

Local Authority Parking Finances in Wales 2019 - 20

1 Introduction

This note covers parking finances for the 22 local authorities in Wales. As in England and Scotland, local authorities are required to submit details of all their finances to the Welsh Government in a standard format. They are normally published in October, seven months after the financial year end. This report looks at the section on parking income and expenditure from 2015-16 to 2019-20 and is based primarily on data reported by Statistics for Wales (Welsh Government (2023)), as well as data reported by English and Scottish Local Government authorities; all of the sources are listed in the references.¹

The published data is less comprehensive than in England and does not split out on- and off-street parking or show penalty income separately. The figures do not include any commercial off-street parking. In 2019-20, 20 councils showed surpluses and two showed deficits. All councils are now receiving income from parking.

2 Summary

Table 1: Summary of parking accounts for Wales (£ millions)

		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19
Parking	Income	35.8	37.4	38.5	41.9	43.0	2.5%
	Expenditure	22.0	23.4	24.1	-16.1	-15.4	-4.2%
	Surplus	13.8	14.0	14.4	58.0	58.4	0.7%
Total transport	Net expenditure	271.2	270.5	265.3	267.1	270.5	1.3%
	Parking surplus as percentage of net transport expenditure	5.1	5.2	5.4	21.7	21.6	

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Table 1 shows the summary accounts for local authorities in Wales of the incomes and expenditures arising from parking charges and penalty income both for on- and off-street parking. The income has increased by 2.5 %, the expenditure has fallen by 4.2 % and the surplus has increased by 0.7 % compared to the previous fiscal year. Total transport expenditure has increased by 1.3 % and the surplus now represents 21.6 % of net transport expenditure. Since 2015-16 income has risen by 20.0% and expenditure has fallen by 170.0%. Over the same period the surplus has risen by 322.8%. Figure 1 gives a longer term overview of the trends in incomes, expenditures and surpluses.

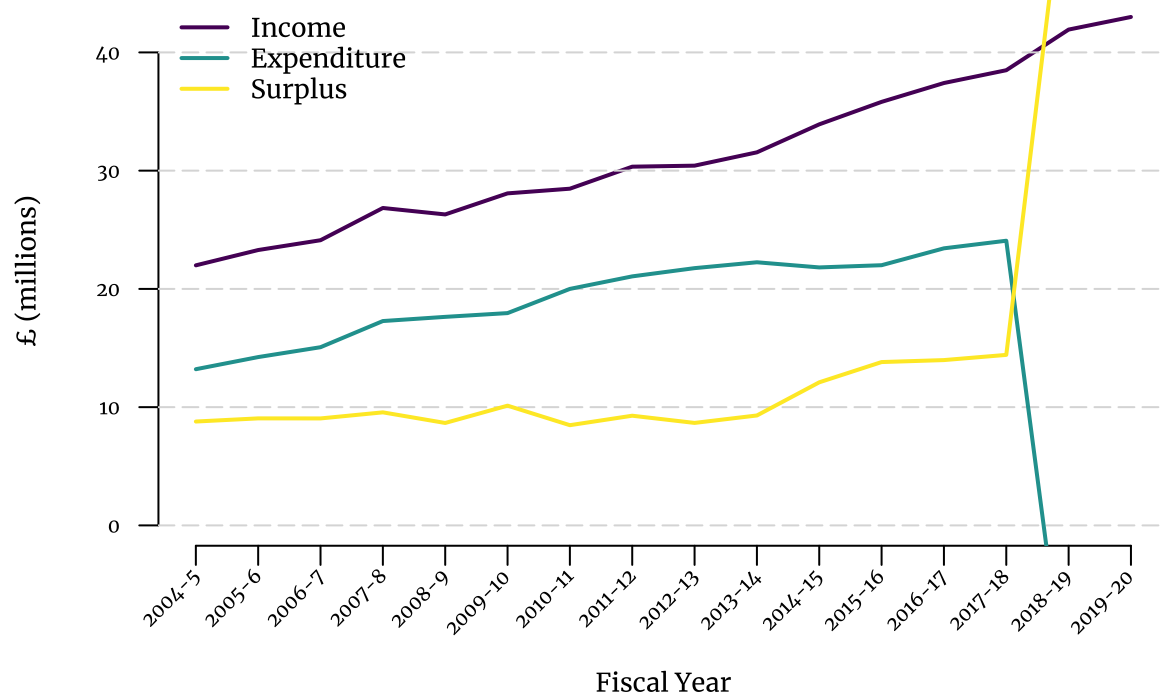


Figure 1: Parking revenues–Wales

3 Income

Total council parking income from all sources in 2019-20 was £43.0 million, 2.5% higher than 2018-19. Note that this includes penalty income, which is not shown separately, but does not include off-street income received by commercial off-street parking facilities. Table 2 ranks the Welsh councils in terms of parking income.

In Wales as a whole 14 councils increased their income over the past year and eight decreased their income. The changes from 2018-19 are mapped² in Figure 4 in the Annex. The annualised changes over the previous four years are plotted in Figure 5, using the same colour palette.

The top three Welsh councils by income were Cardiff, Swansea, and Carmarthenshire, and between them accounted for 43.5% of parking income.

The three councils which had the largest year-on-year percentage increases in income were Torfaen (up 1700.0%), Caerphilly (up 51.2%) and Bridgend (up 41.4%). The biggest decreases were in Blaenau Gwent (24.1%), and Isle of Anglesey (12.2%).

Table 2: Parking income for Wales (£,000)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19	Average annual change from 2015-16
Cardiff	7,257	7,599	8,629	9,739	9,551	-1.9%	7.1%
Swansea	5,446	5,666	5,932	6,978	6,441	-7.7%	4.3%
Carmarthenshire	3,106	3,092	3,035	2,882	2,709	-6.0%	-3.4%
Gwynedd	2,538	2,490	2,539	2,697	2,699	0.1%	1.5%
Conwy	1,886	1,935	1,903	2,227	2,391	7.4%	6.1%
Pembrokeshire	1,783	1,867	1,916	2,173	2,065	-5.0%	3.7%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1,291	1,322	1,090	1,324	1,764	33.2%	8.1%
Powys	1,602	1,684	1,653	1,683	1,741	3.5%	2.1%
Neath Port Talbot	1,376	1,375	1,500	1,652	1,722	4.2%	5.8%
Bridgend	1,220	1,127	1,139	1,211	1,712	41.4%	8.8%
Denbighshire	1,300	1,711	1,517	1,515	1,585	4.6%	5.1%
Monmouthshire	1,421	1,522	1,535	1,446	1,492	3.2%	1.2%
Ceredigion	980	1,109	1,055	1,058	1,259	18.9%	6.4%
Wrexham	896	974	1,113	1,067	1,092	2.3%	5.1%
Caerphilly	702	675	641	688	1,041	51.2%	10.4%
Flintshire	439	599	571	721	925	28.3%	20.5%
Vale of Glamorgan	686	764	737	807	738	-8.6%	1.8%
Merthyr Tydfil	690	608	725	684	697	1.9%	0.2%
Newport	640	643	591	649	637	-1.9%	-0.1%

²Boundary data for this and all further maps is from Office for National Statistics (2017). Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Table 2: Parking income for Wales (£,000) (*continued*)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19	Average annual change from 2015-16
Isle of Anglesey	523	605	639	682	599	-12.2%	3.5%
Torfaen	5	15	4	6	108	1700.0%	115.6%
Blaenau Gwent	30	30	30	40	30	-24.1%	0.0%
Total	35,817	37,410	38,494	41,929	42,997	2.5%	4.7%

4 Expenditure

Table 3 ranks the councils in terms of expenditure on parking.

Overall expenditure has risen by £0.7 million (4.2%) after a fall of £40.2m last year.

In Wales as a whole 11 councils increased their expenditures over the past year and 11 decreased them. The changes from 2018-19 are mapped in Figure 2 in the Annex. The average annual changes over the previous four years are plotted in Figure 3 in the Annex, using the same colour palette.

The largest increase in expenditure occurred in Rhondda Cynon Taf where it increased by 441.9% while Torfaen and Newport increased by 162.6% and 72.1% respectively. The biggest decreases were in Carmarthenshire (20.5%), and Swansea (20.5%) (excluding Caerphilly with expenditure under £30,000).

The table also shows the proportion of income taken up by costs in 2019-20. Nationally in Wales it is -35.8% with Cardiff at -41.8%.

Table 3: Parking expenditure for Wales (£,000)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19	Average annual change since 2015-16	Expenditure as proportion of income
Blaenau Gwent	340	866	483	323	379	17.4%	2.7%	1264.1%
Torfaen	86	87	82	115	302	162.6%	36.9%	279.6%
Caerphilly	512	658	550	302	-17	-105.8%		-1.7%
Vale of Glamorgan	578	632	686	-101	-108	6.9%		-14.6%
Neath Port Talbot	1,168	1,256	1,332	-173	-263	52.2%		-15.3%
Isle of Anglesey	337	358	351	-303	-273	-9.9%		-45.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	519	504	510	-280	-279	-0.2%		-40.1%
Newport	503	633	286	-181	-312	72.1%		-49.0%

Table 3: Parking expenditure for Wales (£,000) (*continued*)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19	Average annual change since 2015-16	Expenditure as proportion of income
Bridgend	988	833	889	-204	-324	58.5%		-18.9%
Flintshire	862	726	678	-321	-361	12.5%		-39.1%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	794	791	906	-69	-375	441.9%		-21.2%
Denbighshire	842	1,053	1,053	-445	-407	-8.7%		-25.6%
Wrexham	580	838	812	-403	-445	10.5%		-40.8%
Ceredigion	964	589	567	-486	-619	27.4%		-49.2%
Monmouthshire	490	594	671	-778	-676	-13.1%		-45.3%
Pembrokeshire	1,200	1,270	1,319	-803	-759	-5.5%		-36.8%
Carmarthenshire	1,712	1,764	2,115	-957	-761	-20.5%		-28.1%
Powys	763	789	822	-860	-883	2.6%		-50.7%
Conwy	828	916	954	-1,169	-1,233	5.5%		-51.6%
Gwynedd	1,130	1,135	1,157	-1,562	-1,389	-11.1%		-51.5%
Swansea	3,044	3,199	3,087	-3,281	-2,608	-20.5%		-40.5%
Cardiff	3,763	3,941	4,764	-4,448	-3,991	-10.3%		-41.8%
Total	22,003	23,431	24,074	-16,085	-15,402	-4.2%		-35.8%

Table 4 shows the proportion of income taken up by expenditure. Across Wales it was -35.8% compared to -38.4% in the previous year.

Cardiff's expenditure was -41.8% of its income having risen since last year, while Swansea's has risen to -40.5%.

Care should be taken in interpreting the percentages towards the bottom of the table, as the very low parking incomes can lead to extreme values which are less meaningful.

Table 4: Parking expenditure as a proportion of parking income

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Blaenau Gwent	1134.8%	2887.2%	1599.7%	818.1%	1264.1%
Torfaen	1720.0%	580.0%	2050.0%	1916.7%	279.6%
Caerphilly	72.9%	97.5%	85.8%	43.8%	-1.7%
Vale of Glamorgan	84.3%	82.7%	93.1%	-12.5%	-14.6%
Neath Port Talbot	84.9%	91.4%	88.8%	-10.4%	-15.3%
Isle of Anglesey	64.4%	59.2%	54.9%	-44.4%	-45.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	75.2%	82.9%	70.4%	-40.9%	-40.1%
Newport	78.5%	98.5%	48.3%	-27.9%	-49.0%
Bridgend	81.0%	73.8%	78.0%	-16.9%	-18.9%
Flintshire	196.4%	121.3%	118.8%	-44.6%	-39.1%

Table 4: Parking expenditure as a proportion of parking income
(continued)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Rhondda Cynon Taf	61.5%	59.8%	83.1%	-5.2%	-21.2%
Denbighshire	64.8%	61.5%	69.4%	-29.4%	-25.6%
Wrexham	64.8%	86.0%	73.0%	-37.7%	-40.8%
Ceredigion	98.4%	53.1%	53.8%	-45.9%	-49.2%
Monmouthshire	34.5%	39.0%	43.7%	-53.8%	-45.3%
Pembrokeshire	67.3%	68.0%	68.8%	-37.0%	-36.8%
Carmarthenshire	55.1%	57.1%	69.7%	-33.2%	-28.1%
Powys	47.6%	46.9%	49.7%	-51.1%	-50.7%
Conwy	43.9%	47.3%	50.1%	-52.5%	-51.6%
Gwynedd	44.5%	45.6%	45.6%	-57.9%	-51.5%
Swansea	55.9%	56.5%	52.0%	-47.0%	-40.5%
Cardiff	51.9%	51.9%	55.2%	-45.7%	-41.8%
Total	61.4%	62.6%	62.5%	-38.4%	-35.8%

* Any empty cells indicate the council reported no income and/or no expenditure

5 Surpluses

Table 5 shows the parking surpluses from from 2015-16 to 2019-20 and the change from 2018-19 to 2019-20. It also shows the proportion that parking surpluses represent of total transport expenditure.

The total *surpluses* for Wales amounted to £58.9 million between 20 authorities of which Cardiff, Swansea, and Gwynedd contributed 45.3%.

‘Two councils made a loss with the total of parking deficits rising to £0.5 million from £0.4 million last year.

Overall, parking contributed £58.4 million to local authority finances in Wales in 2019-20 compared with £58.0 million in 2019-20, an increase of 0.7%.

Caerphilly increased their surplus by 173.8% while Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend increased by 53.5% and 43.8% respectively. The biggest decreases were in Swansea (11.8%), and Isle of Anglesey (11.5%).

The largest increase of deficit was incurred by Torfaen which increased their deficit by 78.0 %

The biggest decrease was in Blaenau Gwent where the deficit fell by (23.1 %)

Table 5: Parking surpluses for Wales (£,000)

Local Authority	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Change 2019-20 on 2018-19	Surplus as proportion of transport spending
Cardiff	3,494	3,658	3,865	14,187	13,542	-4.5%	57.8%
Swansea	2,402	2,467	2,845	10,259	9,049	-11.8%	41.4%
Gwynedd	1,408	1,355	1,382	4,259	4,088	-4.0%	26.4%
Conwy	1,058	1,019	949	3,395	3,624	6.7%	45.0%
Carmarthenshire	1,394	1,328	920	3,839	3,470	-9.6%	21.3%
Pembrokeshire	583	597	597	2,976	2,824	-5.1%	24.8%
Powys	839	895	831	2,543	2,624	3.2%	19.4%
Monmouthshire	931	929	864	2,224	2,168	-2.5%	41.5%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	497	531	184	1,393	2,139	53.5%	12.1%
Bridgend	232	295	250	1,415	2,036	43.8%	17.0%
Denbighshire	458	658	464	1,960	1,991	1.6%	20.9%
Neath Port Talbot	208	118	168	1,825	1,985	8.7%	14.4%
Ceredigion	16	520	488	1,544	1,878	21.6%	15.6%
Wrexham	316	136	301	1,470	1,537	4.5%	17.1%
Flintshire	-423	-127	-108	1,043	1,287	23.4%	6.9%
Caerphilly	190	17	91	387	1,059	173.8%	7.0%
Merthyr Tydfil	171	104	215	963	976	1.3%	19.2%
Newport	137	9	306	830	948	14.2%	7.9%

Isle of Anglesey	186	247	288	985	872	-11.5%	11.0%
Vale of Glamorgan	108	132	51	908	846	-6.8%	9.2%
Torfaen	-81	-72	-78	-109	-194	<i>78.0%</i>	-2.4%
Blaenau Gwent	-310	-836	-453	-284	-349	<i>23.1%</i>	-6.4%
Total deficit	-814	-1,035	-639	-393	-543	<i>38.3%</i>	-4.0%
Total surplus	14,628	15,015	15,059	58,406	58,942	0.9%	22.9%
Total	13,814	13,979	14,420	58,014	58,399	0.7%	21.6%

* Where the change in surplus is actually a change in deficit, the values are in italics

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National comparisons

Table 6: Comparison of parking income and expenditure in across the nations of Great Britain (£ millions, latest year available)

	England without London	London	Scotland	Wales	Great Britain
Fiscal year	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)
Parking income	987.5	726.7	92.8	43.0	1850.0
Parking expenditure	554.0	281.6	43.5	-15.4	863.8
Surplus	433.5	445.1	49.3	58.4	986.3
Surplus as proportion of income	43.9%	61.3%	53.1%	135.8%	53.3%

Table 6 provides a comparison with London, England excluding London, Wales, and Scotland for the most recent available data, while Table 7 compares the changes between 2019-20 and the previous year, with the average annual change over the four-year period starting in 2015-16 (or the most recent four-year period for which data is available). In the last year the surpluses for Wales have increased by 0.7%, which is less than the average annual increase observed over the preceding four years, which was 43.4%.

On average, parking surpluses in Great Britain have risen by about -2.1% annually over the four years compared with 2.8% annually for the Retail Prices Index during the same period (Office for National Statistics (2023)).

Table 7: Changes in parking income and expenditure over previous four years (from most recent year available) across the nations of Great Britain

	England without London	London	Scotland	Wales	Great Britain
Most recent year available	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)	(2019-20)
Average annual change in income	293.8 %	NA %	4.5 %	4.7 %	99.1 %
Change in income since previous year	3.8 %	-0.2 %	4.8 %	2.5 %	2.2 %
Average annual change in expenditure	276.9 %	NA %	2.4 %	NaN %	91.4 %
Change in expenditure since previous year	9.9 %	2.9 %	4.7 %	-4.2 %	7.6 %
Average annual change in surplus	322.3 %	NA %	6.6 %	43.4 %	107.3 %
Change in surplus since previous year	-3.2 %	-2.0 %	4.9 %	0.7 %	-2.1 %

Maps

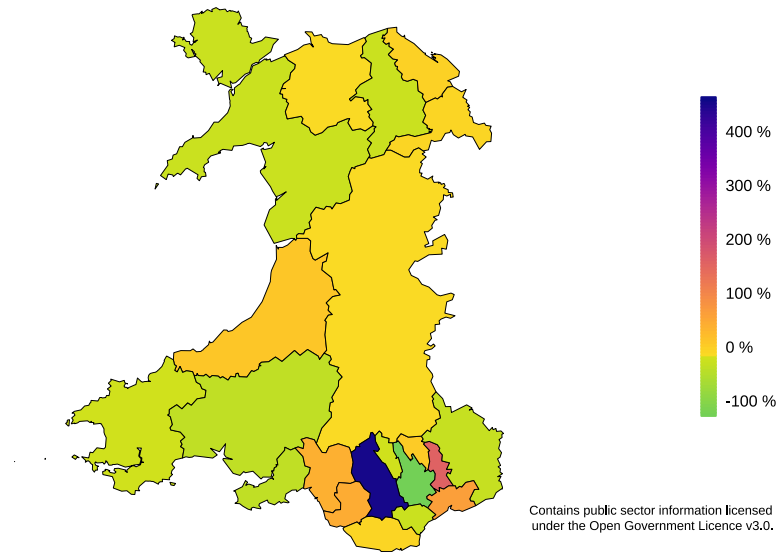


Figure 2: Map of change in parking expenditure from 2018-19 to 2019-20 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

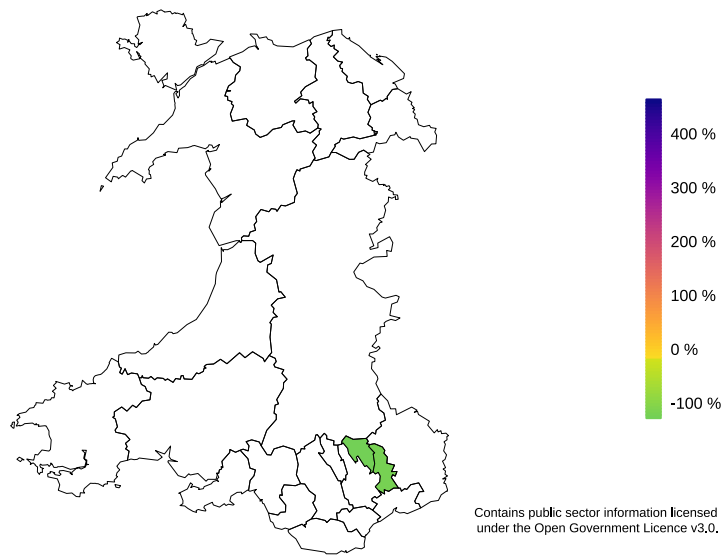


Figure 3: Map of average annual change in parking expenditure over the past four years from 2015-16 to 2019-20 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

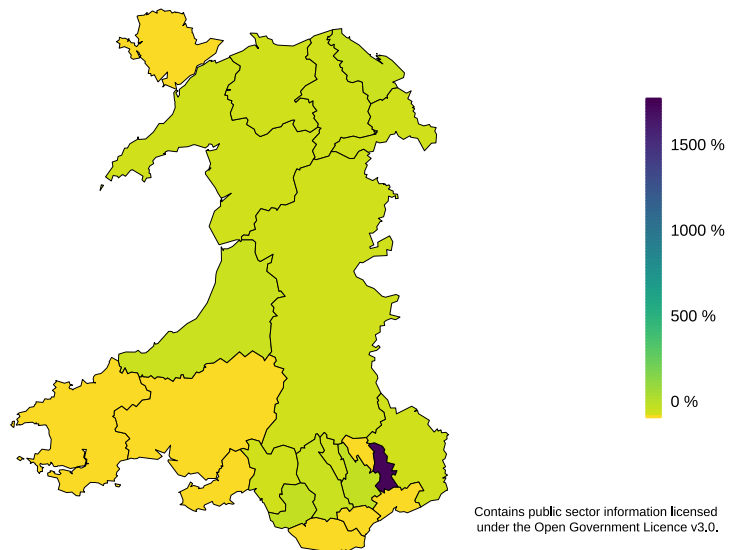


Figure 4: Map of change in parking income from 2018-19 to 2019-20 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

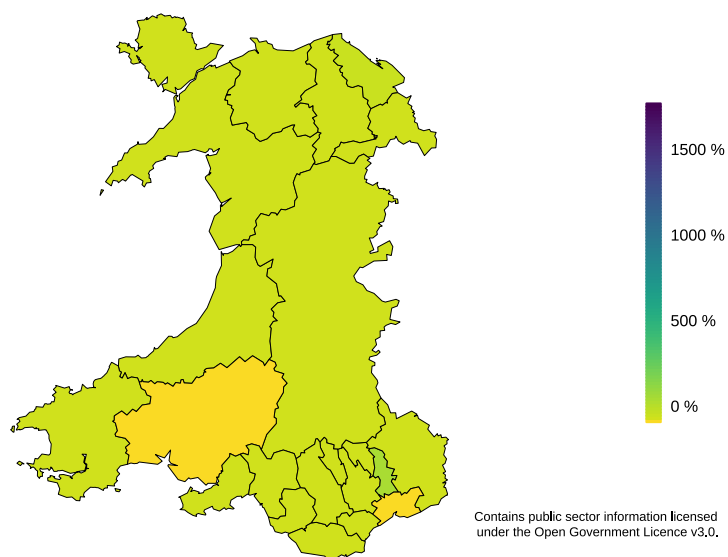


Figure 5: Map of average annual change in parking income over the past four years from 2015-16 to 2019-20 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))