

Area Profile - Torfaen Social Services

Introduction

This area profile has been developed to support Torfaen County Borough Council's Director of Social Services' Annual Report which sets out Torfaen social services' performance. The information about Torfaen in this section supports the director's report by putting that performance into context relating to the way that Torfaen's social services operate.

Three broad areas of information are set out:

- Firstly, the general demographics of the area, including details about population and health;
- Secondly, the service demands placed on Torfaen social services from the needs of vulnerable groups, including children and young people, and older people; and
- Lastly, the level of resources that Torfaen invests in its social services delivery.

Where appropriate the profile makes comparisons between Cardiff's operating context and both the all Wales picture and that of comparable local authorities. The comparable authorities are chosen based on similar results for specific demographic and deprivation indicators. For more information on the comparable authorities methodology please see appendix one. The authorities that have been used for comparison purposes are Denbighshire, the Vale of Glamorgan and Blaenau Gwent.

The information used in this profile has been subject to rigorous quality control procedures. The data sources include: the Office for National Statistics; Welsh Assembly Government; and the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales.

This information has been developed solely to put Torfaen social services' performance into a wider context and does not judge their performance.

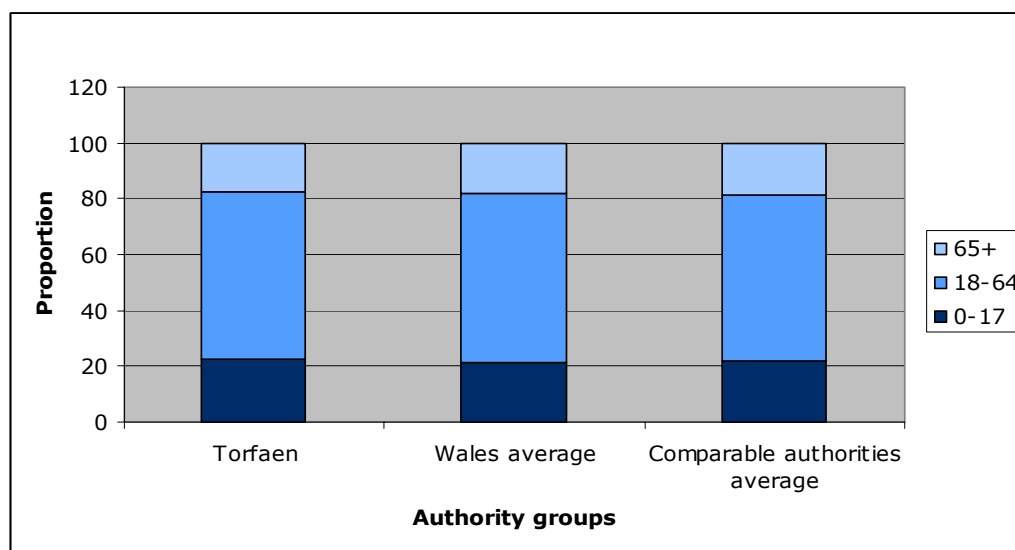
What does the County Borough look like?

This section sets out some general information about Torfaen.

Population

Torfaen has a population of just over 91,000. This compares with a Welsh average population of 135,000 and comparable authorities average of 97,000. Figure 1 shows how the population is proportionately split across different age bands.

Figure 1: Population split by proportion across age bands, 2007.



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

In 2001 the majority of Torfaen's population were from a white background. This was also the case across Wales and the comparable authorities. In 2007 the percentage from a non-white background has remained below 5% for all three.

Table 1: Percentage of population in each ethnic group, 2001.

	White	Mixed	Asian	Chinese or other	Black or Black British
Torfaen	99.06	0.38	0.26	0.21	0.09
Welsh average	97.88	0.61	0.88	0.39	0.24
Comparable authorities average	98.50	0.62	0.43	0.29	0.16

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

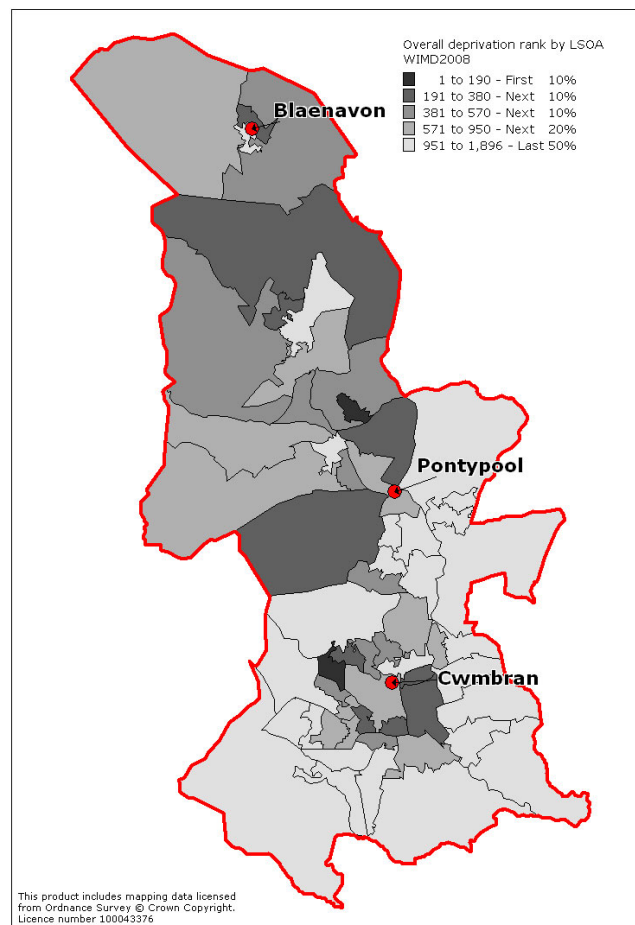
Figure 1 and Table 1 show that the population profiles of Torfaen and the comparable authorities are broadly similar.

Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) takes information produced for local areas across different factors, for example local crime rates, which affect the lives of individuals and communities. WIMD brings this information together to paint a picture of relative deprivation across Wales. Torfaen has two of its local areas in the most 10% deprived in Wales.

Figure 2 shows Torfaen's deprivation profile from WIMD 2008. The darker the colour the more the area is deprived. Three of Torfaen's local areas (parts of Upper Cwmbran, Trevethin and Blaenavon) are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. In general, taking into consideration wider factors, Torfaen suffers more deprivation when compared with Wales overall. Benefit claimants amongst people of working age are around the same proportions as those in comparable local authorities.

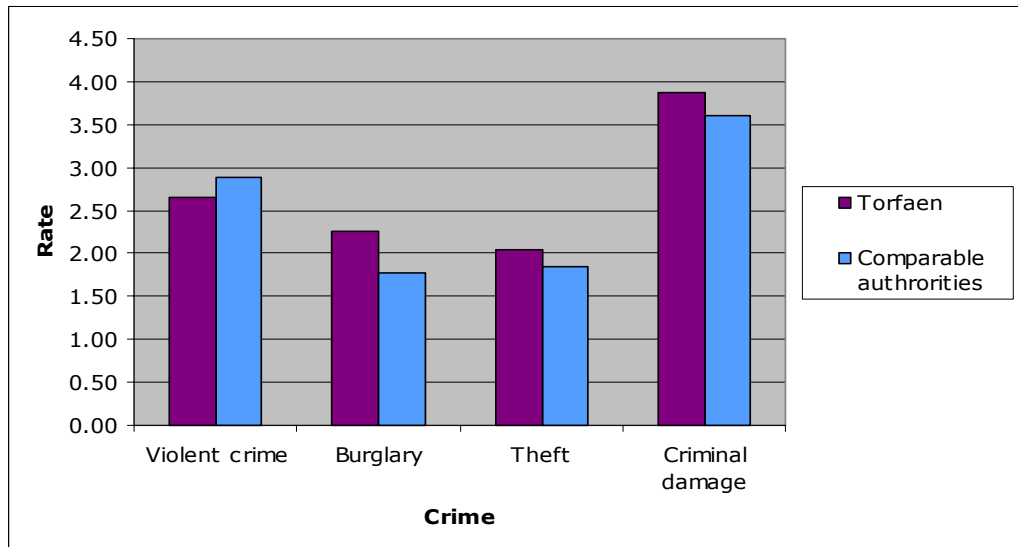
Figure 2: Relative picture of deprivation across Torfaen (WIMD 2008).



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

An area that contributes to Torfaen's overall heightened deprivation profile is recorded crime. Figure 3 shows the level of recorded crime across different categories.

Figure 3: Rate of recorded crime per 100 population.



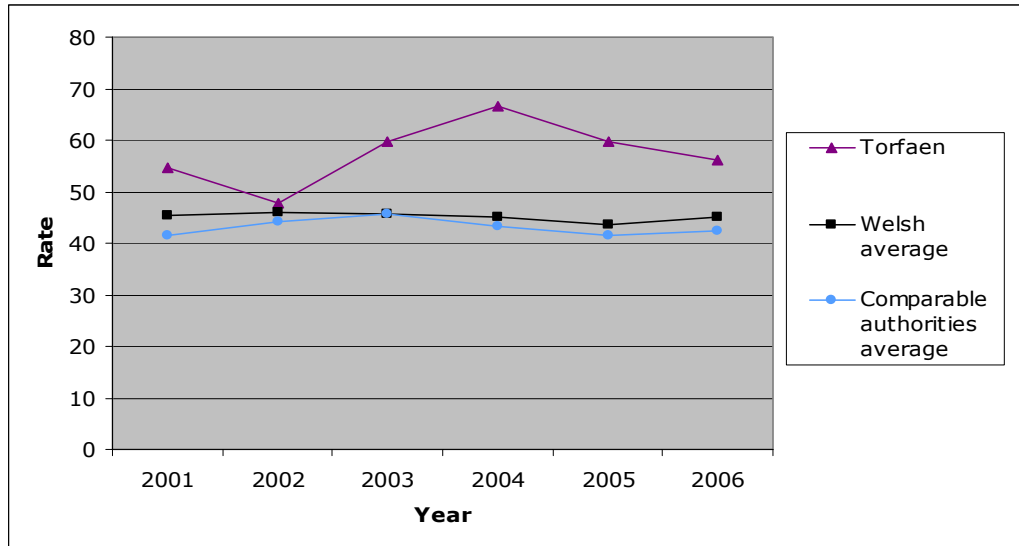
Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Health related issues

In Torfaen 28% of people reported that they have a long term limiting illness. This is broadly similar to the Welsh average. However, there are less people of pensionable age reporting that they have a long term limiting illness than both the Welsh and comparable authorities' average. Therefore, Torfaen has proportionately more people with long term limiting health problems who are younger than pensionable age. In addition, Torfaen has more people under 65 who claim severe disability allowance than the comparable authorities' average.

Figure 4 shows the rate of teenage conceptions in Torfaen. Across the period shown Torfaen has a consistently higher rate of teenage conceptions than the Welsh average.

Figure 4: Rate of teenage conceptions per female population aged 15-17.

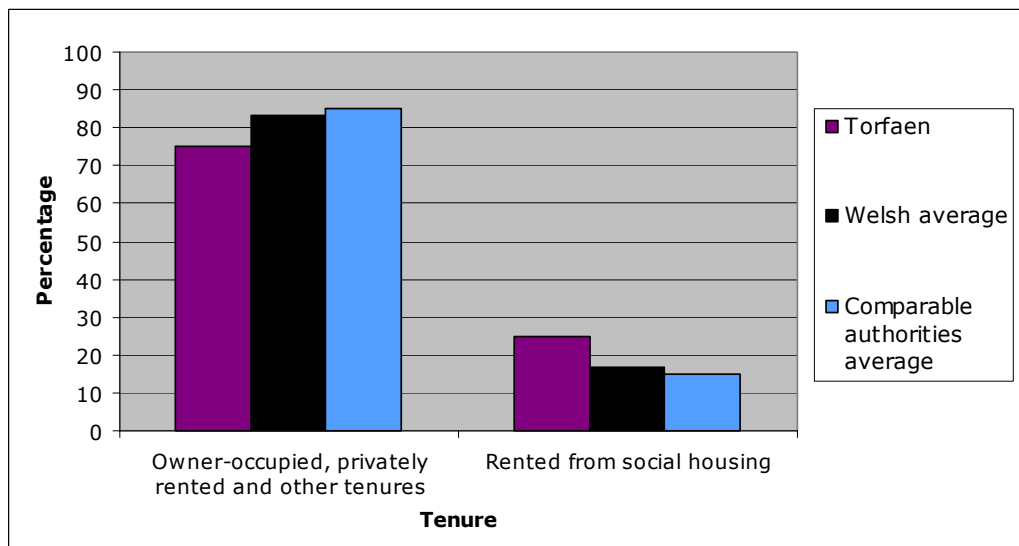


Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS)

Housing

Although Torfaen have transferred their stock to registered social landlords, more households rent from social housing than in the comparable authorities. Figure 5 shows that the majority of household tenures in Torfaen are either owner-occupied or privately rented.

Figure 5: Dwelling stock estimates by tenure, 2007-08.



Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Demands and supply in Torfaen's social care

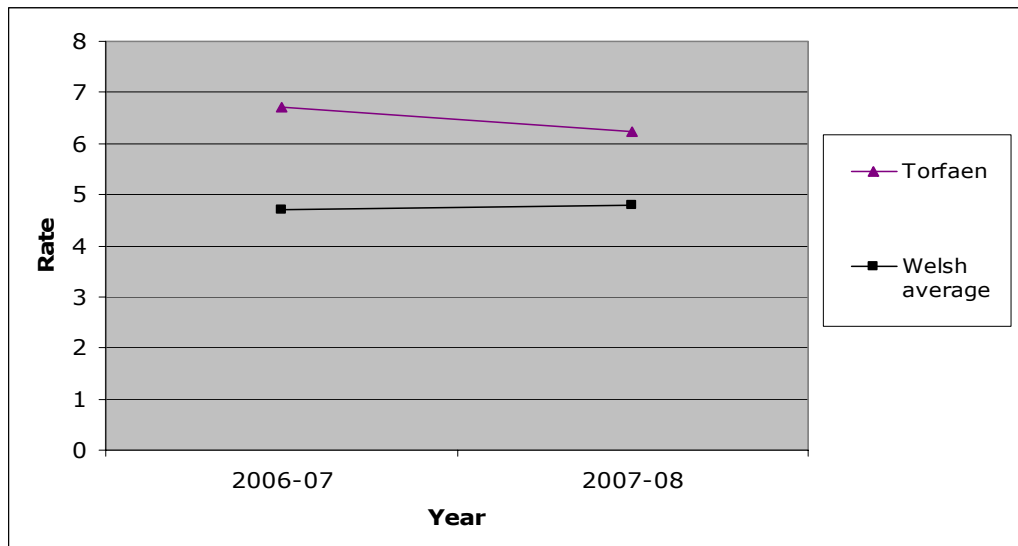
This section considers some indicators of demand for social care services and also the authority's investment in resources. As well as giving a general picture, this section considers each service user group individually.

The overall picture

Torfaen has more people receiving services in the two largest service user groups (older people and children and young people) than the comparable authorities. It also prioritises 14% more spending on social care provision than the appropriate level set out by the Welsh Assembly Government. All other comparable authorities spend more than the appropriate amount derived by the Welsh Assembly Government.

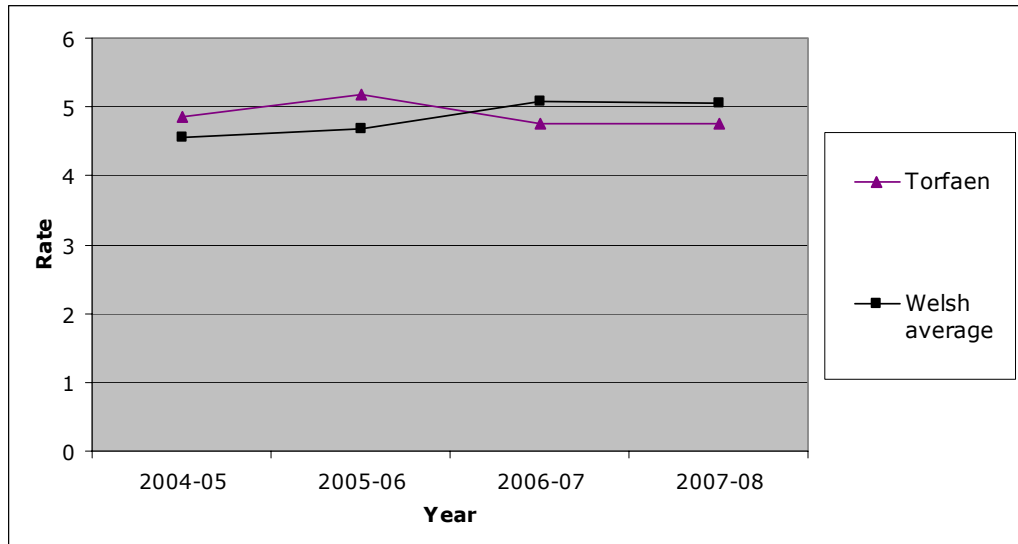
Over the period 2004-05 to 2007-08, Torfaen has reduced the number of staff it employs directly in the provision of social care. Over the same period comparable authorities, on average, maintained a higher staffing level. Torfaen's reduction is representative of a change in service provision, away from directly provided care services to a commissioning role with the private sector providers. Figure 6 and 7 show the rates of adult and children social workers.

Figure 6: Rate of senior social work practitioners, senior practitioners and social workers for adults per 100 adult service users aged 18-64 at 31 March.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Figure 7: Rate of senior social work practitioners, senior practitioners and social workers for children per 100 service users aged 0-17 at 31 March.



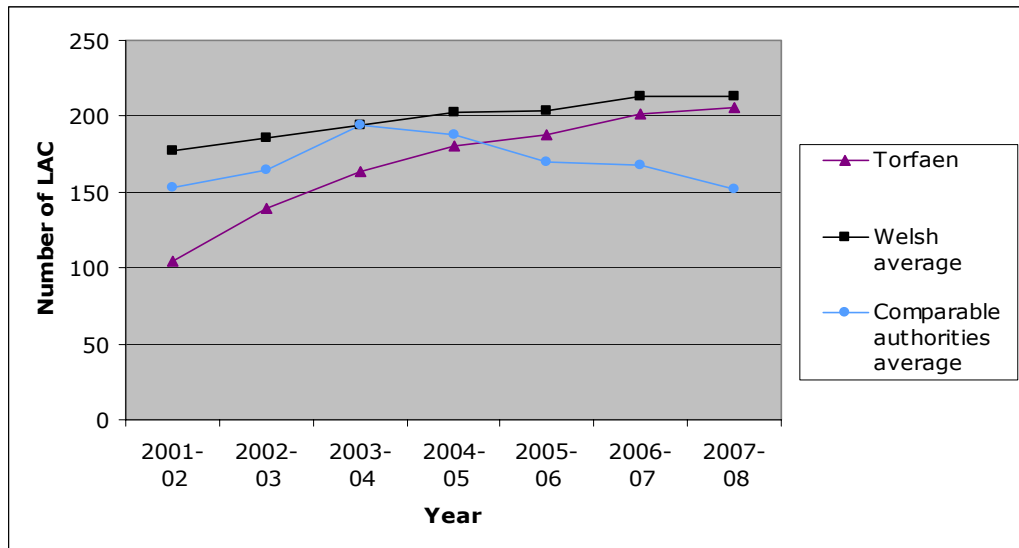
Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Children

Torfaen has 17% more children living in families who depend on income support benefits than those in comparable authorities. It also has 6% more children living in overcrowded housing and 39% more living in social housing. In 2007-08, in proportion to its population, Torfaen had 26% more child social care service users than comparable authorities. Between 2002-03 and 2007-08, the number of child social care clients increased by 20%. This compares with a much lower increase across the comparable authorities.

Children and young people who are in the care of the local authority (looked after children) are a key part of this client group. Figure 8 shows the number of children looked after at 31 March across the six years from 2001-02 through to 2007-08. The number of children looked after by Torfaen has almost doubled over this period. Whilst within the comparable local authorities there have been fluctuations over the period, with the number of looked after children in 2007-08 at a similar level to 2001-02.

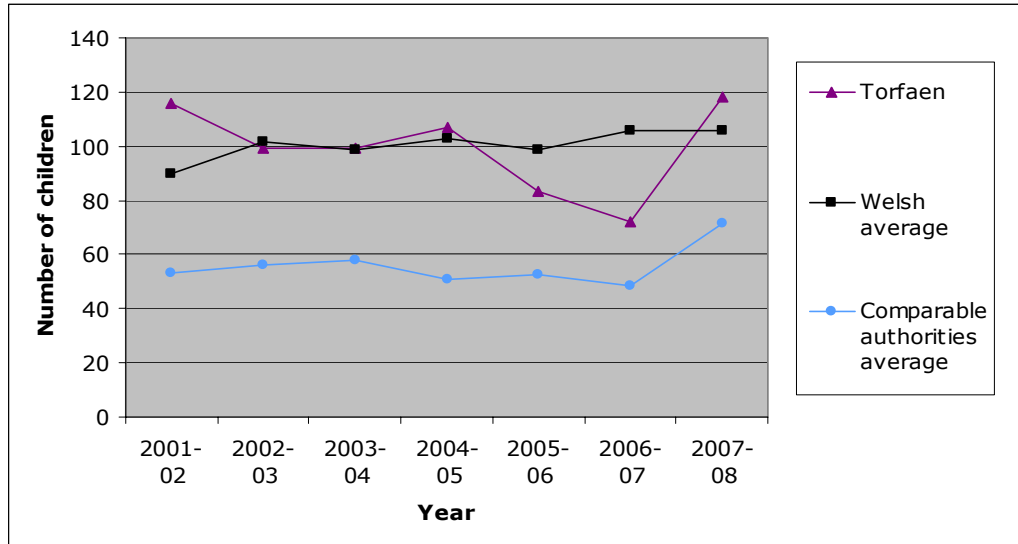
Figure 8: Number of children looked after at 31 March.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Child protection registers are maintained by every local authority in order to improve child protection procedures for children and young people. The change in numbers on the child protection registers (CPR) in Torfaen has not been as dramatic as those relating to looked after children. Figure 9 shows the trend in numbers on the child protection registers across the period 2001-02 to 2007-08. It is clear from the graph that Torfaen has higher numbers of children on the CPR than comparable authorities and in 2007-08 the number was higher than the Welsh average.

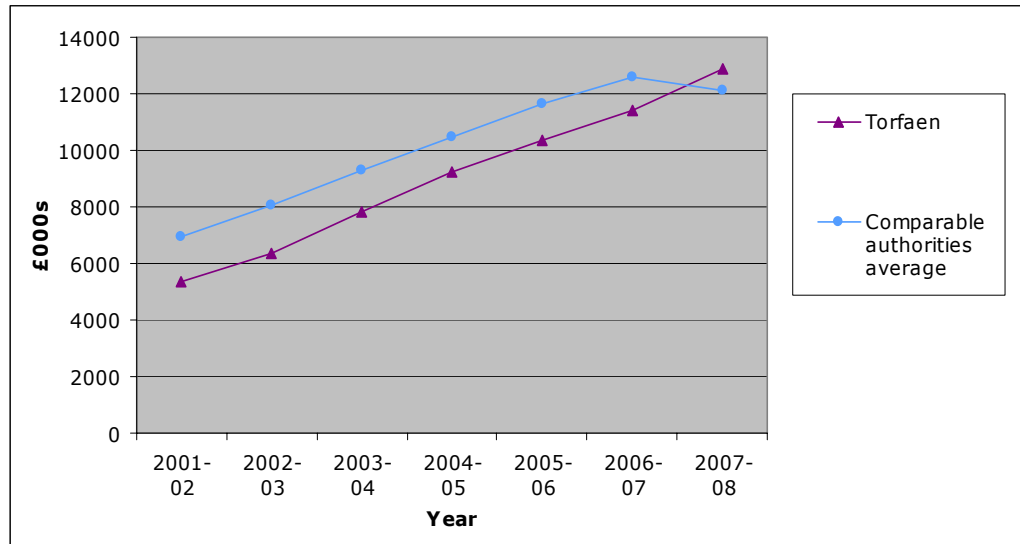
Figure 9: Number of children on the Child Protection Register at 31 March.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

In the period 2001-02 to 2007-08 Torfaen has increased its spending on children and young people's services by 140%. Figure 10 shows the trend of expenditure across this period. It shows that expenditure in similar local authorities has followed a similar trend to that experienced by Torfaen. Torfaen's increased investment on children and young people's services also means that it spends a bigger proportion of its social services budget on this client group.

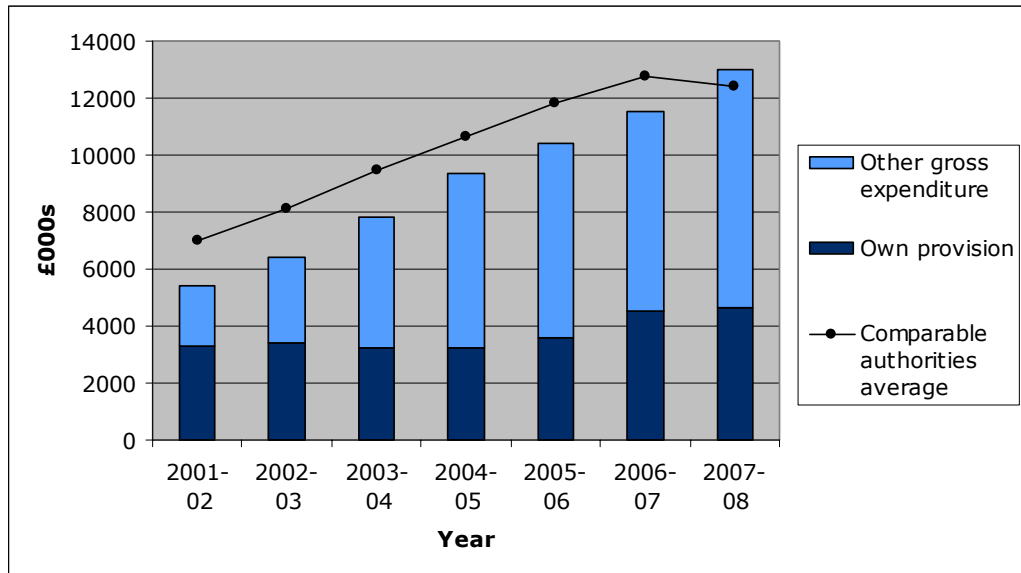
Figure 10: Net expenditure on children's and family services.



Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Figure 11 shows Torfaen's expenditure pattern on children and family services. It shows that proportionately the authority spends a significantly higher amount on services provided by external organisations.

Figure 11: Torfaen's gross expenditure on children's and family services proportionately split between its own and other provision.

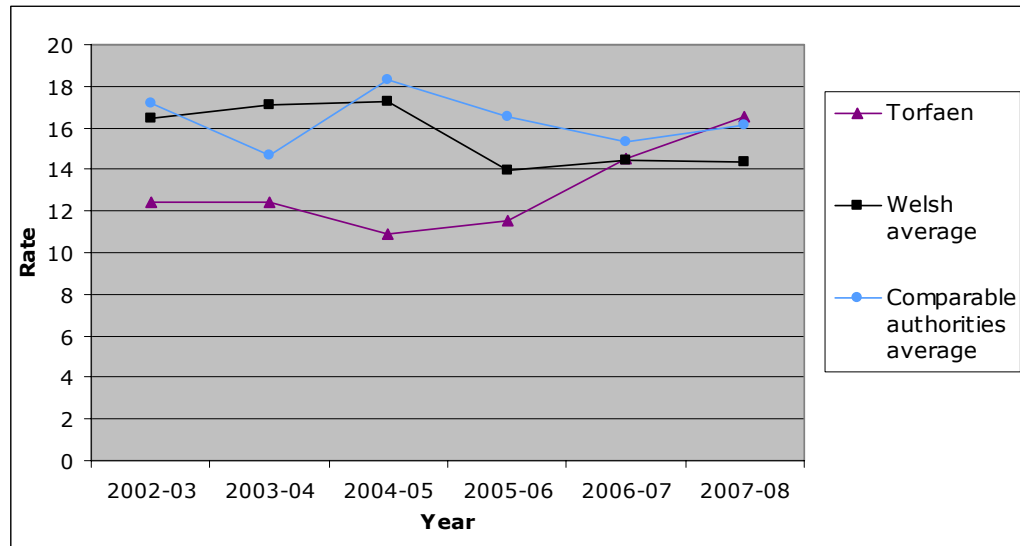


Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Adults 18-64

Torfaen has a lower rate of adult service users aged between 18 and 64 receiving services than its comparable authorities, but higher than the Welsh average. Figure 12 shows the trend over the period 2002-03 to 2007-08.

Figure 12: Rate of adult service users aged 18-64 receiving community and residential services per 1,000 population aged 18-64.

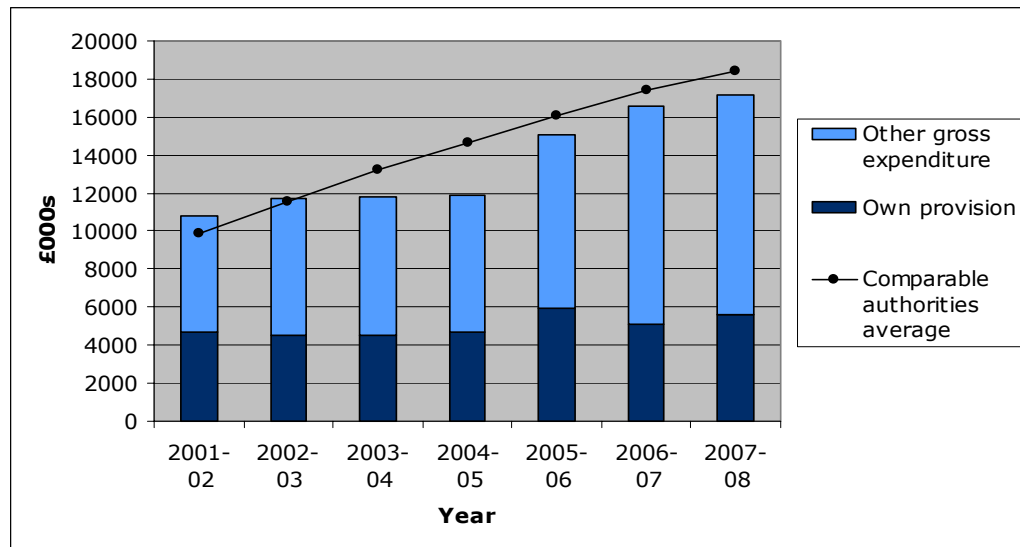


Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Between 2006-07 and 2007-08, Torfaen increased the number of needs assessments it completed by 65%, which is far greater than the increase in comparable local authorities.

In the seven years to 2007-08, Torfaen like other authorities increased its spending in adult social services significantly. Over recent years Torfaen has increased the amount spent on its own provision and services provided through the use of external organisations. The proportion receiving services in this way is now similar to that of comparable authorities. Figure 13 shows Torfaen's additional investment and the change in provision.

Figure 13: Torfaen's gross expenditure on adults aged 18-64 proportionately split between its own and other provision.

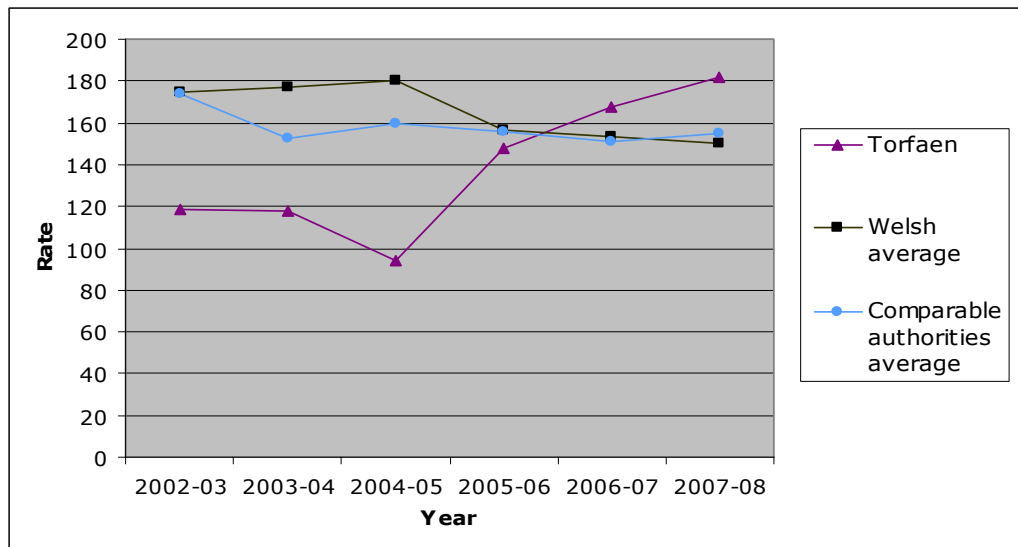


Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Older people (65 and over)

Torfaen provides social care services to significantly more people aged 65 and over than it did in previous years. However, for comparable authorities the number of older people receiving services has decreased slightly. These rates are set out in figure 14.

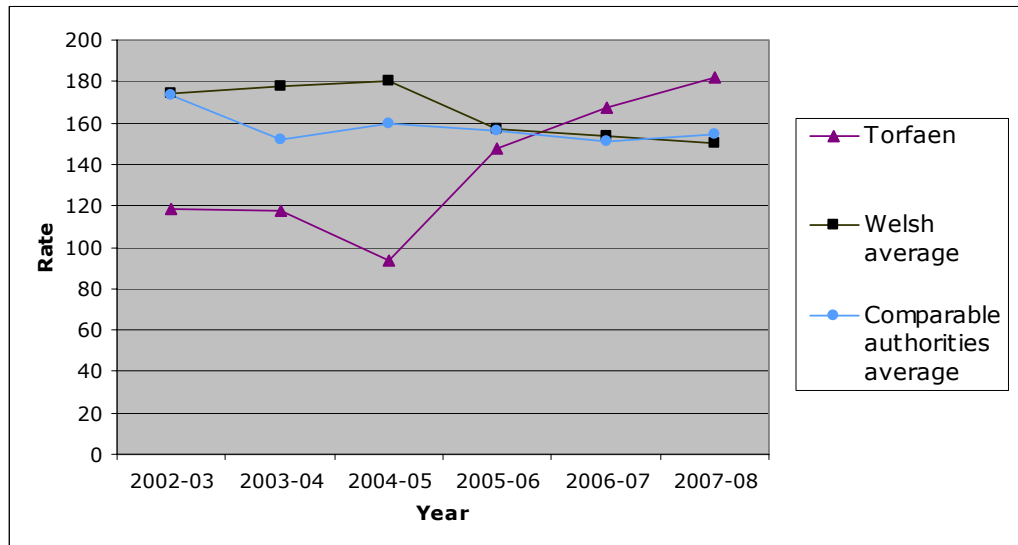
Figure 14: Rate of adult service users aged 65 and over receiving community and residential based services per 1,000 population (aged 65 and over).



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Torfaen now helps about 11% of all people 65 and over to continue living independently at home. Over the period 2005-06 to 2007-08, it has steadily increased the proportion of older people supported in the community and has reduced the numbers entering care homes. The total number of service users in this age group receiving community based services has more than doubled from 2001-02 to 2007-08. Figure 15 shows the numbers of people that Torfaen supports in a community setting and includes assistive technology

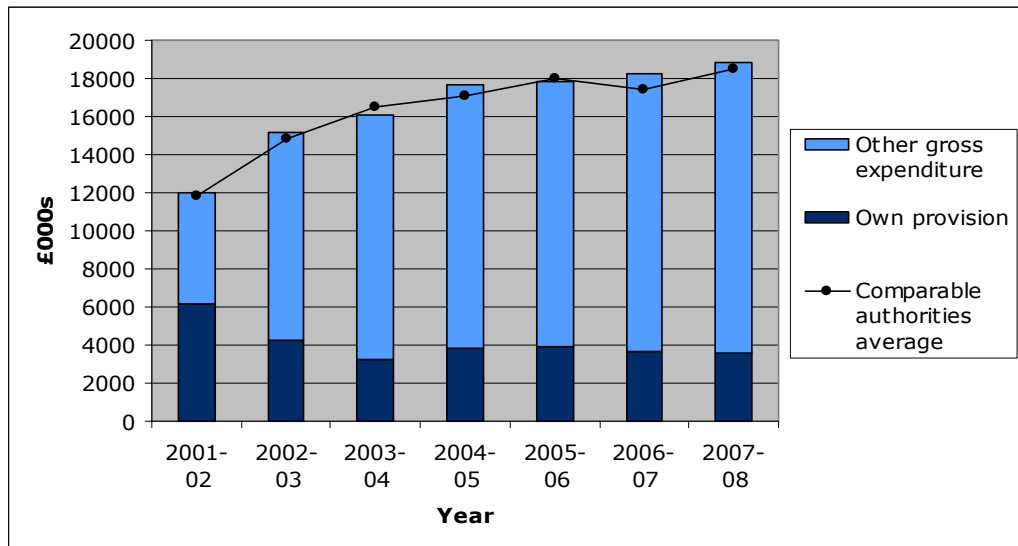
Figure 15: Number of people aged 65 and over receiving community based services during the year.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Torfaen now spends significantly more on this client group than it ever has. This follows a similar trend in the comparable authorities. While the spending levels of Torfaen and the comparable authorities' average are broadly similar the pattern of spending is different. In 2007-08 comparable authorities on average spent around two fifths on their own service provision. Figure 16 shows the growth in Torfaen's expenditure and the pattern of that expenditure.

Figure 16: Torfaen's gross expenditure on adults aged 65 and over proportionately split between its own and other provision.

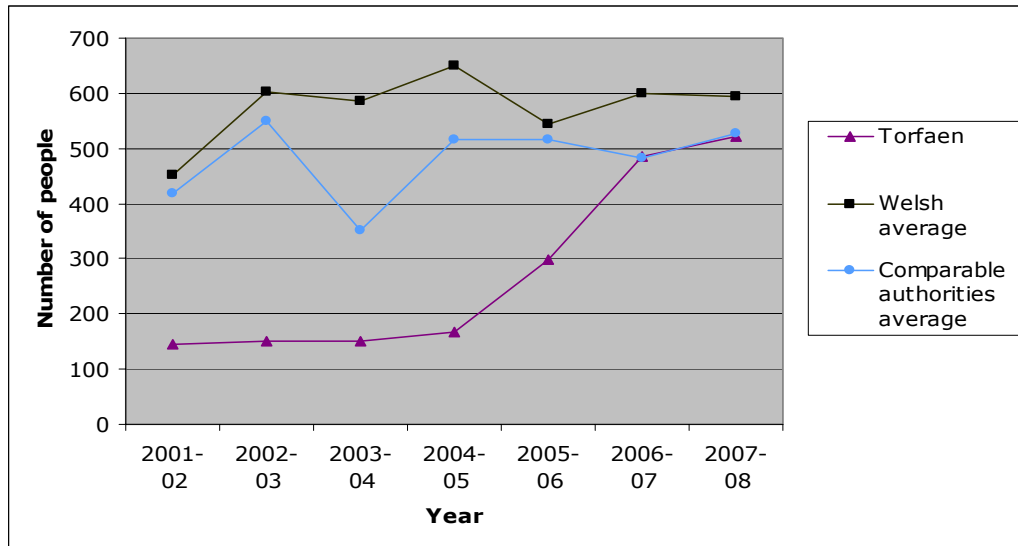


Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Adults aged 18-64 who are physically and sensory disabled

Torfaen has significantly more clients with physical or sensory disabilities receiving community and residential services than it did a few years ago. Figure 17 shows how the numbers have grown in recent years. It also shows the number receiving services from Torfaen is similar to that of the comparable authorities in 2007-08.

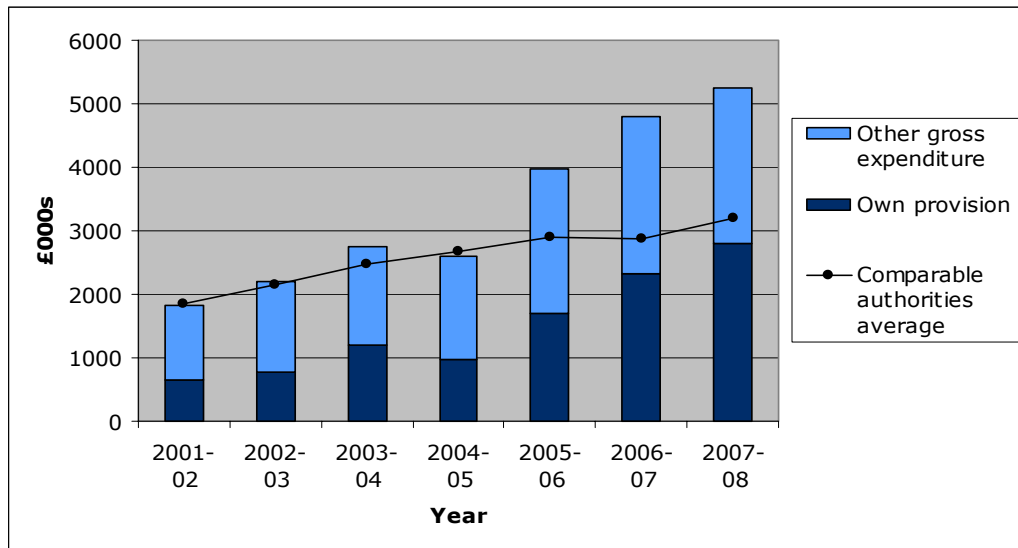
Figure 17: Number of adults aged 18-64 with physical and sensory disabilities receiving community or residential based services during the year.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Across the period 2001-02 to 2007-08, Torfaen increased expenditure in this area significantly. Comparable authorities have also increased their level of spending. However, the level of their spending is below that of Torfaen's. Over the same period Torfaen increased the proportion of expenditure on its own services. Figure 18 sets out this information.

Figure 18: Torfaen's gross expenditure on adults aged 18-64 with physical and sensory disabilities proportionately split between its own and other provision.

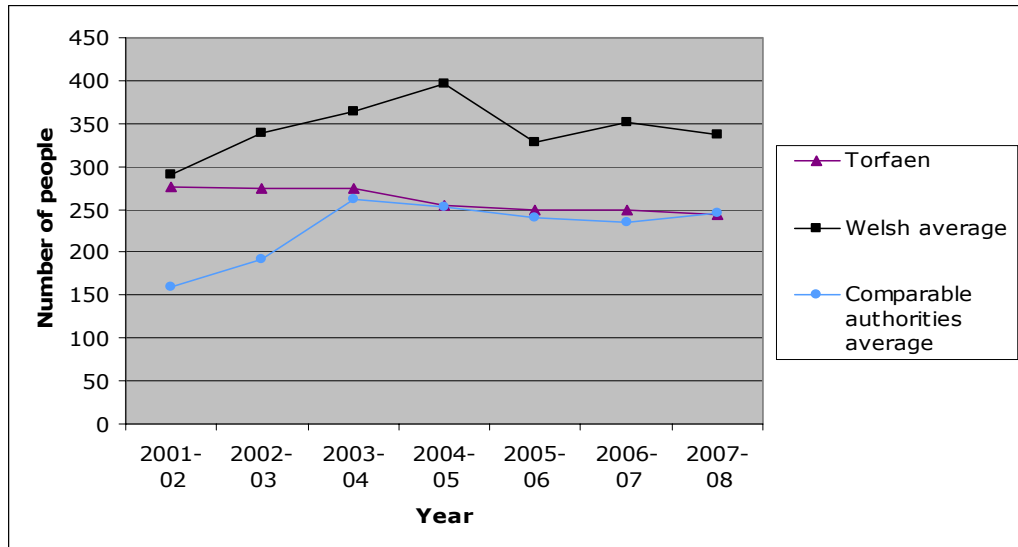


Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Adults aged 18-64 with learning difficulties

Across the period 2001-02 to 2007-08, Torfaen has experienced a decline in the number of people with learning difficulties receiving community and residential based services. The number of people receiving services in this client group is similar to the average number for the comparable authorities. Figure 19 shows the trend in the numbers receiving services in this client group.

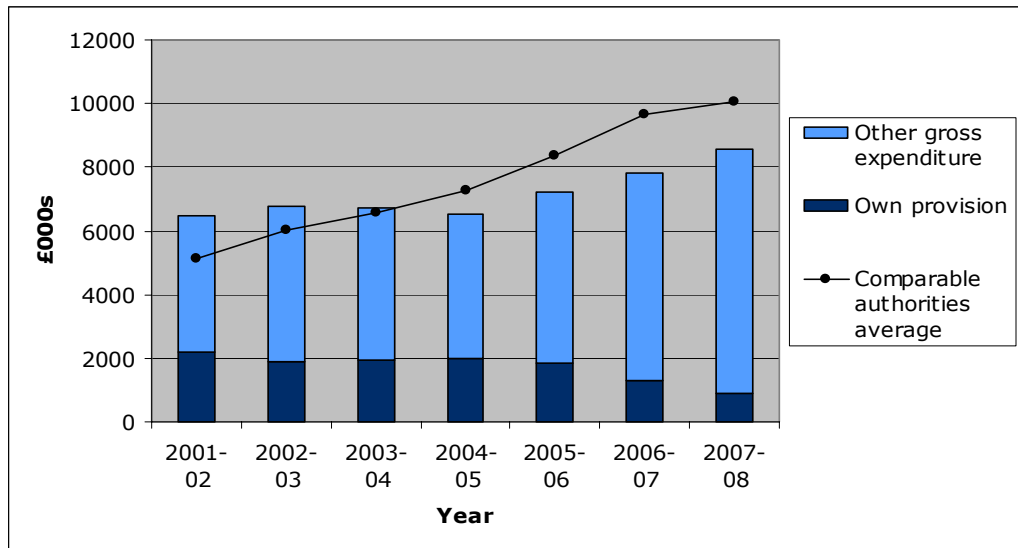
Figure 19: Number of adults aged 18-64 with learning disabilities receiving community and residential based services during the year.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Similarly to other client group areas Torfaen has increased its spending on clients with learning difficulties. Comparable authorities on average also spend more. Figure 20 shows the level of spending. It is also clear from the chart that Torfaen spends proportionately less on its own provision than services provided through external organisations.

Figure 20: Torfaen's gross expenditure on adults aged 18-64 with learning difficulties proportionately split between its own and other provision.

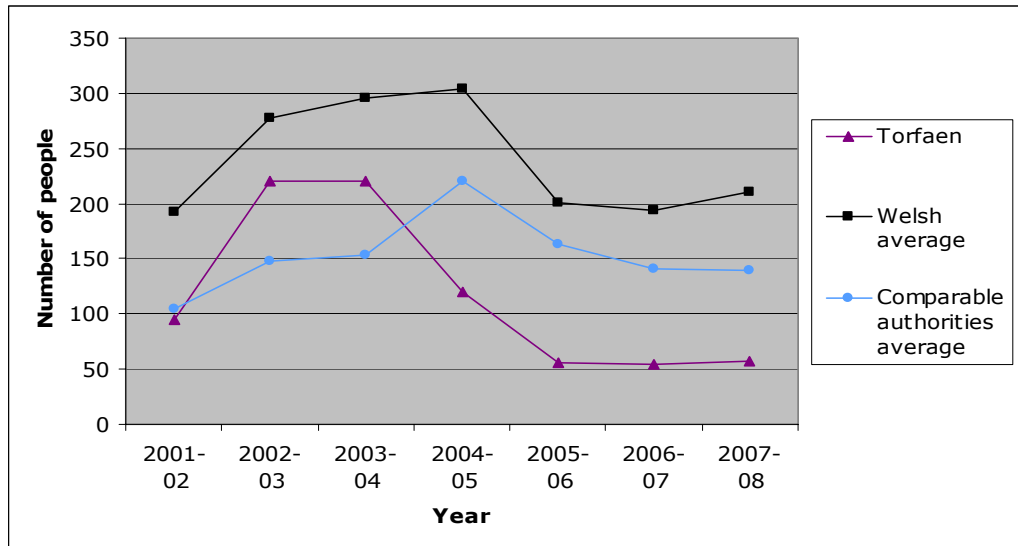


Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Adults aged 18-64 with mental health problems

Across the period 2001-02 to 2007-08 Torfaen has experienced a decline in the number of people with mental health problems receiving community and residential based services. The numbers receiving services from comparable authorities also declined. However, on average numbers receiving services from comparable authorities are higher than Torfaen's. Figure 21 shows the trend over recent years.

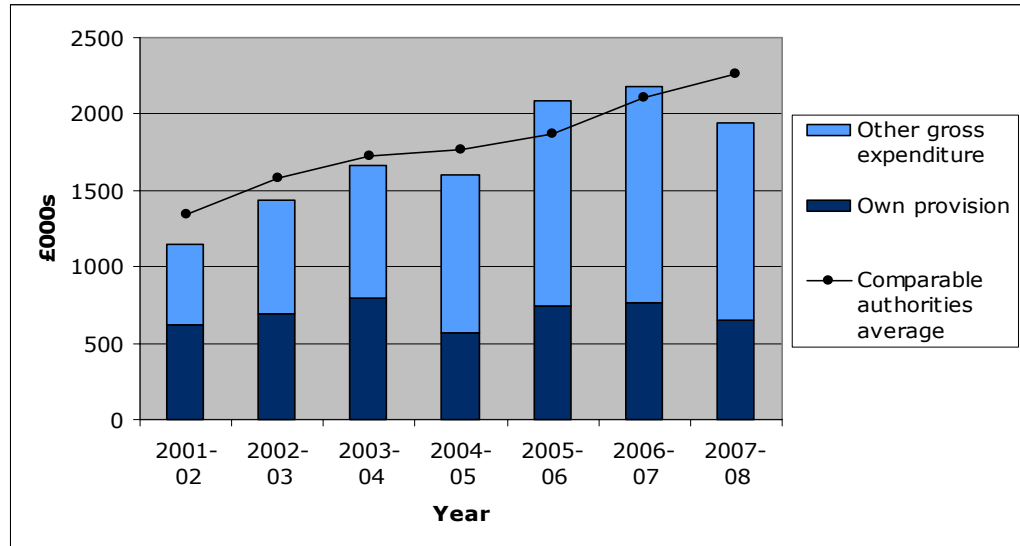
Figure 21: Number of adults aged 18-64 with mental health problems receiving community and residential based services during the year.



Source: Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

Compared with other service areas this is a relatively small area of spend. Whilst the numbers receiving services have declined, Torfaen's expenditure has increased. Comparable authorities have on average also increased their expenditure. Average expenditure in comparable authorities is now higher than in Torfaen. Figure 22 shows these trends as well as the split in Torfaen's expenditure between its own provision and other provision.

Figure 22: Torfaen's gross expenditure on adults aged 18-64 with mental health problems proportionately split between its own and other provision.



Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Appendix 1

Arriving at our comparable authority list

To arrive at our list of comparable authorities we have used a [comparable authorities' model](#). This is a piece of statistical software that is freely available on the [Local Government Data Unit's website](#). It lets authorities choose either socio-demographic and/or service specific data (indicators), in order to arrive at a set of nearest statistical neighbours.

This method gives a score (distance), to all pairs of authorities according to the similarity between them:

- We call this the 'distance' calculated, because the method for calculating the difference in a variable is the same as calculating a geographical distance.
- The 'distances' are then combined to give an overall score.
- The smaller the score, the more comparable the authorities are.
- Increasing the number of indicators decreases the probability of getting a 'close' match.

We chose the following variables in order to arrive at the nearest neighbours:

- Population;
- Population density;
- Dependent children in families receiving income support;
- Population aged under 18 in wards with weighted density greater than 1.5 times the Welsh average;
- Dependent children in overcrowded housing;
- Dependent children in social rented housing;
- Population aged under 18;
- Population aged 18 to 64;
- Adults aged 18 to 64 in non-white ethnic groups;
- Severe disablement allowance and disability living allowance claimants aged under 65;
- Households where head is aged 18 to 64 with no carer;
- Income support and job seekers allowance claimants aged under 65;
- Pensioners with a limiting long-term illness;
- Income support recipients aged 60 and over/65 and over (from 2005-06);
- Pensioners living alone in households; and
- Population aged 85 and over.

For further information please see our website.