



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu
Cenedlaethol

National
Adoption
Service

Annual Report

2023/24

Achieving More Together



A summary
report for
ALL ages

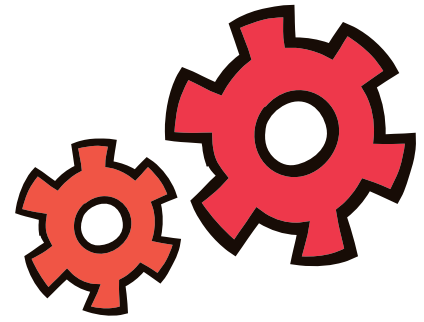
Hi!

from the Chairpersons

Guess what? It's been 10 years since the National Adoption Service (NAS) for Wales started, and we're feeling pretty pleased about the support we've given to children, young people and families through adoption. Even though there have been some tricky times like the Covid-19 pandemic and rising living costs, we've kept making adoption services in Wales better and better. We've been working closely with the Welsh Government to make sure we're doing everything we can to help children and young people find the loving homes they deserve.



So, what's NAS all about?



The National Adoption Service (NAS) is like the super-organiser of adoption services.

We work together with local authorities, charities, health and education services to make sure everything runs smoothly. Every one of the 22 local authorities in Wales are part of NAS, they group together into regions who find families for children who need them, train adoptive parents, support birth parents, and help adopted adults. The charities also train and support adoptive parents and their children. We've got a small but mighty central team that supports all the other services to make sure all of this happens without a hitch.



What's a local authority?

Local authorities are in charge of lots of important things like housing, social services, roads, and even waste collection in certain areas, like Bridgend or Caerphilly. They are a bit like a mini government for each area.



Cool stuff we did in 2023/24

Apology for past adoption practices

The Welsh Government's Deputy Minister for Social Services apologised for some adoption practices that happened way back between the 1950s and the 1970s.

Adoption Barometer Report

This report gave us a big thumbs up, showing that adoption services in Wales are doing really well compared to the rest of the UK.

PRIDE Cymru 2023

We had an amazing time at PRIDE Cymru, where we chatted with lots of people about adoption and heard some incredible stories.

New resources

We launched an Employer Toolkit and some new guidance to help out with adoption in the workplace and in the community.

Awards and campaigns

Our 'Truth be Told' podcast snagged a Silver Award at the British Podcast Awards, and we used our great 'Choose Family' campaign again during National Adoption Week.



OUR BIG PRIORITIES

Priority A:

Finding the best families

We're always looking for the best families for children and young people who need them. This year, we got creative with how we spread the word about adoption. We even hopped on TikTok and Spotify to get people excited about adopting!

What we did:

- **National Adoption Week 2023:** We took our 'Choose Family' campaign to the next level, using social media to reach more people than ever before.
- **Adoption Register for Wales (ARW):** This is one of our 'go-to tools' for matching children and young people with their new families.
- **Welsh Early Permanence (WEP):** This programme makes sure children don't have to move around too much before finding their forever home.
- **Learning and development:** We set up some excellent new training programmes and webinars to make sure everyone working in adoption is at the top of their game.



Priority B:

Great adoption support

Adoption is a big deal, and we're here to support families every step of the way. We're all about jumping in early to help and make sure that children and young people who've had a tough start get the support they need.

Highlights:

- **Support plans:** We created tailored support plans for 1,591 children and their families, helping them along their adoption journey.
- **Pathway Service:** Run by Adoption UK, this service gave 313 families peer and parenting support.
- **Connect Service:** This programme brought together 389 children and young people through fun activities, events, and even a Youth Council that helps shape what NAS does.



Priority C: Staying in touch with birth families

We know that staying connected with birth families is important for many adopted children and young people, so we're here to help them do that in a way that feels right.

What we did:

- **Contact plans:** Nearly all the children and young people we placed this year have a plan to keep in touch with their birth families, either through visits or letters.
- **Training and support:** We trained our staff to be superstars at managing these contacts and came up with new ways to talk to kids about staying in touch with their birth families.



Priority D: Making adoption records easy to access

We want to make it easy for adopted people to find out more about their past when they're an adult and ready.

Cool stuff we did:

- **New pilot service:** This year, we started a great new service to help people who were adopted before 1976 find their records and reconnect with their birth families. We're planning to help even more people next year!



Priority E: Keeping things running smoothly

We're all about keeping NAS and Foster Wales running like a well-oiled machine. We set up a new committee this year to keep everything on track and help us make the best decisions.

Fun fact:

- **Online conferences:** Through an organisation called CASCADE which is based at Cardiff University we helped them to hold an online conference called 'Reframing Adoption' with creative activities and webinars, and people from all over the world joined in!



Compliments and complaints

We love hearing what you think! This year, we got a few complaints (which we sorted out quickly) and loads of positive feedback. Here's a little taste of what people had to say:

- **From adopters:** "Thanks for all your support. He is settling beautifully. The preparation sessions helped a lot. He showed me his bottle of love and it meant so much to him."
- **From adopted young people:** "Thank you to everyone who helped me as a child and moved me to my adoptive family. Being adopted made me strong and I had an amazing childhood."



How we're funded



We get our funding from the Welsh Government and local councils, which helps us run all our awesome programmes. We made sure to use our funding wisely to support all the great work we're doing.

...and finally

A word from our Director

As we celebrate our tenth year, it's clear that we've come a long way in making adoption services in Wales better than ever. But we still have some challenges, like making sure we have enough money to keep up with the growing need for our services.

Adoption is getting more complex, and we're seeing that people need different kinds of support. We'll keep working hard to meet these needs and continue helping children and families across Wales.





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