

Local Authority Parking Finances in Wales 2020 - 21

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 2016-17 to 2020-21 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 2020-21, 14 councils showed surpluses and eight showed deficits. All councils are now receiving income from parking.

2 Summary

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

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20
Parking	Income	37.4	38.5	41.9	43.0	17.0	-60.4%
	Expenditure	23.4	24.1	-16.1	-15.4	9.2	-159.9%
	Surplus	14.0	14.4	58.0	58.4	7.8	-86.6%
Total transport	Net expenditure	270.5	265.3	267.1	270.5	310.4	14.7%

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

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20
Parking surplus as percentage of net transport expenditure	5.2	5.4	21.7	21.6	2.5	

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 fallen by 60.4 %, the expenditure has fallen by 159.9 % and the surplus has fallen by 86.6 % compared to the previous fiscal year. Total transport expenditure has stayed approximately the same and the surplus now represents 2.5 % of net transport expenditure. Since 2016-17 income has fallen by 54.5% and expenditure has fallen by 60.6%. Over the same period the surplus has fallen by 44.1%. Figure 1 gives a longer term overview of the trends in incomes, expenditures and surpluses.

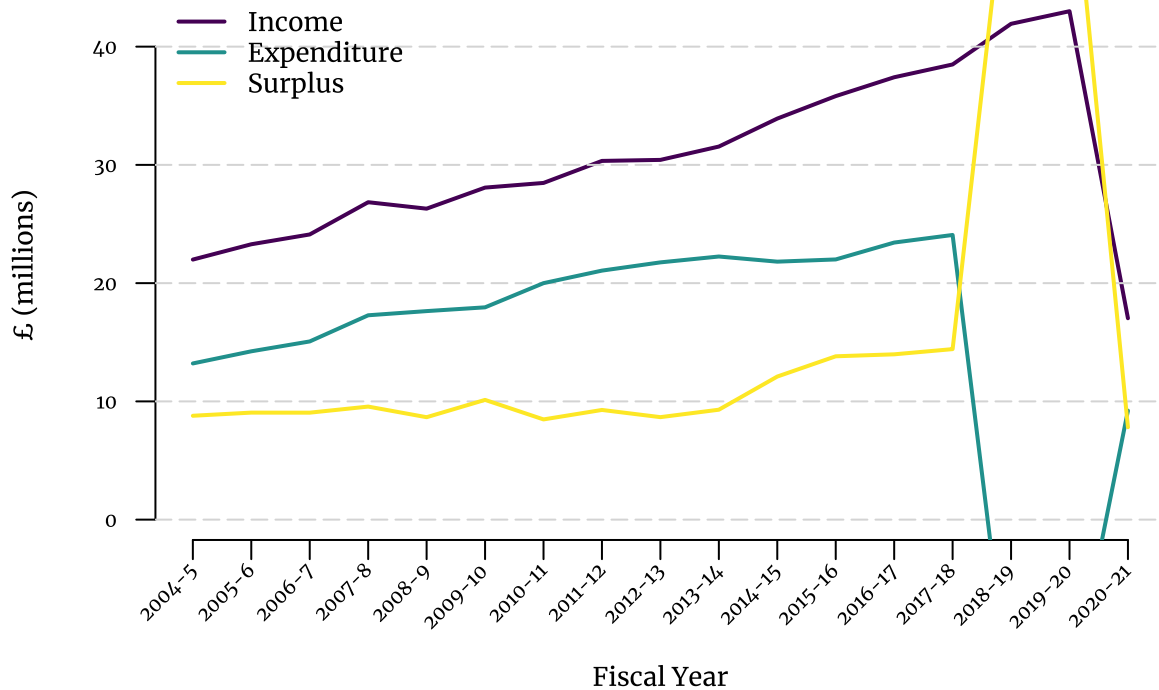


Figure 1: Parking revenues—Wales

3 Income

Total council parking income from all sources in 2020-21 was £17.0 million, 60.4% lower than 2019-20. 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 Zero councils increased their income over the past year and 21 decreased their income. Another single council's income stayed the same. The changes from 2019-20 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 Gwynedd, and between them accounted for 44.9% of parking income.

The three councils which had the largest year-on-year percentage increases in income were Blaenau Gwent (up 0.0%), Vale of Glamorgan (up -14.9%) and Newport (up -21.2%). The biggest decreases were in Flintshire (95.1%), and Wrexham (89.6%).

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

Local Authority	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20	Average annual change from 2016-17
Cardiff	7,599	8,629	9,739	9,551	3,421	-64.2%	-18.1%
Swansea	5,666	5,932	6,978	6,441	2,715	-57.8%	-16.8%
Gwynedd	2,490	2,539	2,697	2,699	1,507	-44.2%	-11.8%
Pembrokeshire	1,867	1,916	2,173	2,065	1,120	-45.8%	-12.0%
Conwy	1,935	1,903	2,227	2,391	1,015	-57.5%	-14.9%
Carmarthenshire	3,092	3,035	2,882	2,709	971	-64.2%	-25.1%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1,322	1,090	1,324	1,764	936	-46.9%	-8.3%
Powys	1,684	1,653	1,683	1,741	721	-58.6%	-19.1%
Bridgend	1,127	1,139	1,211	1,712	673	-60.7%	-12.1%
Denbighshire	1,711	1,517	1,515	1,585	652	-58.8%	-21.4%
Vale of Glamorgan	764	737	807	738	628	-14.9%	-4.8%
Monmouthshire	1,522	1,535	1,446	1,492	617	-58.7%	-20.2%
Newport	643	591	649	637	502	-21.2%	-6.0%
Neath Port Talbot	1,375	1,500	1,652	1,722	411	-76.1%	-26.0%
Merthyr Tydfil	608	725	684	697	292	-58.1%	-16.7%
Isle of Anglesey	605	639	682	599	263	-56.1%	-18.8%
Caerphilly	675	641	688	1,041	170	-83.7%	-29.2%
Ceredigion	1,109	1,055	1,058	1,259	152	-88.0%	-39.2%

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	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20	Average annual change from 2016-17
Wrexham	974	1,113	1,067	1,092	113	-89.6%	-41.6%
Torfaen	15	4	6	108	75	-30.6%	49.5%
Flintshire	599	571	721	925	46	-95.1%	-47.4%
Blaenau Gwent	30	30	40	30	30	0.0%	0.0%
Total	37,410	38,494	41,929	42,997	17,030	-60.4%	-17.9%

4 Expenditure

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

Overall expenditure has risen by £24.6 million (159.9%) after a rise of £0.7 million last year.

In Wales as a whole 20 councils increased their expenditures over the past year and two decreased them. The changes from 2019-20 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 Blaenau Gwent where it increased by -16.6% while Torfaen and Gwynedd increased by -20.2% and -78.5% respectively. The biggest decreases were in Caerphilly (3761.9%), and Neath Port Talbot (515.5%).

The table also shows the proportion of income taken up by costs in 2020-21. Nationally in Wales it is 54.1% with Cardiff at 66.3%.

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

Local Authority	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20	Average annual change since 2016-17	Expenditure as proportion of income
Cardiff	3,941	4,764	-4,448	-3,991	2,267	-156.8%	-12.9%	66.3%
Carmarthenshire	1,764	2,115	-957	-761	1,172	-254.0%	-9.7%	120.7%
Neath Port Talbot	1,256	1,332	-173	-263	1,092	-515.5%	-3.4%	265.3%
Caerphilly	658	550	302	-17	639	-3761.9%	-0.7%	376.7%
Flintshire	726	678	-321	-361	585	-262.0%	-5.2%	1278.7%
Wrexham	838	812	-403	-445	581	-230.6%	-8.8%	513.3%
Ceredigion	589	567	-486	-619	489	-179.0%	-4.5%	322.7%

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

Local Authority	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20	Average annual change since 2016-17	Expenditure as proportion of income
Bridgend	833	889	-204	-324	435	-234.3%	-15.0%	64.6%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	791	906	-69	-375	426	-213.7%	-14.3%	45.5%
Denbighshire	1,053	1,053	-445	-407	390	-195.9%	-22.0%	59.8%
Blaenau Gwent	866	483	323	379	316	-16.6%	-22.3%	1054.7%
Torfaen	87	82	115	302	241	-20.2%	29.0%	321.3%
Pembrokeshire	1,270	1,319	-803	-759	182	-124.0%	-38.5%	16.2%
Powys	789	822	-860	-883	153	-117.3%	-33.7%	21.2%
Newport	633	286	-181	-312	127	-140.8%	-33.0%	25.4%
Monmouthshire	594	671	-778	-676	116	-117.1%	-33.6%	18.8%
Merthyr Tydfil	504	510	-280	-279	100	-135.9%	-33.2%	34.3%
Isle of Anglesey	358	351	-303	-273	92	-133.7%	-28.8%	35.0%
Vale of Glamorgan	632	686	-101	-108	73	-167.6%	-41.7%	11.6%
Conwy	916	954	-1,169	-1,233	51	-104.2%	-51.3%	5.1%
Swansea	3,199	3,087	-3,281	-2,608	-10	-99.6%		-0.4%
Gwynedd	1,135	1,157	-1,562	-1,389	-298	-78.5%		-19.8%
Total	23,431	24,074	-16,085	-15,402	9,221	-159.9%	-20.8%	54.1%

Table 4 shows the proportion of income taken up by expenditure. Across Wales it was 54.1% compared to -35.8% in the previous year.

Cardiff's expenditure was 66.3% of its income having risen since last year, while Swansea's has risen to -0.4%.

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	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Cardiff	51.9%	55.2%	-45.7%	-41.8%	66.3%
Carmarthenshire	57.1%	69.7%	-33.2%	-28.1%	120.7%
Neath Port Talbot	91.4%	88.8%	-10.4%	-15.3%	265.3%
Caerphilly	97.5%	85.8%	43.8%	-1.7%	376.7%
Flintshire	121.3%	118.8%	-44.6%	-39.1%	1278.7%
Wrexham	86.0%	73.0%	-37.7%	-40.8%	513.3%
Ceredigion	53.1%	53.8%	-45.9%	-49.2%	322.7%
Bridgend	73.8%	78.0%	-16.9%	-18.9%	64.6%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	59.8%	83.1%	-5.2%	-21.2%	45.5%

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

Local Authority	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Denbighshire	61.5%	69.4%	-29.4%	-25.6%	59.8%
Blaenau Gwent	2887.2%	1599.7%	818.1%	1264.1%	1054.7%
Torfaen	580.0%	2050.0%	1916.7%	279.6%	321.3%
Pembrokeshire	68.0%	68.8%	-37.0%	-36.8%	16.2%
Powys	46.9%	49.7%	-51.1%	-50.7%	21.2%
Newport	98.5%	48.3%	-27.9%	-49.0%	25.4%
Monmouthshire	39.0%	43.7%	-53.8%	-45.3%	18.8%
Merthyr Tydfil	82.9%	70.4%	-40.9%	-40.1%	34.3%
Isle of Anglesey	59.2%	54.9%	-44.4%	-45.6%	35.0%
Vale of Glamorgan	82.7%	93.1%	-12.5%	-14.6%	11.6%
Conwy	47.3%	50.1%	-52.5%	-51.6%	5.1%
Swansea	56.5%	52.0%	-47.0%	-40.5%	-0.4%
Gwynedd	45.6%	45.6%	-57.9%	-51.5%	-19.8%
Total	62.6%	62.5%	-38.4%	-35.8%	54.1%

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

5 Surpluses

Table 5 shows the parking surpluses from from 2016-17 to 2020-21 and the change from 2019-20 to 2020-21. It also shows the proportion that parking surpluses represent of total transport expenditure.

The total *surpluses* for Wales amounted to £11.0 million between 14 authorities of which Swansea, Gwynedd, and Cardiff contributed 51.9%.

Eight councils made a loss with the total of parking deficits rising to £3.1 million from £0.5 million last year.

Overall, parking contributed £7.8 million to local authority finances in Wales in 2020-21 compared with £58.4 million in 2020-21, an increase of -86.6%.

Vale of Glamorgan increased their surplus by -34.4% while Gwynedd and Newport increased by -55.8% and -60.5% respectively. The biggest decreases were in Cardiff (91.5%), and Bridgend (88.3%).

The largest increase of deficit was incurred by Torfaen which increased their deficit by -14.4 %

The biggest decrease was in Blaenau Gwent where the deficit fell by (18.0 %)

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

Local Authority	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Change 2020-21 on 2019-20	Surplus as proportion of transport spending
Swansea	2,467	2,845	10,259	9,049	2,725	-69.9%	12.0%
Gwynedd	1,355	1,382	4,259	4,088	1,805	-55.8%	10.5%
Cardiff	3,658	3,865	14,187	13,542	1,154	-91.5%	3.4%
Conwy	1,019	949	3,395	3,624	964	-73.4%	9.1%
Pembrokeshire	597	597	2,976	2,824	938	-66.8%	7.4%
Powys	895	831	2,543	2,624	568	-78.3%	3.2%
Vale of Glamorgan	132	51	908	846	555	-34.4%	5.5%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	531	184	1,393	2,139	510	-76.2%	2.8%
Monmouthshire	929	864	2,224	2,168	501	-76.9%	7.0%
Newport	9	306	830	948	374	-60.5%	2.4%
Denbighshire	658	464	1,960	1,991	262	-86.8%	2.6%
Bridgend	295	250	1,415	2,036	238	-88.3%	1.8%
Merthyr Tydfil	104	215	963	976	192	-80.3%	3.5%
Isle of Anglesey	247	288	985	872	171	-80.4%	1.6%
Torfaen	-72	-78	-109	-194	-166	-14.4%	-1.9%
Carmarthenshire	1,328	920	3,839	3,470	-201	NA%	-1.1%
Blaenau Gwent	-836	-453	-284	-349	-286	-18.0%	-4.9%

Ceredigion	520	488	1,544	1,878	-338	NA%	-3.0%
Wrexham	136	301	1,470	1,537	-468	NA%	-4.8%
Caerphilly	17	91	387	1,059	-470	NA%	-2.8%
Flintshire	-127	-108	1,043	1,287	-540	NA%	-2.9%
Neath Port Talbot	118	168	1,825	1,985	-680	NA%	-4.2%
Total deficit	-1,035	-639	-393	-543	-3,148	479.6%	-3.0%
Total surplus	15,015	15,059	58,406	58,942	10,958	-81.4%	5.3%
Total	13,979	14,420	58,014	58,399	7,809	-86.6%	2.5%

* 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	(2018-19)	(2018-19)	(2020-21)	(2020-21)	(2019-20)
Parking income	1021.3	728.0	42.7	17.0	135.8
Parking expenditure	539.6	273.5	44.7	9.2	28.1
Surplus	481.7	454.4	-1.9	7.8	107.7
Surplus as proportion of income	47.2%	62.4%	-4.5%	45.9%	79.3%

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 2020-21 and the previous year, with the average annual change over the four-year period starting in 2016-17 (or the most recent four-year period for which data is available). In the last year the surpluses for Wales have decreased by -86.6%, which is less than the average annual increase observed over the preceding four years, which was -13.5%.

On average, parking surpluses in Great Britain have risen by about -89.7% annually over the four years compared with 2.8% annually for the Retail Prices Index during the same period (Office for National Statistics (2023)).³

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	(2018-19)	(2018-19)	(2020-21)	(2020-21)	(2019-20)
Average annual change in income	4.3 %	5.8 %	-15.2 %	-17.9 %	-46.1 %
Change in income since previous year	4.2 %	7.1 %	-54.0 %	-60.4 %	-92.8 %
Average annual change in expenditure	2.8 %	0.0 %	2.8 %	-20.8 %	-56.8 %
Change in expenditure since previous year	5.1 %	-0.1 %	2.6 %	-159.9 %	-96.6 %
Average annual change in surplus	6.1 %	10.2 %	NaN %	-13.5 %	-39.5 %
Change in surplus since previous year	3.1 %	11.9 %	-103.9 %	-86.6 %	-89.7 %

³The most recent data available for Great Britain as a whole is from the year 2019-20 and all calculations are therefore performed for the four years previous i.e. from 2015-16.

Maps

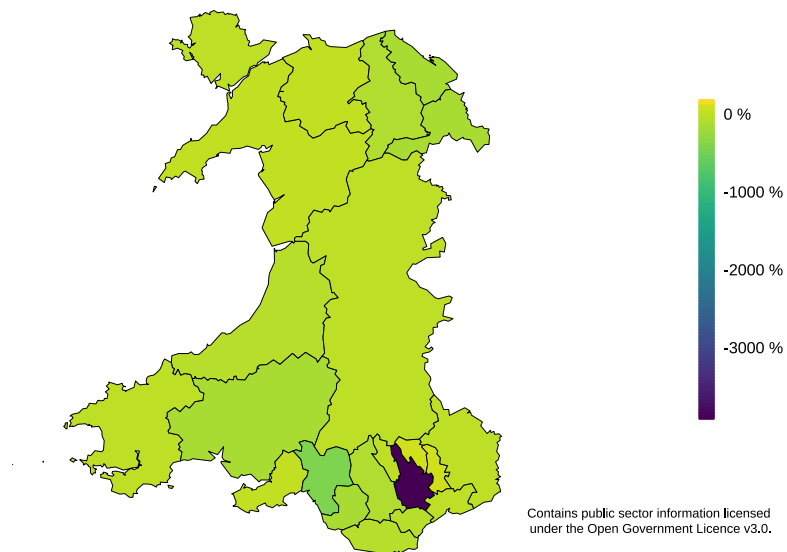


Figure 2: Map of change in parking expenditure from 2019-20 to 2020-21 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

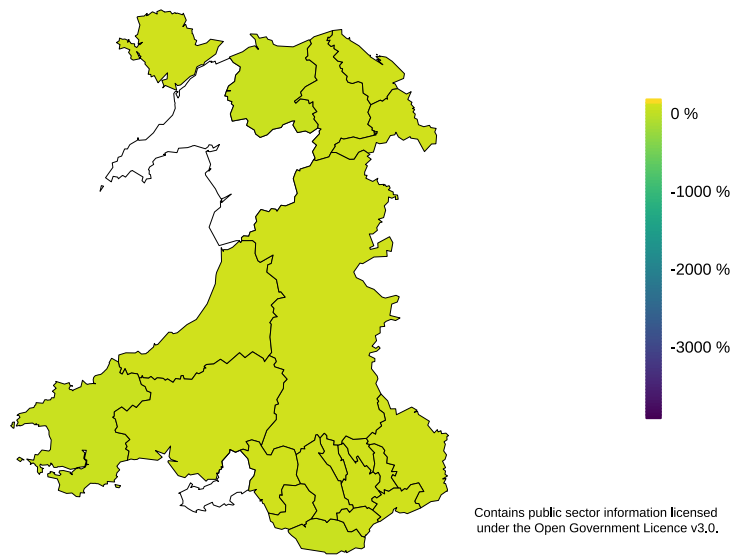


Figure 3: Map of average annual change in parking expenditure over the past four years from 2016-17 to 2020-21 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

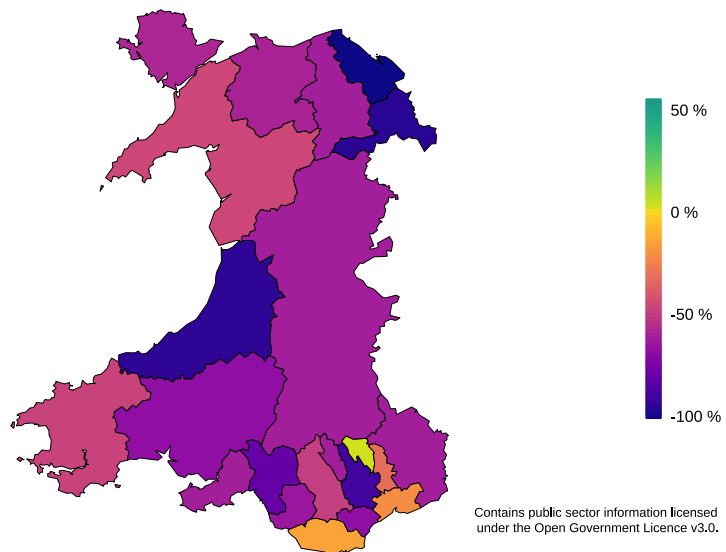


Figure 4: Map of change in parking income from 2019-20 to 2020-21 (Boundary data for this map is from Office for National Statistics (2017))

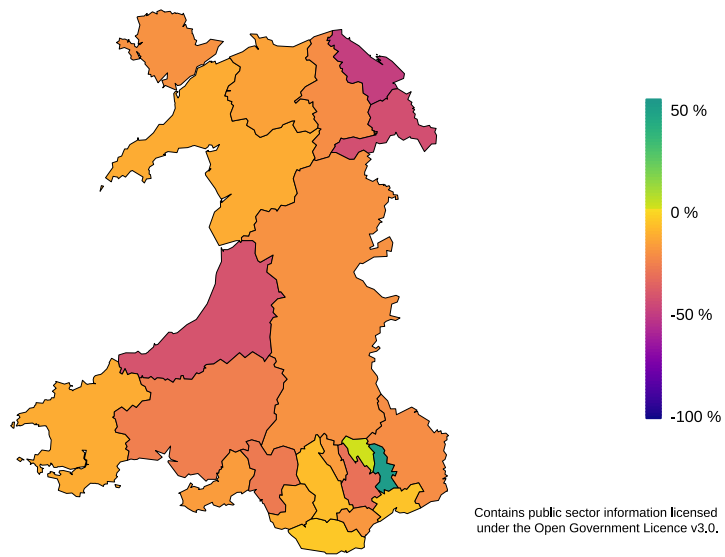


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