



Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative

Performance Report 2020-21

Position as at 31 March 2021

## Introduction

This report provides an overview of Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative (VVC) performance against key indicators in respect of children and adopter as agreed by the Regional Management Board.

Raw data held by the four local authorities and the regional collaborative has been utilised to provide an overview of performance in the reporting period 2020-2021. The report looks specifically at the performance priorities for children, life-journey work and adopters.

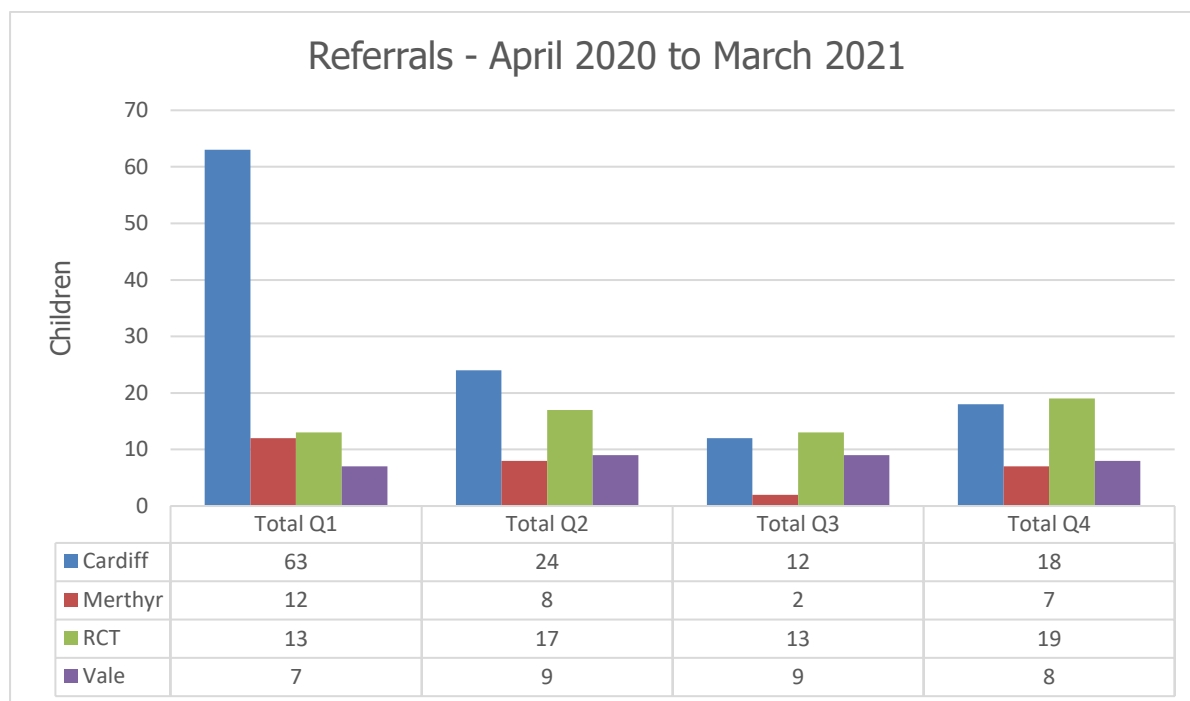
Key strengths of performance:

- ❖ Continued increase in the number of referrals to the service
- ❖ 65 children were placed in year to date
- ❖ 77% of children have been placed within the region
- ❖ Increase in the number of enquiries from prospective adopters
- ❖ 69 adopters approved to adopt in year to date

## Children

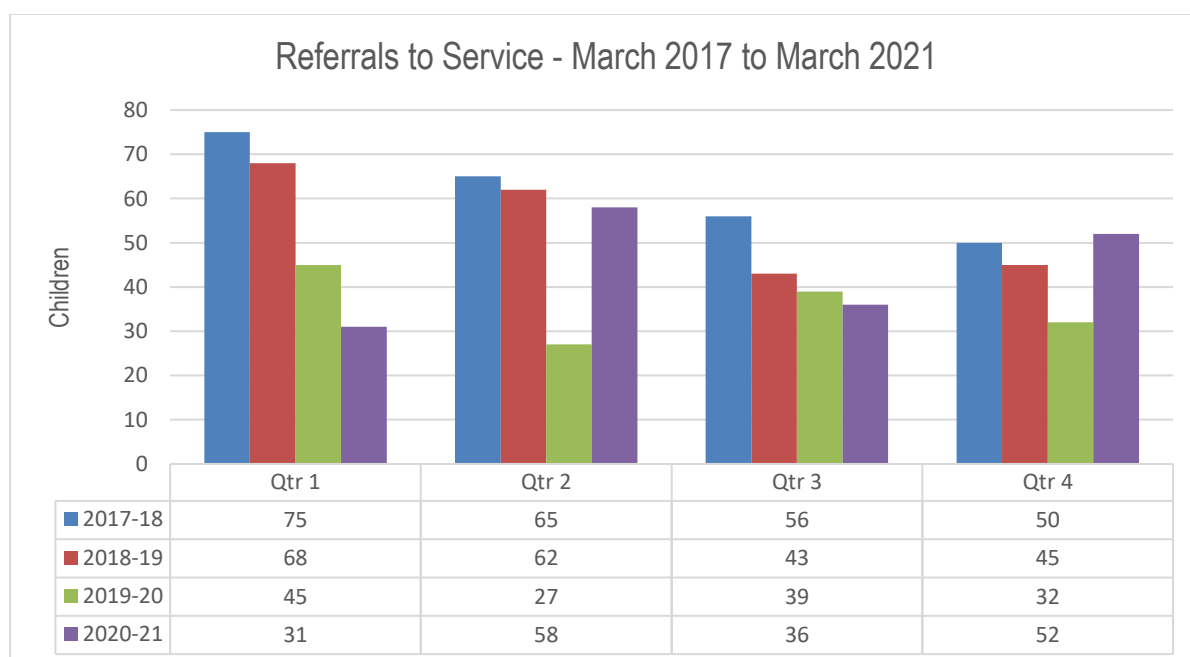
### Referrals

241 children were referred to the service during the period April 2020 to March 2021. When compared to previous year, a **68.5%** increase in the number of referrals is noted.



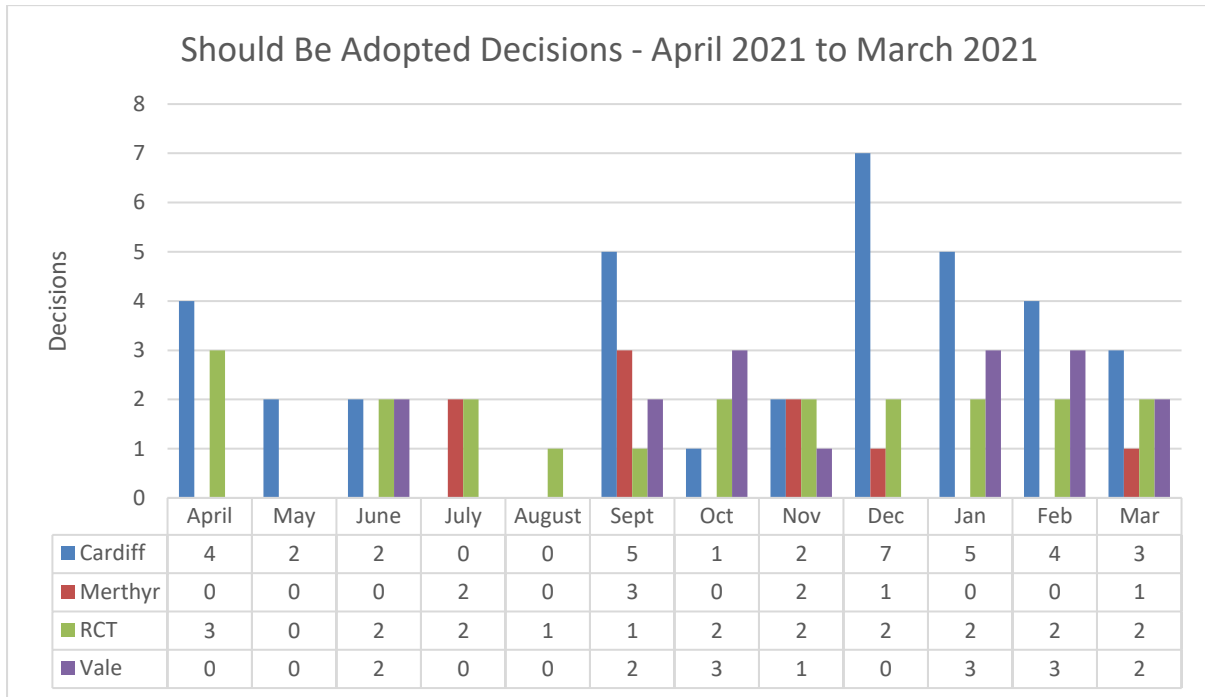
### Comparative Data

Comparative data of previous four years continues to demonstrate a downward trend in referrals, which is in line with national trends.



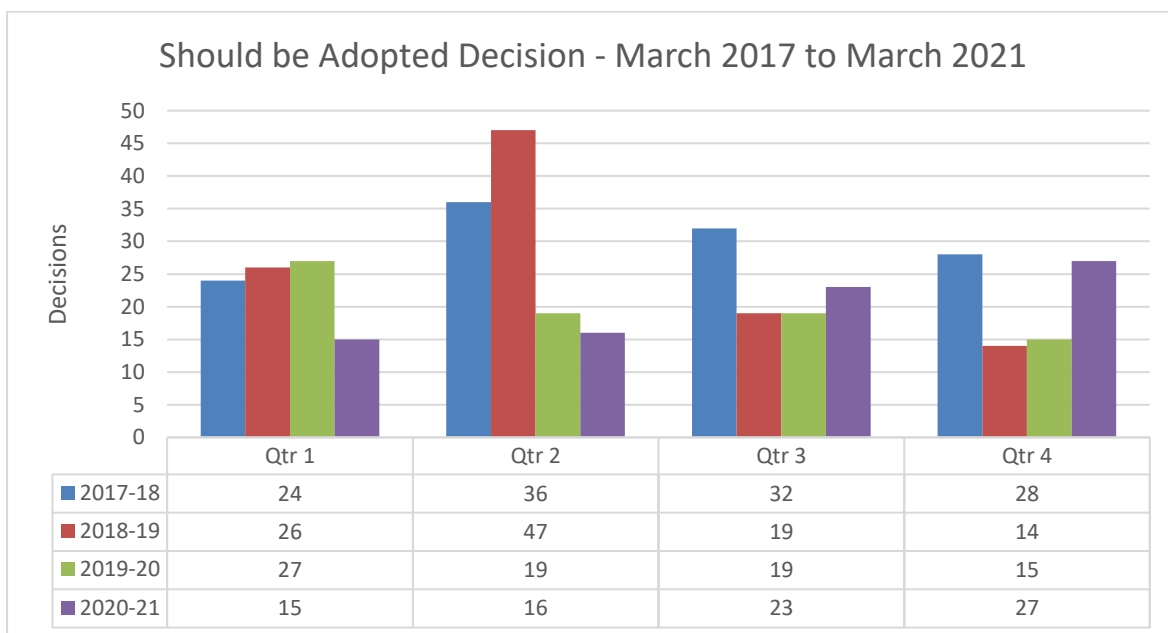
## Should be Adopted Decisions

81 SBA decisions were made during the period April 202 to March 2021. This is consistent with previous year.



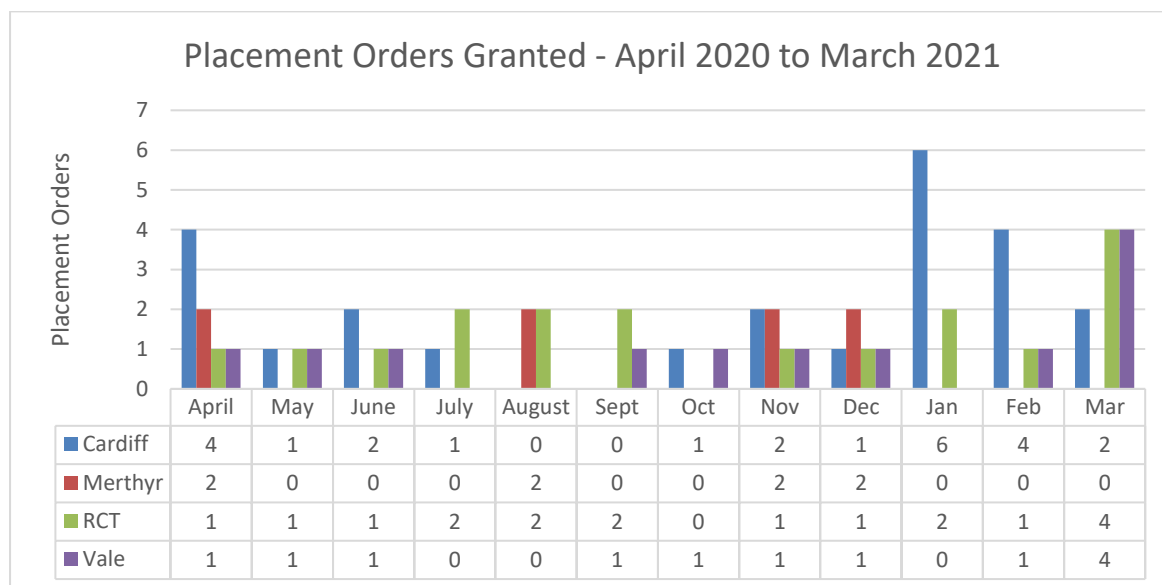
## Comparative Data

A continuing decrease in the number of SBA decisions is observed over the 4-year period and could be indicative of the commitment to find alternative permanency plans for children. A slight increase is noted in the number of SBA decisions in Q4 and this is likely due to a greater number of care proceedings reaching their conclusion now than during the earlier stages of the coronavirus pandemic.



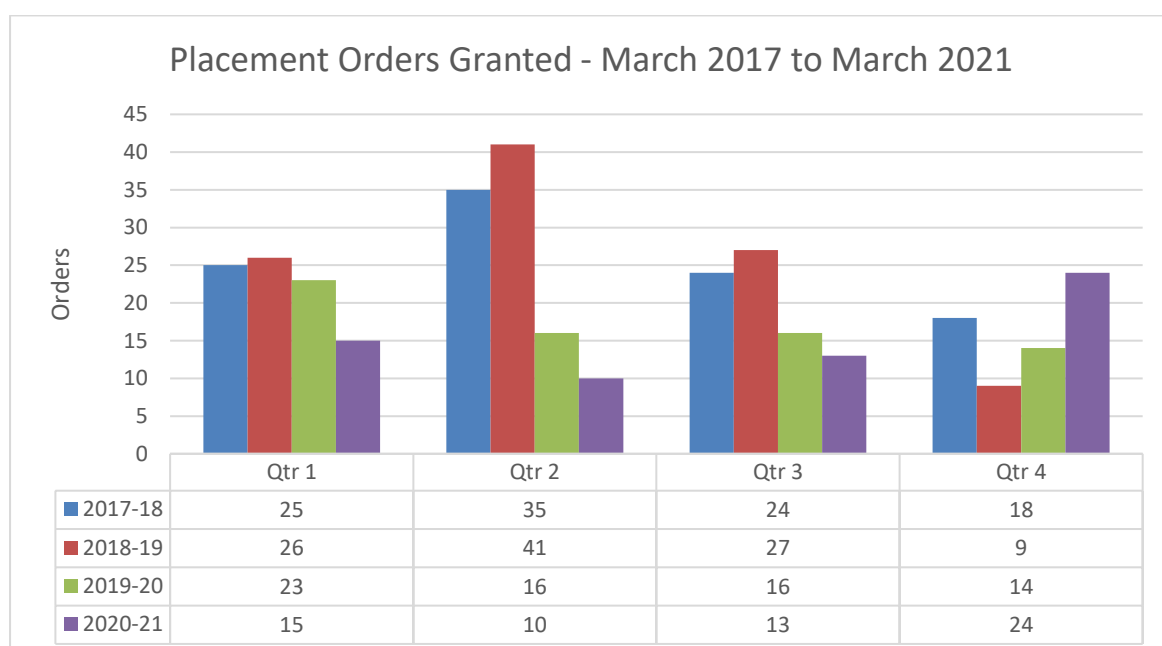
## Placement Orders

62 Placement Orders were granted in the first half year, which is 13% lower than the same period in previous year, however we are slowly seeing an increase in the number of Placement Orders being granted and data for the start of Quarter 4 already is showing a further increase. The active family finding data monitored by Welsh Government shows 53 children with a Placement Order who are as yet not linked, matched or placed and whose care plan remains one of adoption. This number of children 'waiting' has significantly reduced through a combination of increased adopter recruitment, utilisation of specialist family finding measures and the reduction in Placement Orders over the past two years.



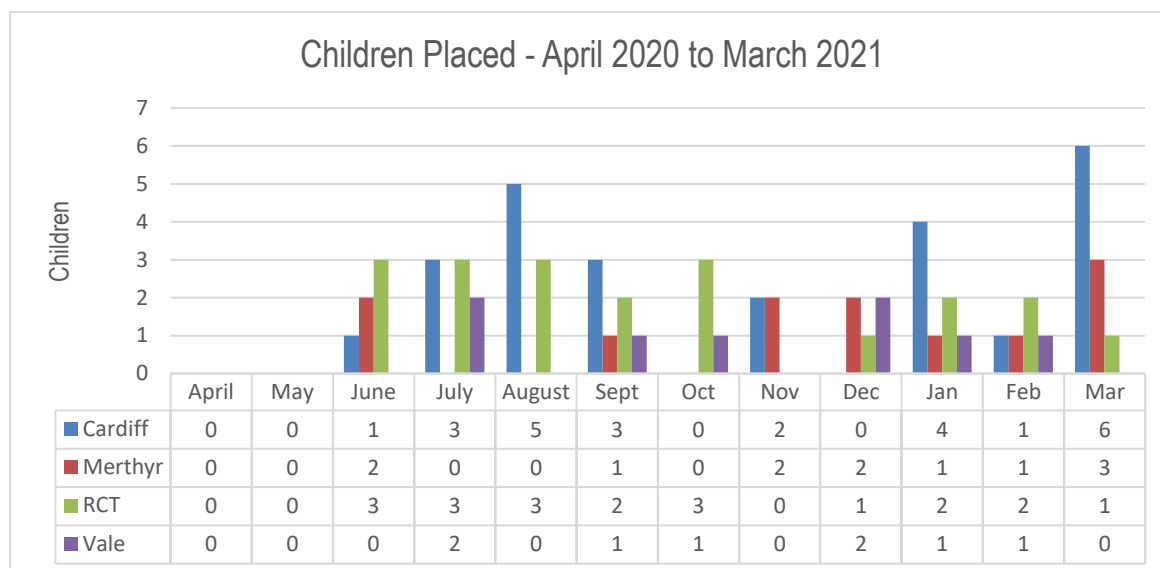
## Comparative Data

As with SBA decisions, the number of Placement Orders granted when compared to previous years have decreased and are in line with the number of SBA decisions made.



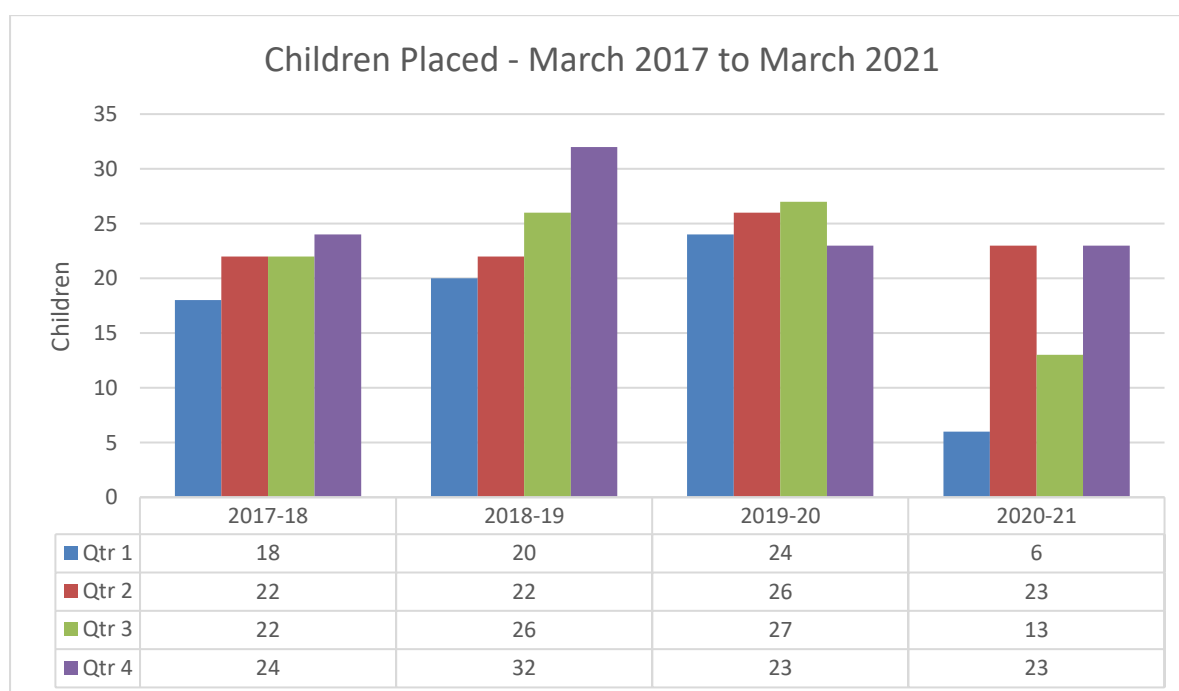
## Children Placed

65 children were placed between April 2020 and March 2021. Whilst there was an initial delay in being able to place children early on due to the coronavirus pandemic, there have been no ongoing delays as a result of this and the transitions risk assessment process is enabling placements to continue. The number of children placed is lower than in previous years, in line with the overall reduction in the number of children requiring adoptive placements observed over the past two years.



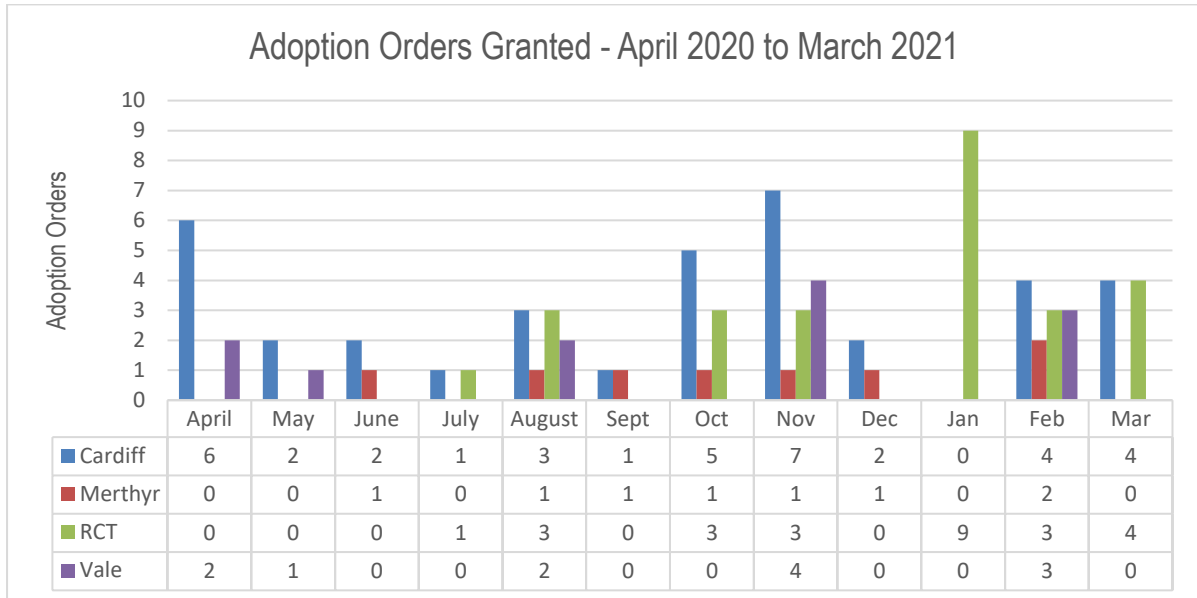
## Comparative Data

Comparative data in previous years demonstrates a reduction in the number of children being placed, however must be viewed in line with the reductions in Placement Orders granted in 2019-20 and 2020-21 compared with previous years.



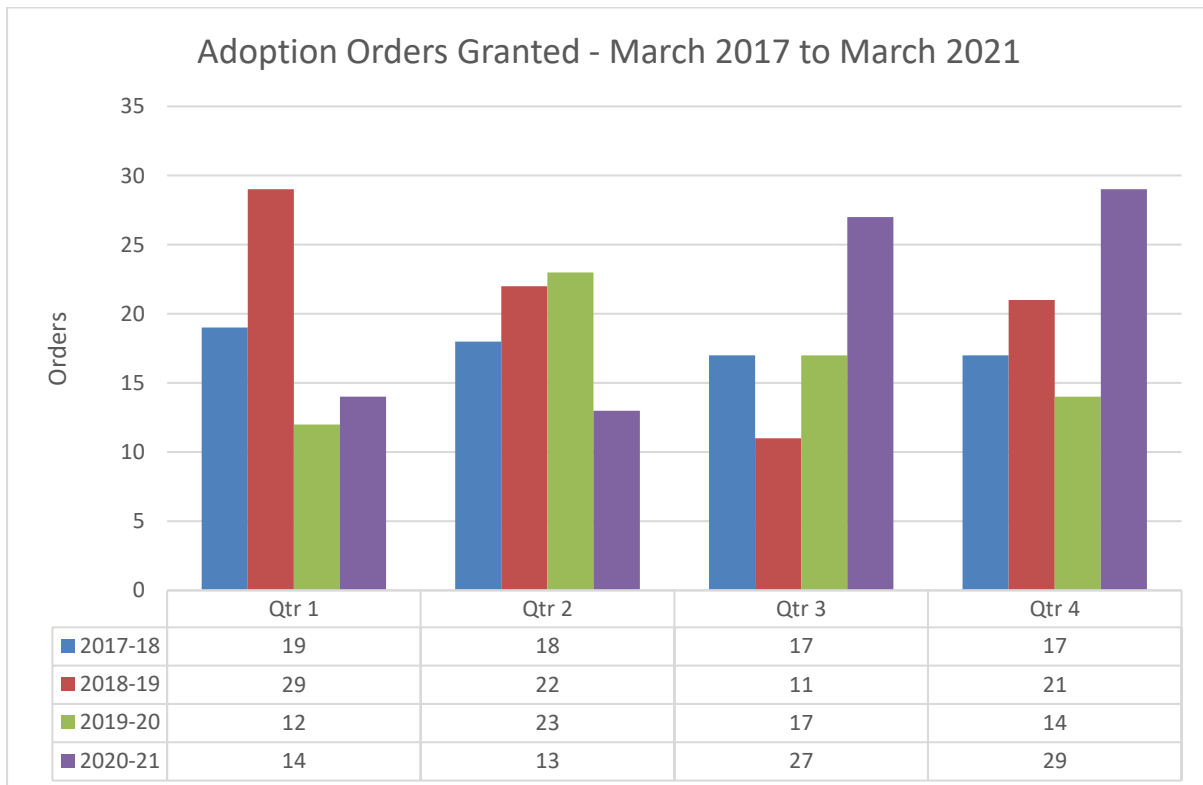
## Adoption Orders

83 Adoption Orders were granted in the reporting period. There has been a significant increase from the first two quarters to the end of quarter 4 in line with an increasing number of final adoption order hearings which have been able to take place following the initial delays earlier in the pandemic.



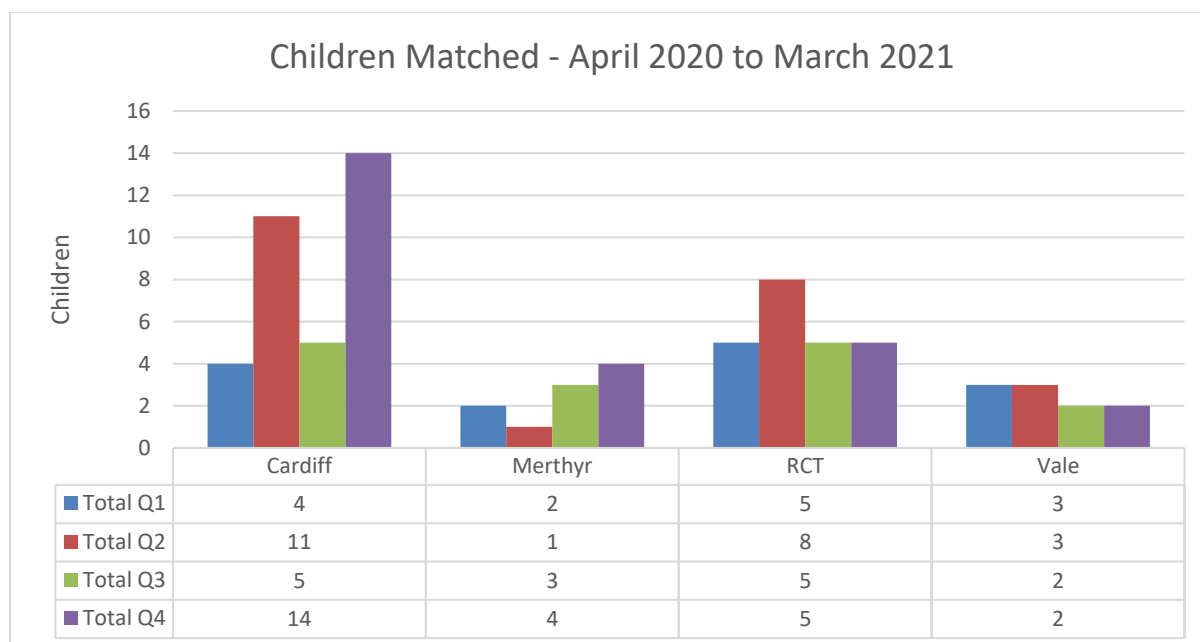
## Comparative Data

There is a significant increase in the number of Adoption Orders granted when compared with the same period in the previous year.



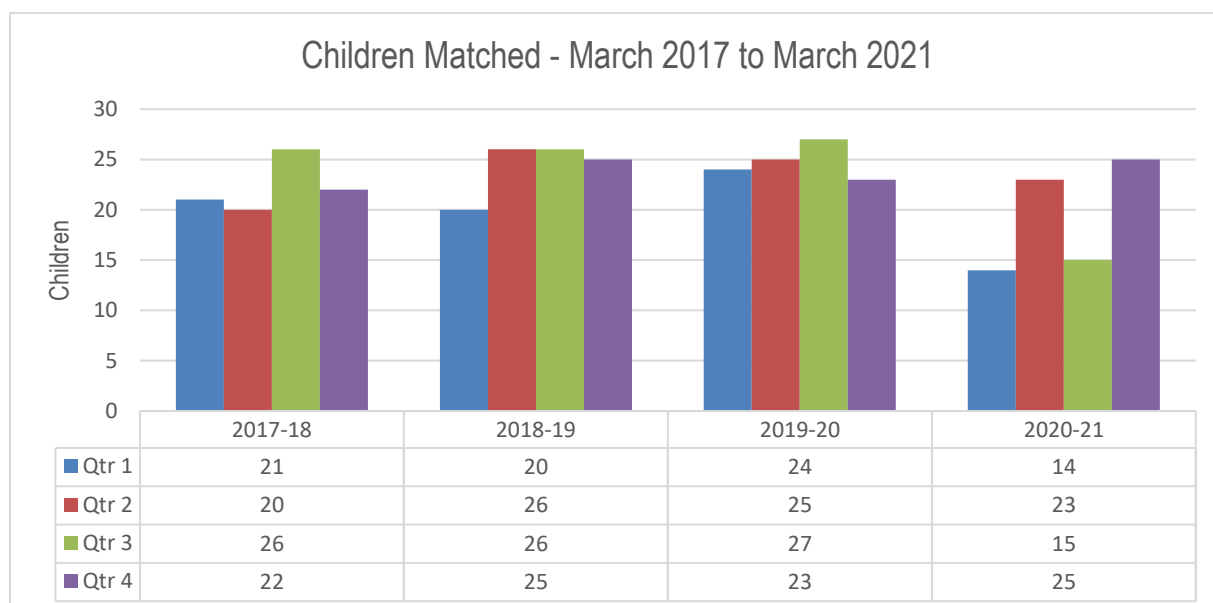
## Children Matched

65 children were matched to adopters during the reporting period. This figure is 35.64% lower when compared to the same period in previous year.



## Comparative Data

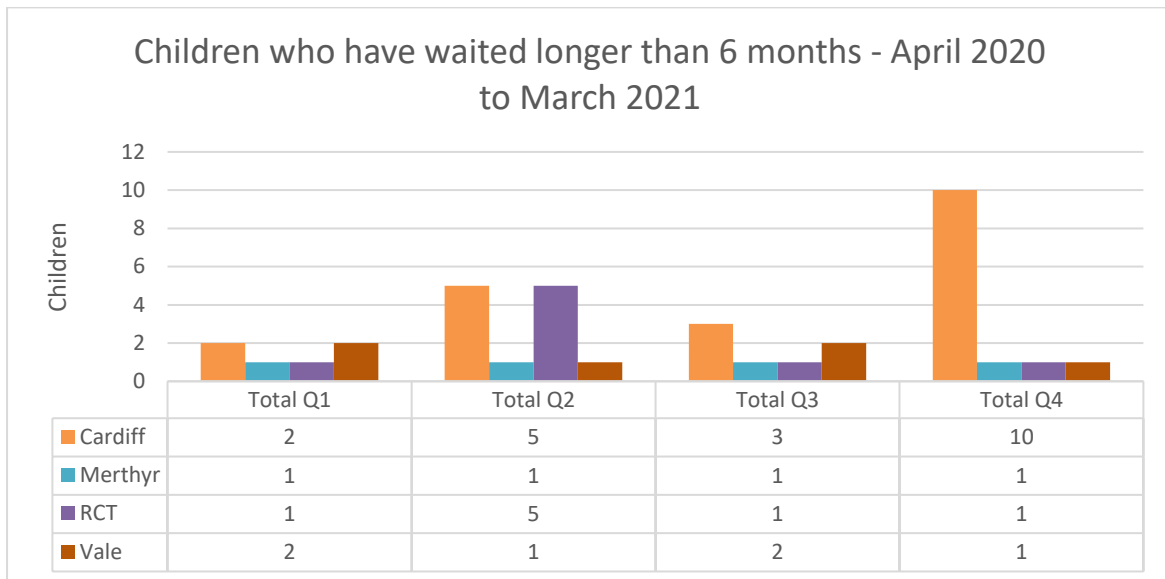
The reduction in the number of children being matched must be viewed in the context of a reduction in the number of Placement Orders granted. 2019-20 saw a 30% reduction in the number of POs compared with the previous year (sustained at similar levels in 2020-21) and in turn a similar rate of reduction is now being seen in children being matched and placed this year.





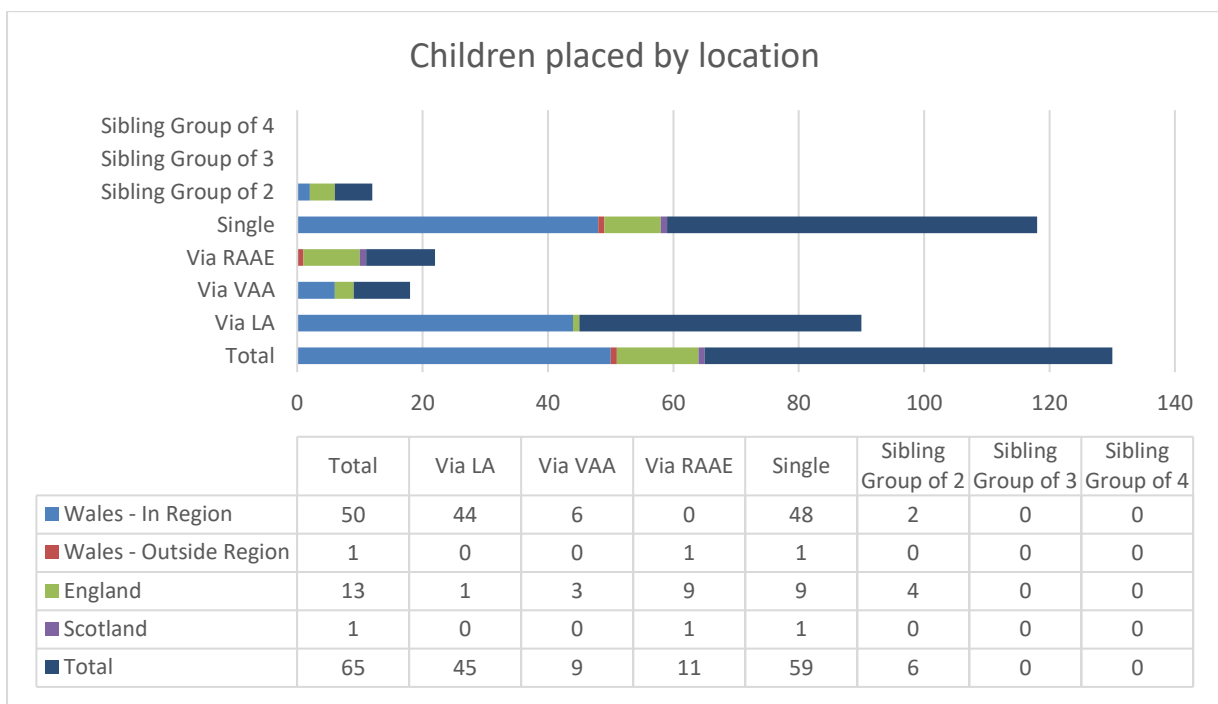
**Number of children Matched since April 2020 who have waited longer than 6 months (or 3 months for a relinquished child under 6 months of age) to progress from “Should be placed for Adoption” decision to approve to Match**

**38 (50.65%)** children matched in 2020-21 have waited longer than six months to progress from SBA to approve to match. This includes a number of children with additional/complex needs whose adoption searches have taken time but also whose matching with adopters has been drawn out over a longer period to ensure both that adopters have had sufficient time and information to proceed and that children have been able to be prepared.



**Type of placement**

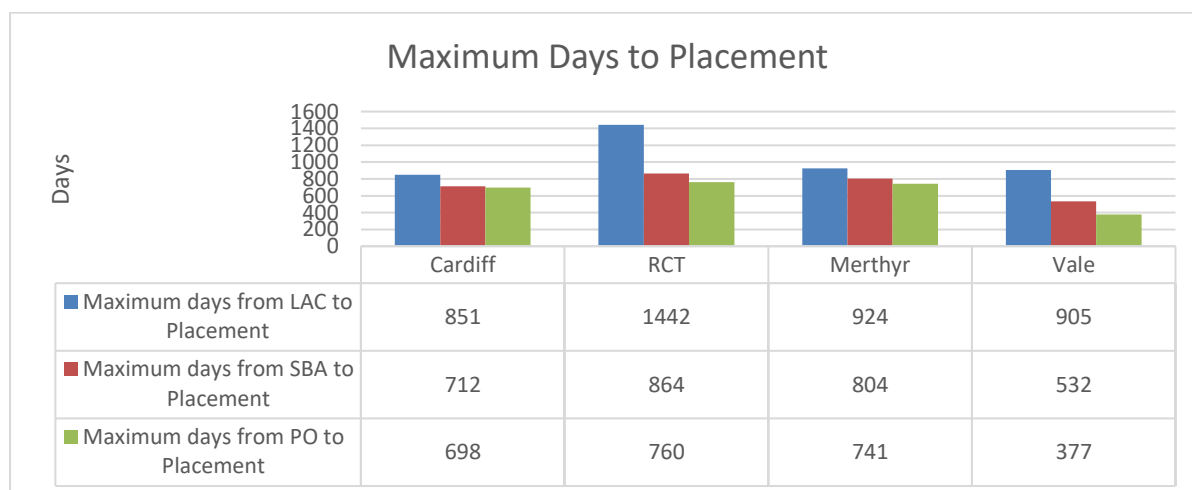
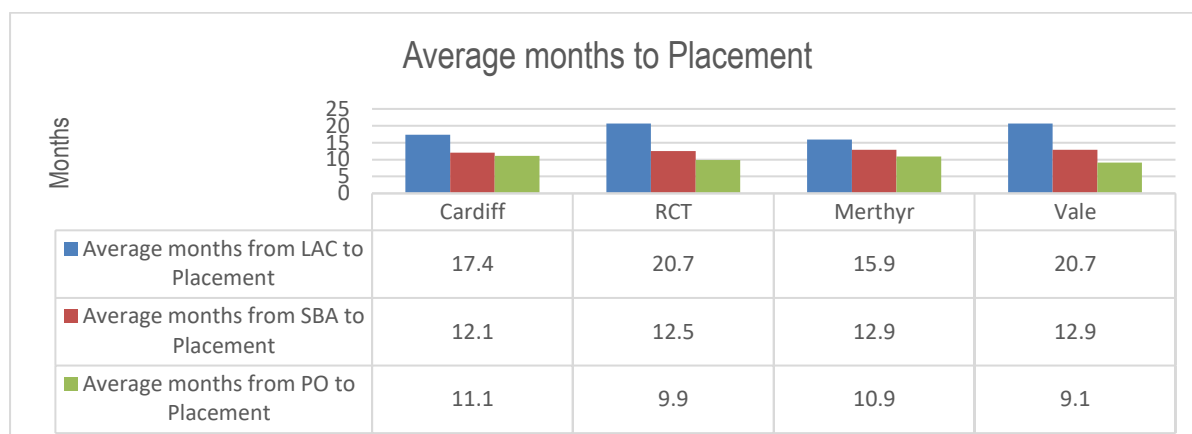
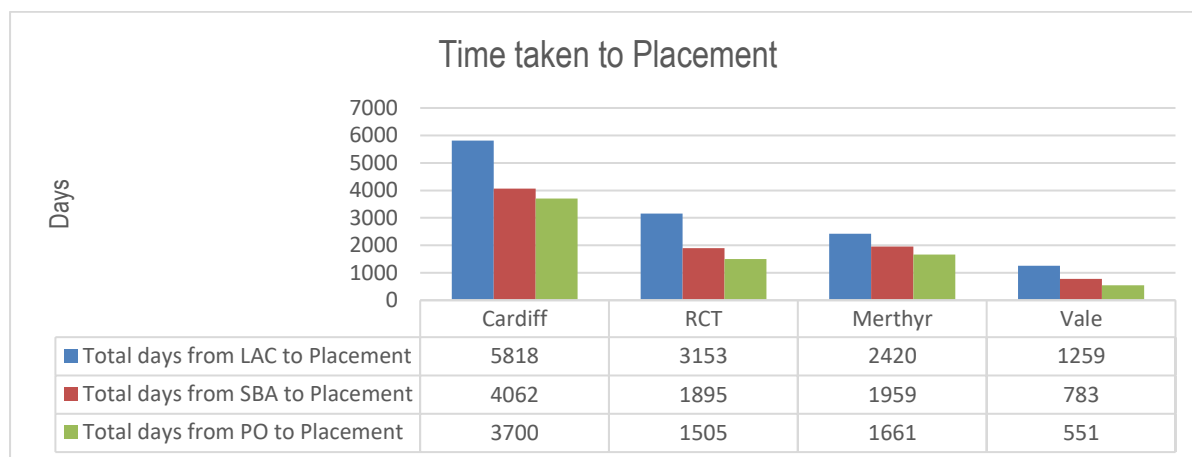
**76.92%** of the children have been placed with VVC adopters



## Conversion Rates

This data shows the analysis of time taken to placement for children placed in 2020-21.

**Note:** Given the overall small number of children placed by the Vale, the data relating to one child being placed in Quarter 3 has significantly skewed averages. This child had a combination of additional health needs, placement at a considerable distance away which was delayed due to difficulties posed by Covid-19, followed by a late legal challenge by birth parents to the Placement Order, all of which resulted in significant delay in being able to place them for adoption.



## Life Journey Work

Amendments to the performance indicators for Life Journey work came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

M20A The number of children during the quarter where life journey material has been provided by the time of matching panel. **Life Journey material at matching panel has been defined as: draft later life letter; and draft life storybook.**

M20 The number of children for whom life journey material has been provided to adopters by the time of the second adoption review.

M21 The number of children during the quarter who had their second adoption review.

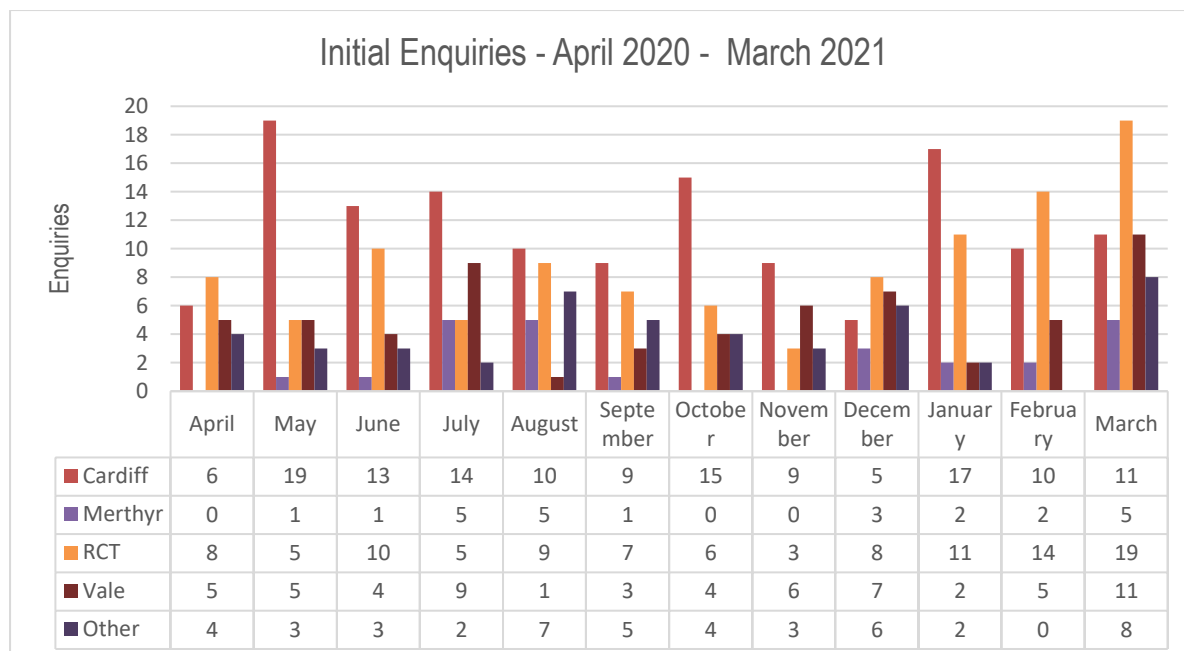
**Quarter on quarter we can see a steady increase in performance with most local authorities achieving 100% compliance. Given the relatively small numbers of children involved in both measures, just 1 child can show a significant impact on the overall %.**

M20, M20A and M21 - Life Journey - Accumulated Data						
	Matches	LJ Materials	2nd Review	LJ Materials	Panel %	2nd Review %
Quarter 1	14	2	16	9	14.29	56.25
Quarter 2	21	14	8	7	66.67	87.5
Quarter 3	15	14	23	22	93.33	95.65
Quarter 4	25	25	10	10	100	100
Total	75	55	57	48	73.3	84.2

## Adopters

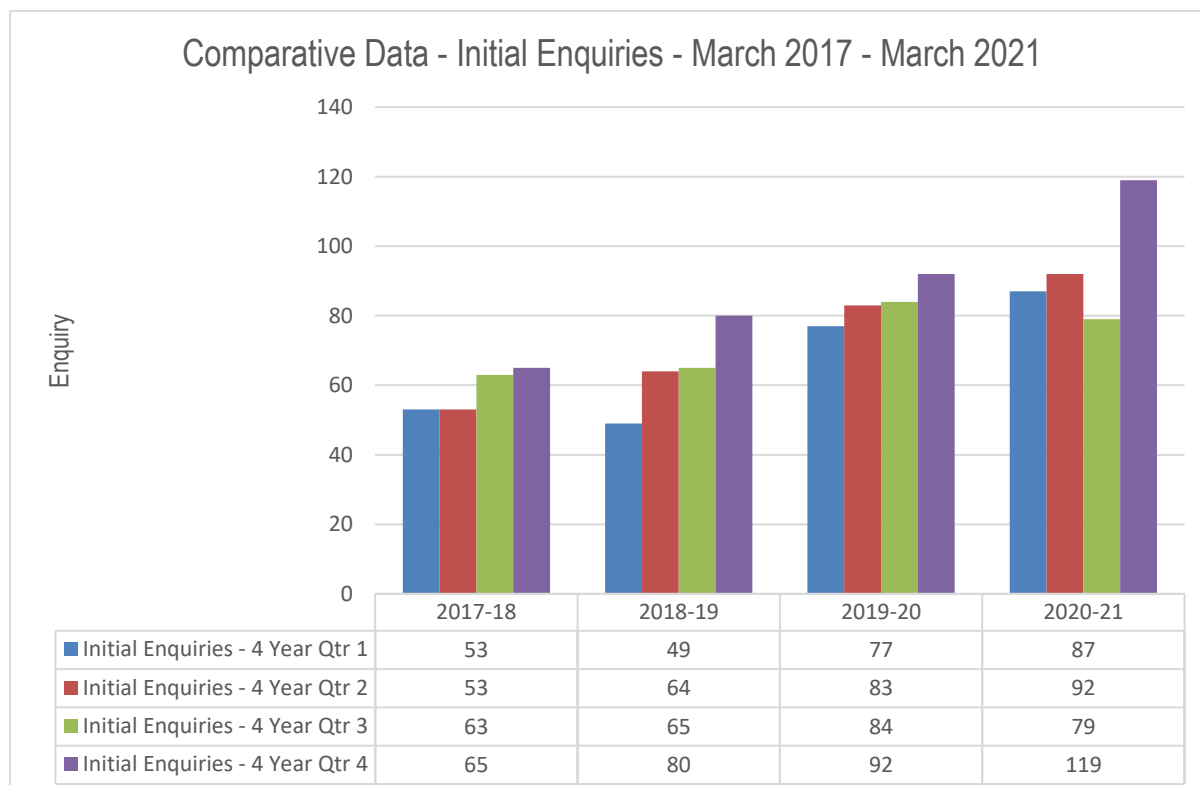
### Initial Enquiries

377 initial enquiries have been received during the reporting period. 100% of enquiries received a response by phone, e-mail or letter within 5 working days.



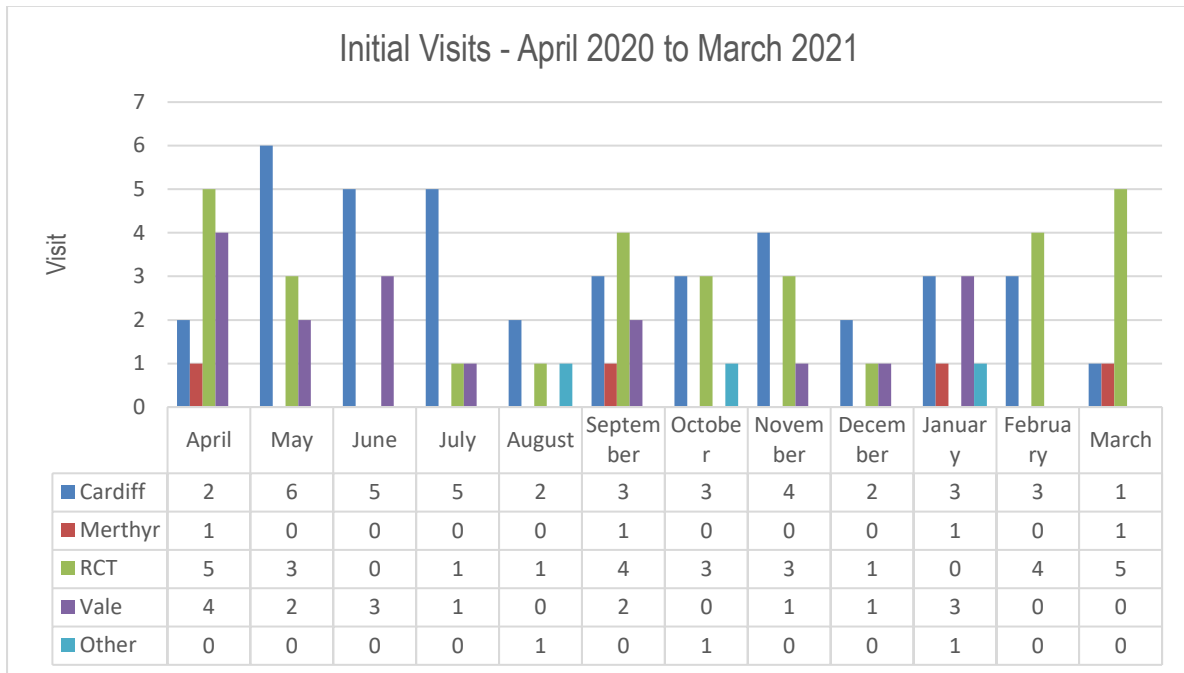
### Comparative Data

Data over a four-year period demonstrates a consistent increase in the number of enquiries received.



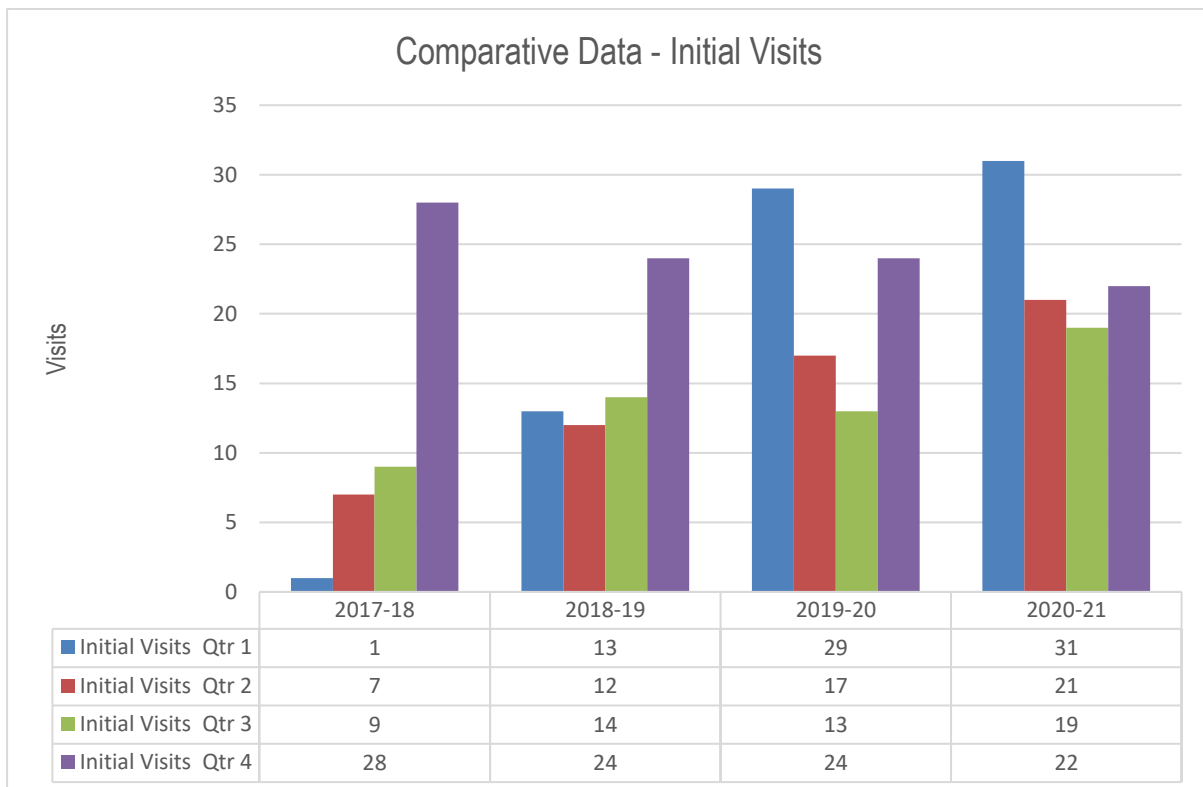
## Initial Visits

93 initial visits took place during the reporting period.



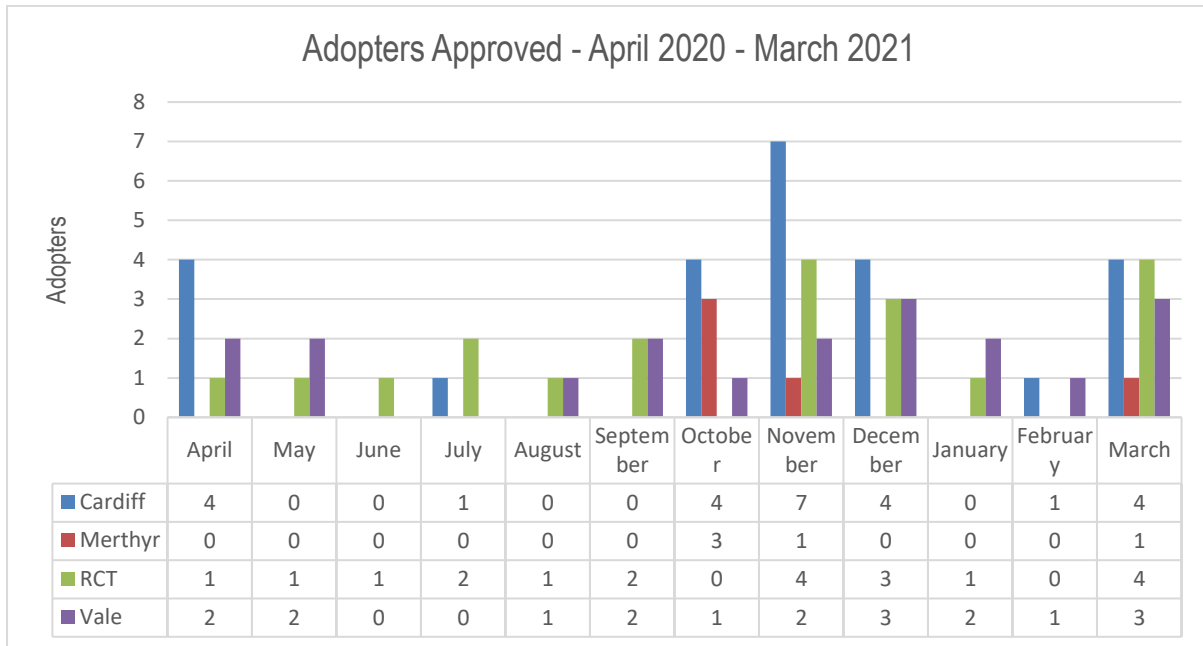
## Comparative Data

When compared to previous years, a consistent increase in the number of initial visits carried out is observed.



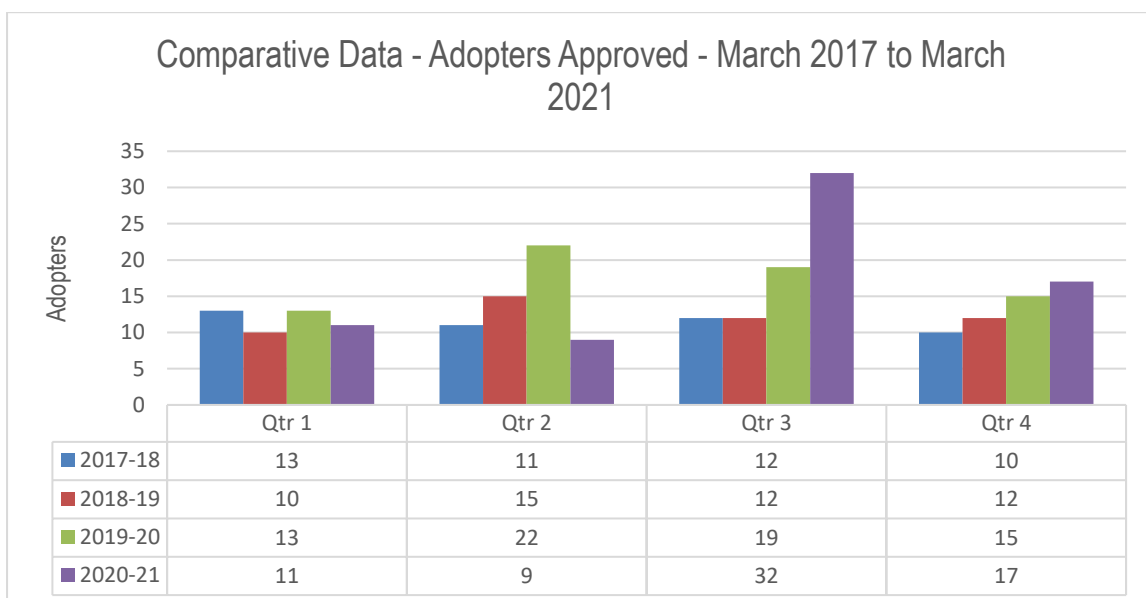
## Adopter Approvals

69 adoptive households have been approved to adopt in 2020-21. There has been a significant increase in adopter approvals in the last two quarters of the year when compared the first two quarters of the year. It has been possible enable face-to-face assessment visit opportunities with a risk assessment process in place and to overcome difficulties experienced earlier in the pandemic with obtaining adoption medicals for adopters.



## Comparative Data

A significant improvement in adopter approvals is observed over the past four years and approvals are currently at a similar rate to the previous year, despite the challenges and restrictions posed by Covid-19.



## Conversions

The Service continues to demonstrate its commitment to process applications within NAS guidelines.

