 and Welsh Government's Regeneration Funding has been used to improve town properties in many areas across the Island.

- 9 of the town and community councils have received £250k for projects and local events.
- 20 projects have received grants to improve properties worth £1 million, including work on 11 empty properties. 54 buildings in the town centres have been painted by MônCF, using the SPF funding through the County Council.
- MônCF has provided 82 small business grants in the town centres using the SPF funding through the County Council.

Wylfa Site

The Wylfa site is now under the UK Government's direct ownership, since March 2024. We are awaiting confirmation, following the UK Government's Spending Review at the end of the summer, if Wylfa has been chosen as a site for the development of Small Modular Reactors. The Council has been in regular contact with the Government to ask for an update on the situation.

Nature Conservation

This year has highlighted the importance of working with stakeholders and other partners if we are to restore the natural world successfully. We have worked successfully with Natural Resources Wales. Using the SPF's Sustainable Landscapes funding, the Sustainable Locations and the Sustainable Development Fund, we have restored many meadows and coastal habitats, planted more than 6,000 trees, managed heathland and presented a new heathland management plan. We have also worked with farmers to complete projects on walls and hedges, and water projects including the Wygyr River.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The team has helped to introduce and fund a vast variety of events that re-connect people with nature. Local young people have taken advantage of the forest school, events for children and parents, darks skies and conservation volunteer days. We have also been able to work with partners to provide 2 educational resources for schools that is also connected to the new Welsh curriculum, with a focus on nature, climate change, agriculture and water quality, as well as other subjects.

Access to Nature

Over £1 million has been invested through the SPF programme to improve access to some of our key sites and to facilitate coastal circular walks so that communities can take economic advantage of the Wales Coastal Path. The paths in the Dingle Local Nature Reserve, Llyn Maelog and Coed y Môr in Menai Bridge have also been improved.

Tourism

The focus this year has been on ensuring good management over destinations. A new website, Welcome to Anglesey, went live and has been well received. New coastal signs have been introduced at our key sites, with a focus on safety associated with the RNLI's guidance. Over 70 ships were welcomed in Holyhead, and we continue to play a proactive part in ensuring that the Island, its communities and businesses all benefit from these visits, as well as providing our visitors with valuable experiences.

Planning

Work has begun on preparing a new Local Development Plan for Anglesey. The first step of the process was to prepare and agree with Welsh Government on a Delivery Plan that outlines the timeframe for completing each step of preparing the Local Development Plan. The work of driving that Plan forward continues, and the process of Calling for Sites is the next big milestone. This will provide landowners with an opportunity to present sites to be considered for future developments that is associated with achieve the vision and aims in the Plan.

Housing

These are some the Housing Service's statistics for the year:

- 63 empty homes brought back to use
- 826 households contacted the Council due to being under threat or homeless
- £15.23m has been spent to build new energy efficient homes, with grade A energy performance, to decrease our carbon footprint

- £9.86m has been spent to upgrade the current housing stock, including energy efficient measures

The Solar and Battery Storage Programme

Work has started on both large scale programmes, with a kitchen replacement contract and a contract to install solar and battery storage facilities over the next 5 years in relevant properties. A contract worth £15 million was awarded to a local company that has been appointed to undertake the work of retrospective installations to the whole Housing Stock wherever practical. The contract concentrates on areas that aren't connected to the natural gas network, and the work began in early January 2025 in the Gwalchmai area, and residents have provided positive feedback to date. During 2025/26, the programme will continue to concentrate on energy performance in properties that use electricity, oil or LPG as their main source of heating.

Plas Alltran Apartments, Holyhead

Work was done to protect the Grade II listed building near Holyhead port. Plas Alltran has been in a poor state for many years, and has been subject to antisocial behaviour. The Council has worked in partnership with Cadw and Welsh Government to complete the project. The aim is to develop 4 affordable community apartments that include four 1-bedroom apartments.

Housing Developments

We continue to invest in our properties to improve the quality of current homes as well as progressing with developing new homes to increase the number of homes across the Island. During 2024/25, developments were completed on the following sites: -

- Cloch yr Eglwys, Ffordd Garreglwyd, Holyhead (8 Flats).
- Llys Llwydiarth, (10 houses). The First Minister visited this development during the year.
- Ffordd Kyffin and Cilfach Cwta/Cilfach Clai, (10 houses).

Additional Care in Tyddyn Mostyn, Menai Bridge

The Aethwy Additional Care facility is a dementia friendly facility with 45 units and 28 beds to provide residential care. Within the facility, there will be offices as well as a Community Resources Team, catering, support and additional accommodation. The project has already gone through the pre-application planning stage and is being prepared for full planning permission.

Kitchen Replacement Programme:

Our Kitchen Replacement Programme started in January 2025, complying with the Wales Housing Quality Standards. The contract includes renovating current kitchens in order to comply with the current obligations of the WHQS. The work programme follows the current kitchens life cycle that were installed between 2008 and 2013 as part of the original WHQS contract, with work concentrating on the Llangefni area at present.

Wales Housing Quality Standards (WHQS 2023)

We continue to invest in our housing stock by remodelling properties that are no longer appropriate and are working to achieve WHQS 2023. Since the announcement was made, we have reviewed resources and the financial obligations that are needed to fulfil this 10 year programme. These new requirements set ambitious standards in terms of energy efficiency and decarbonising the housing stock.

Climate Change

Reducing the carbon footprint of our assets

Low carbon heating systems (air source heat pumps) have been fitted across our assets, including the Headquarters. It is forecasted that this work will lead to a significant decrease in carbon emissions as the building moves away from fossil fuels to heat hot water. Additionally, following the successful bid for a grant of over £750k, the work to install solar panels in the Headquarters' car park has begun, and the electricity produced will be used to power vehicles.

Transforming our electric vehicle fleet

During this year, 13 additional electric vehicles were bought, which means that there are now 35 electric vehicles in our fleet. Significant work has taken place to install 34 charging points for the fleet – 30 near the Headquarters, 2 in Plas Arthur and 2 in Blaen y Coed. The Highways, Property and Waste Service has also worked with the community in Crigyll ward to trial a community transport service to provide a connection with the main bus service.

Circular Economy

The Council's waste service has worked with Medrwn Môn and Saint David's Hospice to offer more opportunities to reuse goods that would otherwise be thrown away.

Approving the Flood Risk Management Strategy

This plan was approved in March 2025 following a consultation with stakeholders. The plan provides a basis as to how the Council responds to some of the effects of climate change. Two other flood prevention projects have been realised during the year, and designs for 2 other sites have been completed and will be put in place when funding allows.

Responding to Matters of Urgency

Officers from the Council have responded to many emergencies during the year, including the aftereffects of Storm Darragh and Eowyn on our roads and buildings, when over 100 calls were received. The Highways, Waste and Property Service has continued to maintain buildings, resurface and keep roads open and collect waste on a weekly basis.

The Welsh Language

Strengthening the Welsh Language's Status

Last year's report referred to the priority given to the Welsh language by setting it as one of the Council Plan's strategic aims for 2023 – 2028. We strengthened that priority again this year by updating our Welsh Language Policy. The new policy makes it clear that everyone who deals with the Council, or on behalf of the Council can receive our services in Welsh. Our efforts are reflected in the steps that we have taken to increase our internal use of the Welsh language and explaining that the language is used in every aspect of administration within the Council.

More Staff Learning and Developing their Welsh Language Skills

As a result of our effective partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, more of our staff than ever are receiving training to improve their Welsh language skills. Since the Welsh Language Team and the Training Team have started promoting the support that's available to staff in the Council, the number of staff learning Welsh has increased over 20%, from 15 in 2021/22 to over 80. The training is provided by specific tutors who work with the Council, and who offer support on every level, from starter to language improvement skills. It's also great to hear from fellow members of the Council who are also learning alongside officers for the first time.

National Recognition for our Practice

Our Strategy to Promote the Welsh Language was one of the subjects discussed during the annual conference of the International Association of Language Commissioners in Cardiff in May 2024. Our language officers had the opportunity to greet an international audience and talk about our efforts to increase the use of the Welsh language in Môn through our education system, our youth services, leisure, care, planning and many other areas that we are responsible for. Our practices in relation to the language have been recognised for many years by the Welsh Language Commissioner as an example of effective practice that other organisations should emulate.

Working in Partnership

The support from Fforwm Iaith Ynys Môn is valuable to us as a Council. This year has been another busy year for the Forum, that celebrated a decade of existence since being established by the Council in 2014. It was great to see so many people listening to contributions from some members of the Forum in Sioe Môn last August, to celebrate this milestone.

Officers from the Council are leading two subgroups of the Forum, concentrating on education and the use of the Welsh language at work. As well as hearing about the accomplishments of these groups, the members also had presentations about the consideration given to the Welsh language within foster care and town and country planning this year.

We continue to work in partnership with the Welsh Language Commissioner, other local authorities and ARFOR (Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire), and others to model our internal use of the language, and members of the Gwynedd and Môn Public Services Board helped us to recruit more Welsh speakers to uphold our high standards of service.