Census 2021 – Welsh Language

The latest Census was held on 21 March 2021 and the first detailed results about Welsh speakers were published on 6 December 2022. This is the only comprehensive data source on the numbers of Welsh speakers in Wales.

Welsh speakers in Gwynedd

On Census day 2021 there were **73,560** people (aged 3+) who were able to speak Welsh in Gwynedd, which corresponds to **64.4%.** In 2011 the corresponding percentage was **65.4%**, therefore the proportion has **decreased 1%.** (The number of Welsh speakers aged 3+ in 2011 was **77,000**).

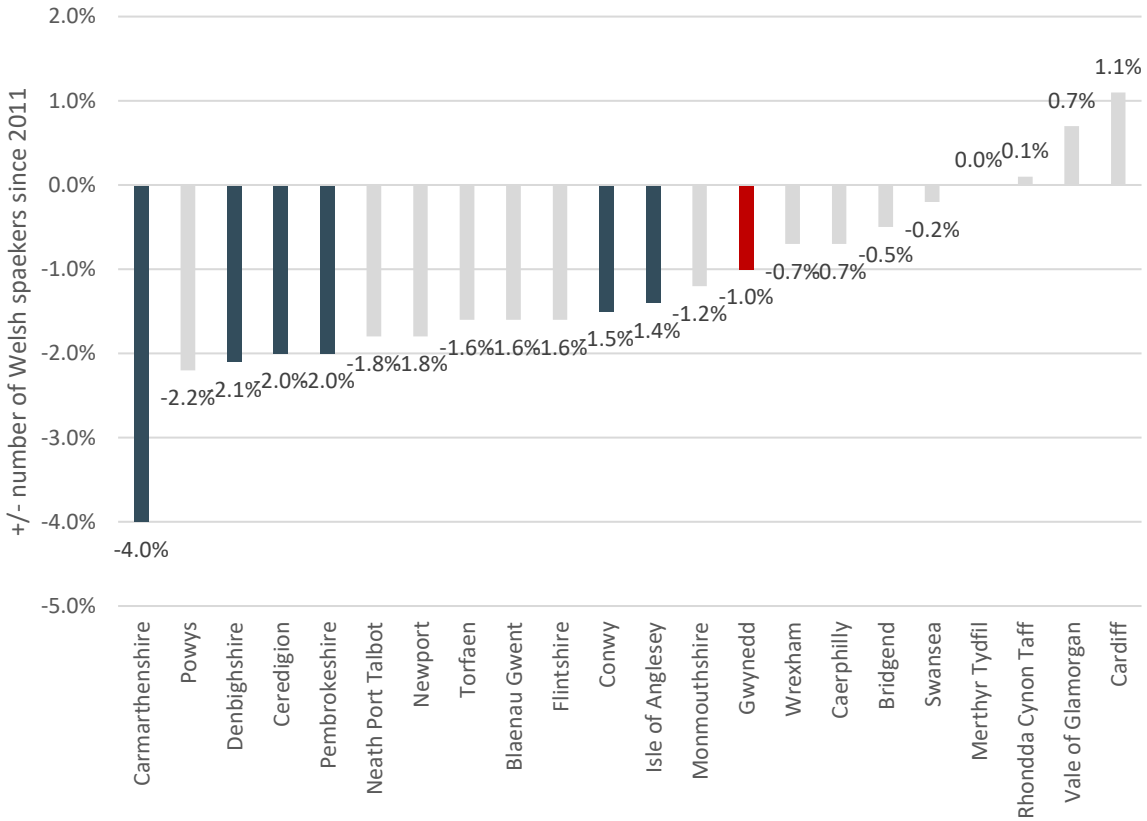
64.4%

of the population able to speak Welsh

-1.0%

since 2011

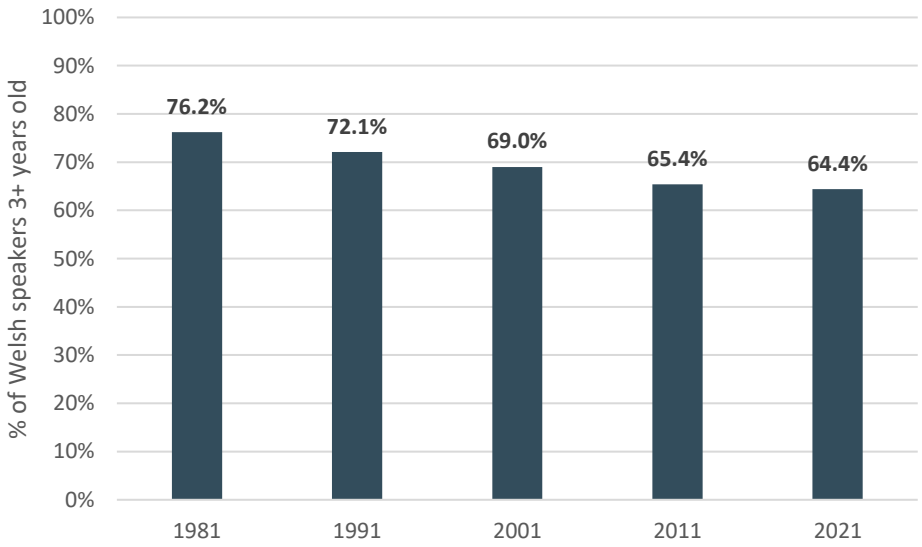
In Wales as a whole **17.8%** could speak Welsh which is a **reduction of 1.2%** since 2011. The chart below shows the increase / decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers in each local authority area in Wales and shows that 18 of the 22 areas have experienced a decrease.



In the above chart the figure for the change in Gwynedd has been shown in red, the figures for other "areas where more Welsh is spoken" [1] shown in blue, and other authorities in grey.

From this it can be seen that the decrease in Gwynedd (-1.0%) is smaller than the decrease in all of the other "areas where more Welsh is spoken", varying from -1.4% (Isle of Anglesey) to -4.0% (Carmarthenshire).

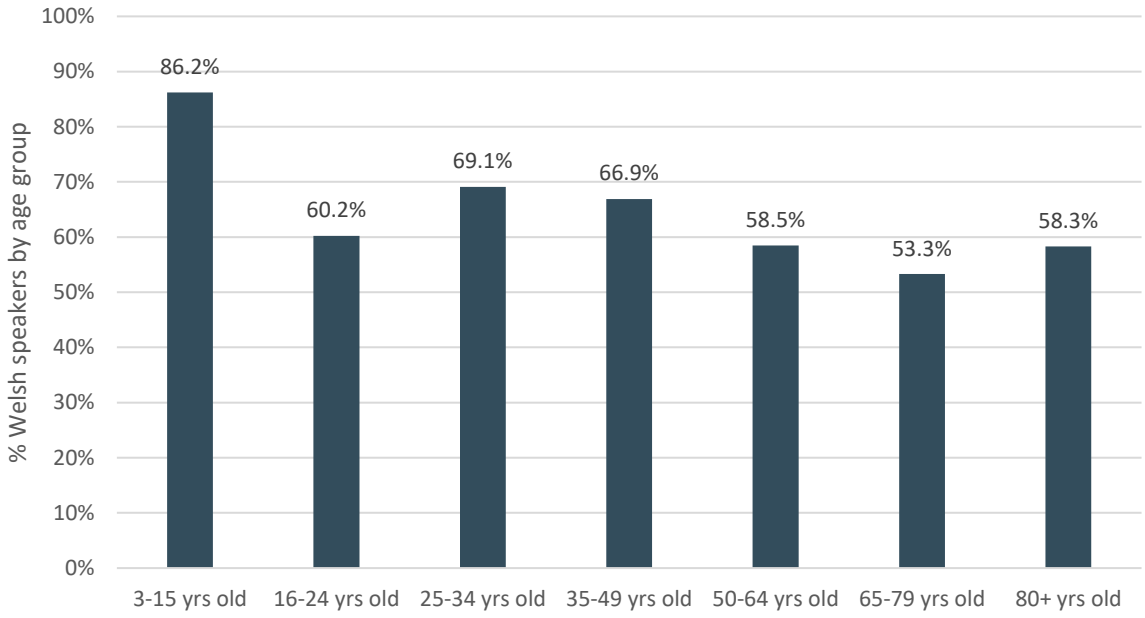
Gwynedd has seen a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers at each Census since 1981, as shown below.



[1] For this purpose, "areas where more Welsh is spoken" are defined as those counties with a higher percentage of Welsh speakers than the all-Wales average (19.0%) in the 2011 Census.

The age groups of our Welsh speakers

By looking at the different age groups in Gwynedd we can see that the proportion of Welsh speakers is at its highest in the 3-15 age group, and at its lowest in the 65-79 age group.



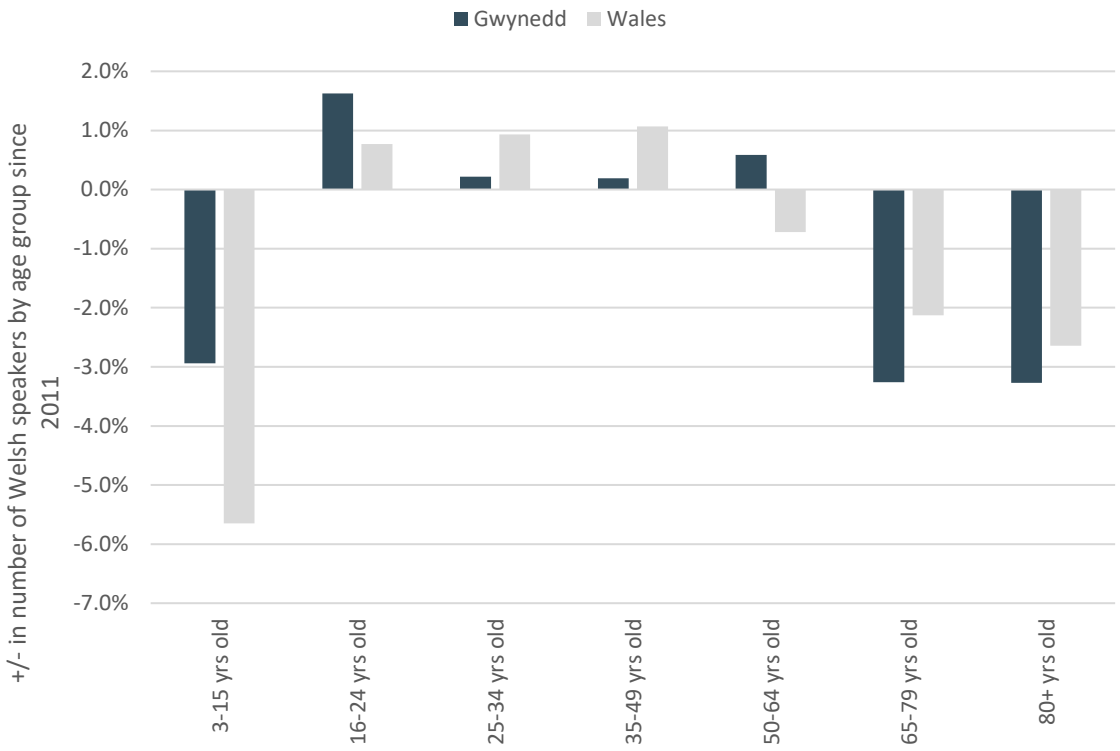
The change since 2011

The table below shows the percentages by age group. The largest decrease has occurred in the two oldest age groups, namely age 65-79 and age 80 and over. A decrease has also been seen in the 3-15 age group. In the other age groups the proportion has increased over the decade, with the proportion in the 16-24 age group 1.6% higher than in 2011.

Age Group	2021	2011	+/- %
Age 3 – 15	86.2%	89.1%	-2.9%
Age 16 – 24	60.2%	58.6%	+1.6%
Age 25 – 34	69.1%	68.9%	+0.2%
Age 35 – 49	66.9%	66.7%	+0.2%
Age 50 – 64	58.5%	57.9%	+0.6%
Age 65 – 79	53.3%	56.6%	-3.3%
Age 80+	58.3%	61.6%	-3.3%
All ages 3+	**64.4%**	**65.4%**	**-1.0%**

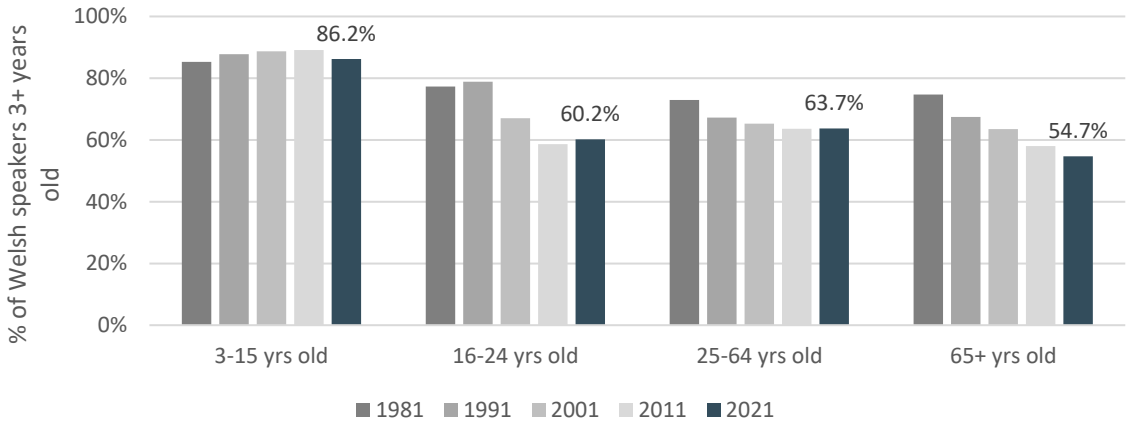
Looking at how the change by age group compares with Wales as a whole, we can see (chart below) that the changes in Gwynedd mirror to some degree the pattern throughout Wales (except the 50-64 age group, where there was an increase in Gwynedd but a decrease throughout Wales).

In the two oldest age groups, however, the decrease in Gwynedd was greater than across Wales as a whole. On the other hand, it can be seen that the percentage of Welsh speakers in the 3-15 age group decreased less in Gwynedd than across the whole of Wales.



Looking further back

It is possible to look at Census data for broad age groups from 1981 onwards (chart below). The proportion of Welsh speakers has generally decreased across the age ranges but has remained relatively stable in the 3-15 age group.



The data for smaller areas within Gwynedd

On the basis of the 13 areas

The map in **Appendix 1** shows the proportion of Welsh speakers by the 13 areas in Gwynedd. (**Appendix 2** lists the main towns / settlements in each area for convenience).

The table below details the percentages, and shows that in 7 of the 13 areas the proportion of Welsh speakers was over 70% in 2021 (and the same areas had over 70% in 2011).

It can be seen that the Caernarfon area had the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in 2021 (81.5%), and the lowest proportion was in Bro Dysynni (40.1%).

When comparing the data with the data from 2011, the pattern is quite varied with an increase in three areas (Pen Llŷn, Bro Dysynni and Bangor area) and a decrease in the other 10 areas. The largest decreases were in the Dolgellau (-4.4%) and Caernarfon (-3.8%) areas.

Area	2021	2011	+/- %
Caernarfon Area	81.5%	85.3%	-3.8%
Bro Lleu / Nantlle	76.3%	78.7%	-2.4%
Bro Peris	74.6%	77.4%	-2.8%
Bro Ffestiniog	74.4%	77.2%	-2.8%
Pwllheli Area	74.3%	77.2%	-2.9%
Bala / Penllyn	73.1%	75.8%	-2.7%
Bro Ogwen	70.4%	72.6%	-2.2%
Pen Llŷn	69.0%	67.6%	+1.4%
Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth Area	66.8%	69.0%	-2.2%
Dolgellau Area	57.7%	62.1%	-4.4%
Bro Ardudwy	47.3%	47.8%	-0.5%
Bangor Area	44.1%	42.0%	+2.1%
Bro Dysynni	40.1%	38.6%	+1.5%
Gwynedd	**64.4%**	**65.4%**	**-1.0%**

Appendix 3 looks back over a longer timescale, detailing the change in the proportion in each area since 1981.

On the basis of the 71 neighbourhoods (Lower Layer Super Output Areas or 'LSOAs')

In 2011 the proportion of Welsh speakers was above 70% in 39 of the 71 neighbourhoods. This had decreased to 34 neighbourhoods in 2021.

These are the 5 neighbourhoods with the highest and lowest proportions of Welsh speakers:

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the highest % of Welsh speakers in 2021	**%**
Seiont 1	86.3%
Llanrug	86.0%
Bethel and Cwm y Glo 1	85.9%
Peblig	84.6%
Penygroes	83.0%

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the lowest % of Welsh speakers in 2021	**%**
Deiniol	19.6%
Menai (Bangor)	22.4%
Hirael and Garth 1	33.0%
Hirael and Garth 2	35.2%
Tywyn 1	36.1%

These are the 5 neighbourhoods with the greatest increase, and the greatest decrease, in the proportions of Welsh speakers between 2011 and 2021:

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the greatest % increase between 2011 and 2021	**%**
Llanbedrog and Abersoch	+5.4%
Dyffryn Ardudwy and Llanbedr	+5.2%
Llangelynnin	+4.3%
Pentir 1	+4.2%
Y Felinheli	+4.0%

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the greatest % decrease between 2011 and 2021	**%**
Hendre (Bangor)	-7.0%
Barmouth	-6.9%
Corris/Mawddwy	-6.8%
Diffwys and Maenofferen	-6.2%
Bala	-6.0%

Appendix 4 shows the percentages, and the change since 2011, for each of the 71 neighbourhoods in Gwynedd.

Other Welsh skills

Data is also available on those who said they **only understood spoken Welsh** (and did not speak it). For Gwynedd the percentage is 7.1% compared to 5.2% in Wales.

Here are the 5 neighbourhoods with the highest proportions:

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the highest % of people who understand spoken Welsh only	%
Marchog 1	22.2%
Marchog 2	19.1%
Dewi	14.8%
Hendre (Bangor)	14.0%
Pentir 2	13.1%

These 5 neighbourhoods are in the Bangor area and looking further down the list, 3 of the five next neighbourhoods in the list are also in the Bangor area.

There is also data on the number who **can speak Welsh but cannot read or write in Welsh**. This percentage for Gwynedd is 5.4% compared to 2.3% in Wales.

Here are the 5 neighbourhoods with the highest proportions:

5 neighbourhoods (LSOAs) with the highest % of people who can speak Welsh but can't read or write in Welsh	%
Peblig	10.4%
Marchog 1	9.0%
Marchog 2	8.1%
Pentir 1	8.1%
Cadnant	8.0%

Further information

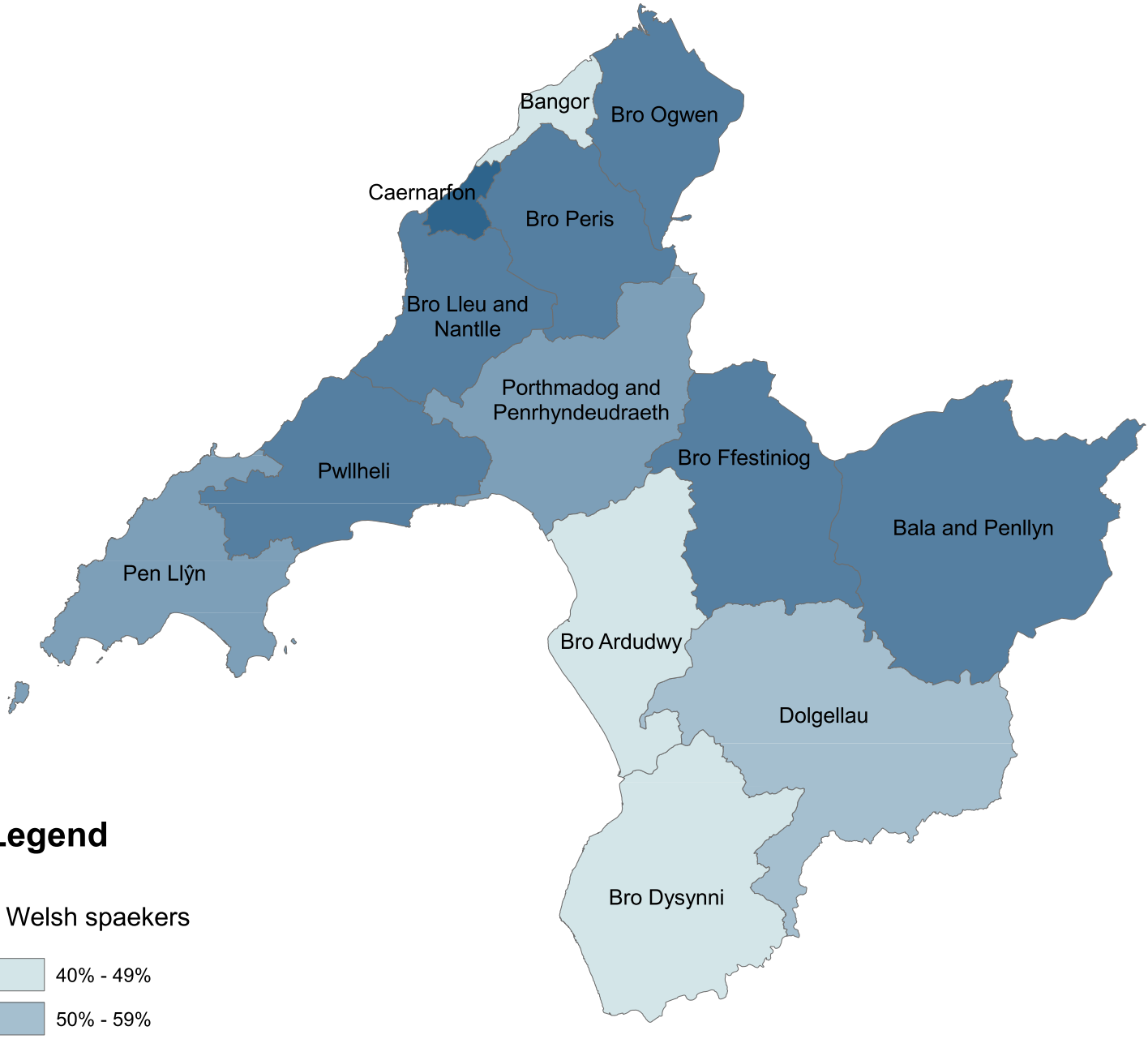
- Welsh language, Wales - Office for National Statistics
- Welsh language in Wales (Census 2021) | GOV.WALES

We will be analysing and publishing further information as more Census results are released over the coming months.

This bulletin has been produced by the Research Team and for more information contact ymchwil@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Appendix 1

% of Welsh speakers by Gwynedd areas



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Adran Cefnogaeth Gorfforaethol, Cyngor Gwynedd
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Appendix 2 – List of settlements within the 13 areas of Gwynedd

Caernarfon Area – Bontnewydd, Caernarfon, Llanfaglan

Bro Lleu / Nantlle – Aberdesach, Bethesda Bach, Carmel, Clynnog Fawr, Dinas, Dinas Dinlle, Groeslon, Llandwrog, Llanllyfni, Nantlle, Nasareth, Nebo, Pant Glas, Penygroes, Pontllyfni, Rhosgadfan, Rhostryfan, Saron, Talysarn

Bro Peris – Bethel, Betws Garmon, Brynrefail, Caeathro, Ceunant, Cwm y Glo, Deiniolen, Dinorwig, Fachwen, Llanberis, Llanddeiniolen, Llanrug, Nant Peris, Penisarwaun, Pontrug, Rhiwlas, Rhyd Ddu, Seion, Waunfawr

Bro Ffestiniog – Bethania, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gellilydan, Llan Ffestiniog, Maentwrog, Manod, Tanygrisiau, Trawsfynydd

Pwllheli Area – Abererch, Afon Wen, Boduan, Chwilog, Efailnewydd, Llanaelhaearn, Llanarmon, Llangybi, Llannor, Llanystumdwy, Llithfaen, Pencaenewydd, Penrallt, Penrhos, Pentreuchaf, Pistyll, Pwllheli, Rhoslan, Rhydyclafdy, Trefor, Y Ffôr

Bala/Penllyn Area – Frongoch, Glan yr Afon, Llandderfel, Llanfor, Llangower, Llanuwchllyn, Llanycil, Llidiardau, Parc, Rhosygwaliau, Rhyd Uchaf, Sarnau, Y Bala

Bro Ogwen – Abergwyngregyn, Bethesda, Llandygai, Llanllechid, Mynydd Llandygai, Talybont, Tregarth

Pen Llŷn Area – Aberdaron, Abersoch, Botwnnog, Bryncroes, Bwlchtocyn, Dinas, Edern, Llanbedrog, Llanfaelrhys, Llangian, Llangwnadl, Llaniestyn, Morfa Nefyn, Mynytho, Nefyn, Rhiw, Rhoshirwaun, Sarn Bach, Sarn Mellteyrn, Tudweiliog, Uwchmynydd

Porthmadog/Penrhyndeudraeth Area – Beddgelert, Borth y Gest, Bryncir, Criccieth, Croesor, Dolbenmaen, Garndolbenmaen, Garreg, Golan, Llanfrothen, Minffordd, Morfa Bychan, Nantmor, Penmorfa, Penrhyndeudraeth, Pentrefelin, Porthmadog, Prenteg, Tremadog

Dolgellau Area – Aberangell, Arthog, Bont Ddu, Brithdir, Corris, Dinas Mawddwy, Dolgellau, Ganllwyd, Llanelltyd, Llanfachraeth, Llanymawddwy, Mallwyd, Penmaenpwl, Rhydymain

Bro Ardudwy – Barmouth, Dyffryn Ardudwy, Harlech, Llanaber, Llanbedr, Llandanwg, Llanddwywe, Llandecwyn, Llanfair, Tal-y-Bont, Talsarnau

Bangor Area – Bangor, Glasinfryn, Penrhosgarnedd, Pentir, Treborth, Y Felinheli

Bro Dysynni – Aberdyfi, Abergynolwyn, Aberllefenni, Bryncrug, Dolgoch, Fairbourne, Llanegryn, Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, Llwyngwril, Pennal, Rhoslefain, Tal-y-Llyn, Tywyn

Appendix 3 – Pattern within areas of Gwynedd since 1981

Area	1981	1991	2001	2011	2021
Caernarfon Area	86.0%	87.9%	86.4%	85.3%	81.5%
Bro Lleu and Nantlle	84.0%	80.0%	78.8%	78.7%	76.3%
Bro Peris	82.9%	79.3%	78.9%	77.4%	74.6%
Bro Ffestiniog	86.6%	82.4%	80.0%	77.2%	74.4%
Pwllheli Area	85.1%	79.9%	78.5%	77.2%	74.3%
Bala and Penllyn	85.3%	80.6%	77.7%	75.8%	73.1%
Bro Ogwen	76.5%	74.1%	72.4%	72.6%	70.4%
Pen Llŷn Area	79.2%	72.0%	69.6%	67.6%	69.0%
Porthmadog and Penrhyndeudraeth Area	80.0%	74.5%	72.3%	69.0%	66.8%
Dolgellau Area	74.4%	64.7%	67.1%	62.1%	57.7%
Bro Ardudwy	58.9%	52.5%	50.1%	47.8%	47.3%
Bangor Area	58.0%	58.9%	51.6%	42.0%	44.1%
Bro Dysynni	52.3%	47.1%	43.4%	38.6%	40.1%
Gwynedd	**76.2%**	**72.1%**	**69.0%**	**65.4%**	**64.4%**

Appendix 4 - % of Welsh speakers and the change since 2011

Neighbourhood (LSOA)	2021	2011	+/- %
Seiont 1	86.3%	90.0%	-3.7%
Llanrug	86.0%	87.8%	-1.8%
Bethel and Cwm-y-Glo 1	85.9%	87.3%	-1.4%
Peblig (Caernarfon)	84.6%	87.4%	-2.8%
Penygroes (Gwynedd)	83.0%	86.8%	-3.8%
Bontnewydd	82.6%	82.6%	0.0%
Ogwen 1	81.2%	83.0%	-1.8%
Llanwnda	81.1%	81.6%	-0.5%
Cadnant (Gwynedd)	81.0%	86.2%	-5.2%
Llandderfel and Llanuwchllyn 2	80.6%	79.2%	1.4%
Menai (Caernarfon)	78.4%	83.9%	-5.5%
Abererch	77.5%	79.8%	-2.3%
Groeslon	77.0%	81.3%	-4.3%
Porthmadog East	76.6%	80.1%	-3.5%
Bowydd and Rhiw	76.3%	78.2%	-1.9%
Pwllheli North	76.2%	79.1%	-2.9%
Seiont 2	76.1%	80.6%	-4.5%
Aberdaron/Botwnnog and Tudweiliog	75.8%	74.7%	1.1%
Pwllheli South	74.7%	78.3%	-3.6%
Penrhyndeudraeth 2	74.6%	76.5%	-1.9%
Llanystumdwy	74.5%	77.0%	-2.5%
Teigl	74.5%	78.5%	-4.0%
Ogwen 2	74.1%	79.3%	-5.2%
Waunfawr	73.6%	75.8%	-2.2%
Deiniolen	73.3%	74.4%	-1.1%
Gerlan	73.2%	73.7%	-0.5%
Nefyn	73.2%	76.1%	-2.9%
Diffwys and Maenofferen	73.1%	79.3%	-6.2%
Trawsfynydd	72.7%	73.1%	-0.4%
Bala	72.5%	78.5%	-6.0%
Efail-newydd/Buan	72.5%	74.3%	-1.8%
Morfa Nefyn	72.3%	72.0%	0.3%
Llanllyfni and Clynnog	71.4%	74.4%	-3.0%
Llanaelhaearn	70.0%	73.8%	-3.8%
Penrhyndeudraeth 1	69.8%	72.3%	-2.5%
Talysarn	69.8%	70.7%	-0.9%
Llanberis	69.5%	74.7%	-5.2%
Bethel and Cwm-y-Glo 2	69.1%	73.1%	-4.0%
Y Felinheli	68.3%	64.3%	4.0%
Tregarth and Mynydd Llandygai	67.7%	69.0%	-1.3%
Penisarwaun	67.5%	70.6%	-3.1%

Neighbourhood (LSOA) continued	2021	2011	+/- %
Porthmadog - Tremadog	65.7%	66.8%	-1.1%
Dolbenmaen	65.6%	67.6%	-2.0%
Llandderfel and Llanuwchllyn 1	64.9%	67.1%	-2.2%
Pentir 1	62.3%	58.1%	4.2%
Llanengan	62.0%	63.4%	-1.4%
Dolgellau South	61.3%	67.1%	-5.8%
Criccieth	60.5%	64.2%	-3.7%
Brithdir and Llanfachraeth/Ganllwyd/Llanelltyd	60.0%	63.2%	-3.2%
Dolgellau North	59.9%	61.8%	-1.9%
Arllechwedd	57.8%	61.9%	-4.1%
Pentir 2	57.3%	59.3%	-2.0%
Porthmadog West	55.8%	57.0%	-1.2%
Llanbedrog and Abersoch	54.7%	49.3%	5.4%
Harlech	54.6%	54.1%	0.5%
Glyder	53.0%	51.7%	1.3%
Dewi	51.8%	52.6%	-0.8%
Marchog 1	51.5%	51.9%	-0.4%
Corris/Mawddwy	49.0%	55.8%	-6.8%
Marchog 2	48.3%	48.1%	0.2%
Dyffryn Ardudwy & Llanbedr	46.7%	41.5%	5.2%
Aberdyfi/Bryn-crug/Llanfihangel	43.3%	42.6%	0.7%
Barmouth	41.9%	48.8%	-6.9%
Llangelynin	40.2%	35.9%	4.3%
Tywyn 2	40.2%	39.3%	0.9%
Hendre (Gwynedd)	38.3%	45.3%	-7.0%
Tywyn 1	36.1%	35.8%	0.3%
Hirael and Garth 2	35.2%	35.2%	0.0%
Hirael and Garth 1	33.0%	34.8%	-1.8%
Menai (Bangor)	22.4%	18.6%	3.8%
Deiniol	19.6%	22.8%	-3.2%