Wales regional data

The biggest challenge facing the fostering sector today is the retention and recruitment of high-quality foster carers who can meet the needs of children in care. A lack of available foster carers in the right place at the right time means children are missing out on vital support. Children in need of care are at risk of being moved away from their communities, hobbies, siblings, having to change schools and leave behind what is important to them, which has a detrimental impact on their wellbeing, stability and development.

Local authority	No. of children in foster care	Local authority	No. of children in foster care
Isle of Anglesey	95	Neath Port Talbot	205
Gwynedd	180	Bridgend	260
Conwy	145	Vale of Glamorgan	200
Denbighshire	130	Cardiff	635
Flintshire	145	Rhondda Cynon Taf	500
Wrexham	255	Merthyr Tydfil	125
Powys	155	Caerphilly	320
Ceredigion	70	Blaenau Gwent	135
Pembrokeshire	160	Torfaen	270
Carmarthenshire	145	Monmouthshire	140
Swansea	395	Newport	250

- **Total number of fostering households: 4,915**

We estimate that a further 400 fostering households need to be recruited this year in Wales.

Recommendations:
- **A greater focus and investment in retention and recruitment of foster carers** – we need the right number of foster carers, with the right skills, in the right location, at the first time of asking to fully meet children's needs. We welcome the recent investment and focus on foster care retention and recruitment, however this needs to be the start of the journey of ongoing focus and investment.

- **To retain highly skilled foster carers they must be treated as equal members of the team around the child and recognised as key members of the social care workforce** – foster carers should have their knowledge and expertise listened to, be empowered to take appropriate and timely decisions about the children in their care, be supported and trained in order to continue to provide the best possible care for children and sufficiently paid for their time, skills and expertise.