

National Adoption Service for Wales

Quarter 4 Year End Performance Report 2015-16



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu
Cenedlaethol

National
Adoption
Service

Achieving More Together /
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd

This report contains all the indicators currently available on the Aspireview performance measurement system plus data on Placement orders and Adoption Support which is being collected separately. It also contains some details about children and adopters who were on the Wales Adoption Register at the end of March 2016. For section the format is:

- Quarter 4 and year end performance for 2015-16 for each Region and VAA and the All Wales number, average and/or %;
- Aggregate data for the seven quarters since April 2014; and
- Year to date position, compared to the 2014-15 figures and any relevant targets.

Glossary

MWAS: Mid & West Wales Adoption Service

WB: Western Bay Adoption Service

NWAS: North Wales Adoption Service

B: Barnardo's Cymru

SEWAS: South East Wales Adoption Service

St D: St David's Children Society.

VVC: Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption Service

Index

Page 2 – Overview by Director of Operations	Page 14 – Disruption; placements not proceeding
Page 4 - Children Waiting	Page 15 – Disruption; Post Placement
Page 5 – Children placed for Adoption	Page 16 - Adoption Support
Page 6 - Time taken to place a child	Page 17 - Life Journey Material
Page 7 – Time taken from becoming LAC to placement for Adoption	Page 18 - Initial Enquiries to adopt
Page 7 - Time SBPA to placement	Page 19 - Prospective Adopters at Initial / Information Events
Page 10 - Time Placement Order to placement	Page 20 - Prospective Adopters who not proceed to Application
Page 10 - Placement Orders	Page 21 – Adopters approved
Page 11 - Children Matched	Page 22 - Time Enquiry to approval
Page 11 - Children Matched waiting longer than 6 months	Page 23 - Birth Parents
Page 13 - Plans for Adoption being changed	Page 25 – Wales Adoption Register

Overview by Director of Operations

Children continue to be placed more quickly. The average length of time between a child becoming looked after and being placed for adoption was 15.2 months (463 days) in 2015/16. This shows promising continued improvement from an average of 16.6¹ months last year with all regions reducing their average over the year. There is variation quarter to quarter over the year with regions reporting challenges linked to the court process, assessment and matching for longer averages. It is a considerable achievement that this is now at the shortest time since 2002/3, the earliest records we can access.

The number of children who waited more than 6 months to be matched with a family reduced by 30% in 2015/16 to 174 children. This is 53% of children matched compared to 67% last year.

Fewer children who have an adoption plan had this plan changed; just 25 children compared to 78 in 14/15 and 180 the previous year, a reduction of 68%. NAS surpassed its target to reduce this by 50%.

326 children were placed for adoption in 2015/16. This is 16% fewer than the 386 children placed during 2014/15. The number of placement orders made by the courts in Wales fell by 20% in 2014/15 and continued at a lower level during 15/16. NAS data suggests that the number of placement orders made in Wales fell by a further 6% during 15/16 but this will not be verified until Welsh Government publishes its data on placement orders later in the year. **Of the children placed 48 were placed with the two Wales based VAA's;** this is a similar level to last year before although the proportionate usage of each agency changed.

The number of children waiting for an adoption placement has continued to fall. The number of children with a 'should be placed' decision who are not yet placed fell by a further 11% this year to 288 children. This represents an overall reduction in children waiting of 24% since April 2014. There is a link between the reduction in children with an adoption plan and fewer children waiting but the reduction also reflects the fact that children are being placed more quickly and that in some areas children with very complex needs who had been waiting long periods of time have now been successfully placed. Whilst 20% (57 children) did not yet have a placement order and 11% (31 children) had been matched but not yet moved into their adoptive home, the remaining 69% or 200 of these children had a Placement Order and were waiting to be matched; it is these children that adoption services should have a bigger impact on.

The number of children on the Wales Adoption Register with no or limited potential for a match has been consistently low. At the end of the year 38 children of the 54 children for whom there was active searching had no or limited potential for a match with the adopters available. This varies on a day to day basis and has been consistently 30-35 children. Of the children where there was no likely match 50% were part of a sibling group and 42% had significant needs.

¹ The published figure last year was 16.4 months but revisions to last year's data made by agencies this year has changed this to 16.6 months

Levels of disruption remain low; a similar number of matches did not proceed to placement or broke down before the order was granted as last year, 3% and 4% respectively. The reported number of looked after children known to have been previously adopted has reduced from 34 in 2014-15 to 8 in 2015-16.

Performance in relation to the provision of 'life journey' materials has improved.

This is in place for 49% of children when it should be, compared to 23% in 2014/15..

The new indicator in relation to adoption support plans shows promising performance. It indicates that for all new placements there has been an assessment of the need for adoption support services and where there is a resulting plan this was discussed with the adopter.

320 adopters were approved in 2015/16. This is an increase of 9% on the level approved last year. This is an acceptable increase given the reduction in placement orders being made which led us to revise our recruitment target and strategies during the year.

At the end of the year there were more adopters on the Wales Adoption Register than children; 110 adopters looking for a match of 173 registered. Of those adopters with no potential match, 90% were looking for a single child and 34% a child under 2 years.

There has been a further improvement in the average length of time it takes for adopter to be approved. On average adopters in wales are approved within 8.6 months, improvement in this has gathered pace as the year progressed and has been sustained in the later part of the year.

There was a 3% increase in number of enquiries about adoption and a 1% increase in the proportion of prospective adopters having an initial, visit or attending an information evening. There were 1,197 enquiries during the year, 36 more than the previous year. **97% of these enquiries received a response within 5 working days.**

The proportion of adopters not proceeding beyond an initial enquiry remains at around one third. On a quarter by quarter basis this shows significant variations and there are also variations between agencies. The review of these in a VAA and two regions has shown that suggested that drop off rates were primarily about personal choice by adopters rather than processes but the current context, namely fewer children with increasingly complexity available, is having an impact on adopters' choices. We have changed our recruitment strategy in the light of this changing context.

The service to birth parents has begun to improve but further work is needed in relation to take up. 661 birth parents were referred to adoption services 97% of which were offered a service. The proportion of birth parents taking this up has improved from 18% to 24% this year.

Children Waiting



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

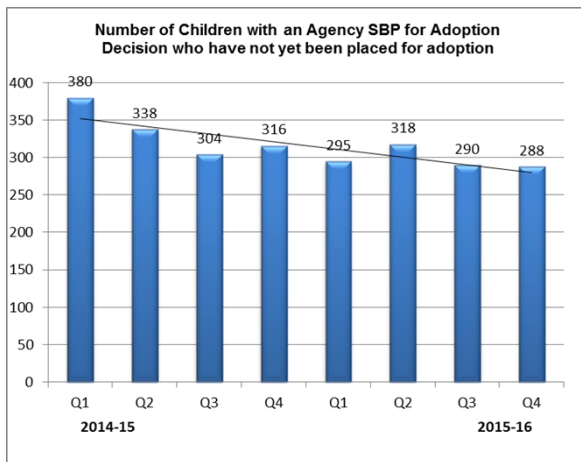
- 9% decrease (n=28) in number of children waiting at the end of the year
- Trend since April 2014 is downwards, with a 24% reduction since April 2014



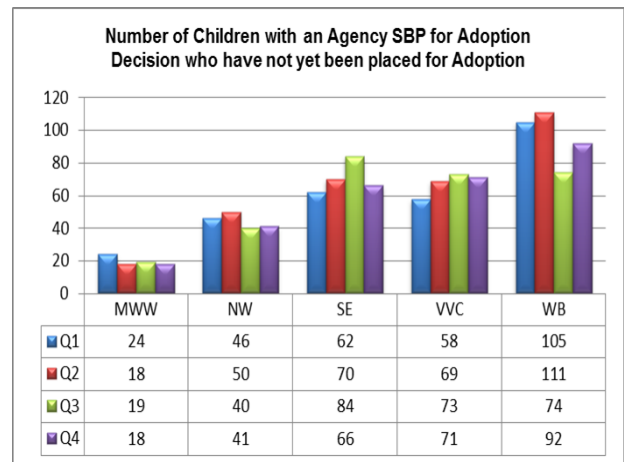
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- 1% decrease (n=2)

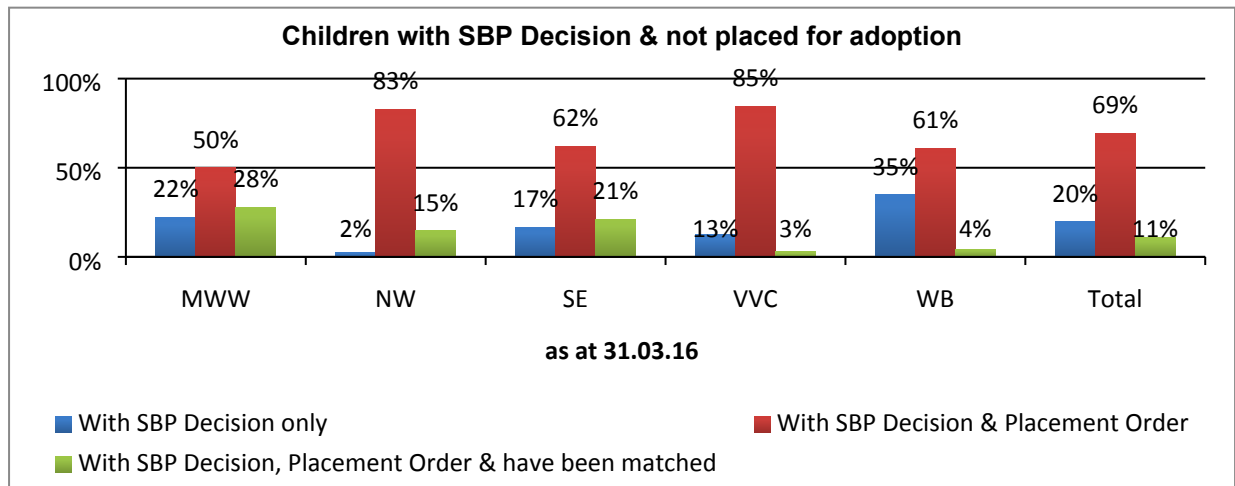
Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



The following graph shows the breakdown of those children with a SBP decision. Of these 69% or 200 children had a Placement Order and were waiting to be matched; 20% (57 children) did not yet have a placement order and the remaining 11% (31 children) had been matched although had not yet moved into their adoptive home..



Story behind the Data

North Wales – 11 children without identified links. 23 children on hold for potential links. 6 matched in introductions. 1 child waiting placement order.

Western Bay – increase in Q4 of placement orders granted.

Children placed for Adoption

Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

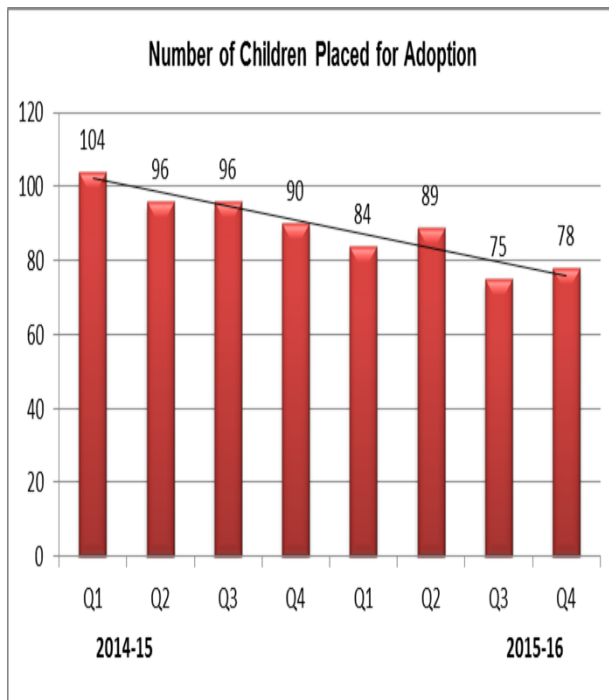
- 326 children placed for adoption during 2015-16
- 16% decrease in number of children placed for adoption
- Of the 326 children placed for adoption, 48 were placed with adopters provided by Barnardo's (n=3) and St David's (n=45)

Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

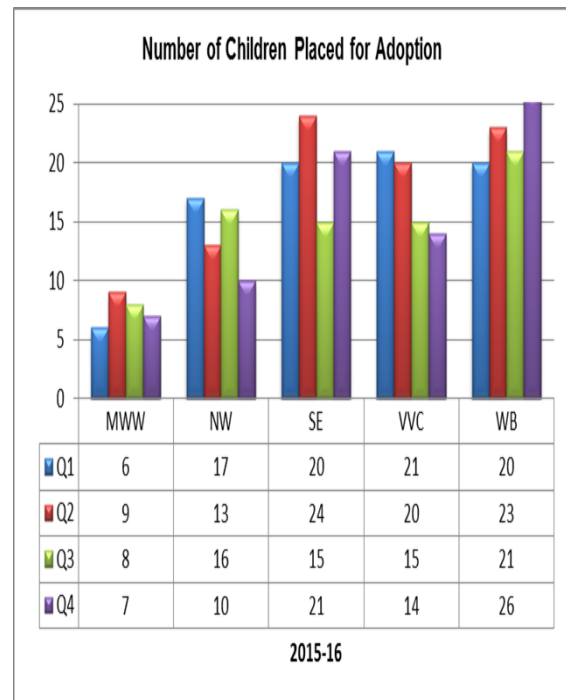
- 3% decrease from quarter 3 to quarter 4

The number of placement orders made by the courts in Wales fell by 20% in 2014/15 and continued at a lower level during 15/16. This determines the number of children available for placement. NAS data suggests that the number of placement orders made in Wales fell by a further 6% during 15/16 but this will not be verified until Welsh Government publishes its data on placement orders later in the year.

Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



Story behind the Data

Mid & West Wales – 1 child – potential link did not proceed and 1 child – introductions made but did not proceed to a placement.

Barnardo's – 2 of the placements made did not continue

Time taken for a child to be placed for adoption

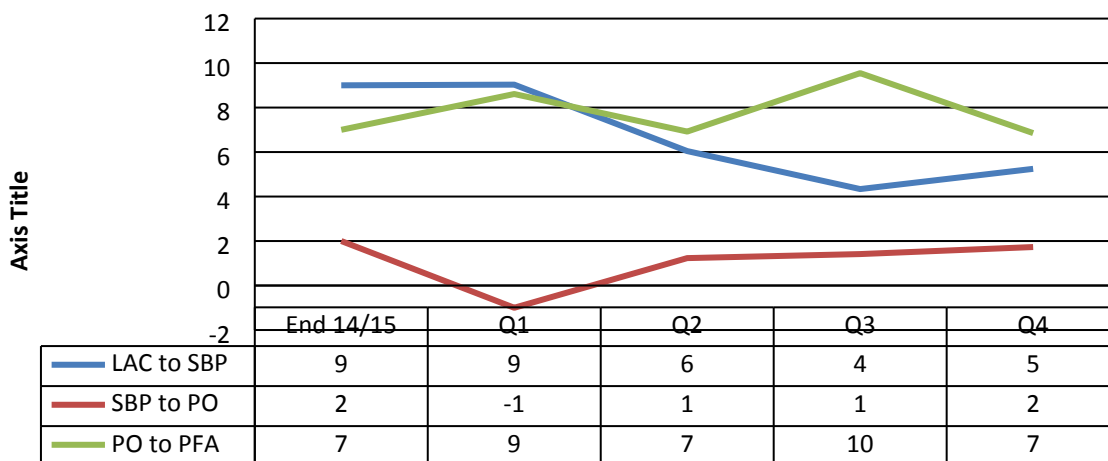


The table shows average time in months from the three key decision making points to the date a child is placed for adoption i.e. the most recent episode of becoming looked after / the 'Should be Placed' for adoption decision / the granting of the Placement Order.

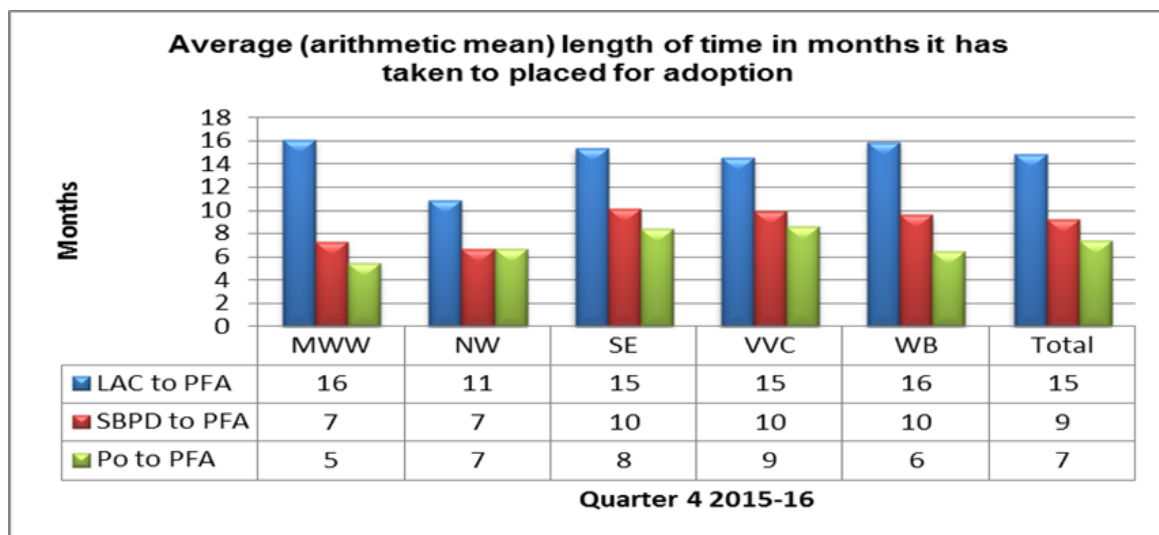
With the exception of Should Be Placed Decision to being placed for adoption which is often determined by court processes there is improvement during 2015/16.

- Becoming 'looked after' to being placed for adoption has reduced by 3 months during the year;
- There has been a decrease of 3 months from the granting of the Placement Order to being placed for adoption during the year.

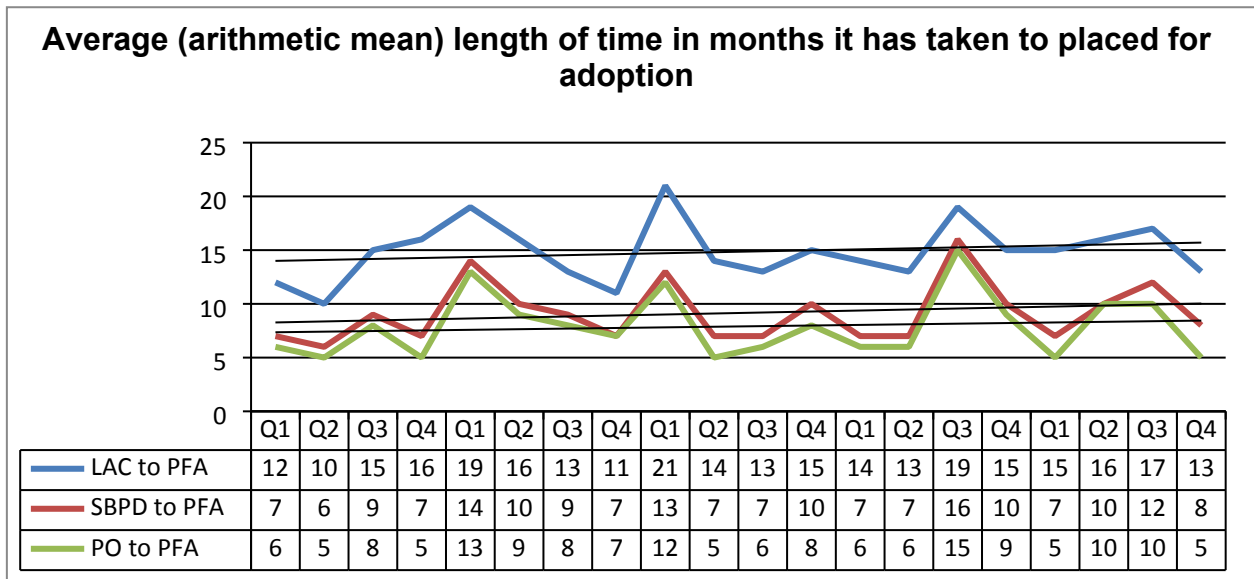
Averages - All Wales



Averages by region



Regional averages by quarter



Time taken between LAC and Placement for Adoption



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

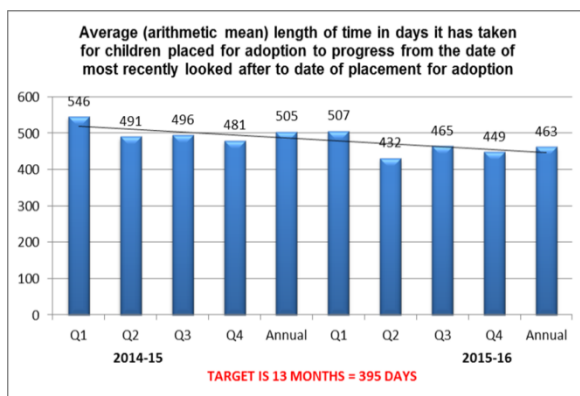
- Average decreased from 16.6² months (505 days) to 15.2 months (463 days)
- The average number of days has fallen by 38% since 2002-03 and is at the lowest level since this time.



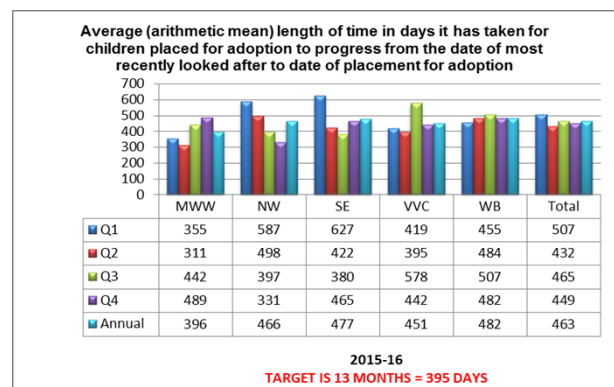
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Average in quarter 4 was 14.8 months (449 days), a drop from 15.3 months in quarter 3
- North Wales achieved the target in quarter 4 and Mid & West Wales achieved the target in their whole year average.

Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



² The published figure last year was 16.4 months but revisions to last year's data made by agencies this year has changed this to 16.6 months

Story behind the Data

Mid & West Wales – 1 child – delay in care proceedings due to failed rehabilitation; 2 children – family finding – one family withdrew.

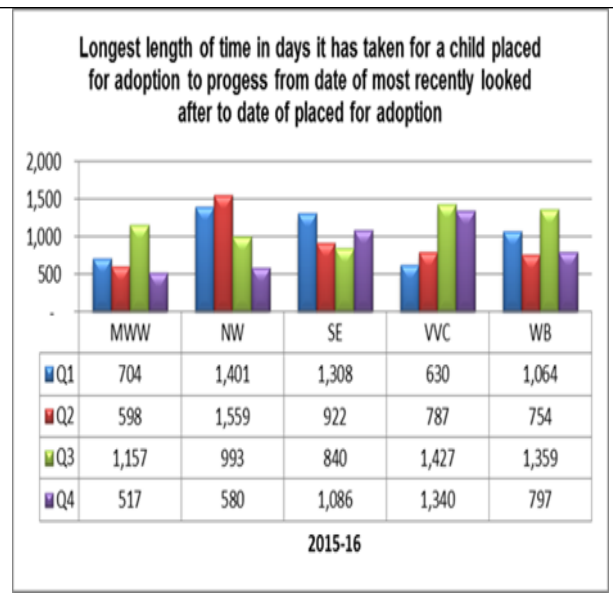
North Wales – delay – child matched but birth parents appealed placement order, therefore, unable to place.

Longest times taken – individual instances

In quarter 4 it shows a variance from 17 to 44 months

Mid & West Wales – 517 days – difficulties engaging birth mother.

Vale, Valleys & Cardiff – longest child – delays due to attachment assessment, match identified in October 15 but unable to proceed until therapeutic assessment completed and support needs identified.



Time taken between SBPA and Placement for Adoption

This is the second indicator that calculates the average time taken for a child to be placed for adoption, taking the measure from the time when the local authority formally decides that adoption is the plan for a child.



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

Average decreased from 11 months (342 days) to 9.6 months (291 days)



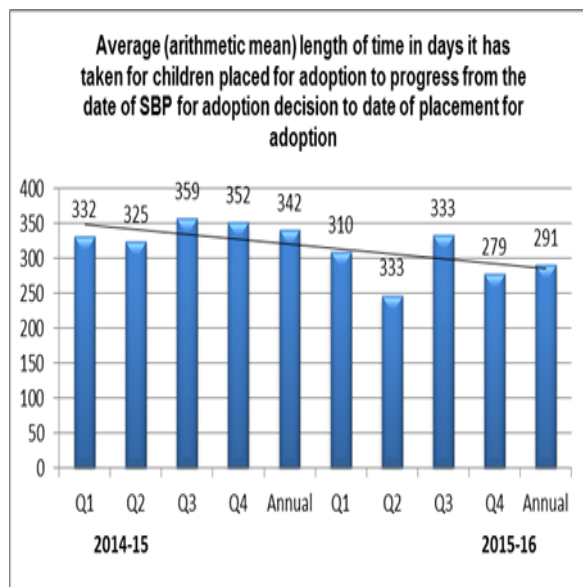
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Average in quarter 4 was 9.6 months (293 days), a decrease from 11 months (333 days) in quarter 3
- There is variance between regions in quarter 4, ranging from 7 to 10 months,
- Trend line since April 2014 is downwards.

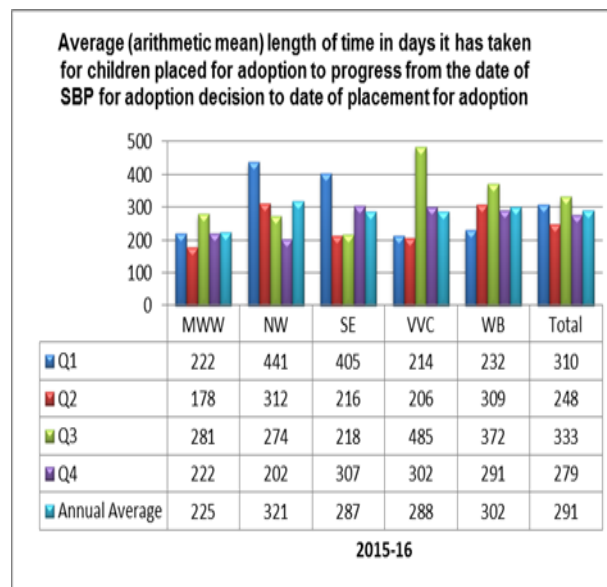
For this indicator and the previous one (see page 7) some elements of the process may be outside of the Adoption Service's control, for example, care planning pre and during court proceedings.

Should be placed for adoption decision to placement

Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



Story behind the Data

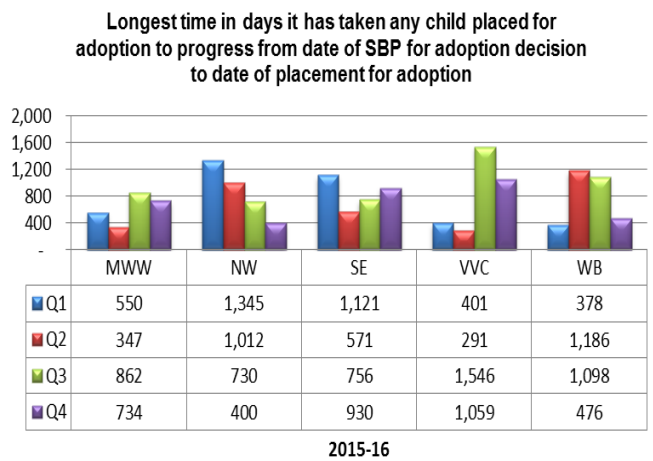
North Wales – child's first placement disrupted with a second placement found approximately 210 days later but overall 400 days shown as should be placed decision date does not alter.

Western Bay – a number of young children with no specific needs were placed in quarter 4.

Longest times taken – individual instances

In quarter 4 there was variance from 13 to 35 months.

Sometimes longer times are due to a harder to place child; finding a suitable family is good news.



Time Taken between Placement Order and Placement for Adoption



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- Average has remained at 7 months (201 days)



Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Average length of time for children to progress from date of placement order to date of placement for adoption in quarter 4 was 7 months, a decrease from 10 months at quarter 3
- Performance between the regions varies from 5.5 months to 8.5 months.

Placement Orders

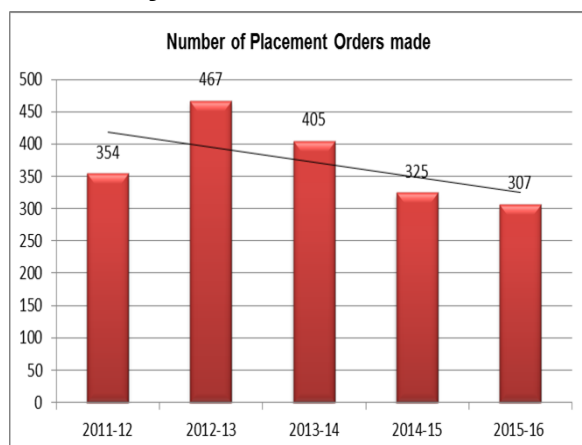
Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- 6% decrease in number of placement orders reported to NAS as granted (from 325 to 307)

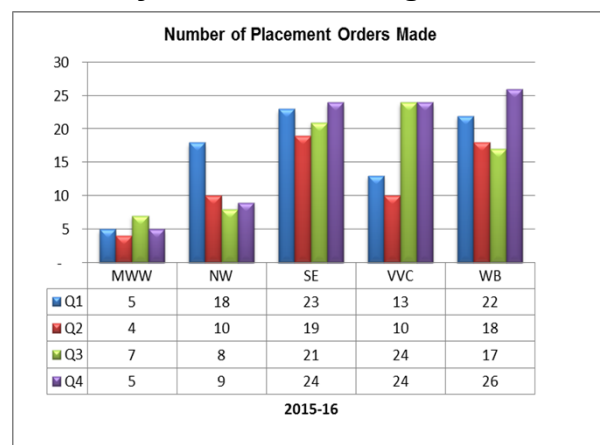
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- 14% decrease in number of placement orders made (from 77 to 88)
- The trend line from 2011-12 to 2015-16 is downwards

Last five years - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



As noted earlier the number of placement orders made by the courts in Wales fell by 20% in 2014/15 and continued at a lower level during 15/16. NAS data suggests that the number of placement orders made in Wales fell by a further 6% during 15/16 but this will not be verified until Welsh Government publishes its data on placement orders later in the year.

Children Matched

Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16



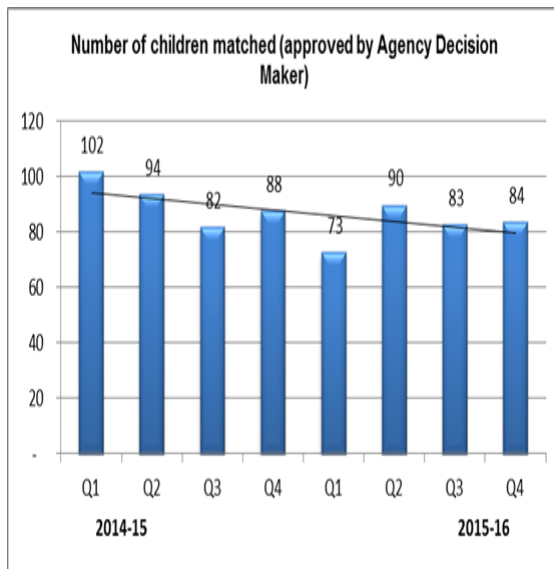
As a consequence of fewer placement orders being made, there were 10% fewer children matched (from 366 to 330)



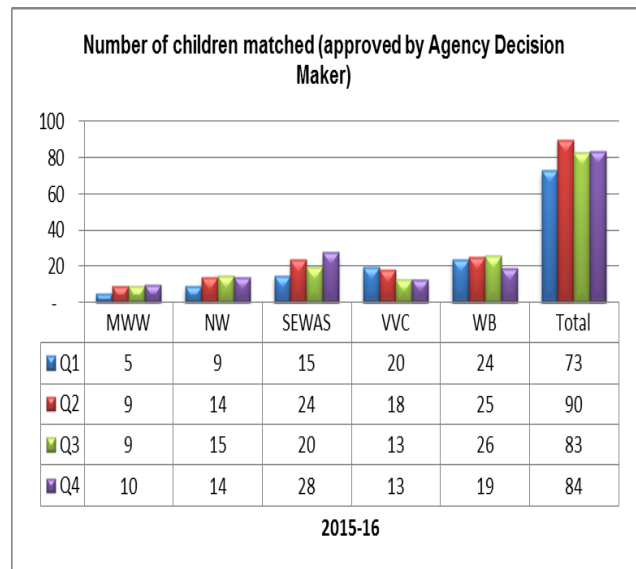
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- There was an increase of 1% although the trend line is downwards.

Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



Children Matched waiting longer than 6 months

Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16



- Number of children waiting longer than 6 months has reduced by 30% (247 to 174)
- Year end performance for 2015-16 is 53%

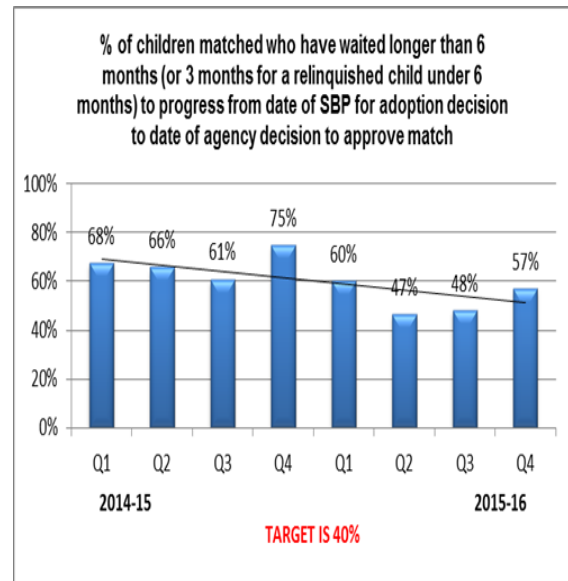
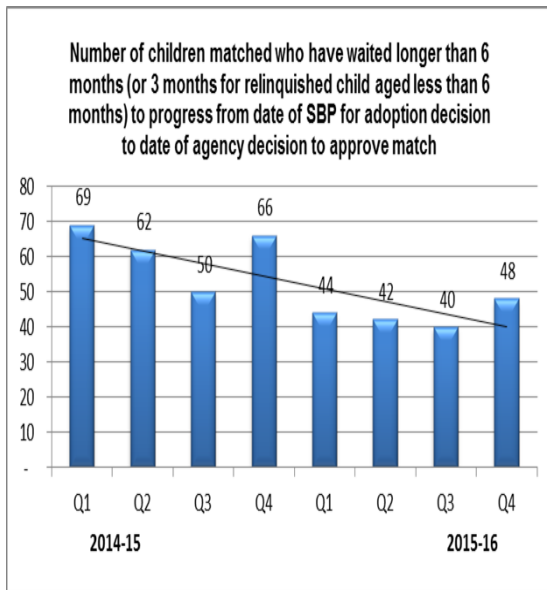
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4



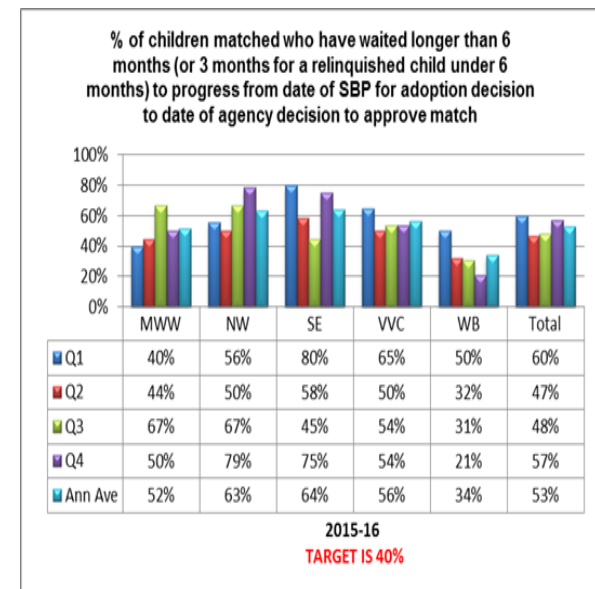
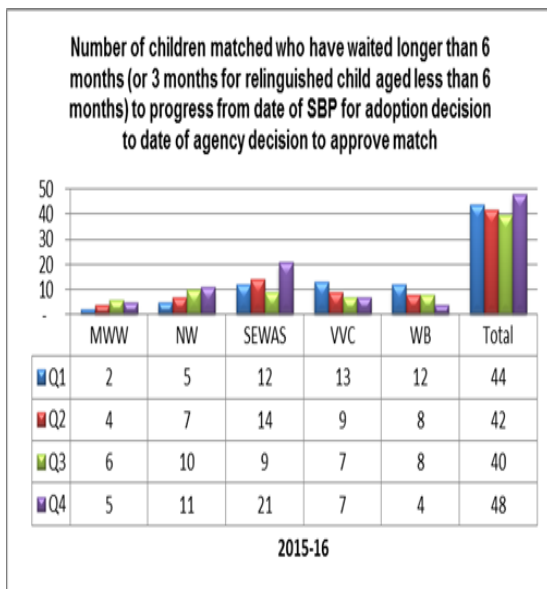
48 children waited longer than 6 months during quarter 4

- 42% reduction since April 2014 but all Wales average increased to 57% in quarter 4
- WB have again achieved target of 40% in quarter 4

National level - Number and percentage of children matched who waited longer than 6 months (3 if a relinquished children under 6 months)



Regional level - Number and percentage of children matched who waited longer than 6 months (3 if a relinquished children under 6 months)



Story behind the Data

Mid & West Wales: 2 children – delay in placement order being granted. 2 children – joint placement sought, one potential link via WAR did not proceed causing delay.

Vale, Valley & Cardiff – 1. Placement with foster carer, foster carer assessed; 2. Sibling group – difficult to find placement; 3. Child placed with siblings - time allowed for assessment of adopter; 4. Legal challenge from mother led to delay

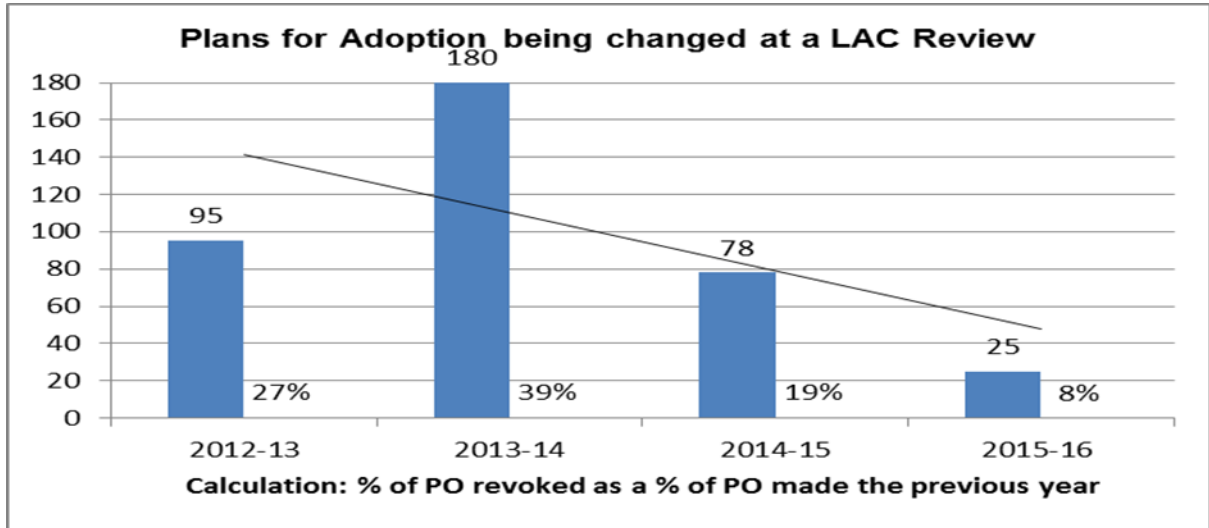
Western Bay – robust family finding process obtains interagency fee agreement at an early stage.

Plans for Adoption being changed

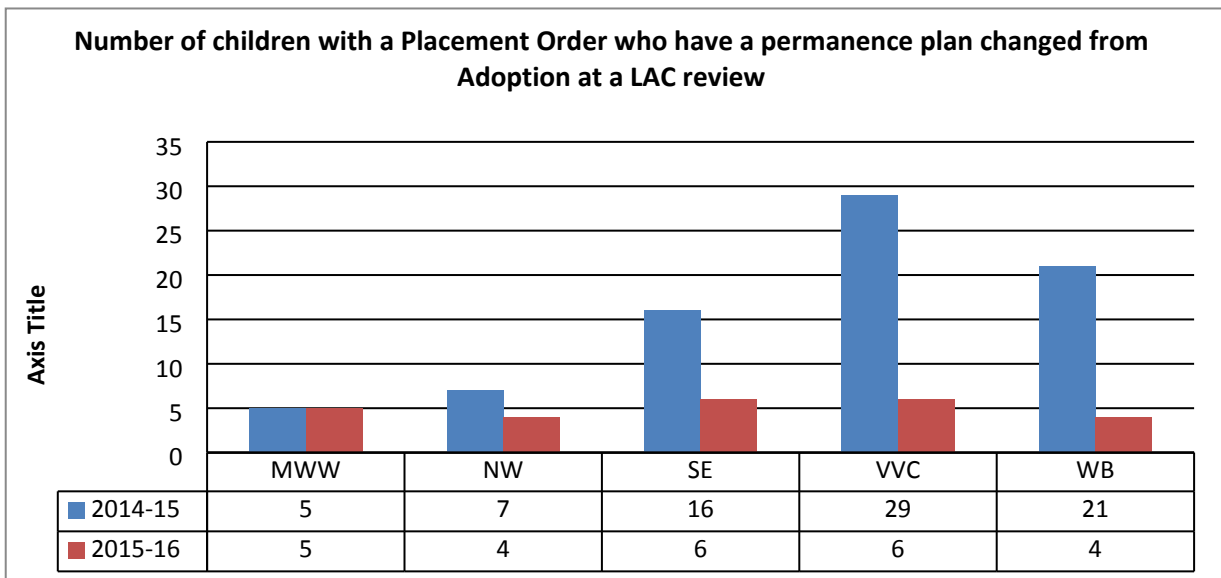
Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16



Numbers of plans for adoption being changed has reduced by 68% (78 to 25)



Regional level – number and percentage of children who have a permanence plan changed at a LAC review



Story behind the data

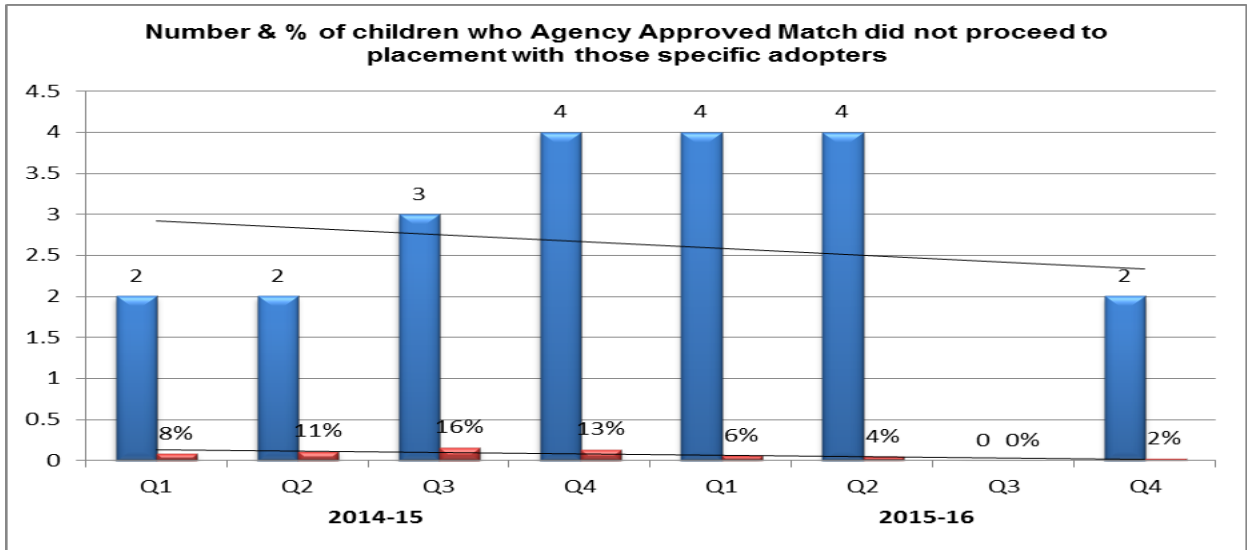
North Wales – 1 sibling group.

Adoption Disruption – placements not proceeding

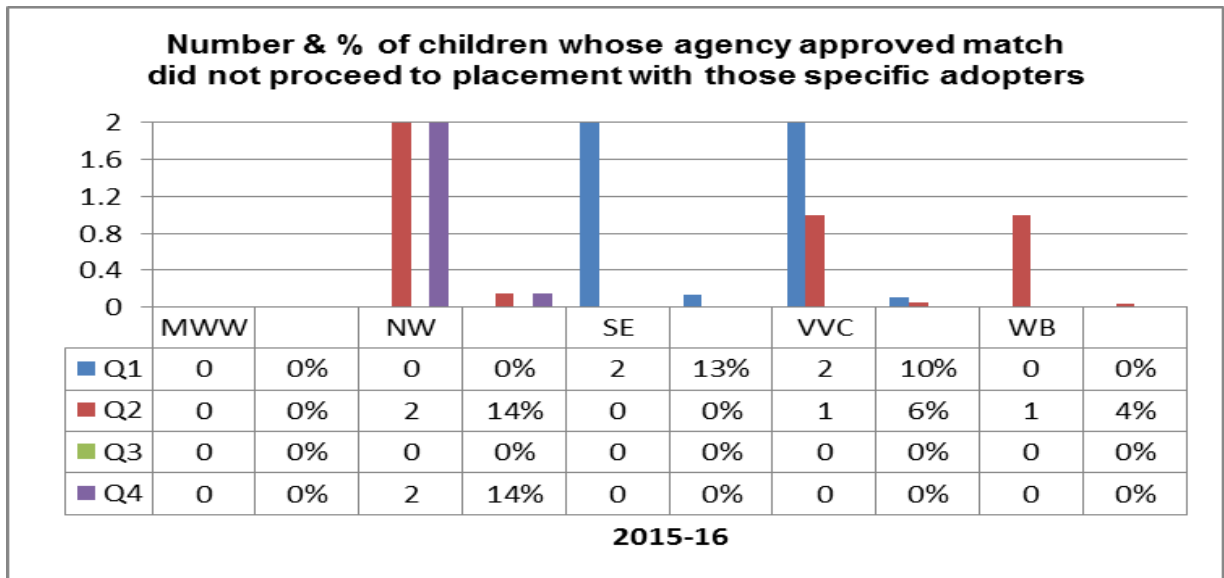


Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- Reduction from 12% to 3% of placements did not proceed
- Number has reduced by 1 (11 to 10 children) or 9%
- Trend-line for actual numbers and % is down.



Regional level – number and percentage of children whose match did not proceed



Adoption Disruption - Post Placement



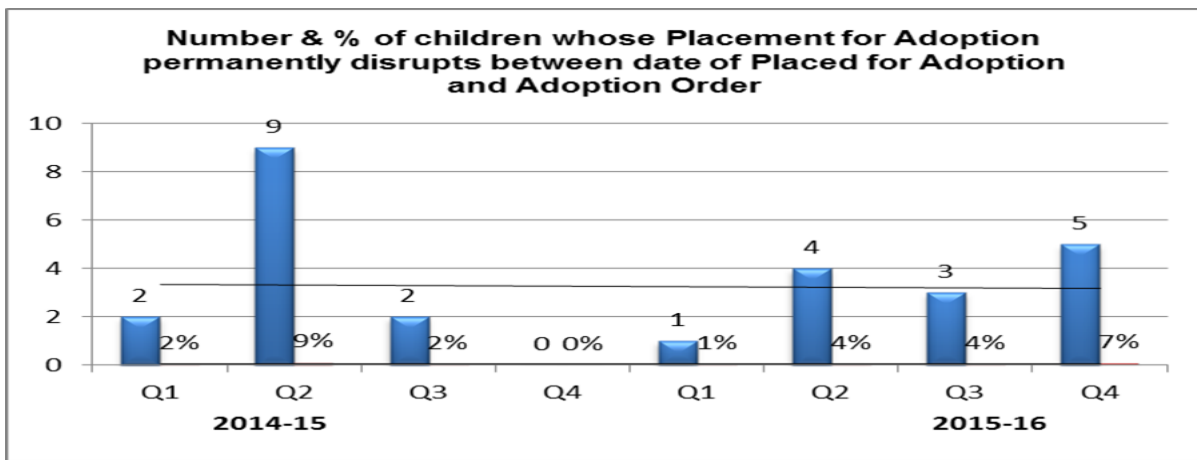
Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- Number of disruptions was 13 in both years which represents 3% and 4% respectively. Trend-line is static
- The reported number of looked after children who were known to have been previously adopted has reduced from 34 to 8.

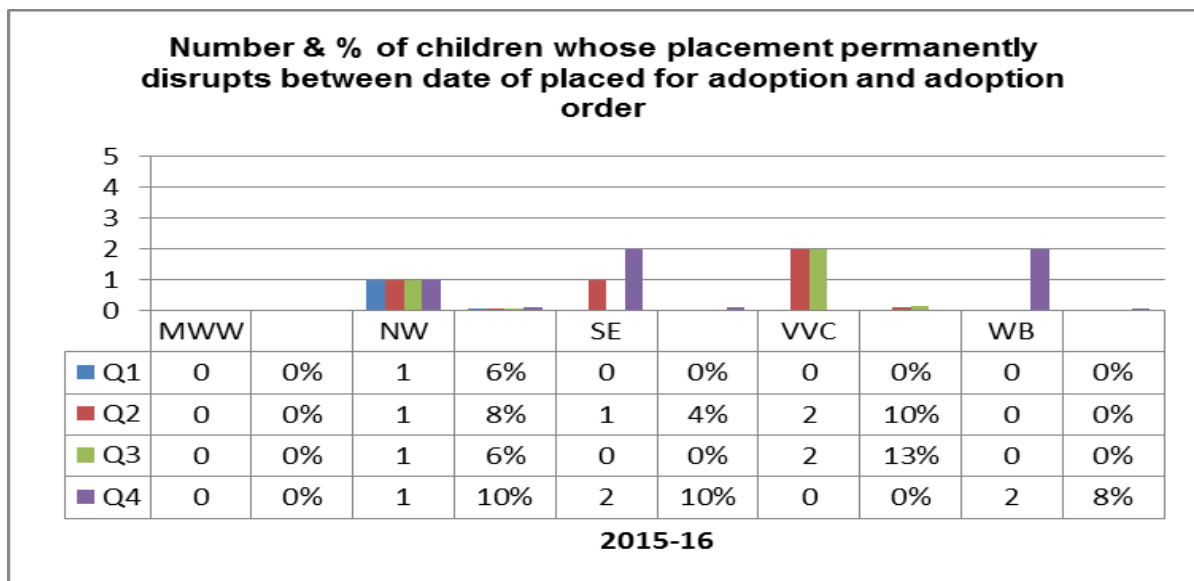


Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Numbers if disruptions increased from 3 to 5



Regional level – number and percentage of children whose placement disrupted before the order was granted



Story behind the data

Western Bay – children placed outside of Western Bay adopters.

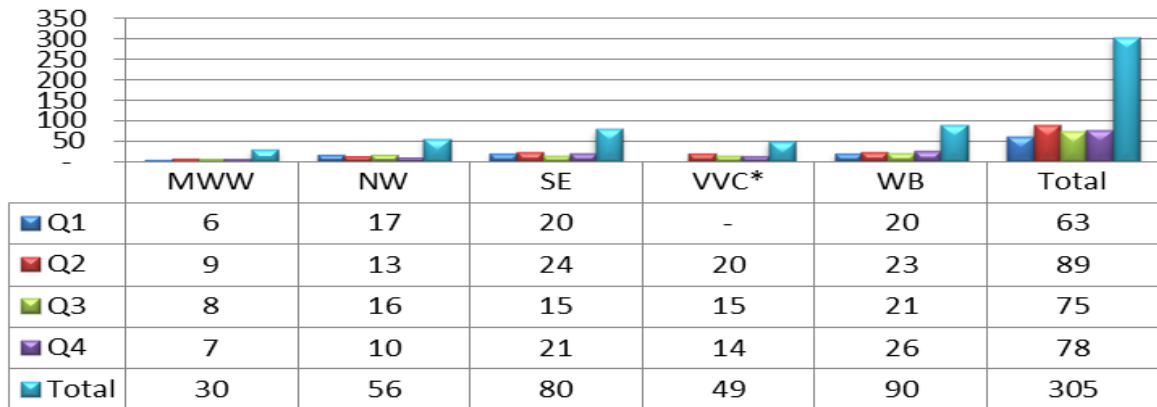
Adoption Support



Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

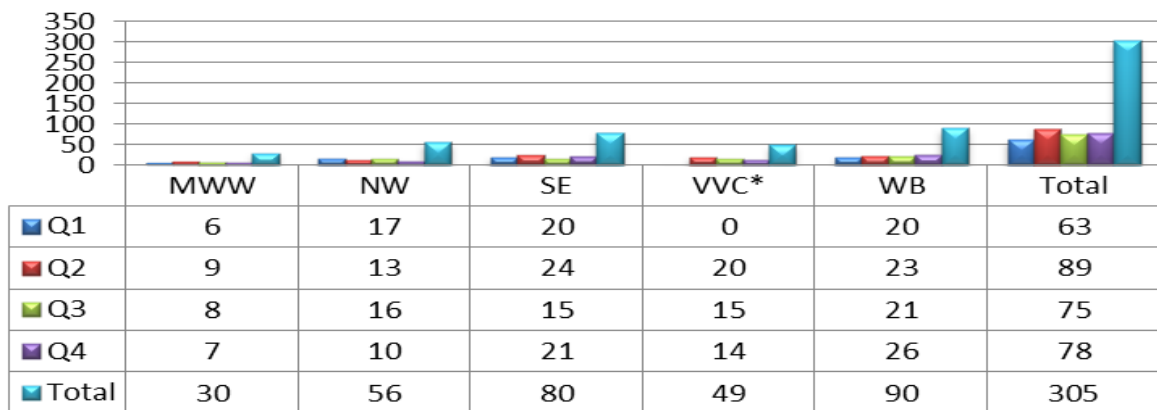
- Quarter 4 data shows 100% achievement for those children with an adoption support plan has been discussed with the adopters.

Number of Children placed for Adoption who have had an assessment for adoption support



*VVC data not available for quarter 1

Number of children placed for adoption whose plan for adoption support has been discussed with the adopters



*VVC data not available for quarter 1

Life Journey Material



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

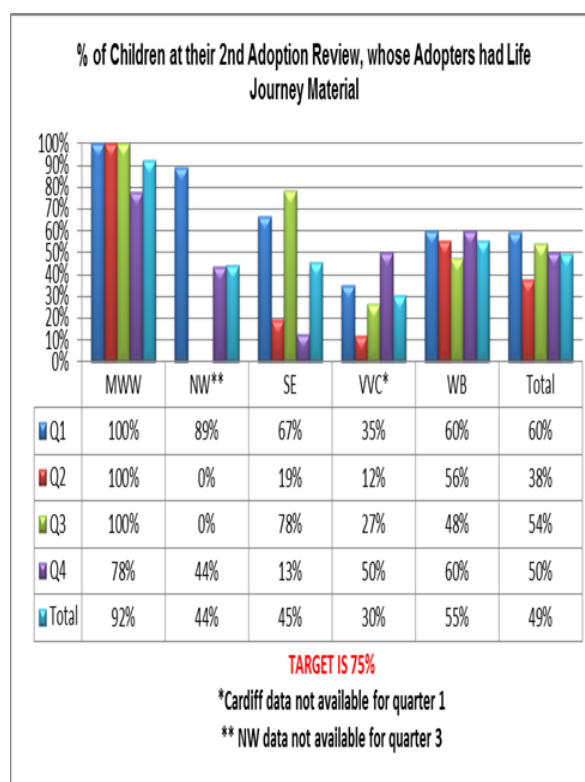
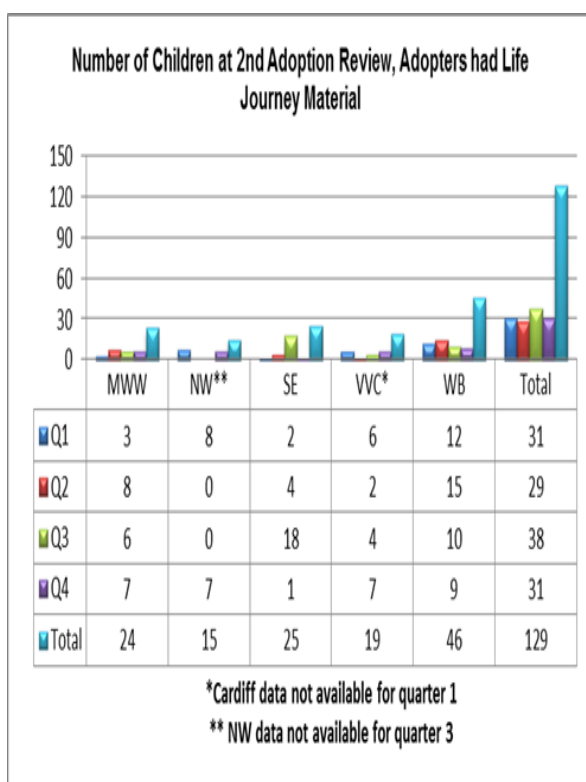
- The percentage of children receiving life journey materials by the required time has improved to 49% at year-end compared to 24% last year



Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Performance has declined slightly from quarter 3 to quarter 4, from 54% to 50%
- Target is 75%
- Mid and West Wales achieved the target in quarter 4.

Numbers and Percentages – children receiving life journey materials by the 2nd adoption review



Story behind the data

Mid & West Wales – 1 child – delay due to awaiting photographs from birth parents.

North Wales – plus 7 in progress – social worker prefers to provide after the adoption order.

Initial Enquiries to Adopt

Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16



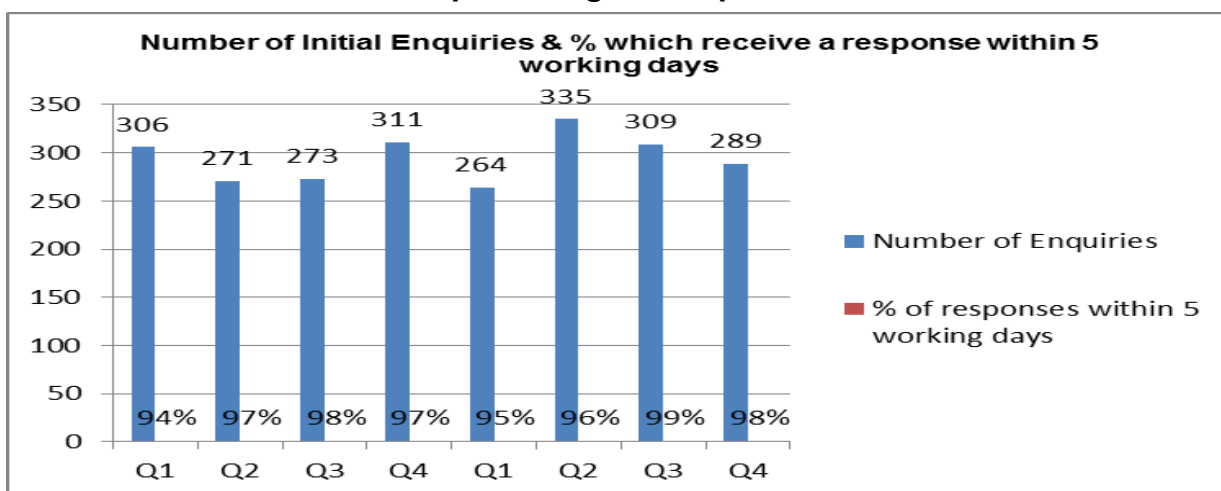
- 3% increase in number of enquiries (from 1,161 to 1,197)
- Increase from 97% to 98% of enquiries responded to within 5 working days

Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

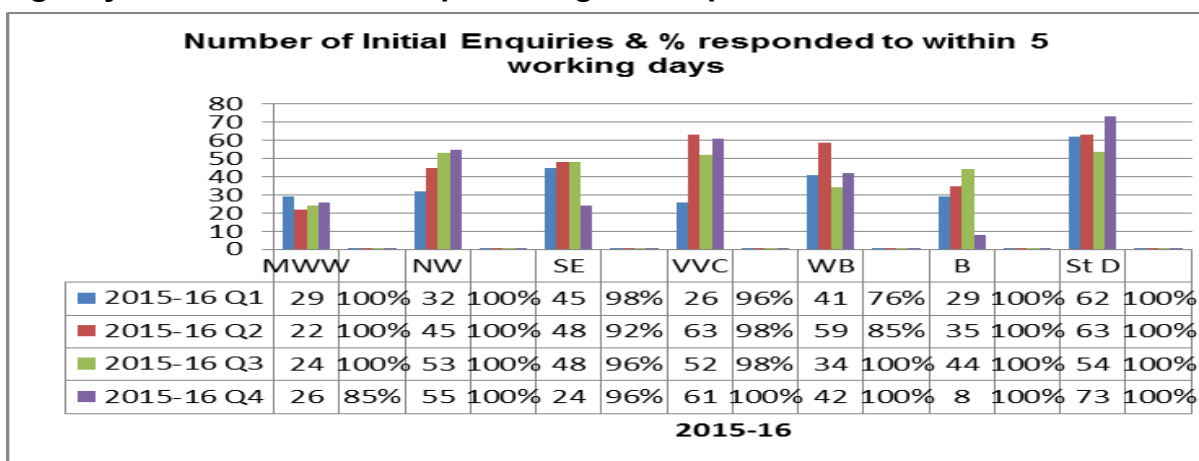


- Quarter 4 numbers have dropped slightly by 6% to 289
- Total of 1,197 enquiries for 2015-16
- For quarter 4 performance is 98% with 5 enquiries not being responded to within the 5 working days.

National Level – number and percentage of enquiries



Agency Level – number and percentage of enquiries



Story behind the data

Western Bay – With 178 enquiries this year, a total of 40 up on the previous year. Performance is extremely good and there is an average of 44/45 enquiries per quarter. Despite WBAS target of to make contact within 7 days, a significant number of adopters were unable to accommodate.

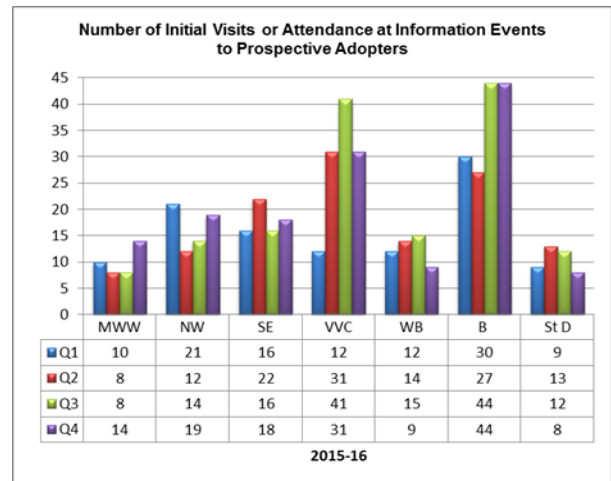
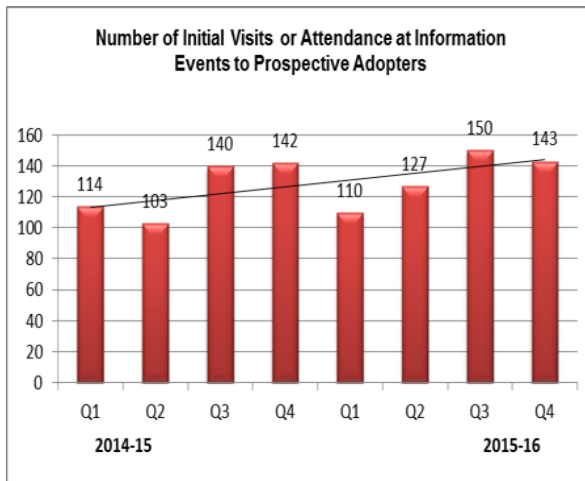
Initial Visits or Attendance at Information Events to Prospective Adopters

Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16



6% increase (from 499 to 530) although there is quarterly variation

National and agency level – adopter attendance at information / initial follow ups



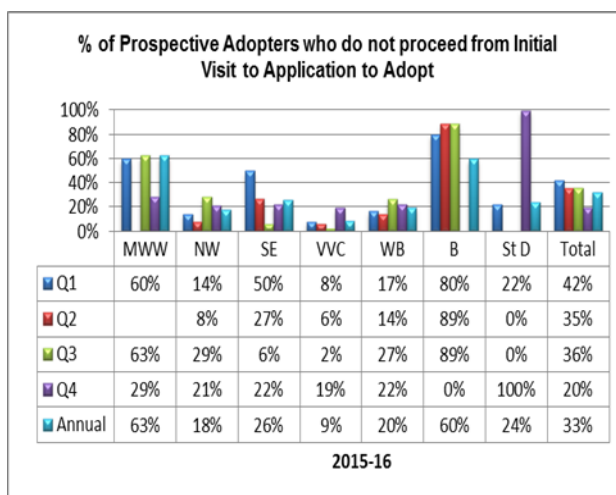
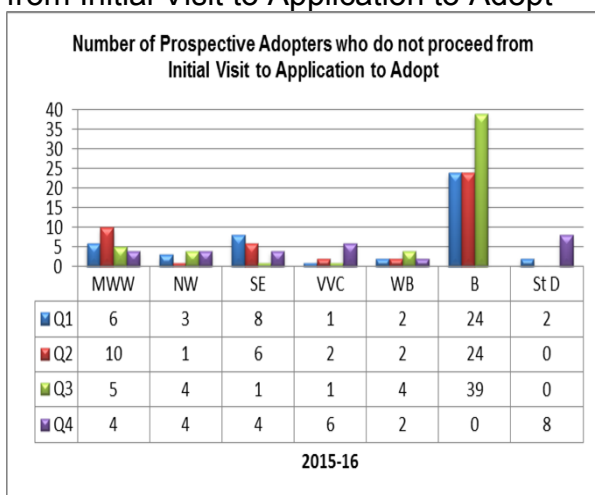
Number of Prospective Adopters who do not proceed from Initial Visit to Application to Adopt



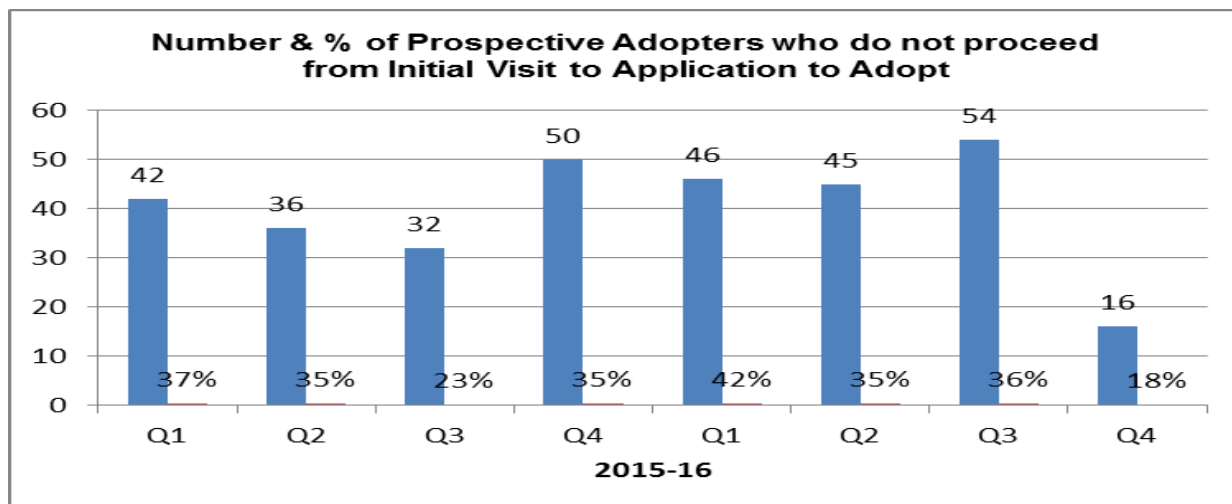
Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- Average over the year is 33% - a similar proportion to last year

Agency level data for 2015-16 - number of Prospective Adopters who do not proceed from Initial Visit to Application to Adopt



There are quarterly variations over the year.



Story behind the data

Mid & West Wales – 1 individual – agreed not suitable; 1 – too many challenges and uncertainties; and 1 – change of mind.

North Wales – adopters did not feel it was the right time to start the process.

Western Bay – 2 withdrew at the end of the assessment for specific reasons both were being assessed for a specific child.

Approval of Adopters



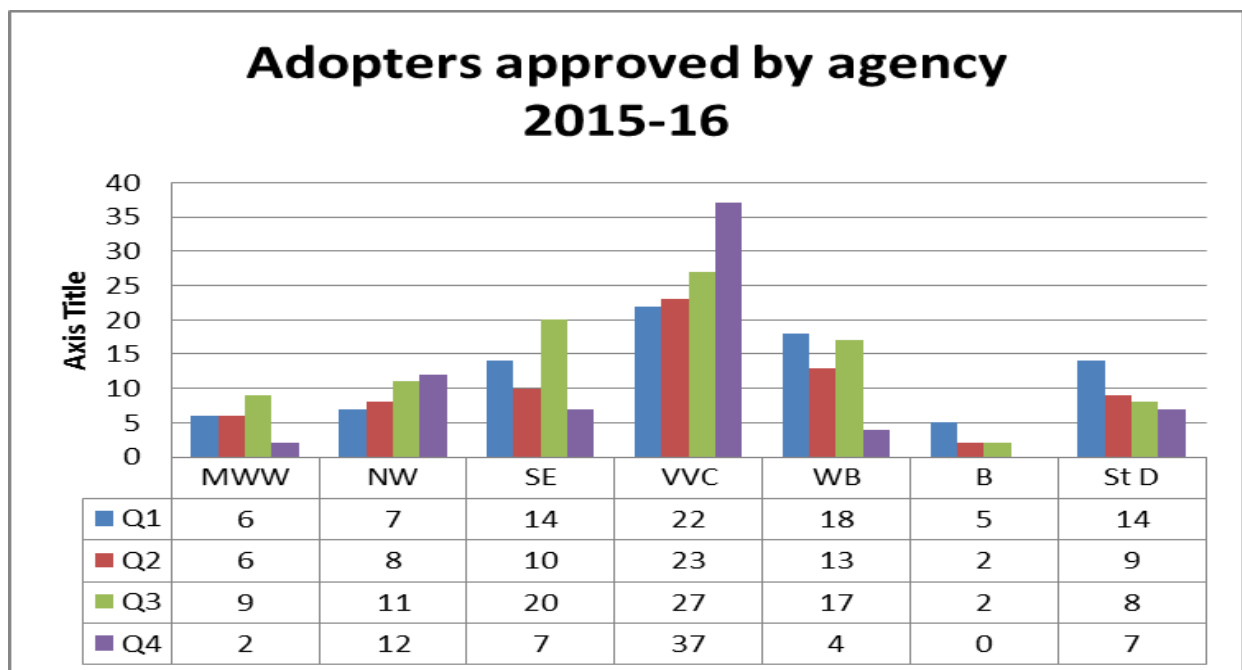
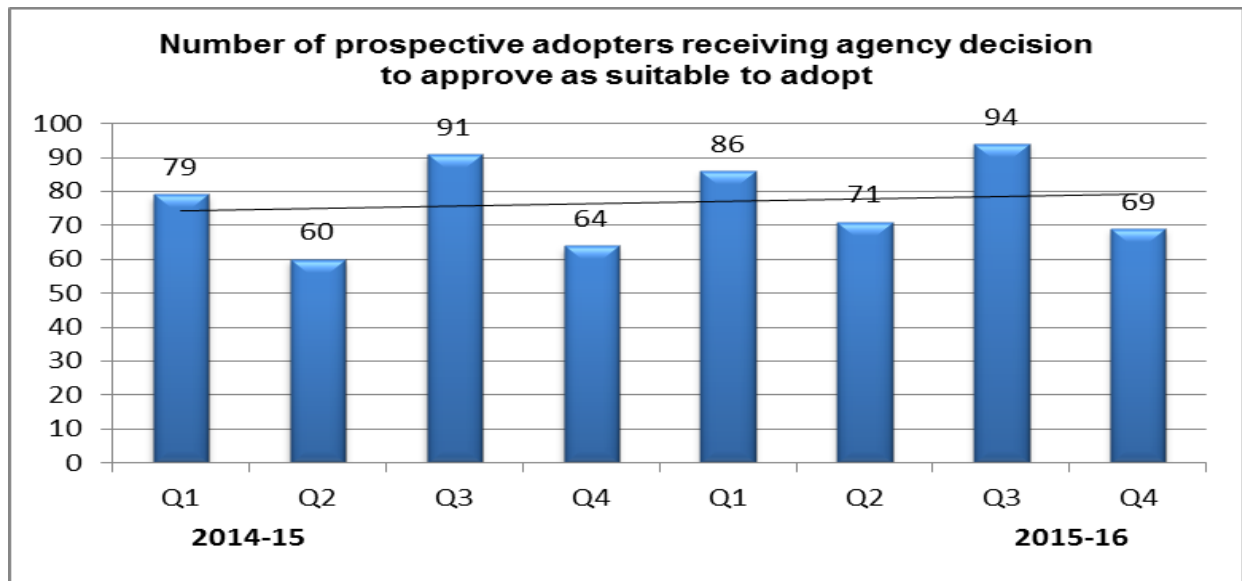
Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- 9% increase of adopters approved making a total of 320 approvals. This is commensurate with the changing context and we revised our target mid-year due to this.



Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- 27% decrease between quarters 3 and 4



Time taken between Initial Enquiry to date Adopters Approved



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

- Average has improved from 9.4 months (280 days) to 8.6 months (262 days) although not within the target of 8 months (243 days)
- Mid and West Wales and Vale, Valleys & Cardiff achieved target

(Please note – data has been revised and the final average for 2014-15 is 9.5 months (289 days))

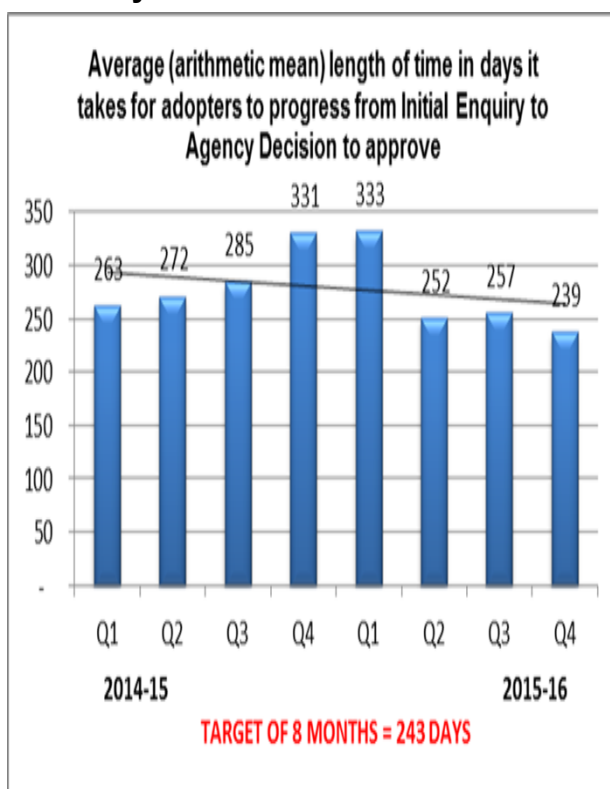


Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

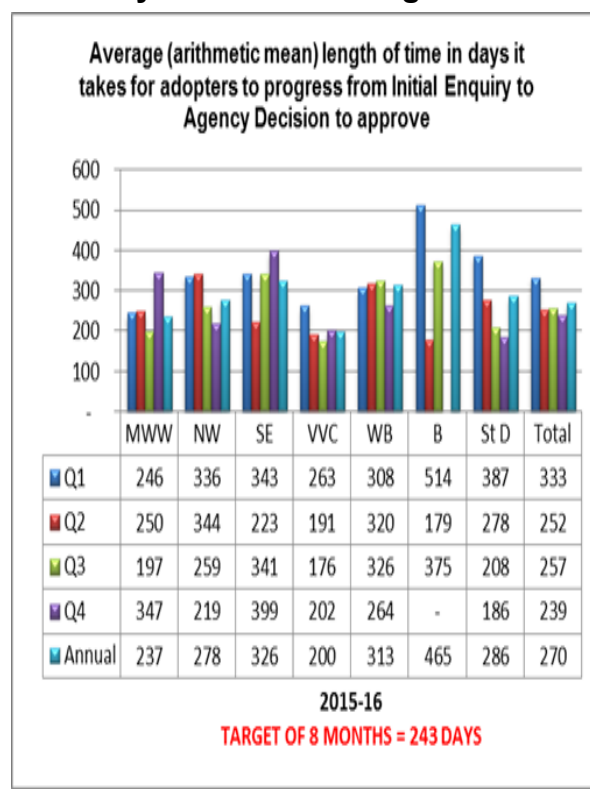
- Average for quarter 4 is 7.9 months, an improvement on 8.5 months in quarter 3
- North Wales, Vale, Valleys & Cardiff and St David's achieved target

Time taken to approve adopters

Quarterly breakdown - All Wales



Quarterly breakdown - Regional



Story behind the data

Mid & West Wales – 1 couple –went on hold due to personal reasons.

Western Bay – over the year our number of adopters has increased. The approval of adopters at the end of March will not be ratified until April, so do not count in this quarter / year's figures. This anomaly will resolve itself in the next quarter.

Birth Parents – referred and offered a service



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

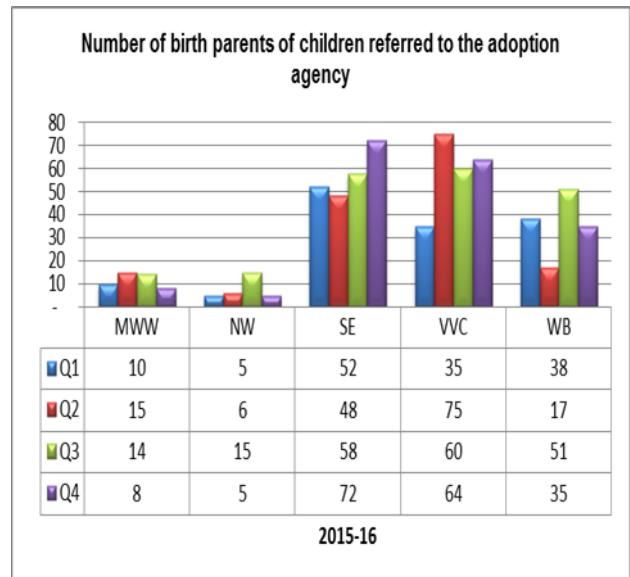
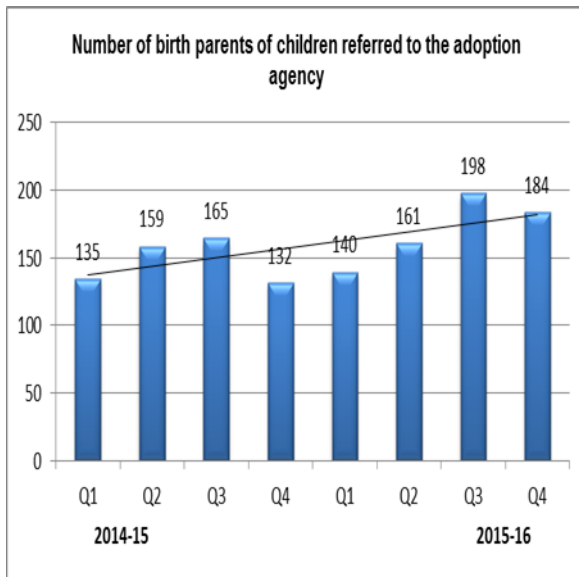
- 16% increase in number of birth parents referred (from 591 to 683)
- Increase from 83% to 97% of birth parents offered a service



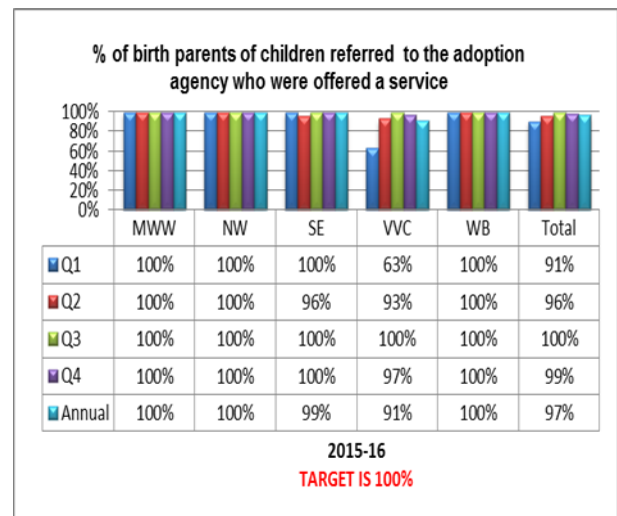
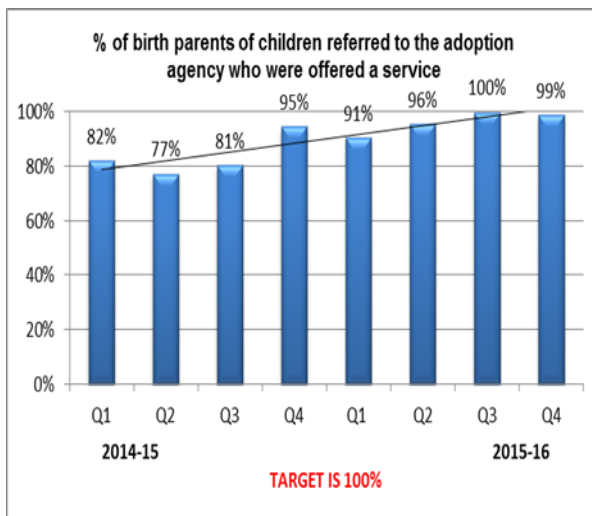
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- 11% decrease in number of birth parents referred (from 198 to 177)
- N.B. indicator definition does not include those that take up of service at a later point in the process
- Slight drop in take up – from 100% to 99%

Birth Parents Referred – national and regional data



Birth Parents offered a service – national and regional data



Birth Parent who take up a Service



Variation from 2014-15 to 2015-16

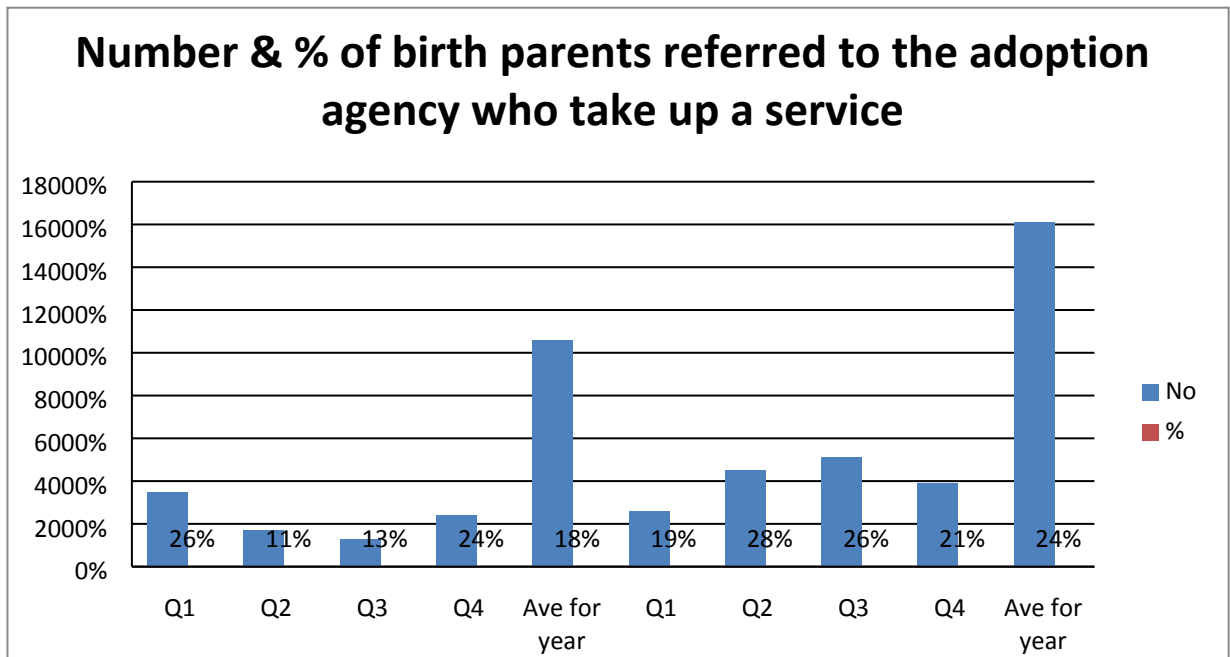
- Increase from 18% to 24% of birth parents offered a service although still not reached target of 50%



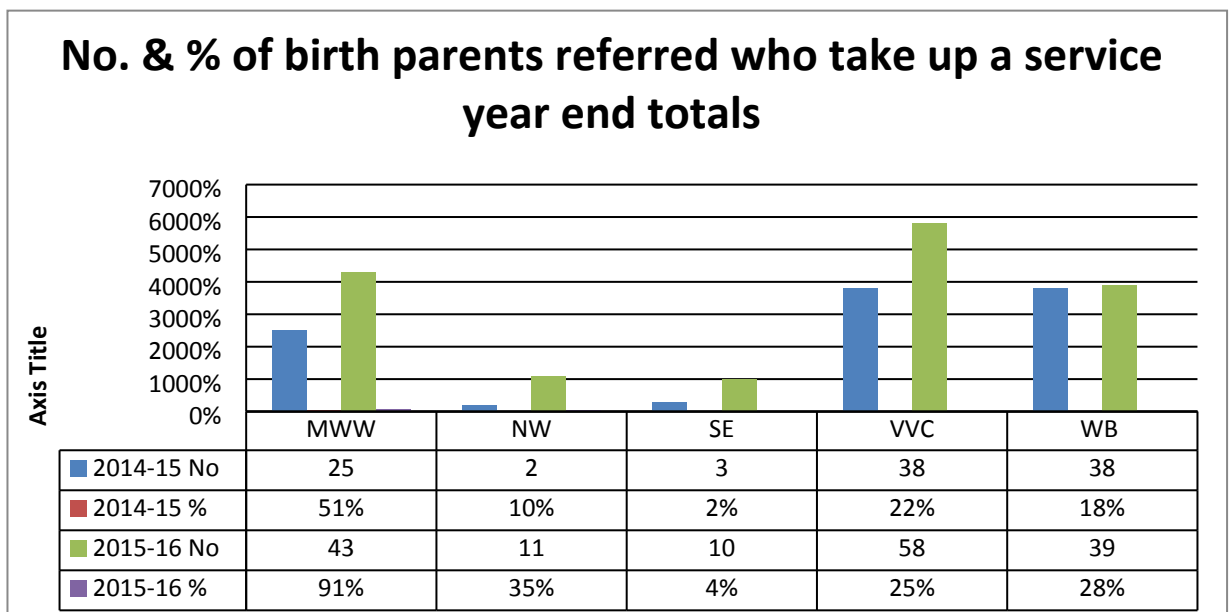
Variation from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4

- Slight drop – from 26% to 21%

National data – number and percentage of birth parents who take up a service



Regional data – number and percentage of birth parents who take up a service



Wales Adoption Register as at 01.04.16

