

# **Independent Language Impact Assessment**

## **Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan**

**hanfod**

Language consultation and editorial services  
June 2016

## Foreword

This independent assessment was formulated at the request of four organisations that campaign to support and strengthen the Welsh Language, namely Cylch yr Iaith, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, Dyfodol i'r Iaith and Canolfan Hanes Uwchgwyrfai.

Their request followed a suggestion made by Councillor Ann Griffith from the Isle of Anglesey County Council at a meeting of the Joint Planning Policy Committee that took place on 29 January 2016, and a resolution by Gwynedd Council at an Extraordinary Meeting on 18 March 2016, to consult on ways of assessing the impact of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan on the Welsh language.

This assessment includes references to two other documents, namely the Statistical Analysis of the Welsh language in Gwynedd and the Statistical Analysis of the Welsh language in Anglesey.

The assessment builds upon the contents of the language impact assessments prepared by the Joint Planning Policy Unit of Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils. The assessment was originally published in February 2015, and re-published with some minor amendments in March 2016. As those assessments recognise, "...the field of language assessments is an area of discussion and a speciality that is still being developed, particularly in the context of development plans".

The purpose of this assessment is to contribute to that process, in order to assist to ensure that the Local Development Plan is based on detailed information and thorough analysis.

It is trusted that the information in it will also contribute to the development of language planning in north-west Wales and by so doing to the future of the Welsh language in its strongholds.

Huw Prys Jones  
June 2016

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## Introduction

Gwynedd and Anglesey are integral to the future of the Welsh language, and Welsh is a vital part of the unique character and heritage of both counties.

Within Gwynedd and Anglesey can be found the most Welsh areas of Wales, which form the main core area and the strongest nucleus of the Welsh language. The fact that these are now the only two counties in Wales where the majority of the population are Welsh-speakers, gives them an even greater significance.

Rather than overloading you with statistics it is suggested that you read this assessment in parallel with the statistical analyses from both counties, and these documents will be referred to from time to time.

It is good to see a growing awareness of the importance of ensuring language growth in the strongholds of the Welsh language as well as in more Anglicised areas. Gwynedd Council's language strategy deserves praise for setting an ambitious aim namely an increase of 5 percentage points in the proportion of the county's people who can speak Welsh by the 2021 Census.

Supporting and strengthening the Welsh language is also noted amongst the key aims of the Joint Local Development Plan, the most significant being SO4, namely "the Plan's strategy and policies will have contributed to creating more communities with a higher percentage than 70% of Welsh-speakers".

Part of this assessment's task is to judge to what extent the Plan's proposals are likely to contribute to this.

## Methodology

When trying to predict the impact of any housing developments on the Welsh language there are several elements to be considered.

The impact of these developments on the population is the most important element, and a great deal of relevant information can be found in the 2011 Census statistics that indicate the population and the number of households. It is possible to use the Welsh Government's projections of average household sizes by 2026 as a basis to estimate populations by that year. Population estimates will be dealt with in greater detail when looking at the two counties separately.

The next step then will be to try and predict what will be the impact of the increase in population on the numbers and percentages of Welsh-speakers. Although firm evidence for this is scarce, there is some relevant information that can be used:

- there is information available in the Welsh Government's projections regarding the forecasts for natural growth in population and the degree that any population growth will depend on inward migration.
- it is also possible to look at the demographic trends and analyse the linguistic change that occurred as a result over the past few years when weighing up the likely impact of changes in population over the next few years.

In this context it is worthwhile noting that the Government uses past migration trends as the main basis for predicting future trends. In the same manner, analyses of population change and language trends in the past have given us a valuable base of information for assessments such as this.

When assessing the likely language impact of any new development it should be noted that the general change in population is most likely to be a key factor, rather than who exactly will buy any new houses built. As stated in the Population and Housing document, it has to be borne in mind at all times that houses that already exist rather than new houses are those that account for 90% of all sales. Therefore, even if every new house was bought by local families this could in turn cause other houses to go on the market and promote further inward migration of non-Welsh-speakers. Likewise, a development that would attract more people who speak Welsh to a specific area would not necessarily always be a positive matter if this leads to the loss of Welsh-speakers in neighbouring areas.

Therefore, it is vitally important to look at the possible indirect and direct effects in specific areas.

Firstly, it is proposed to address the number of houses recommended for approval in Gwynedd and Anglesey before looking at the proposed distribution of those houses within both counties.

## Population and the Welsh language

Amongst the conclusions that become evident in the statistical analyses of both counties, is the fact that the change in population is the main factor for the deterioration of the Welsh language in the north-west. In the majority of the areas in the two counties the main problem facing the Welsh language is that local Welsh-speakers are moving out and other non-Welsh-speakers from outside the area are taking their place. To a great extent what is occurring in sociological-linguistic terms is that a shift in population is the factor that contributes most to the language shift in these areas.

Although the numbers of people who can speak Welsh in Gwynedd and Anglesey have kept their ground fairly well - much better than in several other areas of Wales - a general increase in population has led to a consistent reduction in the percentages of Welsh-speakers.

This pattern of growth in the general population and a reduction in the percentage of Welsh-speakers has been seen in extensive areas throughout both counties over the years and indeed during the last decade. This is something that cannot be ignored when considering any likely increase in future population.

If the increase in population as a result of inward migration was likely to lead to an increase in the numbers and percentages of Welsh-speakers in both counties, then it would certainly be something to be welcomed. According to the Survey of the Use of Welsh by the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner<sup>1</sup> last year, Welsh-speakers are more likely to use Welsh every day in the most Welsh-speaking counties, and therefore any increase in these two counties would be likely to have more positive impact on the use of the language than in other areas of Wales.

Although it is accepted that some developments could facilitate such an increase under the correct conditions, the historical pattern strongly suggests that an increase in the non-Welsh-speaking population is the most likely result of any inward migration to both counties.

Logical considerations also confirm this. As the only two counties where the majority of the population can speak Welsh any random inward migration, even from other areas of Wales, would be likely to mean that the majority of those inwardly migrating would be non-Welsh-speakers. Once the net is extended outside Wales, the greatest majority are likely to be non-Welsh-speakers.

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<sup>1</sup> Survey of the use of Welsh. Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner, November 2015

In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is difficult to foresee that inward migration will contribute to increasing the percentages that speak Welsh in both counties.

These considerations in themselves are not an argument to not build any new housing, as it is necessary to respond to local demand, and the reduction in the average size of households. It is also recognised that preventing the construction of new houses is not a means of stopping inward migration, as the sales of houses already built are the greatest majority of house sales in both counties. However, past evidence from throughout Wales strongly suggests that granting too many houses could greatly contribute to exacerbating the situation.

## Housing Numbers

The Local Development Plan area comprises all of Anglesey and those parts of Gwynedd that are outside the Snowdonia National Park. It is the National Park Authority that is responsible for planning policy within its area.

The Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan intends to open the door to developing a total of 7,902 new homes between both counties between 2011 and 2026 (namely the Plan period). This is based on a basic figure of 7,184 with an addition of 10% of what is called a 'slippage allowance'.

Of these, it is proposed to site 4,084 in Gwynedd and 3,817 in Anglesey, with the additional number for Gwynedd of approximately 750 houses within the Snowdonia National Park area.

From the total of 7,902 houses it is proposed to site them as follows:

- 4,346 in the main towns of Holyhead, Llangefni, Amlwch, Bangor, Caernarfon, Pwllheli, Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog.
- 1,580 in the local centres;
- 1,502 in specific villages;
- 224 in clusters (small rural villages)
- 250 in the countryside.

When judging the likely impact of this on the Welsh language the initial step is to estimate the impact on the population.

As noted in the two language profiles, a pattern has developed of an indigenous population, of mainly Welsh-speakers, who move out, and other people, the majority being non-Welsh-speakers and from outside Wales, who move in.

This can and does occur in several areas without any increase in population. Indeed, this can happen even if the population is reduced. However, if there is already a tendency for local people to move out and for other people to move in, it is difficult to see how an increase in the population is not likely to make the situation worse.

This does not discount the possibility that some of these people will learn Welsh; however too many incomers who arrive in short periods will hinder the work of teaching them Welsh. There are also many factors that work against the efforts to encourage non-Welsh-speakers to learn and use the language, including the continuous presence of English in all aspects of life. It should also be understood that the more non-Welsh-speaking people who move into a specific area, the least incentive there will be to learn Welsh.



It is also fair to say that this is not merely a matter of statistics of the numbers of Welsh-speakers, but that excessive changes in population can lead to the transformation of the cultural character of areas. Here in the north-west, it is the Welshness of these communities that make them unique and a vital part of their character.

Having scrutinised the Population and Housing document<sup>2</sup> and a report by Edge Analytics from Leeds on population projections, it appears that the new houses proposed for Gwynedd will to a large extent respond to the growth anticipated in the population and that new houses in Anglesey are part of the effort to promote the growth in the population there over the next 10 years. It is therefore sensible to deal with the two counties separately.

### **Gwynedd**

The population of Gwynedd increased from 116,843 in 2011<sup>3</sup> to 121,874 in 2011<sup>4</sup>; this is an increase of 5,031 in 10 years. During the same period, the number of Welsh-speakers reduced from 77,830 to 77,000. This is a very small reduction in terms of numbers but coupled with the increase in population it represents a deterioration of 3.5 percentage points of Welsh-speakers - from 68.9% to 64.5%<sup>5</sup>. This deterioration is much worse in some areas of the county than others - although it should also be noted here that there has been a huge increase in students in Bangor that has somewhat skewed the picture throughout the county.

According to Welsh Government projections, Gwynedd's population will be 127,600 by mid-2026 (the end of the Local Development Plan's period). This is noted as an increase of 5.0% in the population.

Although we do not intend to expand excessively on all the statistics regarding population in various publications, it is worthwhile mentioning the methodology behind how the different needs for housing are calculated.

Census figures indicate the number of households in the county, as well as the population. In addition, the number of people who live at these households are also shown, and the number living in community institutions (these may include organisations such as residential homes for the elderly and halls of residence for

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<sup>2</sup> Topic Paper 3: Population and Housing, Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit

<sup>3</sup> Table UV001, 2001 Census, ONS

<sup>4</sup> Table QS101EW, 2011 Census, ONS. For consistency, the census figures are used throughout this assessment. Some of the documents of the Joint Policy Unit use mid-year estimated figures that vary a little, however, the variation is not sufficient to be of statistical significance when discussing percentages.

<sup>5</sup> The percentages that speak Welsh are calculated on the basis of the population over three years old.

students). Regarding the number of households and the population who live there, there is a number for the average size of households.

According to the 2001 Census, 117,974 of the population of Gwynedd lived in households and another 3,900 lived in community institutions. The total number of households in the county was 52,473.

The general trend is that the average household size has gradually decreased over the years, from 2.43 in 1991 to 2.31 in 2001, and 2.24 in 2011. Yet again, the average of 2.24 in Gwynedd is less than the average of 2.31 in Wales. According to Welsh Government's projections, it is expected that the average household size will fall once again to 2.18 in Gwynedd and 2.23 in Wales. One of the reasons why the density of household population is lower in Gwynedd than the rest of Wales is the fact that there is a high percentage of older people which means a higher likelihood of widowers and widows living alone.

However much you doubt the validity of such projections, they offer a methodology for estimating the implications of increasing a specific number of houses in different areas on the populations of those areas. Recognising that they are merely projections, it is proposed to use the same methodology in this assessment when trying to predict the likely impact on the Welsh language. For the purpose of estimating the population in 2026, the figure of 2.18 is used as the average household size for the whole county, although this figure would have to be adapted when looking at some individual areas.

The Government acknowledges that population projections are based to a large extent on current and past demographic patterns.

However, there is more than one reason why population projections should not be accepted as the only criterion to determine the number of houses that should be provided. An increase in population in past years in some areas could partly be as a result of building an excessive housing provision; it could certainly be argued that this is true in the past of vast areas of the north-eastern coast of Wales.

More relevant in the case of this Plan, however, is to ask to what extent the increase in population seen between 2001 and 2011 in Gwynedd would be likely to be repeated over the next ten years.

The Gwynedd average household population is lower than the rest of Wales - on average 2.24 compared with 2.31 for the rest of Wales<sup>6</sup>. It is quite possible that the projections if they are reduced again to 2.18 by 2026 would be an over-estimate of the number of new households required.

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<sup>6</sup> Population and Housing, Topic Paper 3 Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit, February 2015, para 6.2.

More significant than this, is the extent the increase in the number of students in Bangor between 2001 and 2011 has influenced the county's population figures in the two last Censuses. There was an increase of approximately 3,000 in the number of full-time students (some economically active and non-active) in the 2011 census compared to the previous 10 years<sup>7</sup>; there was also an increase of approximately 1,000 in the number of people who lived in 'community institutions' in Bangor over the same period<sup>8</sup>.

This increase in the number of students is more than the total increase in the population of Bangor between 2001 and 2011.

Why is this significant? In a county with a sparse population, the number of students account for a disproportionately high percentage of the population. Certainly, it is sufficient to raise questions regarding the suitability of using the growth of the previous years as a basis for future calculations.

The fact that the 2001 Census was conducted during the University's Easter holidays and that the 2011 Census was conducted during term time is bound to have influenced these figures. Even if we accept that the University has expanded over the same period, there is room to doubt if it will continue to expand at the same rate over the next ten years.

This also brings us to another weakness in Welsh Government's projections as a grounds for planning policy - namely that they are raw projections based on whole counties and there is no consideration of local need for housing in specific areas within the county. Once again, this is truer of a county with an extensive area but with a sparse population such as Gwynedd, than for more urban counties in the south-east.

What one would wish to see would be a planning policy whereby the total number of new houses throughout the county would be based on what is deemed suitable for the different areas within the county, rather than the total number of houses being determined for the county, and those houses then distributed between the different areas. It can be argued that this would be a better system for every county in Wales; but certainly there is a strong argument that Gwynedd and Anglesey need to be treated as special cases in this context.

As has already been noted, an increase of 5% is estimated in the population of Gwynedd by 2026. According to the projections on the Stats Wales website it is expected that the number of households in Gwynedd will increase to 56,700 by that year. This is equivalent to an increase of 4,300 in the number of households, fewer than the total given if the allocation of 750 houses in the Snowdonia National Park

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<sup>7</sup> ONS tables KS103 and KS501EW

<sup>8</sup> ONS tables UV071 and QS421EW The vast majority of the population in this category accounts for students in halls of residence.

area is added to the 4,084 houses under this Local Development Plan. Therefore, if all these houses were built this may mean an increase of more than the estimated 5%.

It is proposed to address the housing allocation to individual areas in further sections.

### **Anglesey**

The Welsh Government's projections do not predict any increase in the population of Anglesey which is quite different to Gwynedd. Although the island's population increased from 67,806 in 2001 to 69,751 in 2011, the figure in Welsh Government's projections for 2026-27 is 69,743.

By using the projections for the average household population in 2026, increasing by 3,817 additional dwellings in Anglesey would be likely to lead to an increase of approximately 6,000 in the island's population.

Number of households in 2011	30,594
Number of new dwellings 2011-2026	3,817
Number of households in 2026 (30,594 + 3,817)	34,411
Estimate of average household population 2026	2.18
Number of people in community institutions 2011	810

By multiplying the number of households in 2026 with the estimated average household population for 2026 and adding the number of people in community institutions (presuming no change for the purpose of this assessment) we arrive at

$$(34,411 \times 2.18) + 810 = 75,826$$

The increase of approximately 6,000 in population corresponds roughly to a figure suggested in the Edge Analytics report on the grounds of one scenario in a series of theories that estimate the population based on the possible growth in employment.

It appears that the possible plan to construct a new power station at Wylfa has had a key influence when determining the number of houses.

Amongst the aims for housing noted in paragraph 9.2 of Topic Paper 3, Population and Housing is 'meeting the challenge of homes for workers constructing the Wylfa site'.

According to the Deposit Plan, paragraph 5.4:

“The New Nuclear Station at Wylfa is a positive driver for the transformation of the economy and communities on Anglesey, providing sustainable employment opportunities, improving the quality of life for the existing and future generations and enhancing local identity and distinctiveness.”

The need for accommodation for 8,500 construction workers over a period of 12 years is discussed in paragraph 7.3.9 where there is a reference to a document by the Isle of Anglesey Council on the new Wylfa power station. In this document an estimate is used of 6,000 construction jobs, with 70% of these posts undertaken by people who would require accommodation. It is further estimated that around 10-20% of these would move their families to the area and 419 permanent houses would be required for them. In paragraph 4.22 it is also recognised that this may lead to an increase in the demand for sites by house builders.

The assessment of the impact of a new power station at Wylfa on the Welsh language is not part of the remit of this assessment. At the same time, there is a dire need for a comprehensive and thorough assessment as there are too many unanswered questions regarding the likely impact of such a development on the island's population<sup>9</sup>. Of course that assessment would have to be totally independent and objective; if any such assessment was prepared on behalf of the developers or the nuclear industry, for example, it may be taken for granted that it would be totally worthless.

There is room to doubt that not much attention has been given so far to the impact of such a large development on the Welsh language. In the paper Wylfa Newydd Power Station reference is made in paragraph 2.10 that the children of the workers who move into the area could counteract the reduction in pupil numbers, especially in rural areas, however, no reference is made to any language impact.

Another relevant question that arises regarding Wylfa Newydd in the context of this assessment is what will happen if the plan does not proceed. This is far from unlikely in light of the difficulties with Hinkley C and the general lack of confidence in the financial markets regarding the viability of such an investment. There is also room to doubt the willingness of the British government to pay the type of high subsidies that would satisfy the investors. At the time of writing, the Energy Minister, Amber Rudd, has published a statement giving an assurance that the Hinkley Point development was not essential to prevent 'lights from being switched off'.

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<sup>9</sup> The report by Edge Analytics refers to two possible scenarios regarding the impact of the new power station at Wylfa on the island's population, one leads to an increase of 11,736 and the other to an increase of 21,389 by 2026.

Should the Wylfa Newydd scheme not take place, where will this leave the housing allocation for Anglesey? It is true that the growth in jobs has been predicted on the basis of other developments in the energy field and other areas. Therefore, it would tend to confirm the arguments of the objectors to nuclear energy that such a large development is not required on the island, but this is another argument. On the other hand, should Wylfa Newydd not be constructed, it takes away the logical basis for a proportion at least of the new houses allocated for Anglesey in the Local Development Plan.

## **The likely impact of inward migration on the Welsh language**

Since any future population figures are merely projections, the best way to deal with any likely impact on the Welsh Language is by offering a range of theoretical circumstances based on specific percentages of an increase in population.

In addition to considering different degrees of growth in population, it is necessary to consider the cause of the growth, and if inward migration is mainly responsible, then the nature of the inward migration needs to be considered.

In the case of Gwynedd and Anglesey, some natural growth is predicted for Gwynedd during the last years of the Local Development Plan, however, it is anticipated that there will be a natural negative change in Anglesey for each year. It is also worthwhile noting that Gwynedd has not experienced any natural growth over the last few years.

As noted in previous sections, there is no way of saying for certain what will be the exact nature of inward migration<sup>10</sup>. As is true about the Government's population projections, the main evidence available are recent past trends.

In terms of the Welsh language, we also have additional information that there is a higher percentage of Welsh-speakers in Gwynedd and Anglesey than anywhere else. Due to this, according to statistical probability, it would be expected that a higher percentage of people who move into both counties would be non-Welsh-speakers. We also have the Census statistics that show the link between language and birth places; although a significant minority of people who were born outside Wales can speak Welsh, on the whole these are young people who are likely to have been through the education system. This suggests that the vast majority of those born outside Wales are non-Welsh-speakers when they arrive. It is recognised that incomers may include people who are originally from Gwynedd and Anglesey and who are returning. Unfortunately, trying to estimate these numbers may take us to the area of pure guesswork. It is important that we recognise all the possible variables when offering projections.

We also need to be clear regarding the meaning of net inward migration and not confuse this with general inward migration. A specific area may be experiencing huge inward migration, however, if there is also outward migration this number is subtracted from the inward migration number to give a new inward migration figure - which may be positive or negative. In truth, 'net migration' is a simple

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<sup>10</sup> In the context of this report, as in population studies generally, unless otherwise stated, inward migration includes any inward migration from outside the two counties.

statistical concept and it does not represent any specific group of individuals in an area.

The Census figures do not give full information regarding inward migration. The tables on the ONS website indicate the numbers who have in-migrated over the previous 12 months - but not the total over 10 years as is the norm with other types of information.

However, there is useful information in one or two of these tables that indicate that the vast majority of those who moved into both counties during the year prior to 2011 had moved from outside of Wales<sup>11</sup>. Looking at the counties individually, 64% of those who moved in to Anglesey and 73.7% of those who moved in to Gwynedd come from outside Wales.

However, if we look at Gwynedd and Anglesey together as one unit the situation is much more dramatic as a large portion of the incomers have moved from one county to the next. If we look at incomers from outside one county or the other, 80% of these came from outside Wales. The combined figure has to be considered for both counties when measuring the impact of the Unitary Development Plan as any inward migration between both counties will not contribute to an increase in the total population during the Plan's period.

The migration figures do not give any information regarding the incomers' ability to speak Welsh.

Having weighed up all the available information, one or two scenarios can be suggested. Using the methodology in the previous sections to try to calculate the possible impact of housing on the population, it was resolved to propose a rough estimate of 5% increase in population in Gwynedd and 8% in Anglesey. The purpose of such estimates is to illustrate the type of changes that may occur rather than offer any detailed prophecy.

These percentages can then be applied to the totals of people over three years old, namely the population where there is information about Welsh-speakers.

In order to maintain the percentages of Welsh-speakers in both counties, the percentages would have to be at least as high as the number of people who move in and can speak Welsh. If it happened that half the incomers could speak Welsh this would mean an increase in the numbers of Welsh-speakers in both counties, without much detrimental impact on the percentages.

However, for the reasons already noted and in light of the evidence on current and past trends, this is extremely unlikely. It was resolved to give three possible

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<sup>11</sup> ONS tables UKMIG101 and MM01CUK.



scenarios, based on the percentages of 25% and 10% of the incomers being Welsh-speakers.

This does not presume that every new housing development would have such low percentages of buyers able to speak Welsh. Having looked at the likely impact of an increase in the population of both counties in their entirety, accepting that the new population will be incomers and the majority will be from outside Wales, it is difficult to envisage a high percentage speaking Welsh. It is also quite possible that the indirect impact of new housing development could be more than their direct impact as local Welsh speaking families leave the countryside for the villages and towns.

The possibility of increasing the population as a result of fewer people leaving both counties is not discounted, or of attracting local people back. However, no evidence has been shown in this plan or in other studies that building more houses alone will change the trend.

Once again we need to remember the difference between inward migration and net inward migration. Inward migration and outward migration can occur without any change in the total population; but if there is an increase in the population and that this is as a result of inward migration, it is equivalent to net inward migration. When trying to assess the impact of housing construction developments, the only element that can be measured is the impact on net inward migration. Because of this, the following examples are illustrative only of what could occur and they do not claim to try and anticipate the extent of general inward migration.

In Gwynedd two such scenarios can be considered:

Total population aged over 3 years old in 2011	117,789	
Number and percentage that can speak Welsh	77,000	65.4%
Total population aged over 3 increased by 5%	123,678	

If a quarter of the incomers that account for the additional population could speak Welsh:

Number and percentage that can speak Welsh:	78,472	63.4%
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If 10% of the incomers account for the additional population could speak Welsh:

Number and percentage that can speak Welsh	77,770	62.9%
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The corresponding figures for Anglesey would be:

Total population aged over 3 years old in 2011	67,403	
Number and percentage that can speak Welsh	38,568	57.2%

Total population aged over 3 increased by 5%	72,795	
If a quarter of the incomers account for the additional population could speak Welsh:		
Number and percentage that can speak Welsh	39,916	54.8%
If 10% of the incomers account for the additional population could speak Welsh:		
Number and percentage that can speak Welsh	39,107	53.7%

The changes in the percentages rather than the percentages themselves are the key issue in the above figures. The impact of other factors cannot be predicted on the numbers and percentages of Welsh-speakers.

The most accurate way of expressing the information is by saying that an increase of 5% in the population of Gwynedd may lead to a reduction of 2 - 2.5 percentage points in the number who speak Welsh, and an increase of 8% in the population of Anglesey would lead to a reduction of 2.4 - 3.5 percentage points in the numbers of Welsh-speakers.

It has to be stressed that such reductions would be in addition to any reductions as a result of other factors. Similarly, if other factors lead to an increase, these reductions would counteract this increase. In light of past trends, the estimates of reductions appear to be conservative.

It is true that these changes do not appear to be very big at first glance, however, it has to be stressed that such reductions would be in addition to any changes as a result of other factors. Even if other factors lead to an increase these reductions would counteract such an increase.

Even if they are taken separately, the reductions that may be attributed to the likely increase in population in Anglesey is sufficient to push the percentage of Welsh-speakers there dangerously close to half.

More seriously than this it has to be borne in mind that the reductions are unlikely to occur at the same rate throughout the counties and there may be more significant implications in terms of individual areas. It may be enough to turn the balance in some places and weaken many of the strongest areas.

Unless a deliberate effort is made to attract more Welsh-speakers to both counties the type of inward migration that is likely to occur as a result of this Local Development Plan is unlikely to contribute constructively to strengthening the Welsh language there.

Once again, it is worthwhile for us to remind ourselves of Gwynedd Council's aim to ensure an increase of five percentage points in the percentage of population that can speak Welsh by 2021. The obvious message from these figures is that as much increase as this in the county's population would make this task considerably more difficult.

## **The Joint Planning Policy Unit's Impact Assessment on the Welsh Language**

Before moving on to look at the impact of the proposed developments on individual areas, we need to briefly deal with the Joint Planning Policy Unit's Impact Assessment on the Welsh Language.

The assessment was originally published in February 2015, and re-published with some minor amendments in March 2016. These assessments follow the Housing Survey and the Welsh language in Gwynedd and Anglesey that was published in 2014. This was based on the results of a multi-purpose questionnaire, a questionnaire that depended on volunteers to respond. Because of this and as the wards that received attention are not representative of the Plan's area in its entirety, the conclusions do not tell us a great deal.

The main weakness of the Language Impact Assessments 2015 and 2016 is that it seems that the emphasis is on justifying the decisions of the Local Development Plan, rather than weighing up its possible impact. This is a criticism of the whole planning system rather than the Joint Planning Policy Unit. What one would wish to see, certainly in areas as key as Gwynedd and Anglesey, would be an assessment of the planning needs in the context of the Welsh language undertaken at the start, and this would then lead to the work of developing the Local Development Plan.

It cannot be denied that the Language Impact Assessment, as the Local Development Plan itself, is full of good intentions. Several of the statements within it are to be welcomed, such as 4.7 that notes that it is necessary to be very careful with settlements that are popular as holiday destinations. It is also noted further on in 5.1 that "It is also important that the cumulative impact of numerous developments in a locality is considered as well as the potential impact on the wider area".

Unfortunately, it does not appear that the assessment succeeds to do this every time, as there is a tendency to look at the effect of individual developments rather than considering the full picture.

For example, it is noted that the majority of people who move into new homes already live in either Gwynedd or Anglesey. The language of residents of new housing is only a small part of the story; the impact of increasing the housing stock on wider communities has to be considered.

There is no expansion either on how the resolved total was arrived at regarding the number of houses, and it states that 'the figures are based on a sustainable democratic process'. It has to be noted that the process was not as transparent as it

could have been, as any clear and simple explanations regarding increasing the population of both counties are few and far between.

It also tends to be too dependent on expressing wishes rather than weighing up the evidence, as in paragraph 4.11 where it is claimed that "... community facilities, environmental improvements, as well as the protect and improve cultural assets including the Welsh language; this should improve the area's desirability. In turn, this should help retain the existing Welsh-speaking population and even attract Welsh-speaking residents back to the area."

The other main criticism of the assessment is that it appears that at best there is only partial understanding of the significance and importance of areas where over 70% of the population are Welsh-speakers. The Local Development Plan sets increasing such areas as an aim and it merits praise for this. However, if we look at paragraph 5.5 of the Language Impact Assessment we see this vague sentence: "It has been agreed through discussions with relevant language officers [sic] that areas where the proportion of Welsh-speakers is less than 70% should be regarded as unsustainable to the Welsh language ..." This is a seriously defective and simplistic interpretation as it suggests that the end is nigh for areas where the proportion of Welsh-speakers is less than 70%.

This interpretation was also harshly criticised in a presentation by Councillor Elin Walker Jones at an Extraordinary Meeting of Gwynedd Council on 18 March 2016. It was therefore good to see that the interpretation had been somewhat amended in the revised version of the language impact assessment published in March 2016. In paragraph 5.24 of the March 2016 assessment it is stated:

"It has been agreed through discussions with relevant language officers that areas where the proportion of Welsh-speakers is less than 70% should be considered to be more vulnerable in terms of the Welsh language and this should be considered as part of the assessment process. However, it should be noted that the threshold of 70% is merely indicative. There are examples where more than 70% of the residents are Welsh-speakers but the proportion was higher in 2001. Consideration will therefore be given to this factor. "

To an extent this is contrary to many of the observations in the remainder of the assessment. The latest version continues to be speckled with simplistic references regarding the percentages that speak Welsh in different areas in terms of 'such and such' more or fewer than 70%. It continues to suggest a lack of full realisation of the significance of this percentage as a threshold.

Similar naivety can also be seen in the repeated references to the holiday home or second home problem, when all who deal with the efforts to retain the Welsh language know that permanent incomers have a great deal more impact on the language's viability. Similarly, it is difficult to see the relevance of all the

stereotyped references to local schools providing Welsh language education for children in the area.

The document refers regularly to the need for a sufficient supply of affordable housing. This is something that everyone would agree with. However, research is required on the extent that indigenous residents of different areas in both counties have fair opportunities for rented social housing in those areas. As shown in the language profiles of both counties, the Census figures suggest that approximately 95% of the native population of the main core area for Welsh, namely north Meirionnydd, Dwyfor, mid Anglesey and most of Arfon can speak Welsh. It would be good to know to what extent the percentage of social housing tenants who can speak Welsh in these areas reflect this. If there is unacceptable inequality then the suitability of the criteria has to be doubted. It could also indicate if the real need is to build more houses or ensure a higher priority for local people.

The same is true regarding houses for sale at an affordable price and local market housing. They are entirely essential in many areas as they are the only hope local people have for a house. At the same time the criteria need to be checked to ensure that local people receive due priority.

Without knowing for certain that those people who receive social housing on rent, affordable housing and local market housing reflect the language of native residents in their areas we cannot take for granted that every such development has a positive impact on the Welsh language.

## Distribution of growth in Gwynedd

As well as considering the likely effect of the total number of houses on the counties as a whole, it is necessary to consider the areas which have not been earmarked for these houses. This section looks at the areas of Gwynedd, and the following section will look at Anglesey.

The individual areas will be dealt with in the same way as they were in the Linguistic Impact Assessment of the Joint Planning Policy Unit; this should help draw comparisons between each conclusion, and each assessment can help to corroborate the other.

### Porthmadog Catchment Area

Porthmadog Town		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	121 (after 'transferring' 180)	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	4051	4057
Percentage of Welsh speakers	69.8	75.0

We see that the original intention was to provide space for the erection of 301 new houses in Porthmadog which would have meant an increase of around 15% in the housing stock. Despite the threat of flooding forcing these plans to be quite significantly modified, Porthmadog, it must be noted, is one of the areas of Gwynedd that saw the greatest decline in the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh between 2001 and 2011. Numbers fell from 3,043 to 2,827 and the percentage dropped from 75.0% to 69.8%. These are the figures for the Porthmadog community council area in the Census, though the figures are a little different in the Planning Policy Unit Assessment.

Due to the difficulties caused by the risk of flooding, it has been noted that 180 of the proposed houses are being moved to Cricieth and Penrhyndeudraeth, leaving 121 in Porthmadog.

It is estimated that 121 houses could lead to a 13% rise in the populations of both the town's wards, and that after a fall of 6.7% in the number of people born in Wales living in the town. Though the Policy Unit Assessment acknowledges the decline of the Welsh language in the town, and that it is a resort, it states that: "the anticipated growth should not... have a negative impact on the language, and it could contribute to keeping the population in the area". Unless evidence is presented to support them, such declarations do nothing more, in reality, than express a wish.

### Penrhyndeudraeth

Penrhyndeudraeth Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	152	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	2493	2380
Percentage of Welsh speakers	74.8	76.8

As a result of the decision to transfer the housing designation from Porthmadog to Penrhyndeudraeth, the intention now is to allocate land for 152 housing units there, 84 more than the original allocation of 68.

It can be estimated that this would lead to a population increase of 200 in Penrhyndeudraeth.

The Welsh language has stood its ground better here than in Porthmadog, with a slight increase in the number of speakers, but the percentage dropped from 76.8% in 2001 to 74.8% in 2011. The increase of 120 in the population is mainly attributed to an influx of people from outside Wales, though there has been an increase of 38 in the number able to speak Welsh.

The idea of using Penrhyndeudraeth to provide for the housing needs of Porthmadog does not in itself appear to be a bad idea. Without certainty that there exists such a need in Porthmadog in the first place, however, it could mean a surplus of houses in Penrhyndeudraeth, which would either mean more inward migration or an increase in population to the detriment of other nearby areas.

It is worth noting that the Penrhyndeudraeth Town Council gathered evidence of the local need for housing. In a February 2015 questionnaire, local people were asked whether they or a family member would need a house in the area or vicinity within the next five years. The total number of houses came to 59.

The Joint Plannig Policy Unit Assessment recommends the need for the development to happen step by step. Reducing the numbers should also be a consideration.

### Cricieth

Cricieth Ward	
Number of houses for which land has been designated	164



	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1716	1770
Percentage of Welsh speakers	64.2	65.5

The plans for Cricieth clearly show the weaknesses of the arrangement of deciding on the total number of houses for the county and then finding somewhere to build them.

After transferring 96 of the Porthmadog 'designation', the intention is to erect 164 houses, which could mean a 20% growth in the town's population - and that in a popular seaside town where the affordability of houses is a known problem.

With the fall in the number of people born in Wales and in the number able to speak Welsh since 2001, it is hard to see on what grounds it is possible to say, as the LIA of the Policy Unit have "that the anticipated level of growth in the centre itself, should not have a negative impact on the language..."

A little less than half the people who moved to Cricieth in the year before 2011 had moved there from Gwynedd; out of the 142 incomers 66 came from other parts of Gwynedd and 76 from outside Gwynedd.

Using the Welsh Government's projection figures of 2.18 for the average household population in 2016, it's reasonable to believe that erecting 164 houses could lead to an increase of 350 in the town's population. This is a far greater increase than has been experienced over the past decades; in fact, the town's population has remained remarkably stable over the past 50 years, and the proportion of Welsh speakers has also stood its ground far more successfully than in most places.

An increase of 350 in the population, however, would mean a population increase of 20%. If the majority of the additional population did not speak Welsh, it would lead to a significant fall in the 64.2% who speak Welsh in the town. It would mean a more dramatic drop than anything seen over the past 50 years, pushing the percentage to a level that's dangerously close to half. Furthermore, even if a very high proportion were able to speak Welsh and came from other nearby areas, the possible impacts on those areas must be considered as many of those areas are also fragile in terms of the falls in the percentages of Welsh speakers.

The claim made by the linguistic impact assessment of the Planning Policy Unit seems to have no regard for any of these risks; rather, their words are as follows: "...the anticipated growth in the centre should not have a negative impact on the language in itself, and it would contribute to keeping the Welsh speaking population in the area".

Such statements as 'contribute to keeping the Welsh speaking population in the area' express nothing more than a wish. Without evidence that people are leaving due to a lack of suitable housing, the robustness of such statements must be greeted with skepticism.

**Tremadog**

The total of 12 houses earmarked for Tremadog appear to be quite reasonable, especially if it can be limited to affordable houses for local need.

## Caernarfon Catchment Area

Caernarfon Town (4 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	415	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	9200	9265
Percentage of Welsh speakers	85.6	86.1

Land has been earmarked for 415 dwelling units within the town of Caernarfon over the term of the plan.

This is significantly higher than the 147 houses erected between 2002 and 2011, and using the Welsh Government projections of 2.18 as the average size of Gwynedd households by 2026, the equivalent of an increase to the town's population of around 600 or just over 6%.

Along with a higher than average percentage of incomers to the town from other parts of the county in the year before the 2011 Census, the high percentage of the town's population having been born in Wales (over 85%) and the high percentage of Welsh speakers (again over 85%), there are no signs of a significant influx of non-Welsh speakers to the town so far.<sup>12</sup> The Planning Policy Unit's assessment expresses an assumption that such a growth would not be "likely to have a negative influence on the language". It is ostensible, but by no means certain, that this is correct in the context of the town itself. The trend over recent years, however, has been the movement from some of the nearby villages to the town, so that the Welsh language holds up well in the town but that some of the villages, especially the more mountainous ones and those farther away from the town, have experienced a fall in the numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers.

We return again to one of the main central arguments of this assessment which is that there are **direct and indirect consequences** to the plans for constructing substantial numbers of houses. In many ways, it could be a positive advancement to see a gradual increase in a town that is as Welsh as Caernarfon; but the question of the degree to which such an increase could be detrimental to other strongholds is one that must be highlighted.

## Caernarfon Area's Local Service Centres

### Llanberis

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<sup>12</sup> ONS Table UKMIG101

Ward / Community of Llanberis		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	65	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1959	1954
Percentage of Welsh speakers	74.7	80.6

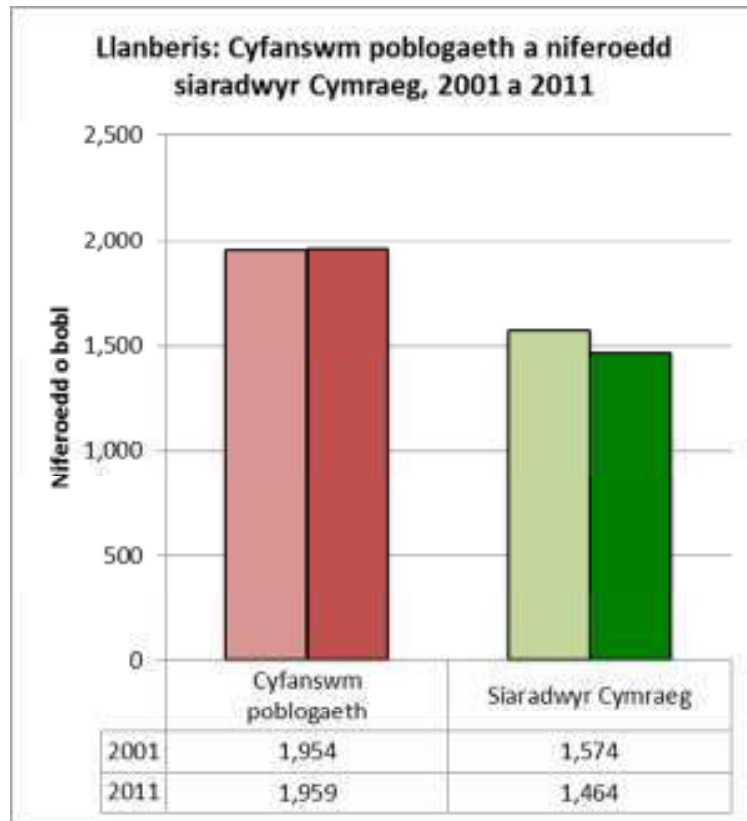
The aim is to erect 65 houses in Llanberis over the term of the plan. This compares with the 44 houses built between 2002 and 2011.

Llanberis is one of the areas that saw a significant change in terms of the proportion of Welsh-speakers between 2001 and 2011, when the percentage fell from 80.6% to 74.7%. Referring to 74.7% as a "percentage which is 4.7% higher than the 70% threshold" as in the Policy Unit assessment is futile; the truth of the matter is that Llanberis has seen a substantial decline in the Welsh language between the two Censuses, with 110 Welsh speakers being lost in one of its main strongholds.

In view of the small population increase, it was surprising to see the comment in the 2015 assessment that inward migration was not a problem for the area; it was welcome to see that this comment had been omitted from the 2016 assessment. Among the arguments of the 2016 assessments alleging that a housing growth would not have a detrimental impact on the Welsh language is the claim that new houses are unlikely to be used as second homes. Once more, it must be reiterated that second homes are not the main problem facing the Welsh language in its strongholds, rather an influx of permanent non-Welsh-speaking residents.

In contrast to a number of other areas in Gwynedd, it appears that it is an inward migration of younger rather than older people that mainly occurs here. Of the 25-34 year age group, only 58.4% were born in Wales.

The Joint Policy Development Unit assessment says that there has been a substantial fall in the younger population. This is somewhat misleading. There was an increase of 75 in the number of 25-49 year old adults, but a fall of 15 in the number of Welsh speakers from among this group.



It is worth noting that the fall in the number of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011 happened during a period when 44 new homes were built. One of the allegations frequently made about new houses in the different areas found in the Policy Unit's assessment is that such developments will help maintain the local population. The events in Llanberis suggest that this is not necessarily true.

It is estimated that the new houses would lead to a population increase of around 3-4%. Without specific evidence to the contrary, it is difficult to see how it would be possible for them to avoid compounding a situation in the village that is already grave.

### Llanrug

Llanrug Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	61	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1835	1730
Percentage of Welsh speakers	87.8	86.8

The intention is to erect 61 houses here. This is the ward with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in Wales with 87.8% able to speak the language, and the village has been frequently used as an example of a place where new houses has been beneficial to the Welsh language. There was an increase of a little over 100 in this population between 2001 and 2011, and a 1 percentage point rise in the percentage of those able to speak Welsh; the housing stock increased by 5.4% during the same period. It is more than likely that the increase in the number of houses would not make a difference to the Welshness of Llanrug but, once again, the comments about Llanberis above must be heeded. Although the increase within a village like Llanrug can appear beneficial on paper, care must be taken that this is not to the detriment of other places.

### Penygroes

Penygroes Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	89	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1728	1681
Percentage of Welsh speakers	86.8	88.2

The intention is to build 89 houses here and it is possible to estimate that, based on the Welsh Government's methodology, it would lead to an increase of 150, or around 8-9% in the population. Only 23 houses were built between 2001 and 2011.

With 86.8% of the population able to speak Welsh in 2011, any increase to the population would have to be based on a high percentage of people able to speak Welsh in order not to have a detrimental effect on the current high percentage. Once more, the question arises as to where the new population will come from. If growth is planned for each area, it is inevitable that growth in those areas will happen to the detriment of other areas to a great extent.

### The smaller villages of the Caernarfon catchment

#### Bethel

Bethel Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	89	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1342	1345
Percentage of Welsh speakers	85.8	86.3

The intention is to build 40 houses during the period of the Development Plan compared with only 7 houses between 2002 and 2011. The population density of households is higher here, however, than it is in the rest of the county. The fact that such a high proportion are able to speak Welsh here, 87.3%, should not be used as an argument for giving free rein to develop more houses; it is rather an argument in favour of taking particular care, as so few such areas exist.

In the Joint Planning Policy Unit's language assessment it was noted that 40.2% of the population born outside Wales was able to speak Welsh. It has been suggested that this "reflects good opportunities for incomers to learn the language". It could also be added that these prime opportunities are essentially due to the fact that such a high proportion speaks Welsh here.

### **Bontnewydd**

Bontnewydd Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	40	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1125	1114
Percentage of Welsh speakers	82.6	85.4

The intention to erect 40 houses during the term of the Local Development Plan also stands in contrast to the 4 that were built between 2002 and 2011. It appears that the Welsh language has stood its ground in the area with a high proportion of 85.9%, as is common in the villages around Caernarfon.

### **Deiniolen**

The intention is to erect 40 houses here also. The Unit's assessment notes that 81.25 are able to speak Welsh here. It seems that this percentage refers to a part of the Deiniolen ward only, as the percentage for the ward as a whole is lower, at 74.4%. The Joint Policy Unit assessments acknowledge that the village could be attractive to new households because of its proximity to Caernarfon and Bangor and, according to the 2015 assessment, it is said that: "Due to the linguistic nature of Bangor, where a higher level of the population is without Welsh language skills, there is potential, therefore, for the development to attract people who work there, and who don't speak Welsh." This sentence, however, has been omitted from the 2016 assessment.

Although the percentage able to speak Welsh here is high, it is still lower than in nearby villages such as Bethel and Llanrug. It is also an area where some falls have

been experienced. Because of this, special care needs to be taken that any development happens gradually with local market restrictions in place on the houses.



## Blaenau Ffestiniog

Ffestiniog Town (3 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	298	
	2011	2001
Cyfanswm poblogaeth dros 3 oed	4696	4657
Percentage of Welsh speakers	78.6	80.9

The Local Development Plan allocates 298 houses for Blaenau Ffestiniog during the term of the Plan. This is a very substantial increase considering the current number of households in the town, around 2,283, which also includes Llan Ffestiniog. By using an average household population projection of 2.18 (for 2026), this would lead to an increase of approximately 800 in the town's population, the equivalent of around 16%.

According to the 2011 Census, 78.6% of the residents of the Ffestiniog community (which includes the wards of Bowydd and Rhiw, Diffwys and Maenofferen and Teigl) were able to speak Welsh. This compared with 80.9% in 2001. This is due to a slight fall in the numbers able to speak Welsh and a small rise in the overall population of the town as shown in the graph below.

When discussing the housing offers for several villages in Arfon, it was noted that it was necessary to take caution regarding the potential of indirect effects, rather than direct effects. In Ffestiniog, however, there is concern about the direct effect of such a development on the town itself.

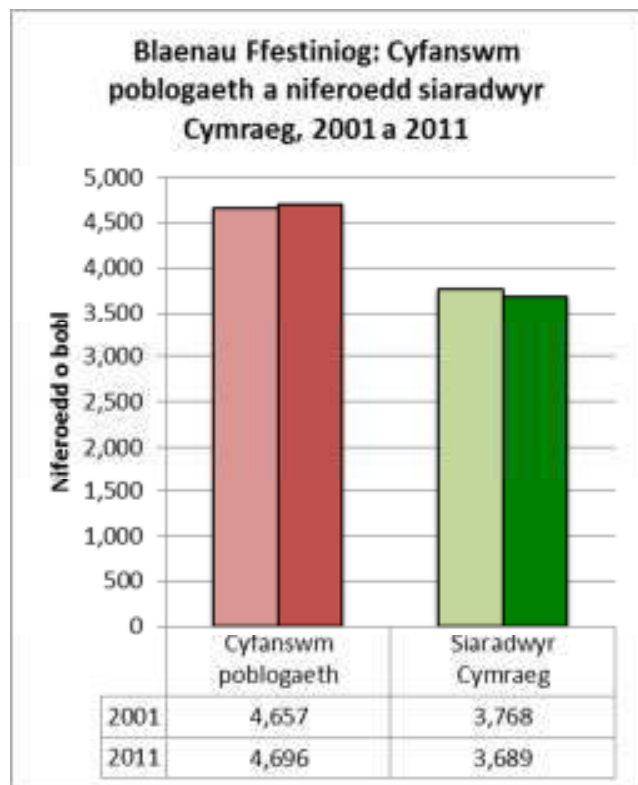
- There was a fall in the number of those able to speak Welsh between 2001 and 2011 and a small rise in the general population at the same time.
- With 94.6% of people born in Wales able to speak Welsh, it is clear that it is migration from outside Wales that mainly accounts for the change.

- Doubt must be cast over the degree to which such a substantial increase can be attributed to the aim of satisfying local need:
  - The three wards were among the wards with the highest number of empty houses in Gwynedd
  - Two of the three wards were already among the wards where houses were most affordable.

Doubt must also be cast over the claim of the Unit's language assessment that "the anticipated level of growth in the centre is not likely to have a negative influence on the language". Where would the proposed 15% of the town's population come from? Even if as many as half spoke Welsh, it could cause a 4 percentage point reduction, approximately, in the proportion able to speak Welsh in the town; if fewer than a quarter were able to speak Welsh, it could be enough to drive the percentage down below the 70% threshold to which so much weight is given in their assessment.

There is a need to seriously reconsider the proposed number of houses and reduce it to a more realistic figure. In the face of the recommended increase for other areas in Gwynedd, it is difficult to foresee how such a significant increase would not have a detrimental effect on the Welsh language in the town. It is true that a high proportion of people in the town who were born outside Wales are able to speak Welsh - but this is because the general population of Welsh speakers is so high. This proportion would soon fall with more non-Welsh language inward migration.

## Barmouth



Barmouth Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	91	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	2422	2347
Percentage of Welsh speakers	41.5	43.8

The intention is to allocate space for 91 houses in Barmouth during the term of the Local Development Plan. The average household population here is much lower than for the county average, 1.98 compared with 2.25. Multiplying the total number of households with the current average of 1.98 would lead to an approximate population increase of 175.

It is a town where the Welsh language has been in decline for a long time. The percentage able to speak the language fell from 43.8% in 2001 to 41.5% in 2011, and less than half the population was born in Wales.

The Joint Planning Policy Unit states that "the housing provision in itself should not have a substantial detrimental effect on the proportion of Welsh speakers in the settlement".

This could be true from the Welsh language standpoint in the town itself. The likely effect of any increase in towns like this where those born in Wales are already in the minority, however, is to add to the Englishness of the wider area, and further erode the percentage that speaks Welsh on the Meirionnydd coast.

The Unit's assessment notes the fragility of the Welsh language in the town, yet claims that holding on to working age groups would "keep the language in the area".

### **Tywyn**

Tywyn Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	103	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3173	3138
Percentage of Welsh speakers	37.5	40.8

The intention is to erect 103 houses in this town where only 36.5% of people are able to speak Welsh, and where a fall of 7.3 percentage points occurred between 2001 and 2011.

The average household size is small here at 1.98. Using this proportion to estimate the effect of 103 new houses on the population, it suggests an increase of around 200. As in Barmouth, such a development may only have a small effect on the Welsh language in the town itself, but again it would contribute to a further weakening of the Welsh language situation on the coast of south Meirionnydd.

## Bangor Catchment Area

Bangor City (8 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated		
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	15928	13286
Percentage of Welsh speakers	36.4	46.7

In Bangor, land has been earmarked for the erection of 969 houses during the term of the Local Development Plan.

According to the 2011 Census, 36.8% of the city's population of almost 16,000 over the age of 3 was able to speak Welsh. This represented a large fall compared to the 46.7% in 2001. Further scrutiny, however, reveals that these figures are skewed by student numbers, as the other set of the Census' statistics - with information about the population outside college term times and about students' addresses outside term time - show that the permanent resident population of the city is around 4,000 fewer, and the proportion able to speak Welsh at 44.9%.<sup>13</sup>

A fall of 400 in the number of people in the city able to speak Welsh was also experienced. Even then, the Joint Planning Policy Unit assessment is guilty of a minor exaggeration by saying that "on the whole, the Welsh language is not viable in the town with a very low proportion of Welsh speakers living in the area - 38.5%, which is 31.5% lower than the 70% level identified as the figure where the language is likely to be viable". Despite the fall, and quite a high proportion of a native non-Welsh speaking population, it is strange to see such a negative statement in one of the Council's official documents.

The average household population of Bangor is significantly higher than that of the rest of the county on average, and that is especially true for wards such as Menai and Deiniol where most students reside. Because of this, the methodology of multiplying the total houses with the projection of 2.18 would not give us a sensible figure. In order to give a conservative estimate of the population increase, only the

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<sup>13</sup> ONS Table OT206WA - which provides information about the population outside college term times

number of new houses, 969, would be multiplied with 2.18 producing a figure of 2,100.

That would correspond to an increase of around 13% considering the current population of the city, or up to around 18% of the population without the students.

However many newcomers are able to speak Welsh, it is difficult to foresee how the development contributes positively toward the language in Gwynedd.

A substantial proportion of the growth could be from non-Welsh speakers who work further eastward and are making the most of the convenience of the A55 as a fast route. That would contribute to weakening the percentage of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd in general as well as weakening the Welshness of Bangor, which is already in a fragile state.

If, however, a high proportion of growth is formed of Welsh speakers, the vast majority are likely to have come from other parts of Gwynedd or from Anglesey. As well as weakening the language in those communities, it is also likely to mean that the Welsh speaking migrants move to a less Welsh community in Bangor, and will, in many cases, lead to less frequent use of the Welsh language.

For this reason, the wisdom of allocating too much growth to the Bangor area to the detriment of other centres in both counties must also be questioned.

As noted in the first part of this assessment, much of the growth between 2001 and 2011 can be attributed to a rise in the number of students, and using this as a reason for building more houses that what is required locally is senseless.

### **Bethesda and Rachub**

Bethesda Town (Ogwen and Gerlan Wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	99	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	4519	4327
Percentage of Welsh speakers	77.5	77.0

Land had been earmarked for 99 houses in Bethesda, whose community includes the wards of Ogwen and Gerlan. 40 houses have also been allocated for Rachub, which also falls within the Gerlan ward. Collectively this equates to an increase of around 6% in the housing stock. This in itself is not likely to lead to a large increase in the population but, as the Unit assessment rightly points out, the proximity of Bethesda to Bangor makes realising the risk posed by incomers who do not speak Welsh is vital.

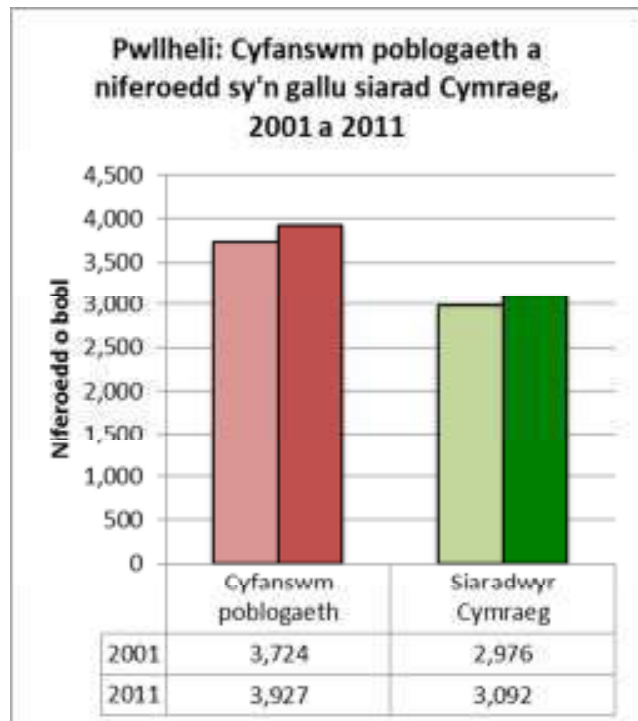


## Pwllheli Catchment Area

Pwllheli Town (2 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	323	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3927	3724
Percentage of Welsh speakers	78.7	79.9

Land has been allocated for 323 new houses in Pwllheli during the term of the Local Development Plan. In considering the current size of Pwllheli this is a greater increase in percentage terms than the 969 houses earmarked for Bangor. It corresponds to a 15% or so increase in the housing stock, and as the current size of the average household is low, it would mean a population increase of over 20%, if the 2.18 figure (which is the projection for the Gwynedd average in 2026) is used as a basis.

This is a very large increase and this in the main centre for Dwyfor, a region where the number of Welsh speakers has fallen between 2001 and 2011.



In Pwllheli itself, there was a small increase of 116 in the numbers of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011, but due to a growth of a little over 200 in the general population, there was a slight fall in the percentage.

The Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment notes that 93 houses had been built in the town between 2002 and 2011. It appears that such a growth has not had too negative an impact on the Welsh language in the town itself. The numbers that would be provided for over the term of the plan, however, are almost four times greater than this, and that the town could cope with inward migration on this scale must not be taken for granted.

The Deposit Plan describes Pwllheli as an international resort for sailing and water activities. Considering the demographic history of Welsh seaside towns over the years, it is clear that Pwllheli is a popular resort for incomers, be they retirees or people who do not need to work. There is clear potential, therefore, for such a large number of houses to have an indirect negative impact on the town. Even if the growth is mainly due to a significant proportion of Welsh speakers, it is likely that the majority of those would come from the Dwyfor area - an area which has seen a decline in numbers, and where there have been falls in the percentages of Welsh speakers in some of the nearby villages. If so, the houses would have an indirect effect on the nearby villages. Such a growth would, therefore, need to be considered in the context of the area as a whole rather than the town on its own.

Even if Welsh speakers accounted for around half this population increase, it would mean a fall of around 5 percentage points in the percentage of the townspeople able to speak Welsh. If the percentage were lower, it would be enough to bring the percentage for Dwyfor below the 70% threshold. In view of the consistent and gradual decline in nearby areas over recent years, it is not possible to consider a plan with the kinds of numbers of houses being proposed for Pwllheli as anything but completely irresponsible. A great deal of pressure must be exerted to reduce this number, and also to extend the restrictions such as those in Aberdaron and Abersoch.

### **Abersoch**

As noted in the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment, a minority, i.e. 43.5%, of the population of the Abersoch ward was able to speak Welsh in 2011.

Land has been earmarked for 67 houses here over the term of the Plan. This is a substantial increase of 15% to the current number of households in the ward, despite the fact that the households in the ward account for only half the total number of houses as so many are second homes or holiday homes. Given the problem with the affordability of houses in Abersoch the fact that only affordable houses and local market houses will be allowed is welcome. At the same time, the effect of such developments must be monitored and assessments made to determine whether the criteria are adequately robust to ensure that a sufficient proportion of the houses go to the native population.

### **Nefyn**

Nefyn Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	73	
	2011	2001



Total population aged over 3	1318	1313
Percentage of Welsh speakers	76.1	78.8

Space has been allocated for 73 houses in Nefyn over the term of the Local Development Plan. A little over three quarters of the population, 76.1%, was able to speak Welsh compared with 78.8% in 2001.

The population remained constant between 2001 and 2011 with a very small decline in the number of Welsh speakers. The Unit's assessment notes that 34 dwellings were erected between 2002 and 2011, which represents 4.5% of the housing stock. 73 proposed dwellings is a far greater increase than this, and using the average household population projections of 2.18 by 2026, it would mean a population increase of around 140 or 10%.

This in itself is a fairly significant increase. When such an increase, however, is also considered in the context of the massive increase in Pwllheli, only 7 miles away, it raises the question of where all the new population will come from. If fewer than half spoke Welsh, it would be enough to destroy the Welsh and Welsh speaking nature of the village.

Given the popularity of Nefyn as a seaside town, the same restrictions as seen in Abersoch must be considered; though the situation here is not as acute, it would be better to take steps before the situation deteriorates.

### **Smaller villages**

#### **Botwnnog**

Although 40 houses do not appear to be a large number at first glance, when we consider the size of the village, it is a very substantial increase. The area has a population of only 312. It includes the village of Botwnnog which accounts for only about a third of the ward of the same name. As noted in the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment, 84.3% of the population of this output area was able to speak Welsh in 2011. Less clear is the relevance and significant of such sentences as: "The existence of a primary school, secondary school and surgery means that there are opportunities to speak Welsh outside the household."

It is worth looking at the proposed growth in the context of the size of the village. According to the 2011 Census, there were 132 households in the output area which includes Botwnnog, as mentioned above. 40 new houses would mean an increase of 30% and a population increase of at least 20%. In view of all the other developments in Pwllheli and Nefyn, it's hard to foresee that this would not encourage further non-Welsh language inward migration, and considering the small size of the village, it would not take much to destroy one of the most Welsh areas of Llŷn.

Acknowledging that this is a significant development compared to the size of the village, the Unit's linguistic assessment recommends pursuing a gradual method of development. This does not go far enough as the local need requires thorough scrutiny (12 affordable homes have already been built there), and considering the popularity of the Llŷn peninsula as a visitor destination, strict restrictions must be imposed on any new houses.

### **Four Crosses**

As noted in the Joint Planning Policy Unit's linguistic assessment, 85.7% speak Welsh in the village of Four Crosses, which is part of the Abererch ward. The recommended growth of 40 houses is very substantial for a small village, and based on household population projections of 2.18 by 2026, it would be akin to a population increase of 75 or 14%. Due to the strength of the Welsh language in the village, it is possible that this would not in itself have a detrimental impact, were it the only such development in the area. We must remind ourselves, however, of the general context throughout the whole of the Dwyfor area where developments that are at odds with the local need are taking place in many areas. That the Unit recommends phasing the developments is welcome; the need for thorough linguistic monitoring should also be added.

### **Chwilog**

The comments for Four Crosses are equally relevant for Chwilog. It is a small village with a high proportion of Welsh speakers, where 40 houses would mean a significant increase in the population. The cumulative effect of all the other developments in the area is the main cause for concern.

The potential for such attractive villages, a stone's throw from the seaside, to become resorts for incomers should not be disregarded, and it is vital that local needs be seriously considered. Rural Welsh language strongholds such as Chwilog, Four Crosses and Botwnnog are invaluable for the future of the language as such villages as these are nowadays so rare.

## Distribution of growth in Anglesey

### Glannau Menai Catchment Area

#### Menai Bridge

Menai Bridge Town (Cadnant and Tysilio wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	115	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3263	3018
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	54.9	60.5

Land for 115 houses is earmarked here, which compares with 101 dwellings that were constructed between 2002 and 2011. This led to an increase of approximately 200 or 6.5% in population, with people from outside Wales accounting for more or less the total growth. The proportion that spoke Welsh here dropped from 60.5% in 2001 to 54.9% in 2011. Although the proposed increase in houses is not large compared with the size of the town, the trends of the previous decade suggest that it could contribute towards a further deterioration in the language.

#### Llanfairpwll

Llanfairpwll Community (Braint and Gwyngyll wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	82	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3023	2952
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	71.8	75.7

Although Llanfairpwll is only a stone's throw from Menai Bridge, the percentage of Welsh-speakers is much higher here. 71.8% were Welsh-speakers here in 2011, compared with 75.6% in 2001. A small reduction was seen in the numbers of Welsh-speakers as well as a small increase in population.

The growth of 82 new houses during the period of the Plan compares with 70 that were constructed between 2002 and 2011. Having discovered that the subsequent growth in population was small, the allocation of new houses does not appear to be too unreasonable. In light of the fact that Llanfairpwll was so close to the 70% threshold of Welsh-speakers, phased development conditions on any new houses should be considered, and the linguistic impact of any developments should be monitored thoroughly and effectively.

The assessment of the Joint Planning Policy Unit notes that it is "important to ensure that employers promote the Welsh language in the workplace". Nobody would disagree with this, but it is difficult to see how such statements are relevant to assessing the impact of plans to construct new houses.

### Beaumaris

Beaumaris Town / Ward		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	96	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	1892	2010
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	39.5	39.7

Over the years, Beaumaris has been one of Anglesey's most Anglicized towns. Only 39.5% of the population were able to speak Welsh in 2011, nearly exactly the same as in 2001. A high proportion of people born outside Wales live in the town, and a high proportion of the indigenous population are non-Welsh-speakers.

Land to construct 96 houses in the town is earmarked during the Local Development Plan. As this is not a large increase compared with the size of the town and as affordable homes and local market housing will only be permitted here, and as the town does not have a linguistic sensitivity, this allocation does not cause too much concern.

## Amlwch Catchment Area

Amlwch Town		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	533	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3658	
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	61.1	

A growth of 533 houses for the town of Amlwch was noted during the period of the Local Development Plan. 61.1% of the population of 3,658 people aged over 3 in the Amlwch Town Council area were able to speak Welsh in 2011, and the rate was slightly higher in the town itself than in the rural part of the community. Due to confusion that occurred with the 2001 Census in the town, no reliable figures are available to be able to make direct comparisons.

The new developments would involve a growth of 31.6% in the number of households, and based on an average population of 2.18 for every household, it would lead to a growth of 28.6% in the population which would be closer to 5,000. It cannot be anticipated for certain how much of this new population would hail from nearby areas. However, as in Gwynedd's case, if there is a general and substantial growth in dwellings across the island, there will be insufficient local people to account for the corresponding growth in population. If a higher than anticipated proportion of these houses in Amlwch are bought by people from Anglesey, this in turn will certainly lead to spaces to be filled by incomers from outside the area. Of course, some incomers could hail from Gwynedd, but for the purposes of this assessment, this could also be at the expense of communities in Gwynedd. Also, as noted at the beginning of this assessment, it appears that most incomers from outside Anglesey and Gwynedd who move to both counties come from outside Wales.

Assuming that the majority of these houses are intended for the new power station's construction workers, it is reasonable to expect that the majority of these will be people from distant locations. That is the clear suggestion in the Wylfa's New Power Station report, which states that 70% of construction workers would be people who lived more than 90 minutes travelling time away from the site. If the majority of houses are taken by non-Welsh-speakers, it would have a huge impact on the town, and the possibility that it could be enough to push the proportion below half cannot be disregarded.

In light of the potential for such a far-reaching impact as this, one can only deplore some of the superficial observations in the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment. "Second homes are not a significant problem in Amlwch and the possibility that new units will be used for purpose is low." As no-one else mentions second homes anyway, what is the

purpose of mentioning this? It then states: "Employers will be expected to promote the Welsh language in the workplace." However, there is no suggestion as to how this could be ensured.

### Local Services Centres

#### Cemaes

The Local Development Plan allocates 81 new houses to be constructed in Cemaes. This is equivalent to an increase of 12.5% in the number of households, and based on an average household size of 2.18, it could lead to an increase of approximately 200 in the population.

It is one of the villages in the area that has been Anglicized the most, with low proportions of the population born in Wales (54.8%), and 52.4% speaking Welsh. Examining the general pattern of the wider area, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a further increase in the population will soon push the proportion of Welsh-speakers below half.

#### Benllech

Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf Community (2 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	90	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	3318	3332
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	46.5	48.6

What has happened in the community of Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf over the past 40-50 years shows the type of impact that over-development can have on rural communities. The proportion of people able to speak Welsh has been lower than half since the period of extensive construction work in the 1960s. The proportion has remained fairly consistent since then but the population has still increased. 46.5% of the community's population of 3,382 spoke Welsh in 2011.

It is intended to construct 90 houses here during the period of the Local Development Plan, which could lead to a growth of approximately 250-300 in the population, based on a household population of 2.18.

As in the case of so many other areas, the main concern is not the impact of such a growth on the community, but the fact that it is likely to contribute further towards Anglicizing the island.

### **Pentraeth**

57 houses were allocated for Pentraeth during the period of the Local Development Plan, compared with 12 houses that were constructed between 2002 and 2011. 54.8% of the ward's population of slightly over 1,800 could speak Welsh in 2011. Compared with the proposed growth in several nearby areas, it does not appear that what has been designated for Pentraeth would be likely to lead to a major change in population.

### **Llanerchymedd**

Llanerchymedd is among Anglesey's most Welsh rural villages. 73.8% spoke Welsh in the community of Llanerchymedd in the 2011 Census, which represented an increase in numbers but a reduction in the percentage from 75.6% in 2001. During the decade, there was an increase of 146 in the general population, and a smaller increase of 87 in the number of Welsh-speakers.

40 houses are earmarked for the village of Llanerchymedd during the period of the Local Development Plan. It is true that this does not represent a major growth in comparison with the existing number of households in the ward. It is noted in the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment that 55 houses had been constructed between 2002 and 2011. To the extent that this increase had led to an increase in the number of Welsh-speakers in the community without reducing the percentage too much, it can be recognised that there is no evidence that those houses were detrimental to the Welsh character of the village. By contrast, there is a need to carefully consider whether or not there is robust evidence of local demand for even more development in the village. Certainly, one should insist that the recommendation of the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment to implement the policy on a phased basis is accepted.

## Holyhead Catchment Area

Holyhead Town (7 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	833	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	10942	10808
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	42.2	47.2

Holyhead is by far the largest town in Anglesey, and it has seen a constant decline in the proportion and numbers of Welsh-speakers over the years. According to the 2011 Census, 42.2% of the population of 10,942 were able to speak Welsh. As can be seen in the graph on the opposite page, there was a reduction of 483 in the number of Welsh-speakers in the town between 2001 and 2011 compared with a small increase of 134 in the general population aged over 3.

On the other hand, 73.9% of the town's inhabitants were born in Wales, compared with a corresponding proportion of 65.4% for Anglesey in its entirety. Amongst those born in Wales, about half of them are able to speak Welsh, although the proportion tends to be higher amongst older adults than it is amongst younger adults. It is also interesting to note that a high proportion of 19.7% of people can understand spoken Welsh only, and these are additional to the proportion of 42.2% who speak the language.

Therefore, Holyhead is a town where the ability to speak Welsh is declining, but it appears that there is considerable knowledge and understanding of the language under the surface.

The Local Development Plan allocates 833 houses to be constructed during the period until 2026. This equates to an increase of 16% in the total households of the seven wards that form the community of the town. By using a projection of an average population of 2.18 for households, it would lead to an increase of approximately 1,800 in the town's population.

This will certainly have a far-reaching impact on the town and on the island in its entirety. This is also likely to be true from wherever the increase in population comes.

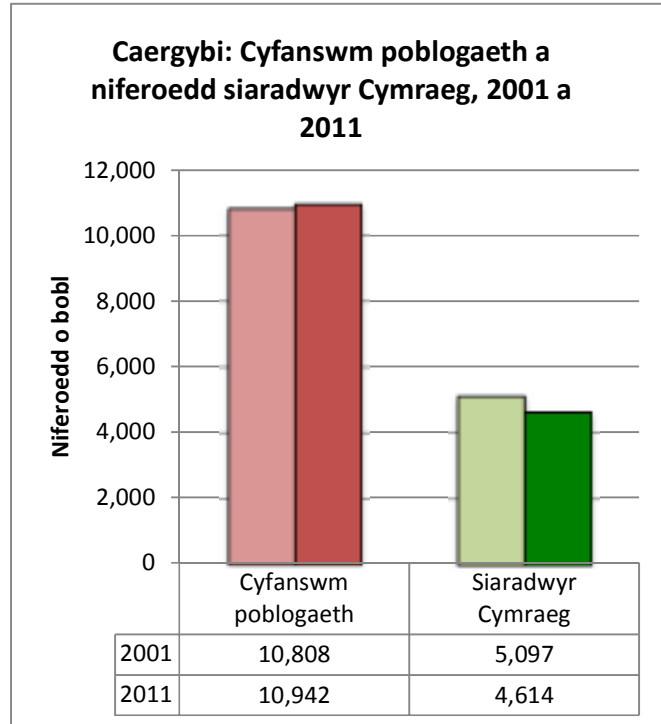
If a substantial proportion of the increase will come from other parts of Anglesey, including some from the island's most Welsh villages, it will be a blow for those communities, and it is likely to lead to inward migration there. With the proportion of Welsh-speakers less than 40% in every working age group in the town, it is unlikely that an increase in the number of Welsh-speakers as a result of inward migration from other parts of the island would be enough to have a positive influence on the town. It is likely



that the opposite would occur, and Welsh-speakers hailing from more Welsh communities receiving fewer opportunities to use the Welsh language.

If, on the other hand, non-Welsh-speakers from outside Anglesey and Gwynedd, most of them from outside Wales account for the majority of the increase, that could be a further blow for the Welsh language in the town, and further erode awareness of it. There is also evidence that the town's Anglicised nature has a negative impact on other villages in the surrounding catchment area; a major increase in its population could dramatically exacerbate the situation.

As the Welsh language's outlook in Holyhead appears to be quite fragile, it could be accepted that a slightly small increase in the population would not make a major difference. However, an increase of this scale is one that will have implications for the entire island.



### Valley

54.7% of residents of the Valley ward were able to speak Welsh in 2011, which is higher than Holyhead, and is fairly similar to several of the island's coastal communities. 84 new houses were designated for Valley during the period of the Local Development Plan. Such an increase would not be a very large one, and it would not be enough in itself to cause concern. However, in light of the proposed huge increase in Holyhead, one cannot ignore the cumulative impacts of smaller developments such as this one.

### Rhosneigr

This seaside village is the island's most Anglicized ward, where only 36% of the population can speak Welsh. Constructing 70 new houses as designated by the plan would result in an increase of 14% in the number of households in the ward, and perhaps a similar increase in the population of just over a thousand. Such an increase would not be likely to have much impact on the linguistic character of the village itself, but the potential cumulative impacts of developments such as this on the rest of the

island cannot be ignored. It should also be noted that the proposed increase is in addition to the 117 houses that were constructed in the ward between 2002 and 2011.

### **Bodedern**

70.7% of the population of Bodedern community were able to speak Welsh in 2011; communities and parishes in the centre of the island are substantially more Welsh than those on the coast. The intention to construct 57 houses could lead to an increase of approximately 100 in the village's population. Caution would be required with any new development in a village that is only narrowly over 70%, and it is good to see a recommendation to ensure a phased development. But, even worse than this specific allocation is the fact that Bodedern is exactly the type of village that is under the greatest threat from developments in Holyhead. As an objective, the Local Development Plan notes the need to increase communities with over 70% of Welsh-speakers; it is difficult to see favourable projections for the retention of such a proportion in this community if the development occurs on the scale proposed in the Plan.

### **Gwalchmai**

With a proportion of 72.6% of its population speaking Welsh, the town of Gwalchmai is one of the island's most Welsh communities. There was an increase of 55 in the numbers that were able to speak Welsh between 2001 and 2011, but with an increase of 116 in the general population, the percentage dropped from 75.9%.

40 new houses have been designated for Gwalchmai in the Local Development Plan, which will result in an increase of approximately 10% in the number of households, and this is in addition to the 32 new houses that were constructed between 2002 and 2011. It should be ensured that any development takes place on a phased basis and that the impact of each step is carefully monitored.

## Llangefni Catchment Area

Llangefni Town (3 wards)		
Number of houses for which land has been designated	673	
	2011	2001
Total population aged over 3	4886	4499
Percentage of Welsh-speakers	80.7	83.8

The town of Llangefni consists of the highest percentage of people who speak Welsh of all Anglesey communities. Just over 80% could speak Welsh in the town according to the 2011 Census, and over 70% of people within the surrounding rural area are also Welsh-speakers. Indeed, populated areas that have higher percentages of Welsh-speakers than Llangefni are only found in Caernarfon and the vicinity.

It is a town that has witnessed considerable growth in population between 2001 and 2011, when 239 new houses were constructed there. The population increased slightly by over 400 between both censuses. The numbers who were able to speak Welsh in the town increased to 171, but there was a slight reduction in percentage - from 83.8% in 2001 to 80.7% in 2011. In the five communities that surround Llangefni, namely Bodffordd, Llanddyfnan, Llangristiolus, Llanfihangel Esceifiog and Penmynydd, there was a small increase in the general population over the same period, but a reduction of 79 in the numbers of Welsh-speakers. This strongly suggests that the growth in the numbers who speak Welsh in Llangefni is to be partially attributed to the movement of local people from nearby villages to the town.

The Local Development Plan allocates land for 673 houses in Llangefni. This is nearly three times the growth that was seen between 2002 and 2011. It represents an increase of approximately 30% in the number of households in the town, and by examining the average size of households, an increase of 1,200 in the population would be a fairly conservative estimate. Therefore, in reality we are talking about an increase of approximately 25% in the town's population.

The obvious question to ask is: From where will the new population come? Even with a far lower growth between 2001 and 2011, people from outside Wales accounted for nearly half of the growth. It also appears that the growth witnessed in the numbers who speak Welsh in the town is to be partially attributed to local people moving there from nearby villages.

The enormous scale of the proposed growth demands that its implications are seriously considered. With no natural growth being predicted on the island, it follows that inward migration will be the only element of growth in population. For the purpose of this

assessment, migration from Gwynedd cannot be considered as it would contribute towards losses in Gwynedd, and migration patterns suggest that the majority of incomers that come from outside these two counties come from outside Wales if they are considered together as one unit. In terms of Llangefni's specific growth, if a higher than anticipated proportion of the new population can speak Welsh, it is extremely likely to be at the expense of the Welsh character of other communities in Anglesey.

Taking all these factors into consideration, it is worth considering a scenario of the impact of population growth on the town should a quarter of the new inhabitants be able to speak Welsh. If so, we would have a total of 4242 people able to speak Welsh out of a population of 6086 in the town, which is a proportion of 69.7%. The fact that this would narrowly be under 70% is not the significant issue but the fact that there would be an enormous reduction in the percentage.

Another potential scenario is that a high proportion of Llangefni's new population would be Welsh-speakers, but that it would be as a result of people moving from other nearby villages. The direct impact of that would be to lose more rural communities where 70% of people speak Welsh.

It is worth reminding ourselves once again that the Local Development Plan sets a strategic aim to increase communities where over 70% of people speak the language. It is difficult to see how proposals such as these for Llangefni contribute towards realistic projections for this to be realised.

In light of the clear threat from a growth on this scale to the island's largest Welsh stronghold, and one of the Welsh language's principal strongholds, it is regrettable to see that the Joint Planning Policy Unit's assessment does not have much to say apart from clichés such as the fact that 80.3% "is 10.3% higher than the level of 70% that is identified as a figure where it is likely that the language is viable" or "second homes are not a significant problem in Llangefni".

### **Gaerwen**

76.5% of the population of 1500 in the community of Llanfihangel Esceifiog spoke Welsh in 2011. The 58 houses that are allocated for the village in the Local Development Plan is not likely to lead to a major increase in the population, and it is not in itself a cause for concern. Gaerwen, on the other hand, is exactly the type of village that could be under threat from the huge proposed growth in Llangefni.

## Summary and conclusions

Gwynedd and Anglesey is the only Local Development Plan area in Wales where the majority of the population are able to speak Welsh. Therefore, the Welsh language is a wholly vital part of the area's unique character and heritage. The vast majority of communities where over 70% of their population can speak the Welsh language are also within Gwynedd and Anglesey. Therefore, the area has a crucial key significance to the future of the language.

The Joint Local Development Plan recognises the importance of the Welsh language, and one of its Strategic Objectives is to "contribute to creating more communities with a higher proportion than 70% of Welsh-speakers"<sup>14</sup>.

The degree in which the Welsh character of these communities is successfully maintained, strengthened and developed, will be an important criterion when measuring the success of the Local Development Plan's Strategic Objective. A Strategic Objective is not something to be disregarded as empty words full of good intentions and nothing else - it is in fact a measurable aim.

Unfortunately, research undertaken for this assessment suggests that several aspects of the Local Development Plan are at risk of hindering Strategic Objective 4 rather than promoting it.

As it will not be possible to prove for certain what the Local Development Plan's outcomes will be prior to the publication of the 2021 Census (and language figures are usually not published until about two years later), further research work is required to try to predict in more detail how Strategic Objective 4 can be achieved.

**Recommendation 1.** Prepare a detailed action plan to achieve Strategic Objective 4, namely "contributing to creating more communities with a higher proportion than 70% of Welsh-speakers", and amending the Local Development Plan as required accordingly.

The need to increase the overall percentages of people who are able to speak Welsh in both counties is as important as in individual communities, especially in parts that form the main core area of the Welsh language that extends from the centre of Anglesey to north Meirionnydd.

Everyone realises that achieving such an aim is not something that any planning system can do alone. At the same time, the planning system has an important function in terms

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of preventing developments that would have a negative impact on efforts to maintain and strengthen the Welsh character of our main strongholds.

There could be an argument for some sort of national recognition, from the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Unit or the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office, of the key importance of these areas. They could offer assistance and specialist guidelines, for example, on developing the planning system in the most favourable manner to maintaining their Welsh identity. At the same time, it would also be good to see more resourcefulness and imagination on a local level, breaking new ground in a different way to the rest of Wales and more emphasis on what makes Gwynedd and Anglesey different.

Unfortunately, it appears that the way the plan was prepared was no different to any other development area in Wales or the rest of Britain.

**Recommendation 2.** Seek special national recognition in the field of planning for Gwynedd and Anglesey based on their importance to the future of the Welsh language.

Two main concerns come to light when the likely impact of this Local Development Plan on the Welsh language is assessed:

- the excessive increase in population that is provided for
- some of the areas where this population growth is distributed.

It must be emphasised that population growth should not be regarded as a threat to withstand. Indeed, seeing some of the strongholds of the Welsh language increasing in population would be a development to be welcomed in an ideal world. Unfortunately, however, it is easy for population increase to lead to the weakening of the Welsh character of these strongholds.

Of course, inward migration of Welsh-speakers, whether they hail from other parts of Wales, or are returning from other places, would be a positive development for the language. Inward migration of non-Welsh-speakers, provided that it occurs on a small scale, could also be a constructive development if a substantial proportion of these people learn Welsh. On the other hand, inward migration of non-Welsh-speakers on an excessive scale could change the linguistic nature of these areas, and thus contribute towards the weakening of the motivation to learn the Welsh language. Also in several areas, a slightly small increase could make a substantial difference as so much inward migration of this type has taken place in recent years.

For the reasons noted in the first part of this assessment, the type of population increase that is provided for represents a development that is unlikely to benefit the Welsh language.

- it appears that the proposed population growth is more or less completely dependent on inward migration from outside both counties
- as the only two counties where the majority of the population can speak Welsh, the probability that people from outside the counties could speak the language is fairly low
- although reference is made to the desire for local people to remain in the county rather than leave, no evidence is offered that constructing new houses would achieve this result
- whilst accepting the possibility that most of the new houses in a specific area could be bought by local people, as a result other houses are then likely to become vacant and they are then sold to non-Welsh-speaking migrants
- the pattern of population and language changes over the past decades suggests a trend of indigenous population leaving and people from outside, the majority of them from outside Wales, moving in; the plan does not offer evidence as to why providing more houses should change this trend.

Taking everything into consideration, it is estimated that population increase in itself could lead to reductions of approximately 2-2.25% in the percentage of people who speak Welsh in Gwynedd and approximately 2.5-3.5% in Anglesey. This is in addition to any reduction that could take place as a result of other factors; or it could counteract any increase that could occur.

In addition to this, it appears that the Welsh Government's projections are not reliable as far as Gwynedd is concerned. These are based on past trends, and it is quite clear that a vast proportion of the population increase in Gwynedd can be attributed to the increase in students in Bangor. Therefore, it is entirely inappropriate to use such figures to increase population in other parts of the county.

In Anglesey, it appears that the possibility of a new power station in Wylfa has strongly influenced the decision to provide for so many houses. However, it is not entirely clear to what extent the proposed increase in the island's economy will depend on the existence of the power station or not. This is certainly a matter that requires further discussion.

There is a need to realise that there are various extensive risks when setting excessive allocations for new houses. Although planning permission will be required for any individual developments, the planning authority is open to a legal challenge from developers if they are refused. Ensuring the suitability of a local development plan can save significant money for taxpayers in subsequent years.

**Recommendation 3.** Consider seriously the suitability of the total number of new houses for the area's requirements. When considering population and language

trends over the years, it becomes apparent that the number is too high. Rather than determining a specific total for both counties, the number of houses should be based on the genuine requirements of individual areas.

The Language Impact Assessments prepared by the Joint Planning Policy Unit intensifies doubts that insufficient attention was given to the Welsh language as the Local Development Plan was formulated in the first instance. They are extremely superficial, full of statements that are nothing but an expression of wishes, and show a lack of pure basic understanding of linguistic and social matters. They do not include any evidence either as to how proposals within the Local Development Plan could benefit the Welsh language within its areas. Having considered everything, the Joint Planning Policy Unit's Language Impact Assessments cannot be considered as robust evidence for their intended purpose.

As noted many times in this assessment, the general increase in population will certainly have direct and indirect impacts on different areas wherever it happens.

This is why it is essentially important to continuously monitor the broader picture. While examining individual developments, or the allocations for individual areas, it would be easy to argue that the majority of the houses could be bought by local people. However, if there is a general over-provision throughout both counties, it is therefore logical that this cannot be true in every area, due to the limited number of local buyers in the long run. Therefore, directly or indirectly, the housing supply will encourage more inward migration.

In addition, some specific developments in individual areas cause particular concern due to the linguistic significance and sensitivity of those areas. The proposals that cause the greatest concern are those for the catchment areas of Wales' most Welsh towns, namely Blaenau Ffestiniog, Pwllheli and Llangefni, three towns which are essential to the Welsh character of the main core area of the Welsh language in north Meirionnydd, Llŷn and Eifionydd and the centre of Anglesey.

- 300 houses are designated in Blaenau Ffestiniog, a town that has seen a small reduction in the numbers of Welsh-speakers, and a town where the numbers of empty houses are already among the highest in Gwynedd. Without evidence of local demand, an increase to the recommended scale could lead to inward migration that would cause an unsustainable reduction in the percentage of the Welsh-speaking population in the town.
- The designation for over 300 houses is excessive for Pwllheli. As noted in the Local Development Plan, the town is an international sailing centre and will certainly be a location that attracts wealthy buyers from near and far. Even if the impact on the town is not as severe as expected, it would certainly affect some of the nearby villages, and a relatively small migration could be enough to lower the percentage of those who speak Welsh in the Dwyfor area to below 70%. For



a Plan that has the aim of increasing communities where more than 70% of people speak Welsh, seeing an entire region such as Dwyfor falling below this level would be a sign of total failure.

- Likewise, the intention to construct 673 houses in Llangefni could be a serious blow for Anglesey's most Welsh area. It would result in an enormous increase in population after the substantial growth that has already occurred over the past 10 years. It is very difficult to foresee how such an increase would not weaken the Welsh identity of the town and surrounding areas.

**Recommendation 4.** Give particular and specific attention to the housing allocation for Blaenau Ffestiniog, Pwllheli and Llangefni. This degree of development in the areas cannot be justified unless robust and reliable evidence can be shown that it would be beneficial to the Welsh language.

In addition to the direct impacts on the sensitive areas referred to above, there is also a need to examine potential side effects on other areas.

- Difficult to see any rationale for the proposed growth of nearly 1,000 houses in Bangor. As noted in this assessment, it is the increase in the number of students between 2001 and 2011 that is more or less responsible for the increase in the city's population over the same period. There is no evidence that such an increase would be likely to continue. Bangor is within convenient travelling distance to towns further to the east and even as far as the Chester area, and many of these new houses could lead to further Anglicization. In addition to this, the value of the idea of centralising too many developments in Bangor must be questioned as it could be at the expense of other areas in the county. In other words, it is difficult to see what good could come from this over-provision. If it attracts too high a proportion from outside the county, it is likely to contribute towards the further Anglicization of the city, and if it attracts more than anticipated from within Gwynedd and Anglesey it will contribute towards further impoverishing other more rural and Welsh locations.
- Much of the same is true for Holyhead, where adding 833 houses to the town would have an impact on the entire island. The Welsh language is already at a low ebb in the town, and more people from outside could further Anglicize it, and a general increase in the town could have more of an impact on the surrounding area. It could also contribute towards the loss of the Welsh indigenous population from the island's more rural areas.
- Although the number of houses earmarked for Caernarfon and the vicinity is not as large in comparison with the population nor likely to have an impact on the language of the town and nearby villages to the same degree, the risks of indirect impacts cannot be ignored by confirming the existing trends of population increase in the area at the expense of the county's more rural areas.

Everything contributes towards a general provision of houses that is excessive for the current situation in Gwynedd and Anglesey.

**Recommendation 5.** Consider the indirect impacts, as well as direct impacts, of any developments on the Welsh language, especially in the context of excessive growth in some of the largest towns noted above.

Turning one's attention to affordable homes, lack of house affordability is a problem in several areas of the county, as noted in the Plan. However, providing more open market housing will not help to resolve this. Therefore, stricter conditions should be imposed to ensure a higher proportion of affordable homes in different developments, and extending the local housing market to more areas. There is also a need to seriously consider the eligibility criteria for affordable homes or social housing to see whether or not local people are given their due priority.

**Recommendation 6.** Extend areas where houses are being limited to the local market, increase the proportion of houses in developments that must be affordable homes, and assess the suitability of criteria for the tenancy or purchase of such houses.

To conclude, the need for more information and research on matters regarding planning and housing and the Welsh language must be emphasised. In terms of the Local Development Plan specifically, there is a need to take a step back and try to assess its impacts thus far.

With over five years of the plan's period having already elapsed, there is an opportunity to seriously examine the housing developments that have been approved thus far, namely from 2011 to 2017, and assess the impact of those when re-considering the suitability of allocations for the remainder of the plan's period.

If fewer developments than anticipated have taken place thus far in some specific areas, there is a disproportionate proportion of the housing allocation left for what remains of the plan's period. This results in developing a far higher number of houses per year on average than is suggested in Council documents, and which could lead to intensifying the impacts of migration.

It is understood that Gwynedd Council is already taking action on such research in line with a decision that was made at a Special Meeting of the Council as referred to above. If this is the case, it would be possible to ensure that a review is ready for the Plan before it is finally adopted by both Councils.

On a wider level, there is a need for much more thorough research at grass roots level to discover the requirements of local housing, using organisations such as community councils, schools and local language enterprises. This would set a more robust

knowledge base when determining developments. The information would also be valuable to assess the suitability of criteria for social housing and affordable homes.

Finally, there is a need to arrange a network of information at grass roots level on the linguistic nature of the communities of both counties. 10 years is too long between Censuses and a way of identifying any trends far sooner is required so that a robust knowledge base is available for all types of linguistic planning. A consultation should be held with suitable organisations and establishments on methods of doing this.

**Recommendation 7.** Ensure more information and research, including assessing the impacts of housing developments that have been approved since the start of the Local Development Plan's period in 2011.

**Geographical and statistical  
analysis of the Welsh language in  
Gwynedd**

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# Foreword

This analysis is a living document rather than a finished piece of work. It is intended as a first step in the work of developing a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the situation of the Welsh language in Gwynedd based on the most up-to-date information. In its current form, it is mainly based on the 2011 Census and previous censuses; but, with the intention that any relevant information be added to it. This version deals in very general terms with various regions within the county; however, the intention is to develop this further to deal in more detail with smaller areas also.

The aim is to gain a better understanding of the linguistic trends at work, so that the most comprehensive information is at hand when preparing strategies to increase the numbers and percentages of Welsh-speakers in the county.

It is hoped that a complete source of comprehensive information about the Welsh language in the county will prove useful to linguistic planners, language campaigners, researchers and elected representatives.

# Part I - A general overview of the county

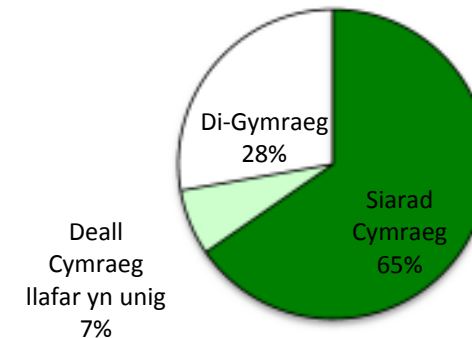
## 1.1 Introduction

Before referring to any statistics, the first thing that needs to be emphasised from the outset is Gwynedd's status as the main Welsh Language stronghold. This gives it national significance. In addition to it being the county with the highest percentage of Welsh-speakers and, according to surveys, of people who use the language, Gwynedd is also the region within which lie the greatest number of areas where the significant majorities of the population speaks Welsh.

Exactly 77,000 of Gwynedd's residents are able to speak Welsh, according to the 2011 Census; this equates to a little under two thirds of the population. To put this in context: very few wards or parishes outside the counties of Gwynedd, Môn and Conwy have equally large cohorts.

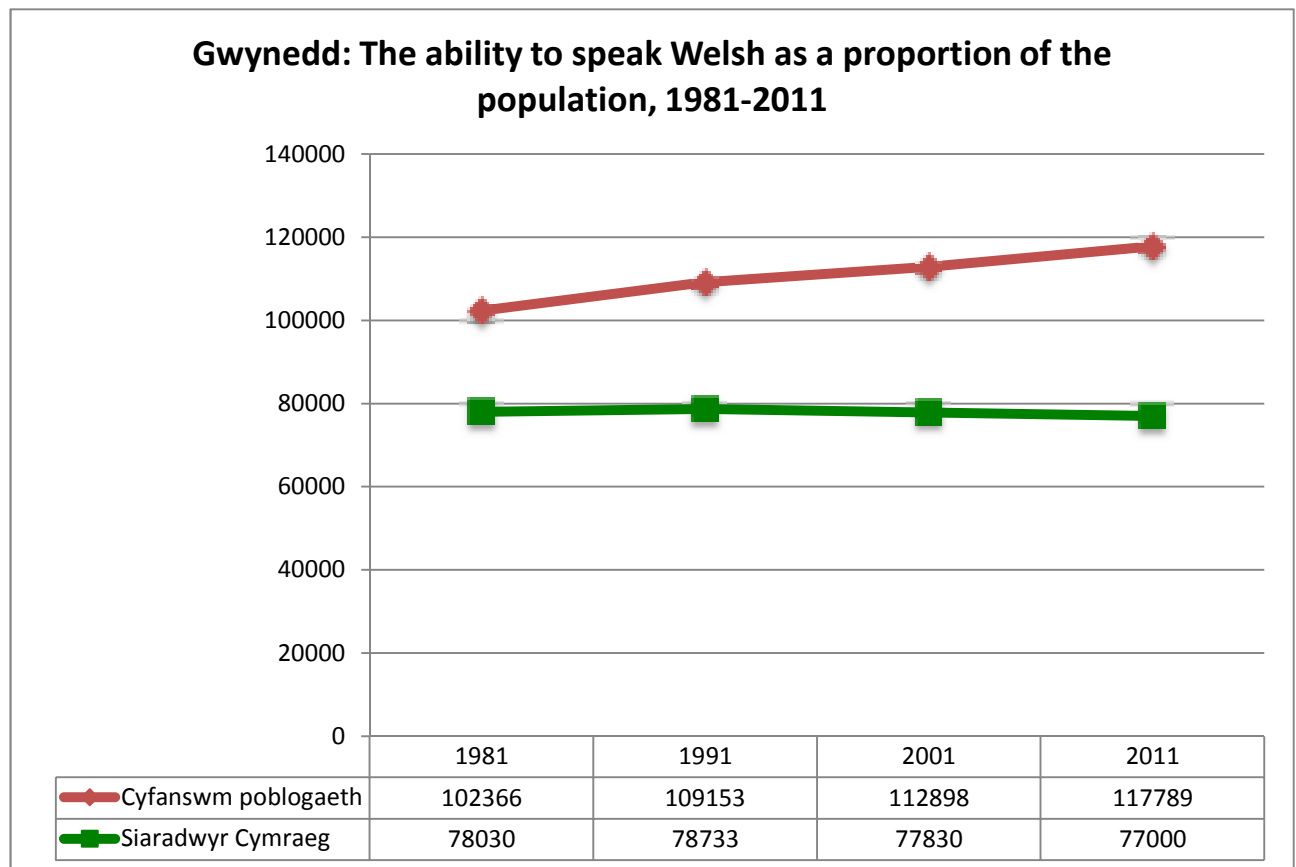
The Welsh language fared better in Gwynedd between 2001 and 2011 than in a number of areas in Wales; for example, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. There was a slight drop of 841 during those 10 years. As this accounts for a little over 1% it is not of great significance in itself; but with an increase of around 5,000 in the general population of the county, the percentage fell from 69% to 65.4%. A significant proportion of the increase in population is due to the rise in the numbers of students in Bangor; information about student residences outside the season suggests that the percentage of the permanent resident population of Gwynedd able to speak Welsh stands at 67.1%. The topic of student numbers is discussed in more detail in the section on Bangor.

**The whole of Gwynedd : The ability to speak Welsh and understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011**



It is also advisable to note at the beginning, that the question from the Census is in relation to the ability to speak Welsh and does not provide information on the degree to which the language is used. To be clear and correct, therefore, it is preferable to refer to any statistics and cohorts as ones where the ability to speak Welsh is demonstrated; avoiding the use of any expressions such as 'Welsh-speakers' or 'the Welsh'. For the sake of brevity, however, the use of 'Welsh-speakers' will sometimes be used, especially in parts such as graphs where there is little space.

There are also separate questions about the ability to read and write in Welsh. The percentage of Welsh-speakers in the chart includes those who are not only able to speak, but those who can also read and write in Welsh. The intention is not to expand on the subject at this point, but it is worth noting that the proportion of parents who are able to speak Welsh and are also literate in the language, is higher in Gwynedd than in the rest of Wales. In Gwynedd, the Welsh language literacy rates are highest in the predominantly Welsh areas.



From the chart, it can be seen that an additional 7% of Gwynedd residents can understand spoken Welsh only. This percentage is low compared to the percentage that's able to speak Welsh, but it is evidently higher in some areas, especially in Bangor.



Looking back at the pattern over the past 30 years, we see that the number of Welsh-speakers, though in slight decline, has held its ground. There has been, however, a steady and relatively significant rise in the general population which means that the percentage of Welsh-speakers within the population has fallen from 76.2% in 1981, to 72.1% in 1991, to 68.0% in 2001 and again to 65.4% in 2011.

## 1.2 The ability to speak Welsh in various parts of the county

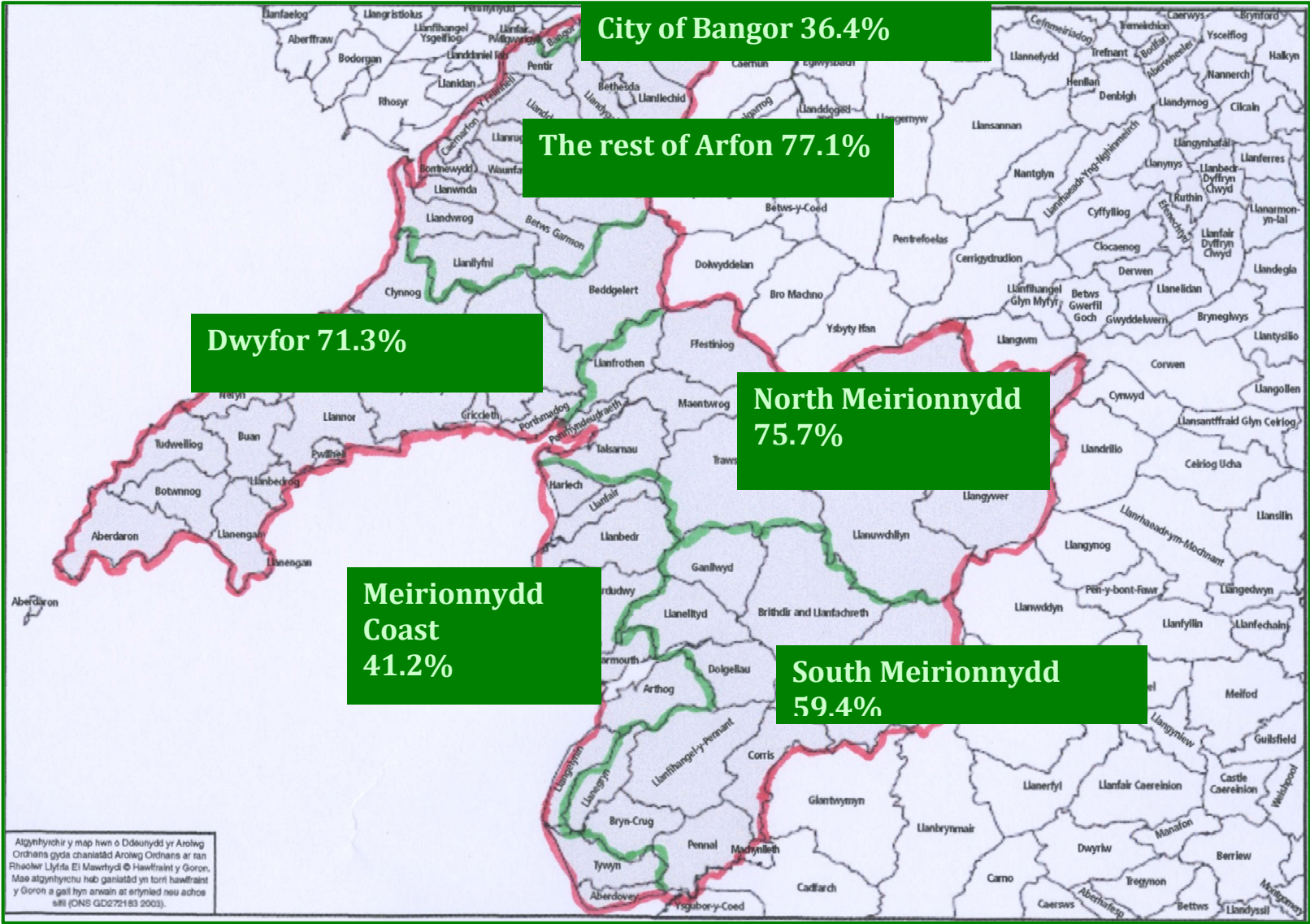
Since county borders do not generally follow linguistic borders, there will be some variation in the situation of the Welsh language in Gwynedd. There are variations also in the linguistic trends at work. Although the aim is to go into detail on the different areas in the second part of this analysis, these areas and their differences need to be mentioned from the beginning, before any general and meaningful picture of the county can emerge.

As Gwynedd is already divided into three recognised regions, namely Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, the work of identifying different linguistic areas is relatively straightforward.

The following areas may be assumed as those which form the different linguistic regions:

- **The City of Bangor.** As the largest settlement in the county, where the low percentage of Welsh-speakers disproportionately impacts the figures for the rest of the county, the City of Bangor needs separate consideration. As will be seen later on, the figures for Bangor are further complicated by the massive increase in the number of students there.
- **Rest of Arfon** Although percentages are lower in the villages on the outskirts of Bangor, the wards with the highest percentages of Welsh-speakers are still found in Arfon, especially in and around Caernarfon.
- **Dwyfor** Although Dwyfor has experienced more inward migration than most of Arfon, it remains one of the strongholds of the Welsh language with 71.3% of the population speaking the language.
- **North Meirionnydd.** A region which includes Penrhyndeudraeth, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Trawsfynydd and Penllyn, where three quarters of the population speaks Welsh.
- **The Coast and South Meirionnydd.** Compared with the rest of Meirionnydd, barely half the population is able to speak Welsh. As there are significant discrepancies between the seaside towns and rural area around Dolgellau, these are discussed in detail separately.

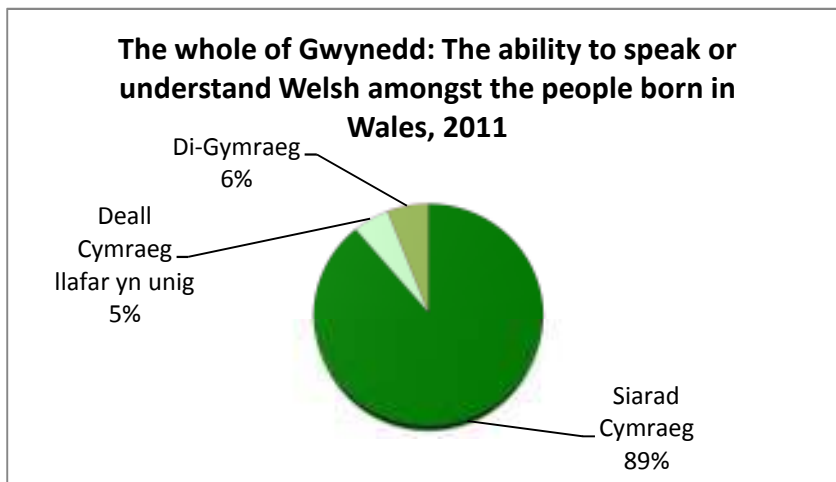
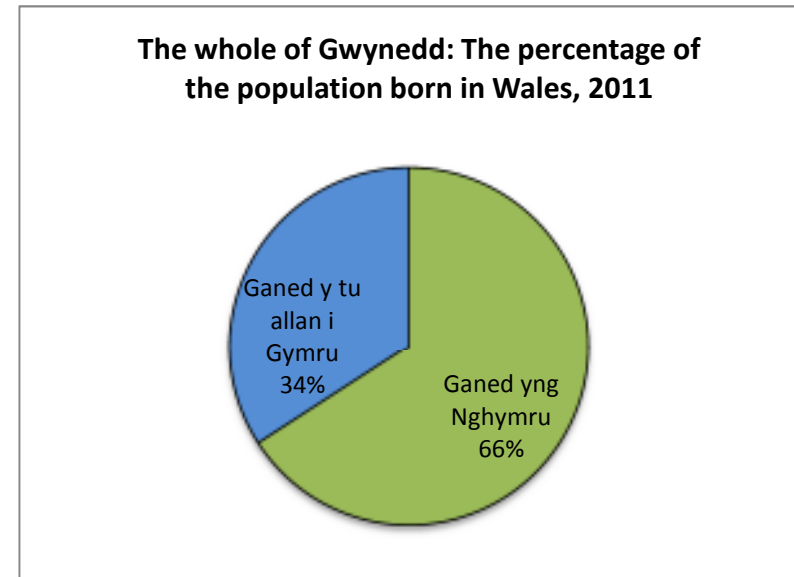
The percentages of people over 3 years old who can speak Welsh in different parts of the county, 2011



### 1.3 The ability to speak Welsh according to place of birth

Some of the most interesting and useful information in the Census came from statistics about the ability to speak Welsh according to age and place of birth. This information is especially significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it shows the relationship between language and immigration and the degrees to which the Welsh language is maintained among the indigenous population. It also shows the age profile of Welsh-speakers and within which age groups inward migration is most likely to occur. It also shows the degree to which people born outside Wales are learning Welsh.

As shown in both pie charts, two thirds of the county's population was born in Wales, of which 89% was able to speak Welsh. In most of Arfon and in the whole of Dwyfor and north Meirionnydd, this percentage is closer to 95%.



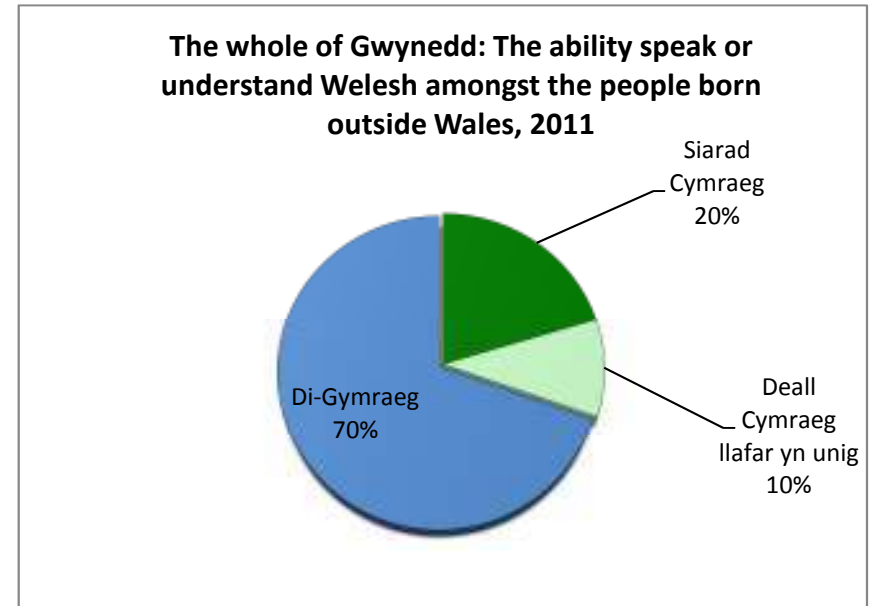
Bearing in mind that not all those born in Wales will necessarily have been born locally, it can be assumed that the percentage of the native population able to speak Welsh is even higher. Unfortunately, there is no information about birth places according to county.

It's reassuring to note that the percentage of people in the county who were born in Wales and who are able to speak Welsh does not appear to have changed much since 1991, despite the general decrease in the proportion of Welsh-speakers since that time. The main change is due to the percentage of the population born in Wales falling from 72% to 66% over the 20 years.

The main conclusion we can draw from this is that the fundamental cause of linguistic change in Gwynedd comes from a population and not a linguistic shift, as very few traces have been found of the Welsh language losing ground among the native population in the greater part of the county.

In Carmarthenshire, however, where the proportion of Welsh-speakers fell from 54% to 44% between 1991 and 2011, the proportion of people born in Wales also decreased from 63% to 54%. This demonstrates a language shift among the native population rather than a population shift exclusively.

From the chart above, it is also clear that quite a significant minority of people born outside Wales are also able to speak Welsh, and from the table on the next page, that this percentage varies according to the different parts of the county.



A summary of the information about language and places of birth in different parts of the county can be seen in the following table.

Area	Total number 3 and 4 year old children	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>The whole of Gwynedd</b>	117,789	77,000	65.4	77,576	65.9	68,816	88.7	8,184	20.4
<b>Bangor</b>	15,928	5,801	36.4	7,906	49.6	5,094	64.4	707	8.8
<b>Rest of Arfon</b>	42,499	32,757	77.1	32,520	76.5	29,942	92.1	2,815	28.2
<b>Dwyfor</b>	26,833	19,124	71.3	18,224	67.9	17,106	93.9	2,018	23.4
<b>North Meirionnydd</b>	13,474	10,201	75.7	9,683	71.9	9,124	94.2	1,077	28.4

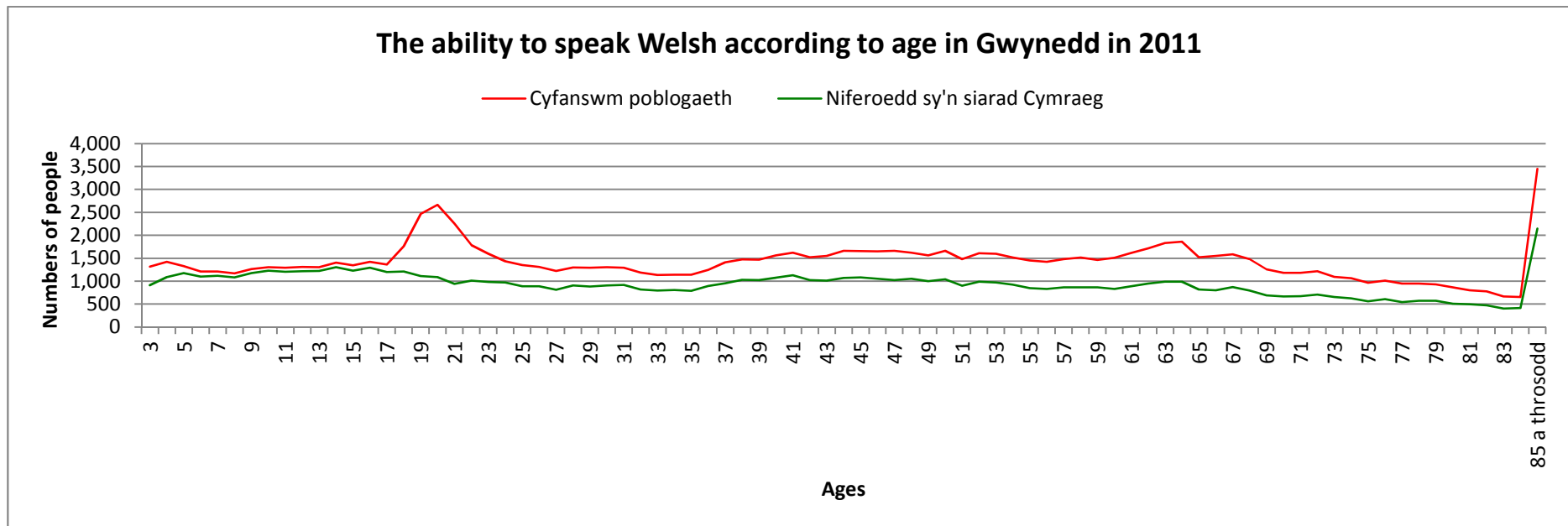
South Meirionnydd	6,958	4,133	59.4	4,056	58.3	3,555	87.6	578	19.9
Meirionnydd coast	12,097	4,984	41.2	5,187	42.9	3,995	77.0	989	14.3

Some of the facts revealed:

- The lowest percentage of the Wales-born population is on the Meirionnydd coast (42.9%). This is slightly lower than the figures for Bangor too, but figure that is accounted for mainly by the high numbers of students.
- The highest percentage of people born in Wales are in rest of Arfon and north Meirionnydd
- The percentage of people born in Wales and able to speak Welsh is much lower in Bangor than in the rest of the county (64.4%), and the same is true, albeit to a lesser degree, on the Meirionnydd coast (77.0%). It is consistently high in the predominantly Welsh areas, especially Dwyfor and north Meirionnydd
- We can see that over a quarter of the population born outside Wales in north Meirionnydd and the rest of Arfon is able to speak Welsh, and a little less than a quarter in Dwyfor.

## 1.4 The ability to speak Welsh according to age

A detailed analysis according to age can be seen in the graph below, and figures are only available for the county as a whole. It shows that almost all school age children are able to speak Welsh, and the large increase in non-Welsh-speakers between the ages of 18 and 23 shows the impact of the student numbers on the figures. Both lines subsequently draw closer among younger adults but begin to diverge among older adults, from around 57 years on. The reason for the rise in both lines at the end is that everyone over 85 is included.



The table below shows the ability to speak Welsh according to age and place of birth:

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	117,789	77,000	65.4	77,576	65.9	68,816	88.7	8,184	20.4
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	16,866	15,035	89.1	15,058	89.3	13,738	91.2	1,297	71.7
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	16,723	9,805	58.6	10,011	59.9	8,718	87.1	1,087	16.2
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	12,532	8,632	68.9	8,528	68.0	7,659	89.8	973	24.3
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	22,808	15,208	66.7	15,161	66.5	13,388	88.3	1,820	23.8
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	23,720	13,730	57.9	13,924	58.7	12,052	86.6	1,678	17.1
<b>65 years and over</b>	25,140	14,590	58.0	14,894	59.2	13,261	89.0	1,329	13.0

Initially, we can see how the percentages of those able to speak Welsh vary according to age, with the vast majority of 3-15 year old children able to speak it. There is a significant fall in this percentage among the 16-24 year age group, but as shown in the tables for different areas, this is mainly due to the high number of students in Bangor. The percentages of adults able to speak Welsh decrease as the groups get older, and from the columns showing the numbers and percentages born in Wales it is clear that this can be almost entirely attributed to the drop in the percentages born in Wales.

We see that the percentages of people born in Wales and able to speak Welsh are consistently high in all age groups. The percentage of those born outside Wales and able to speak Welsh, however, is very high among children, and higher among younger than among older adults.

Generally, the age profile of Welsh-speakers in the county is relatively buoyant with lower percentages among the older population than among the population in general.



## 1.5 The ability to speak Welsh amongst children and young people

Care must be taken when interpreting the Census figures on the ability among children and young people to speak Welsh. In a number of areas in Wales they appear unrealistically high, suggesting that parents state their children's ability to speak Welsh on the basis of it being taught in school. As the vast majority of Gwynedd school children receive at least a part of their education through the medium of Welsh, it is no surprise that 89.1% of the 3-15 age group are able to speak Welsh. As the percentage is consistently high throughout the county, it prevents us from comparing the use of the language among children in different areas. Only in Bangor is the percentage of children able to speak Welsh significantly lower than the county average (69.9%), suggesting perhaps that many children in the city receive a more English education compared to the rest of the county.

Even more useful information can be drawn from looking specifically on the 3-4 year age group, as children of this age will be subject to this educational regime to such a degree. According to the figures available for the county as a whole, 69.2% of 3 year olds and 76.6% of 4 year olds were able to speak Welsh in 2011. Both age groups have been banded together in the figures available for the wards, and the table below shows a not unexpected pattern:

Area	Total number 3 and 4 year old children	Total of Welsh- speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers aged 3-4	Percentage of Welsh- speakers
The whole of Gwynedd	2703	1978	73.2	73.2
Bangor	281	128	45.6	45.6
Rest of Arfon	1213	941	77.6	77.6
Dwyfor	571	454	79.5	79.5
North Meirionnydd	293	258	88.1	88.1
South Meirionnydd	101	63	62.4	62.4
Meirionnydd coast	244	134	54.9	54.9

It is one thing for children to be able to speak Welsh when at school, but another concern is to what degree they are still able to speak Welsh after leaving and as adults. Statistics about children today tell us nothing, of course, but it is possible to compare figures about young people and figures about children from past Censuses.

It is possible, for example, to consider the numbers and percentages of 15 year olds able to speak Welsh in 2001 and compare these with the corresponding figures for young people of 25 years in 2011.

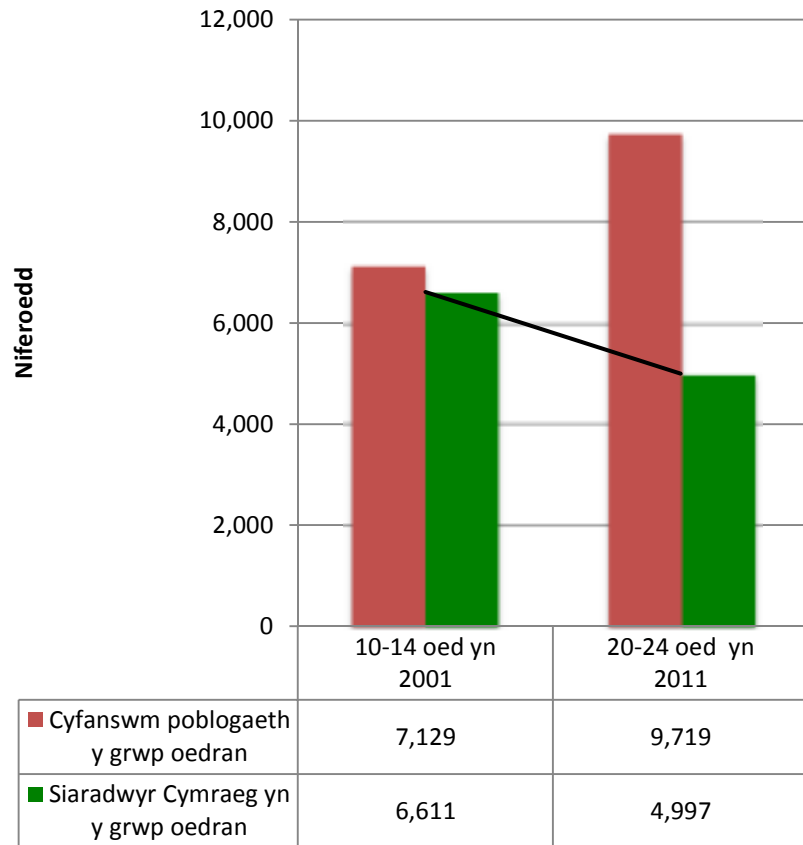
In so doing, dramatic losses can be seen in the numbers across Wales and there could be more than one reason for this:

- outward migration;
- children losing their ability to speak Welsh, or
- that 10 years prior they were not actually able to speak Welsh.

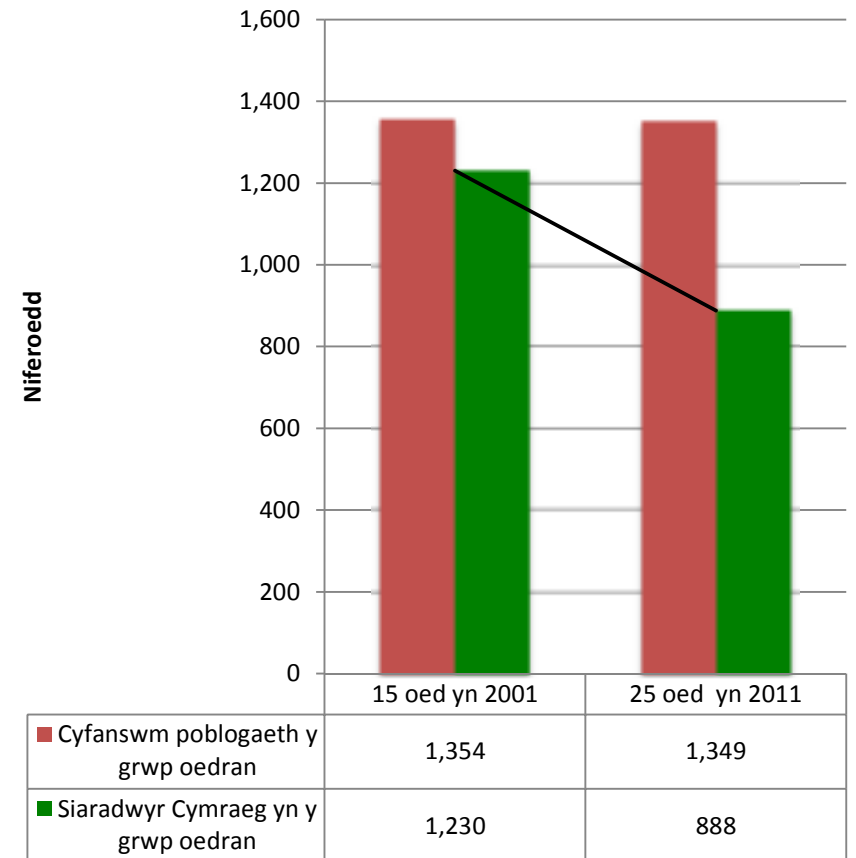
One thing to observe is that the losses in Gwynedd are not as great as everywhere else, and far lower than the Wales average.

We see losses in Gwynedd, as shown in the two graphs below:

**Gwynedd: Y gallu i siarad Cymraeg ymysg plant 10-14 oed yn 2001 a phobl ifanc 20-24 oed yn 2011**



**Gwynedd: Y gallu i siarad Cymraeg ymysg plant 15 oed yn 2001 a phobl ifanc 25 oed yn 2011**



In Gwynedd, 4,997 young people aged 20-24 years were able to speak Welsh in 2011, compared with 6,611 children aged 10-14 years, 10 years earlier. Similarly, 1,230 children aged 15 years were able to speak Welsh in 2001 compared with 888 young people aged 25 in 2011. Although these changes represent reductions of 24.5% and 27.8% in the numbers, these are the lowest reductions in Wales.

They compare with reductions of 56.5% and 59.5% in Wales on average.

In the other most Welsh counties, other comparatively low reductions were seen, with a reduction of 33.0% in Anglesey, 41.9% in Carmarthenshire and 48.3% in Ceredigion. Likewise, the predominantly English speaking counties saw the most dramatic falls. Looking at the counties of Monmouth, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Newport, only 321 young people aged 25 were able to speak Welsh in all four counties in 2011, compared with 10 years earlier when 2,170 children aged 15 years were able to speak Welsh. This is the equivalent of an 85.2% fall.

## Part II - The Welsh language in various areas

### 2.1 The City of Bangor

As noted earlier, the City of Bangor must be considered separately when discussing the situation of the Welsh language in Gwynedd. There are several reasons for this:

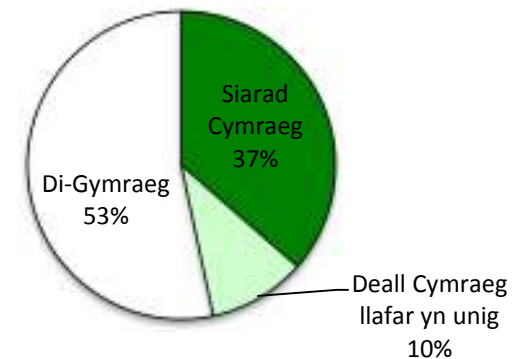
- its linguistic nature is very different from the rest of the county
- its size means that it has a disproportionate effect on the statistics of the rest of the county
- the increase in the number of students between 2001 and 2011 gives a misleading picture of the situation of the Welsh language in the city.

According to the main figures from the Census about the ability to speak Welsh, the percentage of city dwellers able to speak Welsh fell from 46.7% in 2001 to 36.4% in 2011.

Scrutinising other information from the Census, there was an increase of around 3,000 in the number of students in the city between 2001 and 2011; this was reflected in an increase of around 2,700 in the population, this figure being almost wholly attributed to a growth in the 16-24 year age group.

The disproportionate influence of students on the language and population statistics for the city is confirmed in another table of Census results<sup>1</sup> which provides information about college holiday periods. This shows that the population of Bangor falls by around 4,000, with the

**Bangor: Welsh-speakers and those who understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011**

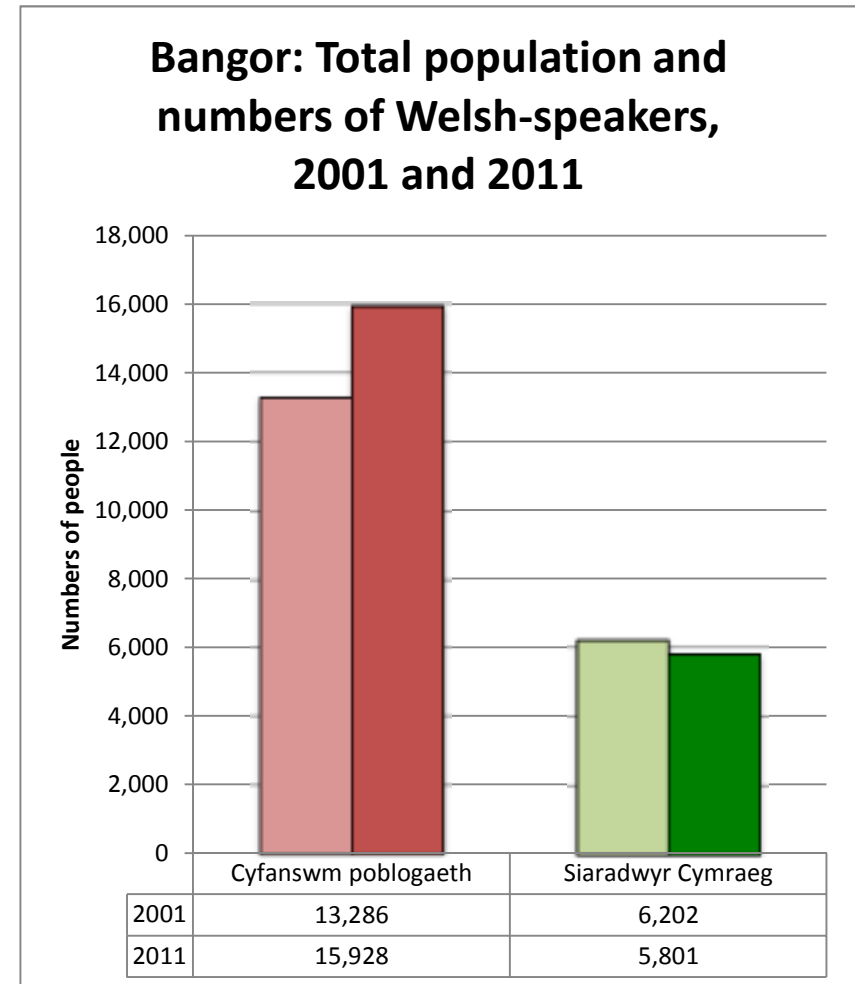


<sup>1</sup> ONS Table OT206WA - which provides information on the population outside the term times of colleges

percentage of Welsh-speakers at 44.9%. It is also interesting to note that this one table shows the population of the whole of Gwynedd is around 3,000 fewer and that the percentage of Welsh-speakers increases to 67.1%.

It is quite possible that these percentages paint a more accurate picture of the ability to speak Welsh among the permanent population of the city and county but, since the most detailed information about the Welsh language is in the main tables and includes students, these must be used as the main foundation. It should also be noted that it is only in Bangor where the numbers of students influence the figures so significantly.

Despite the degree to which the influence of students on the statistics of the Welsh language in Bangor are exaggerated, a decline among the native population must also be noted. There was a fall of 401 in the numbers of Welsh-speakers in the city - a decline of 6.5%, compared with a little over 1% in the county as a whole. The city's age profile also shows a higher proportion of older adults able to speak the language compared with younger adults.



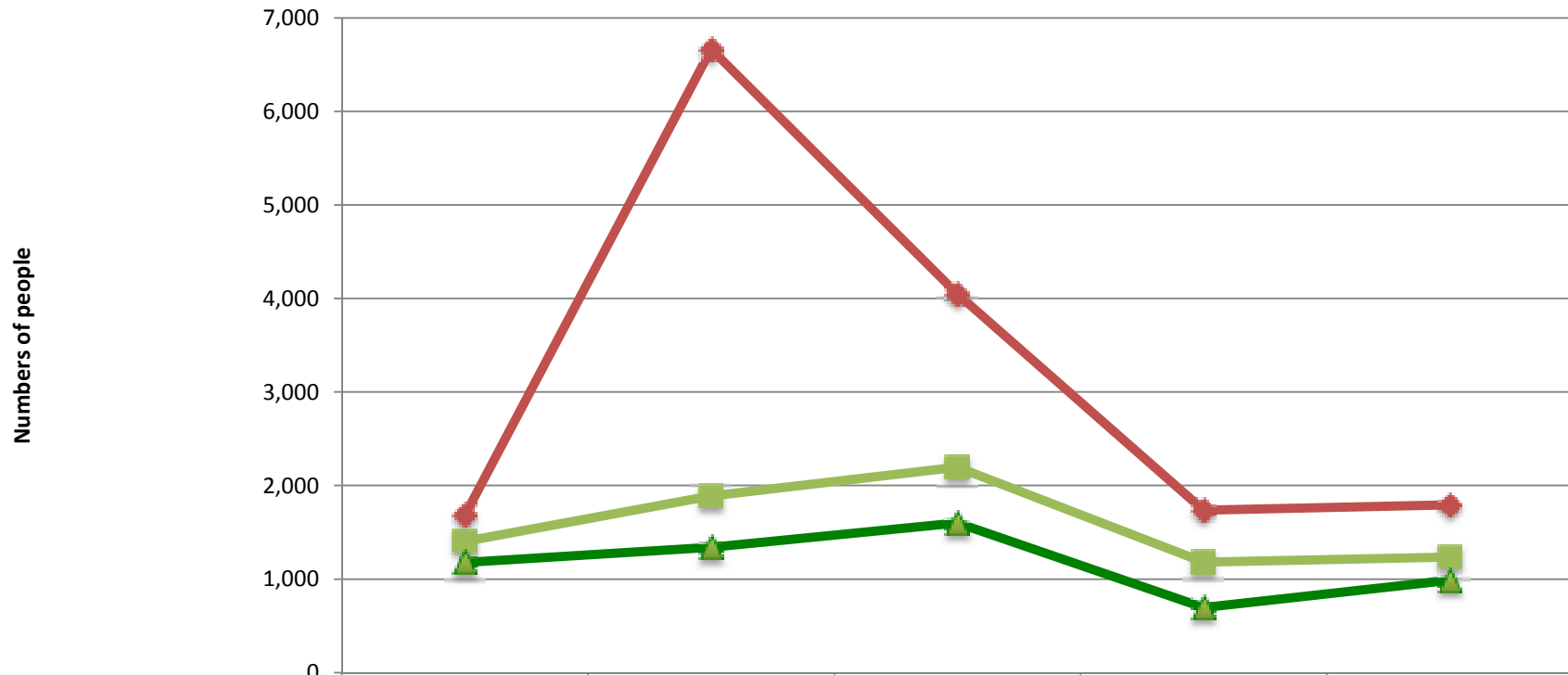
**Table 2.1 Bangor**

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	15,928	5,801	36.4	7,906	49.6	5,094	64.4	707	8.8
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	1,687	1,179	69.9	1,404	83.2	1,053	75.0	126	44.5
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	6,664	1,339	20.1	1,888	28.3	1,146	60.7	193	4.0
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,824	638	35.0	832	45.6	536	64.4	102	10.3
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	2,224	961	43.2	1,366	61.4	834	61.1	127	14.8
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	1,736	697	40.1	1,181	68.0	618	52.3	79	14.2
<b>65 years and over</b>	1,793	987	55.0	1,235	68.9	907	73.4	80	14.3

Higher percentages of over 65's are able to speak Welsh than younger adults - 55.0% of the general population and 73.4% of those born in Wales. Apart from the young people cohort that includes students, contrary to expectation the lowest percentages were among adults of 50-64 years. Even among people of 50-64 years born in Wales, a little over a half - 52.3% - speak Welsh. It then rises among younger adults.

The graph below shows a striking image of the age profile of the population of Bangor, their places of birth and numbers of Welsh-speakers:

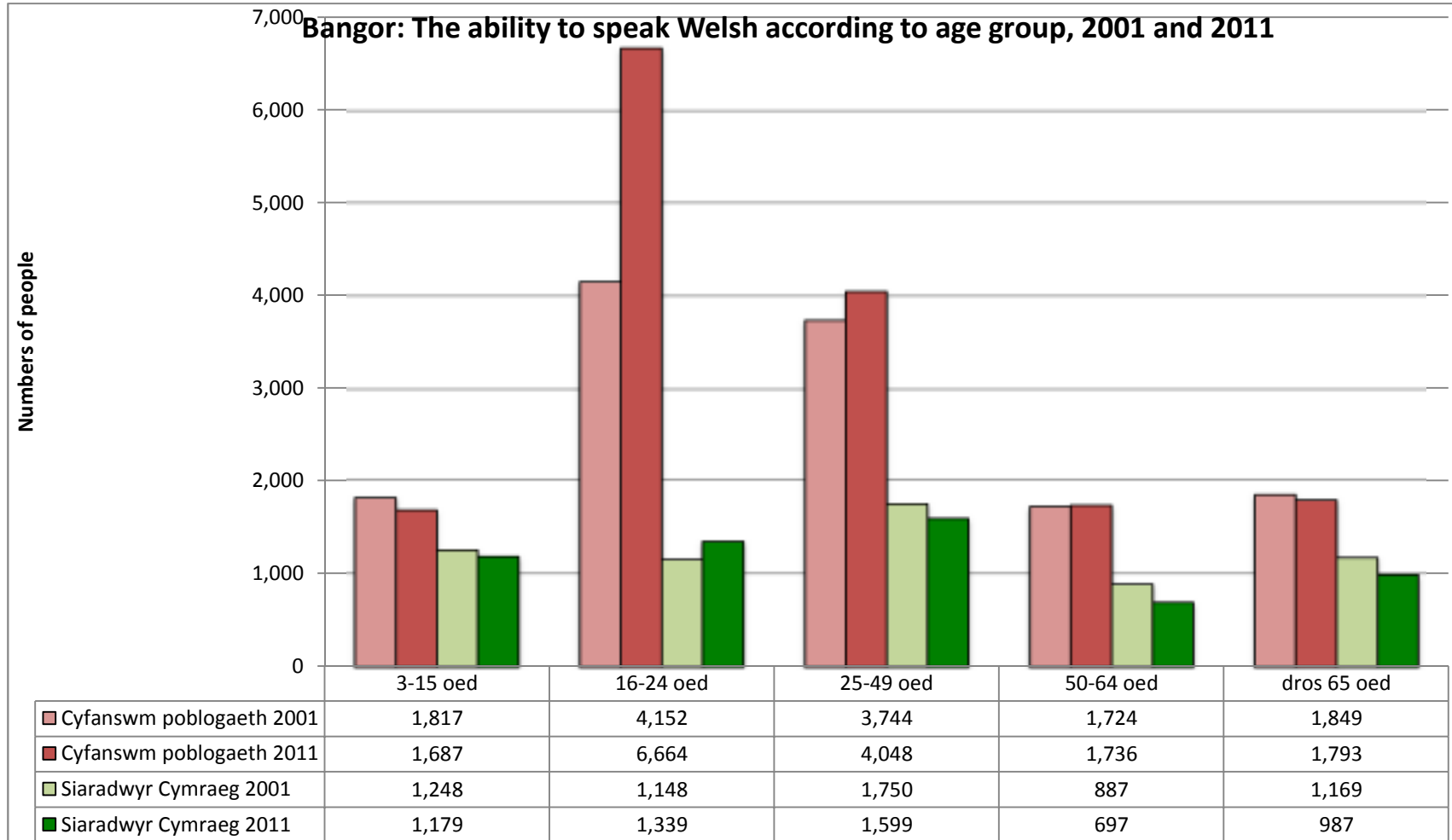
**Bangor: Population according to age group, 2011**



	3-15 oed	16-24 oed	25-49 oed	50-64 oed	dros 65 oed
<span style="color: red;">◆</span> Cyfanswm poblogaeth	1,687	6,664	4,048	1,736	1,793
<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Pobl a aned yng Nghymru	1,404	1,888	2,198	1,181	1,235
<span style="color: darkgreen;">▲</span> Siaradwyr Cymraeg	1,179	1,339	1,599	697	987



The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:



## 2.2 Rest of Arfon

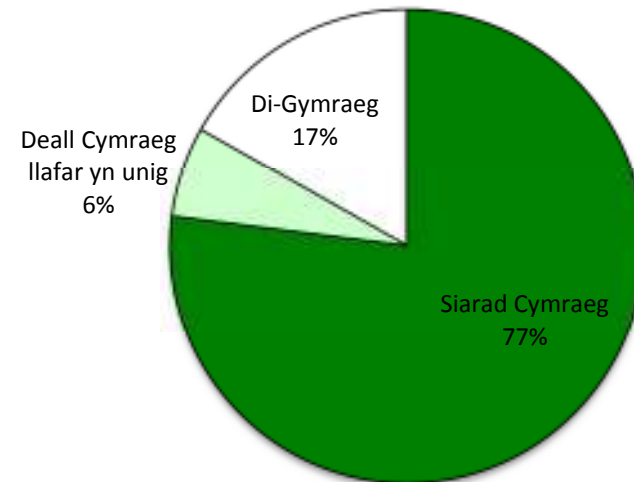
The rest of Arfon, not including the city of Bangor, is evidently an area where 77% of residents on average are able to speak Welsh. This is also the only part of Gwynedd where the number of people able to speak Welsh increased between 2001 and 2011. As seen in the chart, the number rose by 457, despite a percentage drop of 1.2% due to a general population increase.

A definite geographical pattern emerges regarding the strength of the Welsh language. High percentages are seen in the Caernarfon area, with the town itself and its surrounding semi-urban wards - Bethel, Llanrug, Bontnewydd, Llanwnda, Groeslon and Penygroes - all boasting a Welsh-speaking population of over 80%.

Although percentages tend to be lower in the more upland villages, in the majority 70% are still able to speak Welsh. These are the villages that also saw the greatest falls in their percentages between 2001 and 2011.

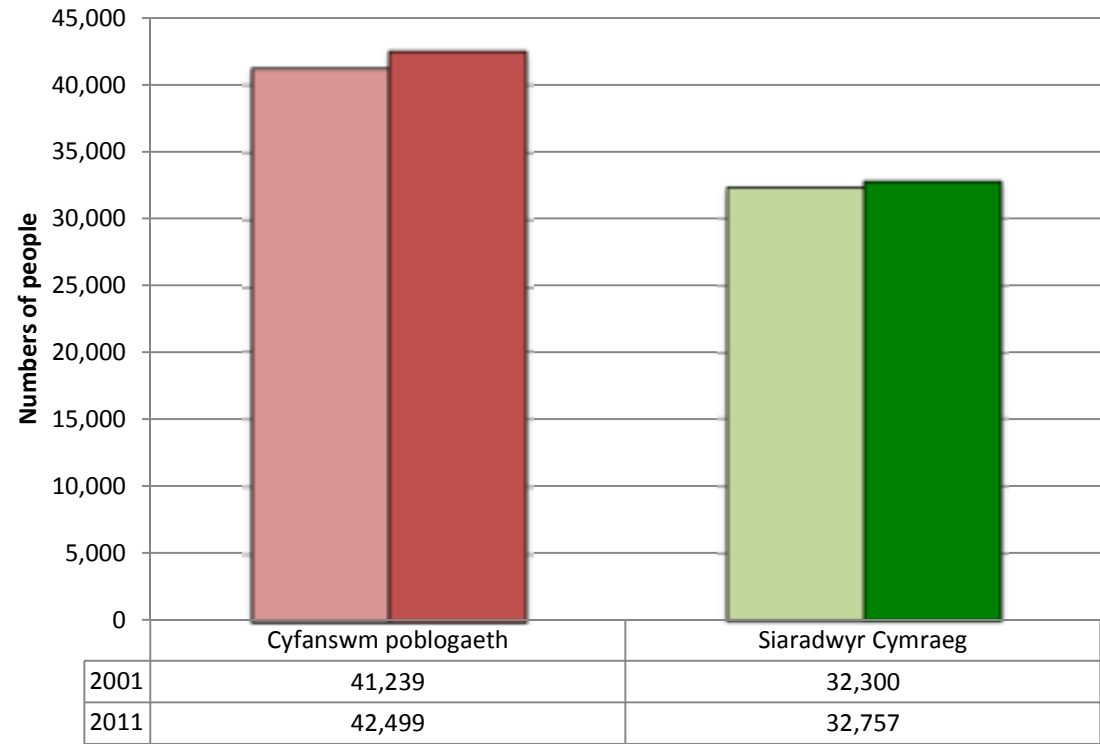
A similar pattern emerges in the Bethesda area also, where the percentage of Welsh-speakers in the Ogwen ward, at 80.1%, is higher than in the more rural surrounding villages.

**Arfon (except Bangor): Welsh-speakers and those who understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011**



The areas where the Welsh language is at its weakest are the four wards on the outskirts of Bangor: Y Felinheli, Arlechwedd, Tregarth and Pentir. This reflects the pattern seen in the northern counties where predominantly English towns influence their surrounding villages.

### Arfon (except Bangor): Total population and numbers of Welsh-speakers, 2001 and 2011

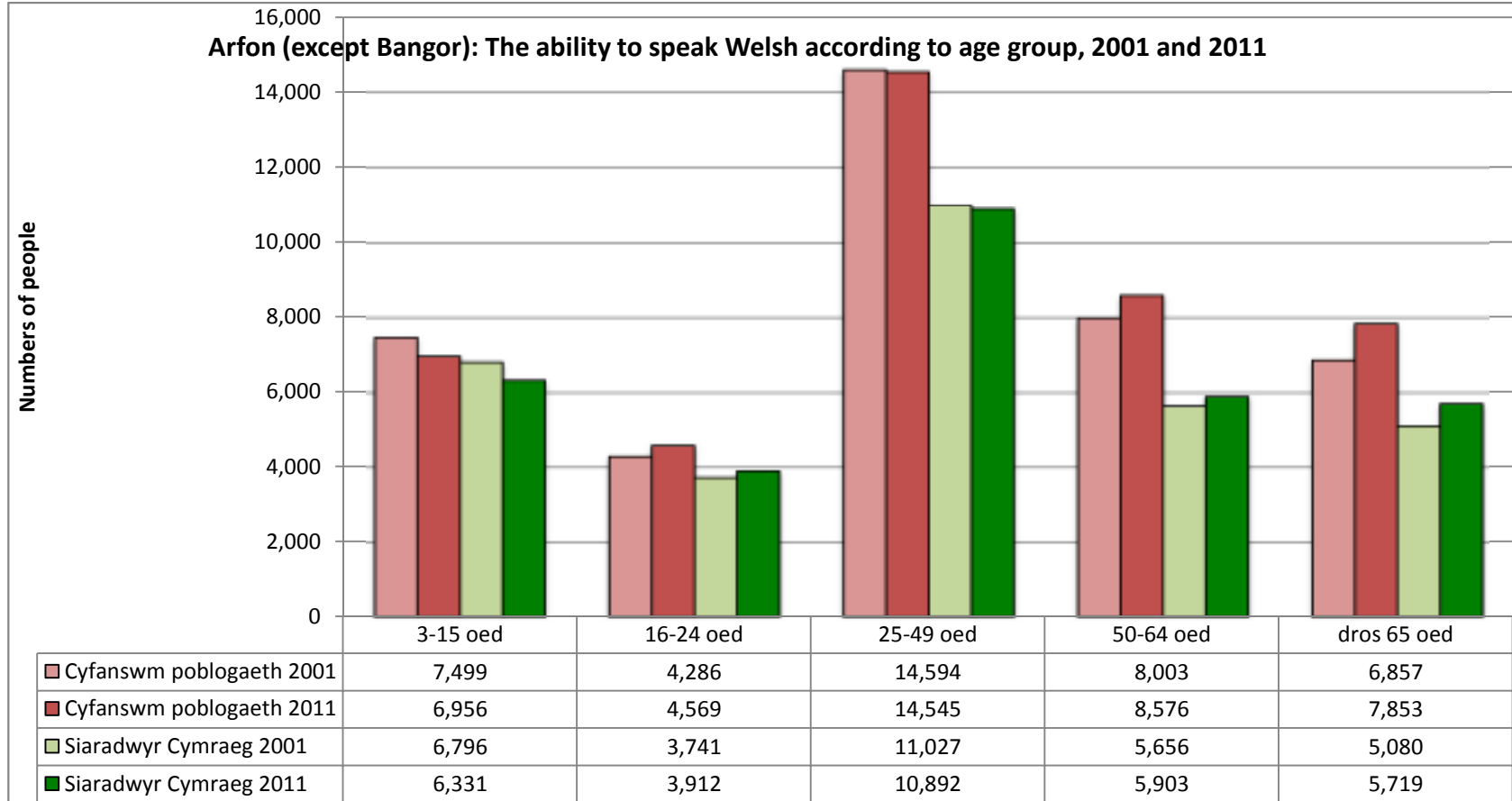


**Table 2.2 The rest of Arfon**

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	42,499	32,757	77.1	32,520	76.5	29,942	92.1	2,815	28.2
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	6,956	6,331	91.0	6,442	92.6	5,981	92.8	350	68.1
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	4,569	3,912	85.6	3,871	84.7	3,616	93.4	296	42.4
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	5,151	3,907	75.8	3,830	74.4	3,531	92.2	376	28.5
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	9,394	6,985	74.4	6,777	72.1	6,201	91.5	784	30.0
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	8,576	5,903	68.8	5,871	68.5	5,302	90.3	601	22.2
<b>65 years and over</b>	7,853	5,719	72.8	5,729	73.0	5,311	92.7	408	19.2

This is the part of the county where the highest percentage of people were born in Wales - 76.5%, and this, in turn, is reflected in the high percentage of people able to speak Welsh. The figures relating to the ability to speak Welsh among people born in Wales is consistently high at over 90% throughout each age group, but a higher proportion of people aged 50-64 born outside Wales means that the lowest proportion of Welsh-speakers is found in this group. 28.2% of people born outside Wales are able to speak Welsh; this percentage increases among young people.

The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:



## 2.3 Dwyfor

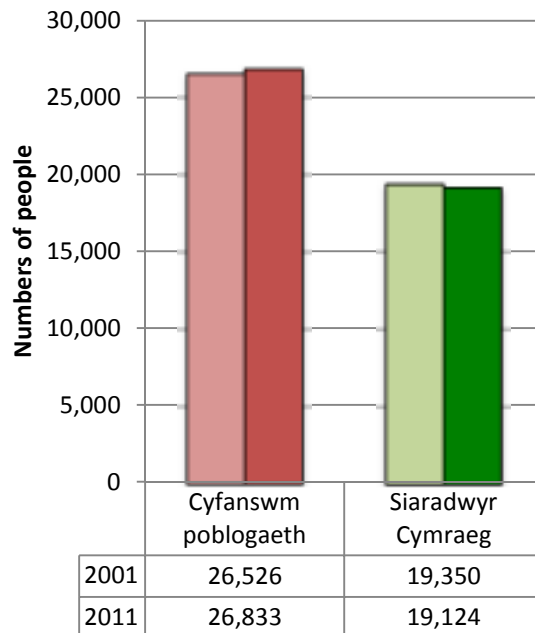
71.3% of Dwyfor residents were able to speak Welsh in 2011, compared with 72.9% in 2001.

There has been a slight decline in numbers compared with 2001. As we shall see

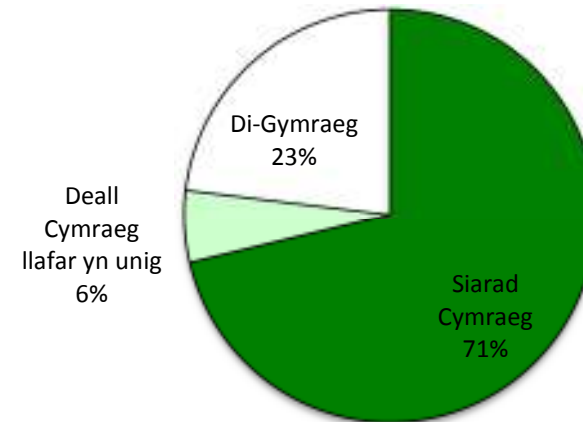
in the next sections, the lower percentages in Dwyfor compared with the Caernarfon area are almost exclusively due to inward migration.

In general, the higher percentages are seen in urban areas such as Pwllheli and central Porthmadog and some of the villages such as Nefyn, Four Crosses and Chwilog. The most Anglicised areas are the seaside towns such as Abersoch and Llanbedrog, with signs of decline also visible in Morfa Nefyn and the outskirts of Porthmadog.

**Dwyfor: Total population and numbers who can speak Welsh, 2001 and 2011**



**Dwyfor: The ability to speak and understand Welsh as a percentage of the population, 2011**



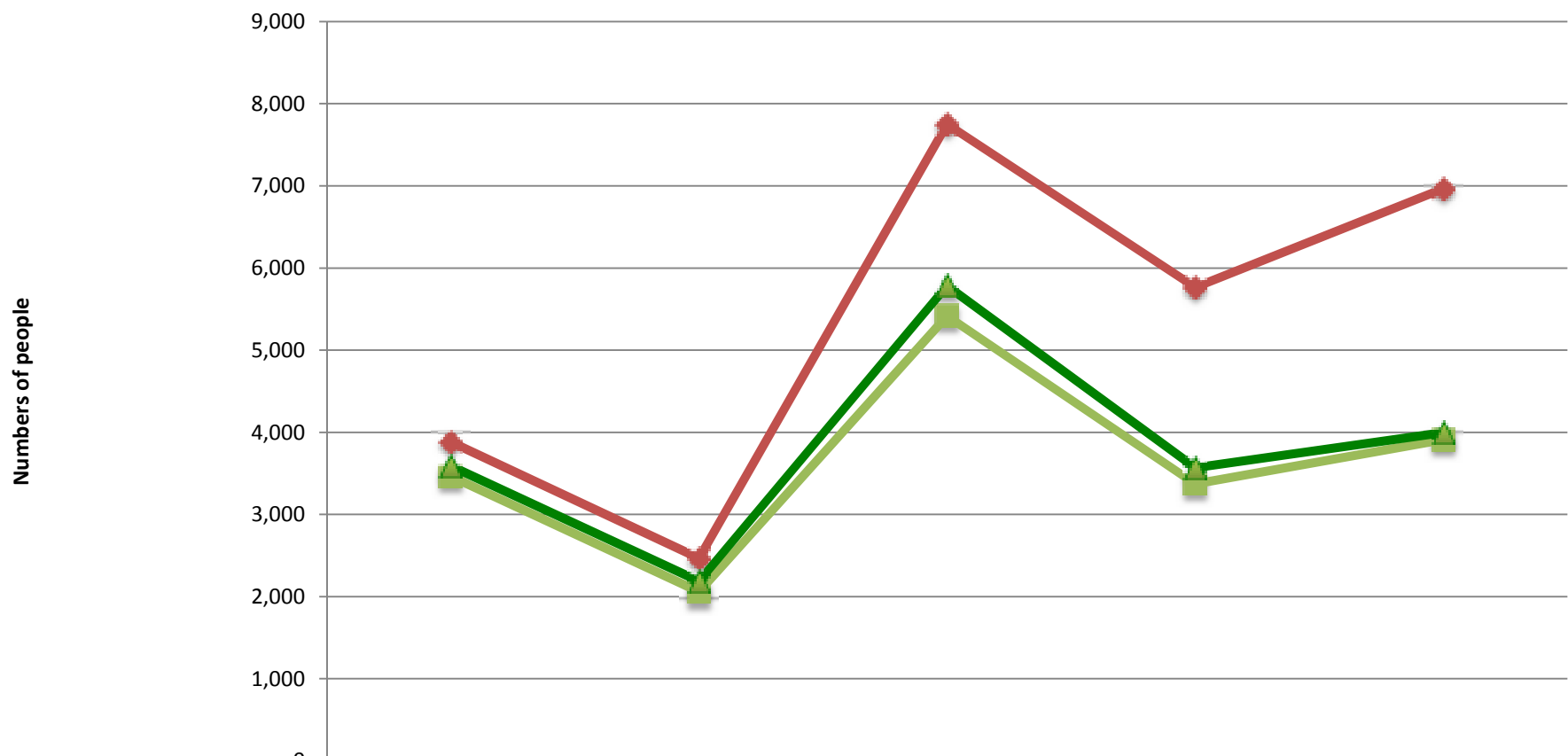
**Table 2.3 Dwyfor**

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	26,833	19,124	71.3	18,224	67.9	17,106	93.9	2,018	23.4
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	3,883	3,590	92.5	3,465	89.2	3,261	94.1	329	78.7
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	2,466	2,186	88.6	2,060	83.5	1,976	95.9	210	51.7
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	2,533	1,997	78.8	1,831	72.3	1,760	96.1	237	33.8
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	5,219	3,784	72.5	3,586	68.7	3,375	94.1	409	25.0
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	5,765	3,570	61.9	3,373	58.5	3,135	92.9	435	18.2
<b>65 years and over</b>	6,967	3,997	57.4	3,909	56.1	3,599	92.1	398	13.0

The relationship between inward migration and the ability to speak Welsh seems to be most evident here. The vast majority of those born in Wales are able to speak Welsh, with not much difference between different age groups. The age of the people born outside Wales is also striking, with incomers accounting for over 40% of the over 50 population. 82% of the population under 50, however, is able to speak Welsh. Significant proportions of those born outside Wales are able to speak Welsh, despite a significant variation in percentages according to age. Over half of young people aged 16-24 born outside Wales are able to speak Welsh and over a third of adults aged 25-24, but the percentage drops to 13.0% among the over 65's.

The graph below paints a striking picture of the effect of inward migration on the language of the older age groups:

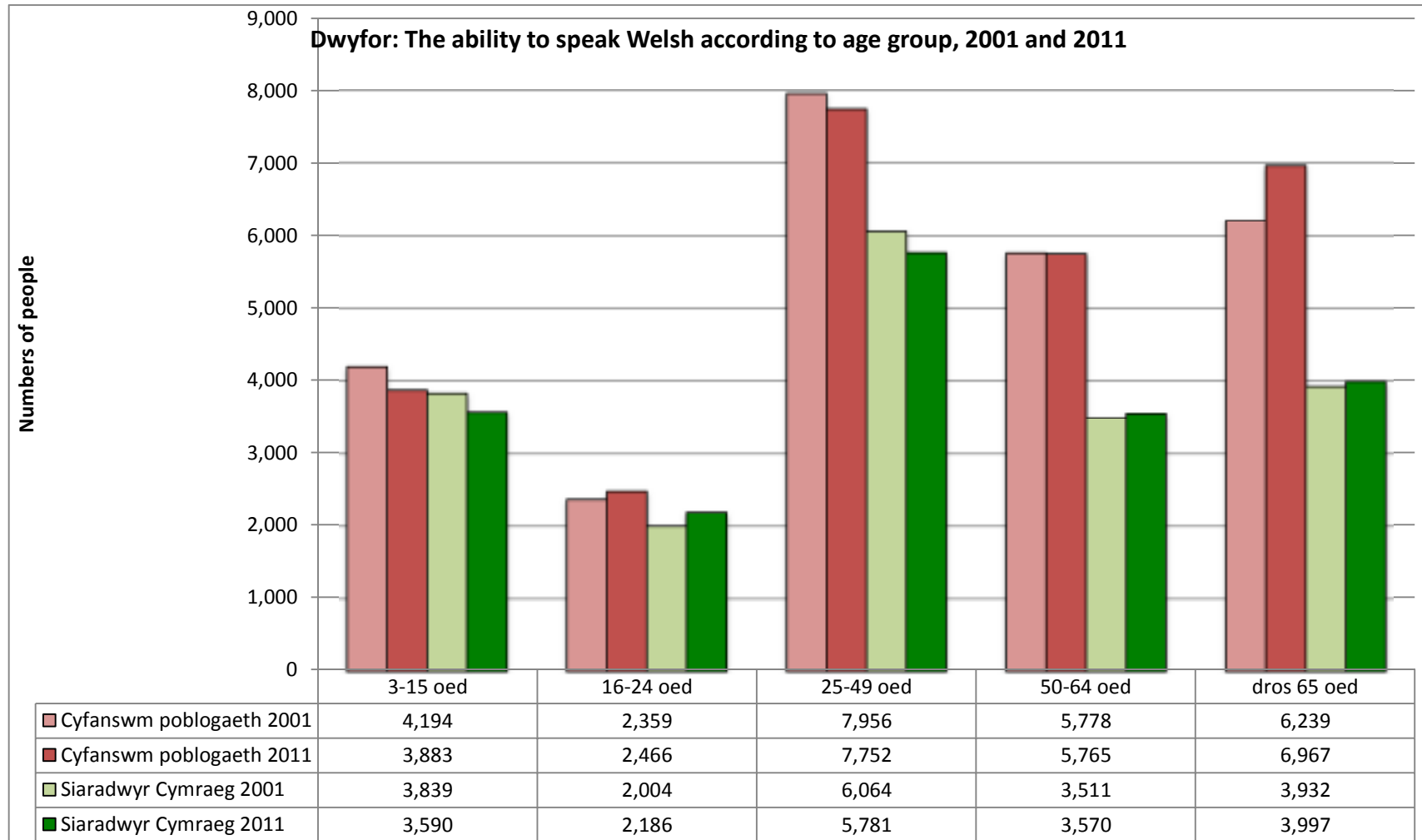
**Dwyfor: Population according to age group, 2011**



	3-15 oed	16-24 oed	25-49 oed	50-64 oed	dros 65 oed
—●— Cyfanswm poblogaeth	3,883	2,466	7,752	5,765	6,967
—■— Pobl a aned yng Nghymru	3,465	2,060	5,417	3,373	3,909
—▲— Siaradwyr Cymraeg	3,590	2,186	5,781	3,570	3,997

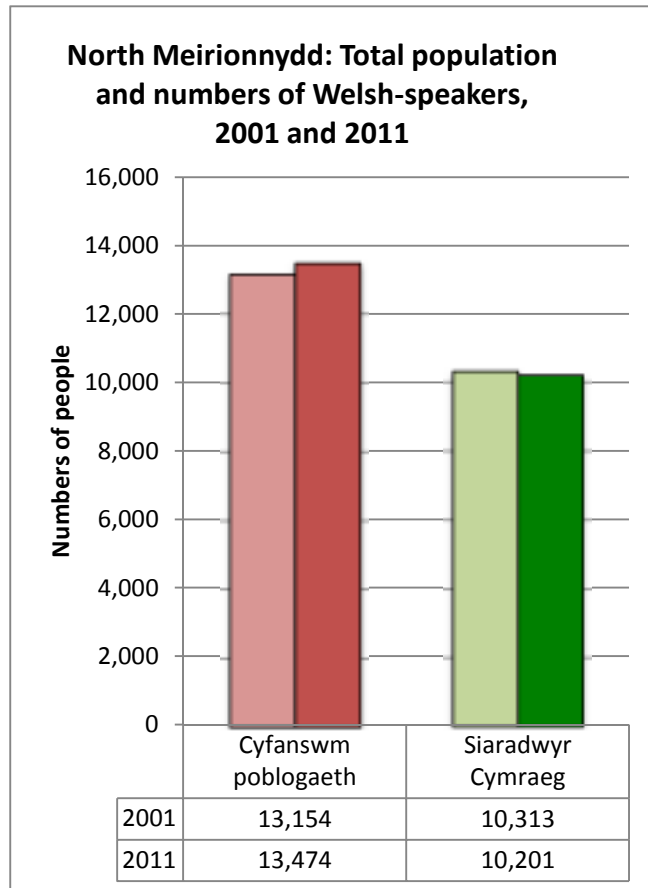


The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:

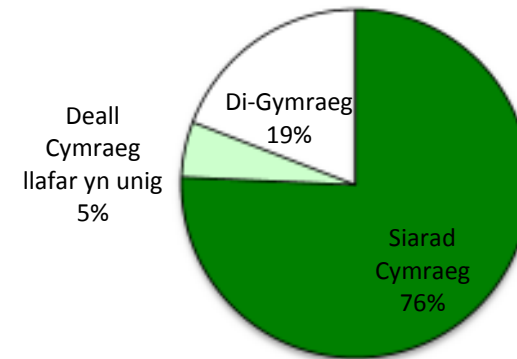


## 2.4 North Meirionnydd

If one were to look at Meirionnydd as a whole, the percentage of Welsh-speakers stands at 59%, which is lower than the average for the county at large. There is too much variation between the different areas within Meirionnydd, however, for this figure to be meaningful in any way, as it contains some of the most Welsh and most Anglicised areas in the County.



### North Meirionnydd: Welsh-speakers and those who understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011



The predominantly Welsh area of Meirionnydd is the north. It contains the areas of Penrhyndeudraeth, Ffestiniog, Trawsfynydd, Bala and Penllyn, where over three quarters of the population spoke Welsh in 2001.

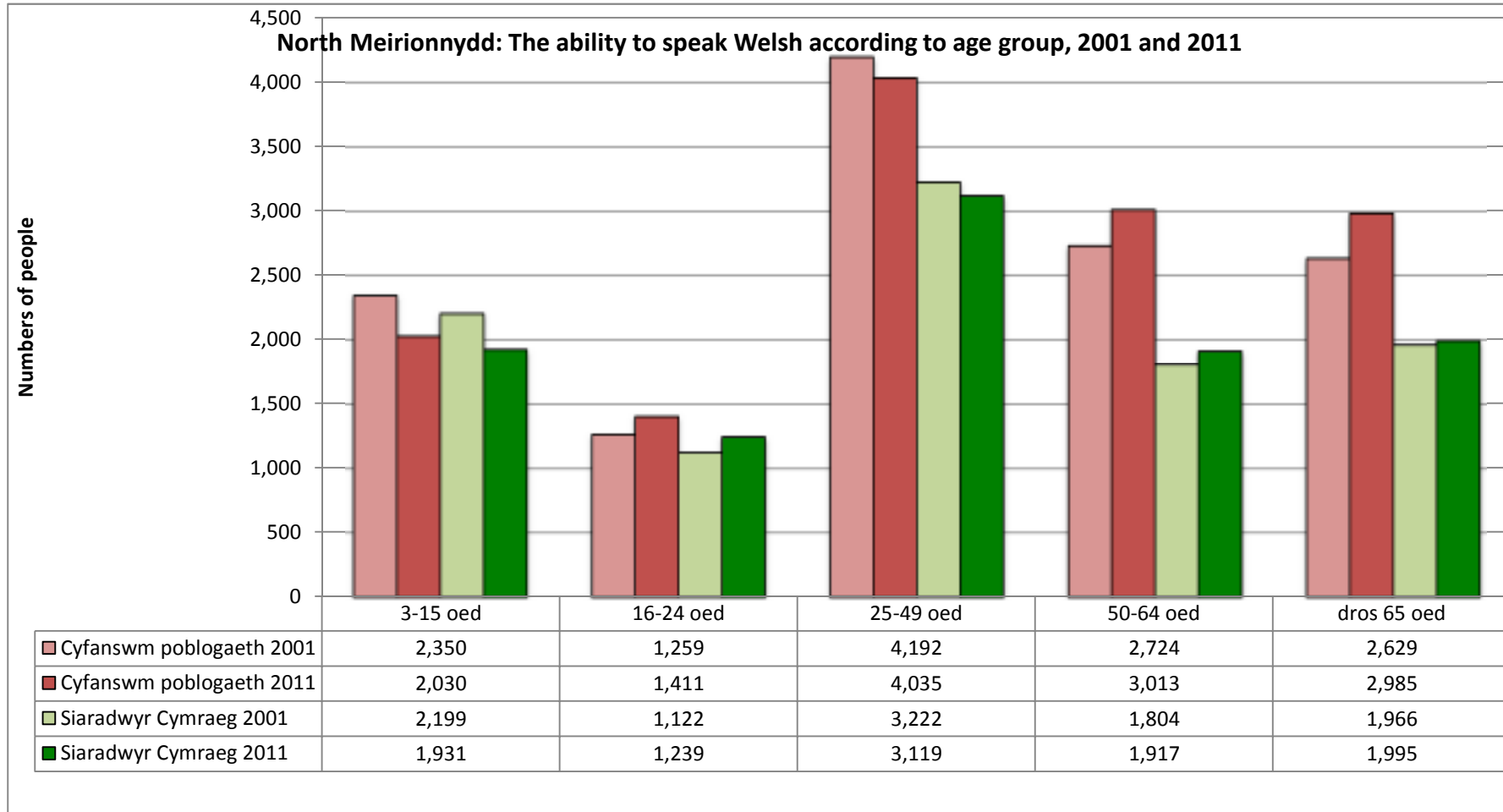
As a result of a small drop of just over 100 in the numbers of Welsh-speakers and an increase of over 300 in the general population, the percentage fell from 78.4% to 75.7% between 2001 and 2011.

## 2.4 North Meirionnydd

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	13,474	10,201	75.7	9,683	71.9	9,124	94.2	1,077	28.4
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	2,030	1,931	95.1	1,859	91.6	1,781	95.8	150	87.7
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	1,411	1,239	87.8	1,155	81.9	1,094	94.7	145	56.6
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,397	1,143	81.8	1,076	77.0	1,033	96.0	110	34.3
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	2,638	1,976	74.9	1,896	71.9	1,764	93.0	212	28.6
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	3,013	1,917	63.6	1,781	59.1	1,659	93.1	258	20.9
<b>65 years and over</b>	2,985	1,995	66.8	1,916	64.2	1,793	93.6	202	18.9

Another of the most significant Welsh language strongholds within the county, where the percentage is a little higher among the Wales-born population than in Dwyfor, despite the lower percentages among older adults. Of these, the vast majority in all age groups speak Welsh. Of those born outside Wales, the percentages of Welsh-speakers are a little higher than in Dwyfor, yet it follows a similar pattern among older people.

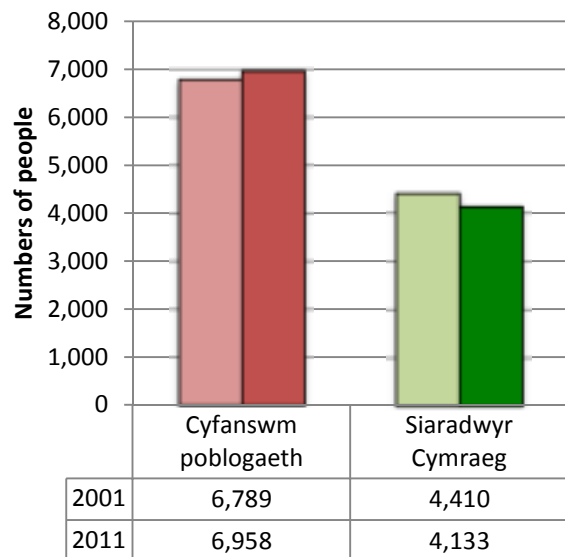
The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:



## 2.5 South Meirionnydd

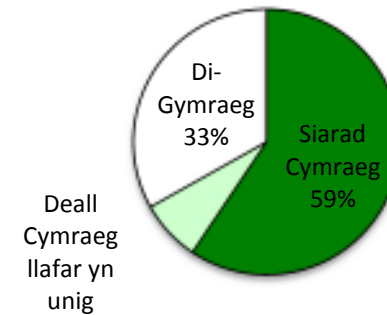
Looking at the areas of south Meirionnydd, namely the town of Dolgellau and rural parishes nearby, the situation of the Welsh language is more fragile. There was a fall of almost 300 in the number of those able to speak the language between 2001 and 2011, and due to an increase of around 170 in the general populations, the percentage fell from 65.0% to 59.4% over the 10 years.

**South Meirionnydd: Total population and numbers of Welsh-speakers, 2001 and 2011**



As can be seen, this is a small area in terms of population, as it is significantly more Welsh-speaking than the coastal villages, it is worthy of individual consideration.

**South Meirionnydd: Welsh-speakers and those who understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011**

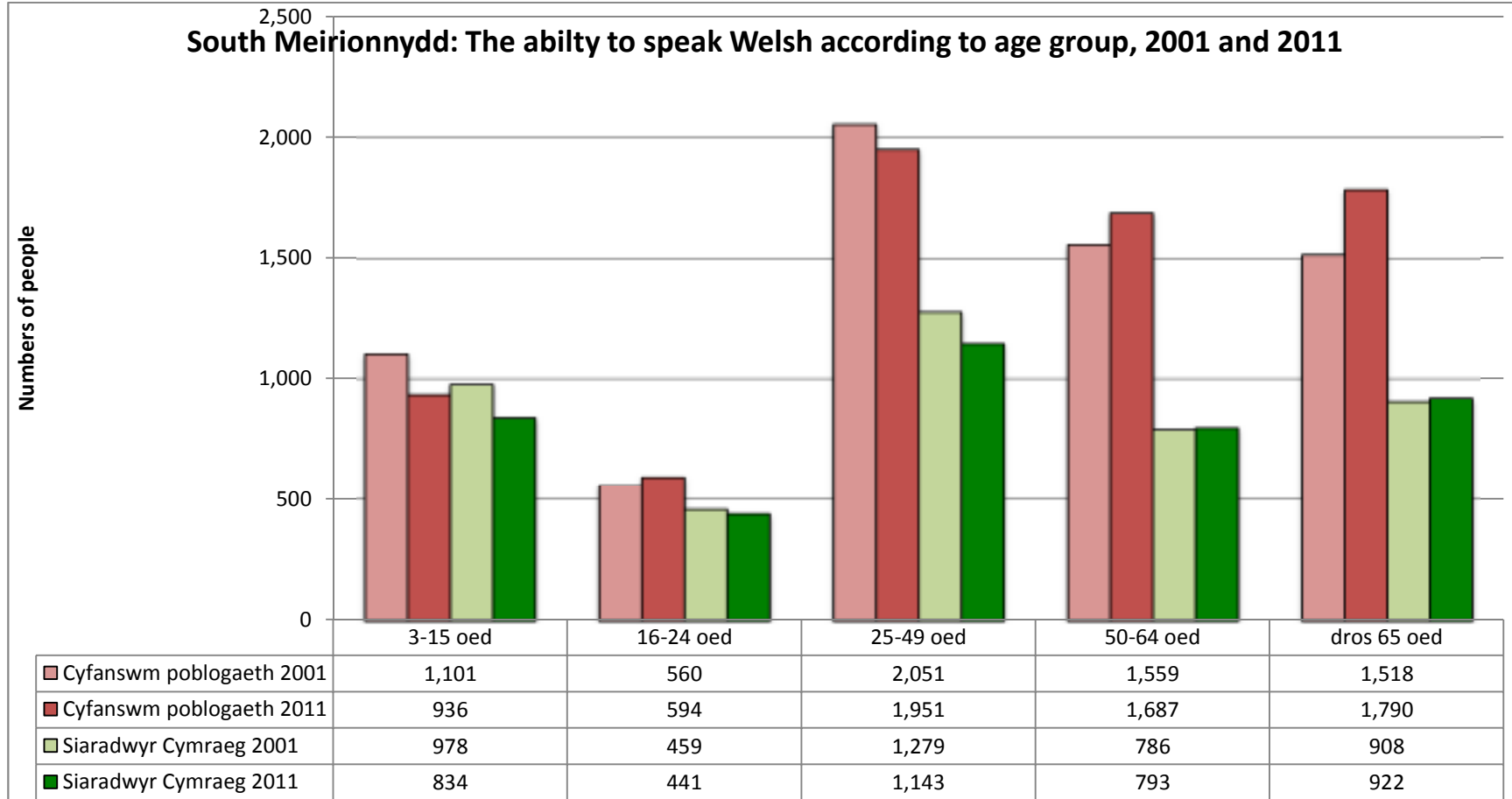


**Table 2.5 South Meirionnydd**

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	6,958	4,133	59.4	4,056	58.3	3,555	87.6	578	19.9
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	936	834	89.1	785	83.9	715	91.1	119	78.8
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	594	441	74.2	412	69.4	366	88.8	75	41.2
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	622	413	66.4	422	67.8	366	86.7	47	23.5
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	1,329	730	54.9	723	54.4	614	84.9	116	19.1
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	1,687	793	47.0	777	46.1	671	86.4	122	13.4
<b>65 years and over</b>	1,790	922	51.5	937	52.3	823	87.8	99	11.6

The percentage of people born outside Wales is far higher here than in north Meirionnydd, and the percentages of those able to speak Welsh are lower. A minority of people aged 50-64 and a little over half those over 65 years have been born in Wales, and this is reflected in the percentages of Welsh-speakers. The percentages of people born in Wales and able to speak Welsh is consistently higher, but lower than in the more robust strongholds.

The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:

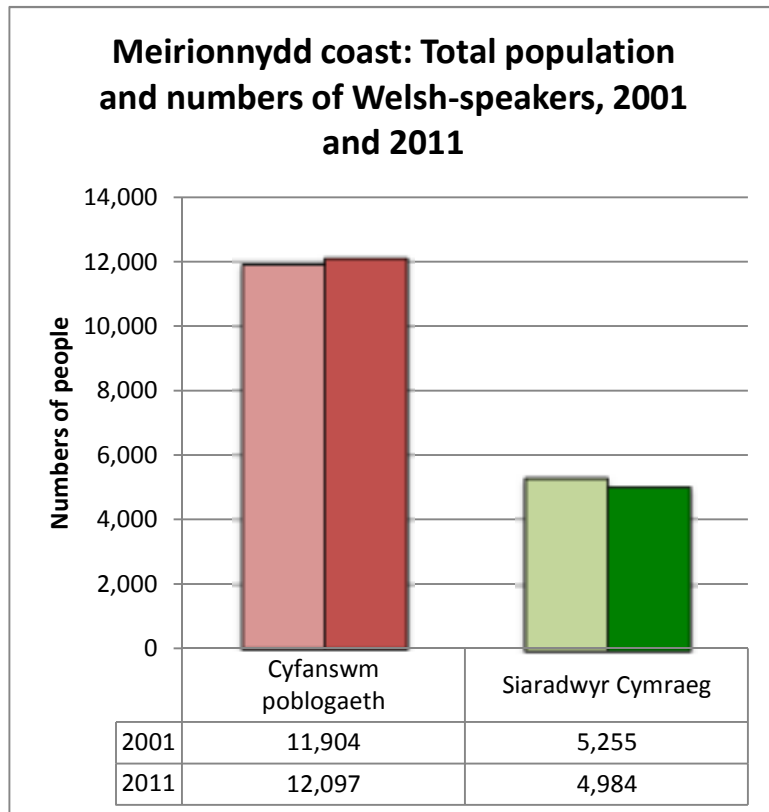


## 2.6 Meirionnydd coast

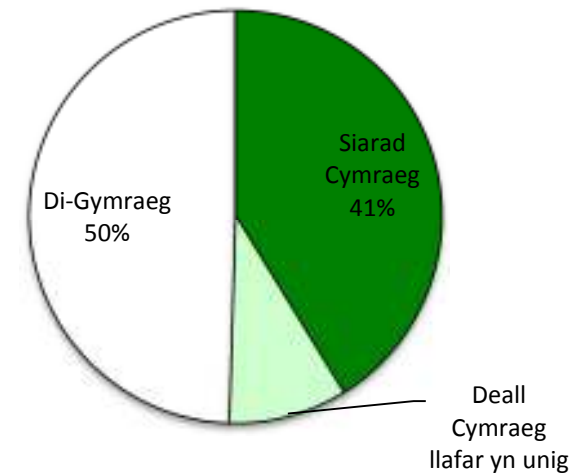
Looking at all the coastal communities of Meirionnydd as a whole, 41.2% of the population spoke Welsh in 2011, compared with 44.1% in 2001. Harlech and Llanbedr are the only communities where more than half the population spoke Welsh and, in general, the percentages fall the further one ventures toward the

south. The percentages are especially low in Arthog (28.3%), Tywyn (37%) and Aberdyfi (30.3%).

As we shall see later, a very high proportion of the coastal population was born outside Wales.



**Meirionnydd coast: Welsh-speakers and those who understand oral Welsh only as a percentage of the population, 2011**



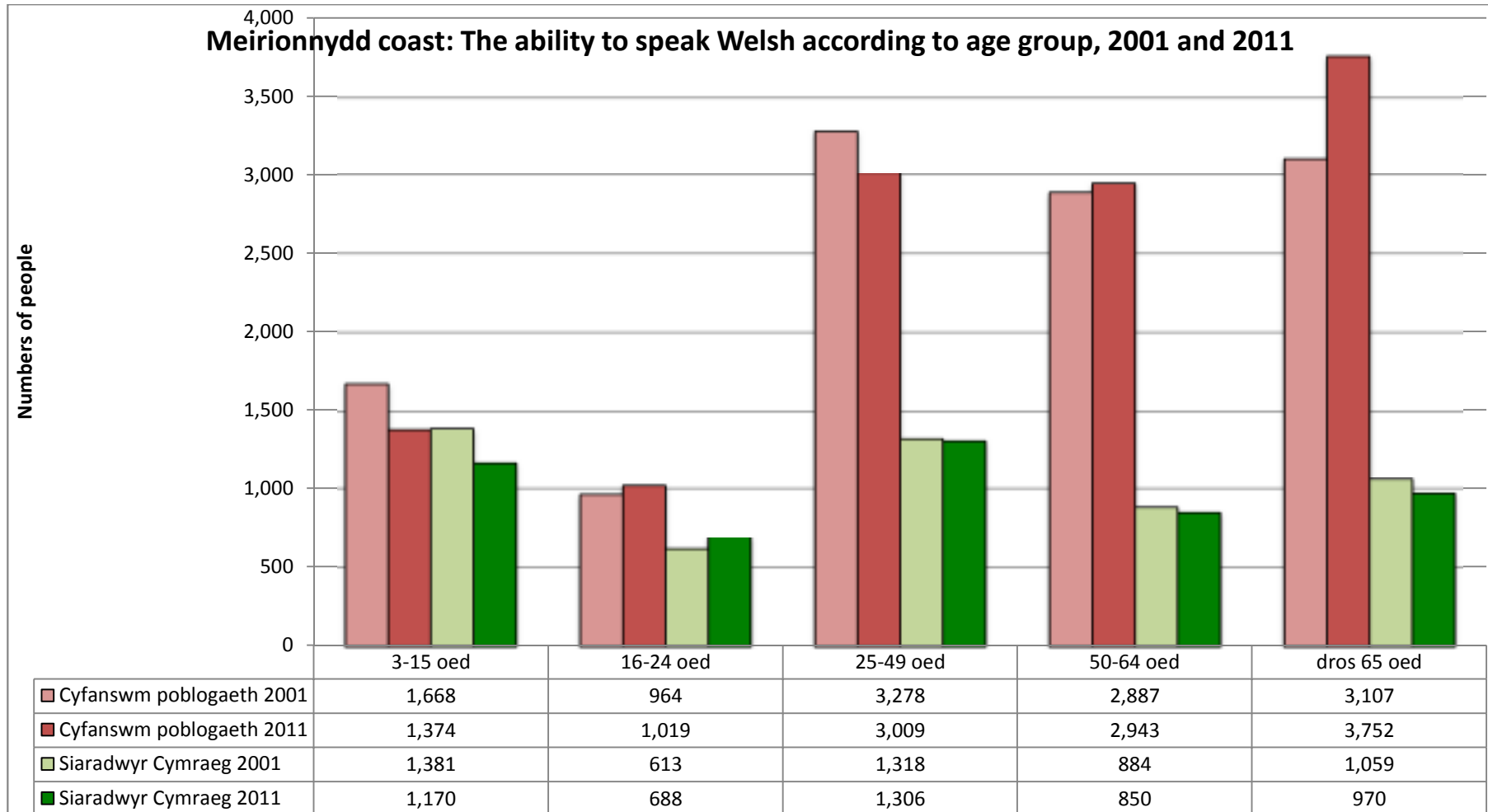


**Table 2.6 Meirionnydd coast**

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh-speakers	Percentage of Welsh-speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh-speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	12,097	4,984	41.2	5,187	42.9	3,995	77.0	989	14.3
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	1,374	1,170	85.2	1,103	80.3	947	85.9	223	82.3
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	1,019	688	67.5	625	61.3	520	83.2	168	42.6
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,005	534	53.1	537	53.4	433	80.6	101	21.6
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	2,004	772	38.5	813	40.6	600	73.8	172	14.4
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	2,943	850	28.9	941	32.0	667	70.9	183	9.1
<b>65 years and over</b>	3,752	970	25.9	1,168	31.1	828	70.9	142	5.5

On the Meirionnydd coast, a minority of the population was born in Wales and this percentage falls with each age group so that it stands at just a little over 30% among people over 50 years of age. Quite a high percentage of young people 16-24 born outside Wales are able to speak Welsh, but it is a lot lower than the county average among other age groups. The percentage of those born in Wales and able to speak Welsh is also lower than expected, and especially among older people - 70.9% among the 50-64 and over 65 age groups. It suggests either a native non-Welsh-speaking population, or an influx of retirees from less-Welsh-speaking parts of Wales.

The graph below shows the changes in language and population between 2001 and 2011, according to age group:



## Part III - Conclusions

The results of the 2011 Census confirm the strength of the Welsh language in Gwynedd on the one hand, and send a clear warning on the other. It suggests that the Welsh language is standing its ground well among the native population but it also shows a steady and gradual downward trend in the percentage able to speak Welsh in this most Welsh-speaking county of Wales.

The crucial importance of Gwynedd for the future of the Welsh language as a living language is entirely evident.

More significant than the fact that this county has the highest percentage of its population able to speak Welsh is that this is where the largest agglomeration and most densely populated of areas are found where the vast majority speaks the language.

It is these areas, namely the greatest part of Arfon and Dwyfor and north Meirionnydd, that make up the strongest nucleus of the main core area and main stronghold of the Welsh language in the north-west. Although this core area spreads to a fairly large area of Anglesey and over the border to some of the rural areas in Conwy, it is here in Gwynedd that the vast majority of that population resides.

A greater acknowledgement on a national level of the significance of this main core area would be welcome.

It is true that the need to preserve communities where over 70% of the population speaks Welsh has been somewhat generally acknowledged, but any real attempts at taking decisive action toward achieving the goal has seldom been made. More critical than the exact cohorts in individual communities, however, is the bigger picture within their surrounding areas. Grouping the most Welsh-speaking areas of Gwynedd together, we see a significant and unbroken piece of land with a population of over 80,000 where three quarters of the population speaks Welsh, where the vast majority of the native population speaks Welsh, and where more than a quarter of the population born outside Wales is able to speak the language. In fact, the percentages of people able to speak Welsh in these areas are higher than the percentages of the population born in Wales. Here also are the highest percentages of children aged 3-4 able to speak Welsh.

One clear conclusion that stands out when studying the language statistics of Gwynedd in detail is that the linguistic change in the vast majority of areas in the county is mainly due to a population shift rather than a language shift. There are vast areas that are losing local Welsh-speaking people, and non-Welsh-speakers from outside the area are taking their place. There is a steady increase in the population of some areas also that has not led to a corresponding increase in the numbers able to speak Welsh but which has further eroded the percentages able to speak the language.

Although the Welsh language appears to be standing its ground well among the native population, it must be remembered that the Census only serves to record the ability to speak Welsh and does not measure the degrees to which it is used. We do not know to what degrees sustained inward migration affects the use of the language in different parts of the county.

Although there is a lot to be proud of regarding the situation of the Welsh language in the county, there are some clear signs of decline.

- Even within the main core area, there has been a gradual and constant decline, so that the percentage in Dwyfor is dangerously close to the critical threshold of 70%.
- There was a significant decline in the rural area of south Meirionnydd between 2001 and 2011, and the decline continues along the coast.
- Even after dismissing the effect of the students in Bangor, there are signs of decline among the native populations with higher proportions of older adults than of younger adults speaking the language.

On the whole, the first decade of the millennium was relatively kind to the Welsh language in Gwynedd in terms of the degree of inward migration. There is room to suspect, however, that that was due - to a greater degree - to the recession in the housing market across Britain, and that a change in the market could lead to the reopening of the floodgates once more. This highlights the need for stringent controls on any new developments where there is no evidence of their benefit to be introduced.

Looking into the future, the question must be asked as to whether Gwynedd gets the priority it deserves in the national efforts to maintain and strengthen the Welsh language. The degrees to which the Welsh language stands its ground among the native population and is also able to expand into a significant minority of incomers from outside Wales must show how invaluable its main strongholds are to the viability of the language. It should be quite clear that strengthening the core plays a wholly critical and vital part in the efforts to revive the Welsh language throughout Wales.

Success in increasing the percentages of Welsh-speakers in Gwynedd would certainly be one of the most effective ways of increasing the use of the Welsh language. Earmarking more funds and resources toward this goal would certainly be a cost effective use of resources. Likewise, no stone must be left unturned in the quest to attract Welsh language organisations to relocate to the county.

Over the centuries, the slogan the 'Steadfastness of Gwynedd' ('Cadernid Gwynedd') has been a source of inspiration and national pride. Maintaining and strengthening that steadfastness is more important than ever and requires far greater priority than it has received so far.

# **Geographical and statistical analysis of the Welsh language in Anglesey**

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## Foreword

### Part I - An outline of the situation of the language throughout the county

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The ability to speak Welsh in various parts of the county
- 1.3 The ability to speak Welsh according to place of birth
- 1.4 The ability to speak Welsh according to age
- 1.5 The ability to speak Welsh amongst children and young people

### Part II - The Welsh language in various areas

- 2.1 Llangefni, Llanfairpwll and centre of the island
- 2.2 The south-west coast
- 2.3 Holyhead, Valley and Rhosneigr
- 2.4 Amlwch and north of the island
- 2.5 The banks of the Menai and east coast

### Part III Conclusions

# Foreword

This analysis is a live document rather than a finished piece of work. It is intended as a first step in the work of developing a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the situation of the Welsh language in Anglesey based on the latest information. Currently, it is mainly based on the 2011 Census and previous censuses; however, it is intended to add any relevant information into it. This version deals in very general terms with various regions within the county; however, it is intended to develop this further to deal in more detail with smaller areas also.

The aim is to attempt to improve understanding of the linguistic tendencies that are in progress, so that comprehensive information is at hand for preparing strategies to increase the numbers and percentages who speak Welsh in the county.

Hopefully, offering a full source of comprehensive information regarding the Welsh language in the county will be useful to linguistic planners, language campaigners, researchers and elected representatives.



# Part I - An outline of the situation of the Welsh language throughout the county

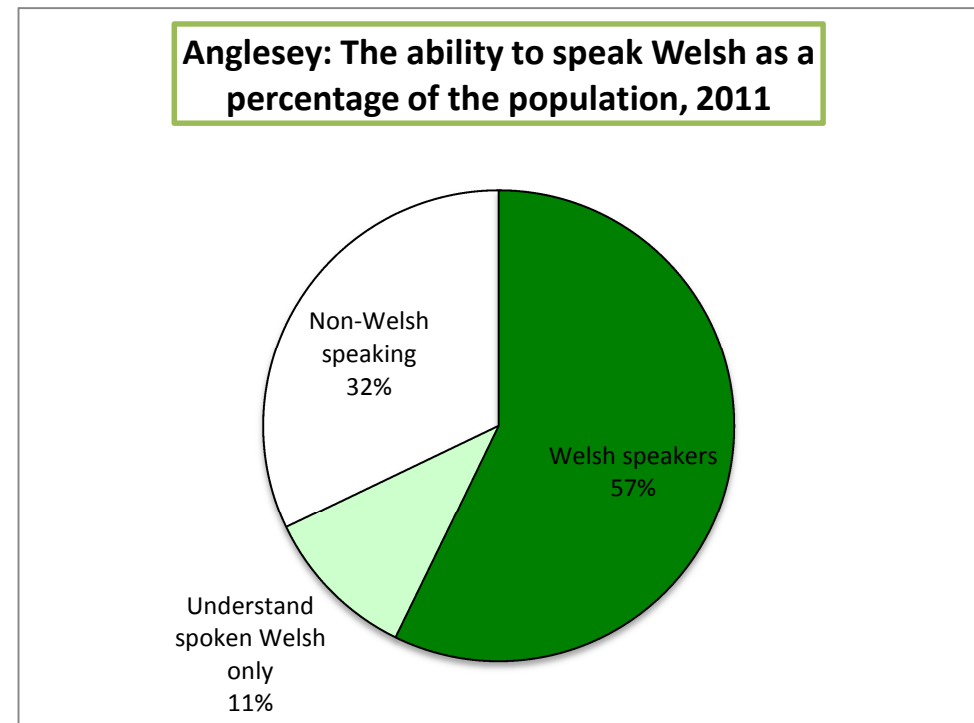
## 1.1 Introduction

Although the numbers of Welsh speakers in Anglesey have held their ground over the past fifty years, they have consistently dropped as a percentage of the population.

Along with the counties of Meirionnydd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire, Anglesey was one of four from the former 13 counties in Wales where three-quarters of the population spoke Welsh in 1961. By 2011, the percentage had dropped to 57.2% in Anglesey; nevertheless, the Welsh language had held its ground much better compared with two of these counties; the proportion of Welsh speakers had dropped to less than half in Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire.

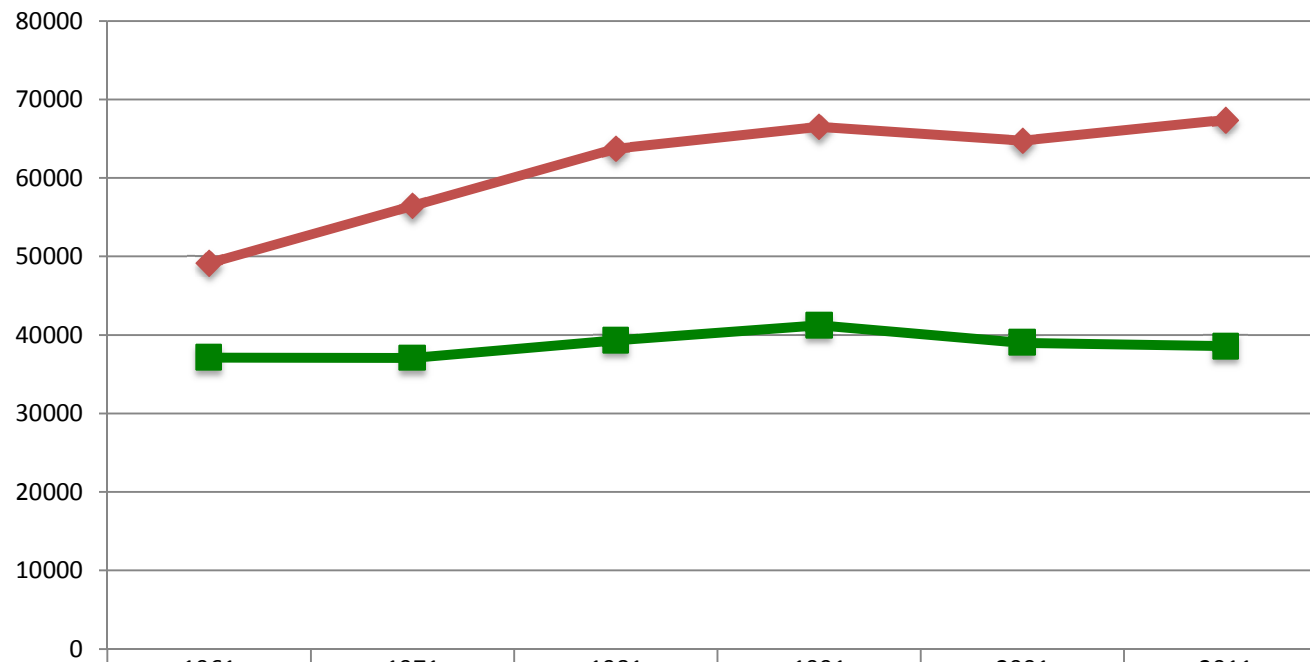
Almost two-thirds of the county's population had been born in Wales, and the numbers born in England accounted for 28.8% of the population.

Clear differences can be seen within the county, with the centre of the island much more Welsh than the coast. Over 70% are able to speak Welsh in almost all inland communities; however, there is no coastal community with an accordant proportion of Welsh speakers. The influence of inward migration can be seen in many of the seaside villages, although it appears that the Welsh language has held its ground well amongst the native population in most of them. The pattern is very different in Holyhead; where a higher proportion than the island's average have been born in Wales, but where the number of Welsh speakers



has dropped from 7,000 in 1961 to just over 4,500 today, and where it is obvious that the language is losing ground amongst the native population. The above pie chart shows that 11% of the population understands spoken Welsh only; this is a higher proportion than in Gwynedd, and the high numbers in Holyhead Town are responsible for this to a great extent.

**Population and numbers of Welsh speakers in Anglesey 1961-1981**



	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Total Population	49156	56450	63760	66525	64742	67403
Welsh speakers	37101	37090	39295	41240	38971	38568

## 1.2 The ability to speak Welsh in various parts of the county

Although it is intended to elaborate more on the various areas of the county in the next part of the report, a general picture of the county cannot be obtained without making a quick reference to the substantial changes between different parts of the county in terms of the ability to speak Welsh.

As noted previously, one of the main differences can be found between the centre of the island and the coast. On the other hand, substantial differences can be seen along the coast also, and it would make no geographical sense to consider the entire length of the coast at the same time. There are no such definitive geographical divisions in Anglesey in the absence of significant mountains and valleys; however, for the purposes of this analysis, an attempt was made to place areas that share language features together; whilst roughly keeping to the catchment areas of towns at the same time. To avoid over-complicating the picture, we kept to five areas; but we acknowledge at the same time that differences exist within these areas.

(i) **Llangefni, Llanfairpwll and centre of the island**

This is the most Welsh area of the island by far, where three-quarters of the population of 17,000 is able to speak Welsh.

(ii) **The south-west coast**

A rural area with a dispersed population which includes the villages of Aberffraw, Newborough, Brynsiencyn and Llanddaniel. An area that used to be thoroughly Welsh until relatively recently; but where inward migration has brought the percentage of Welsh speakers down to 63%.

(iii) **Holyhead, Valley and Rhosneigr**

Holyhead is by far the largest town on the island, and it has seen a marked decline in the numbers and percentage of Welsh speakers over the years. Contrary to the rest of the island, the main reason for the Welsh language's decline in the town is that it is losing ground amongst the native population; not inward migration. Rhosneigr is also more anglicized than the island's other seaside villages.

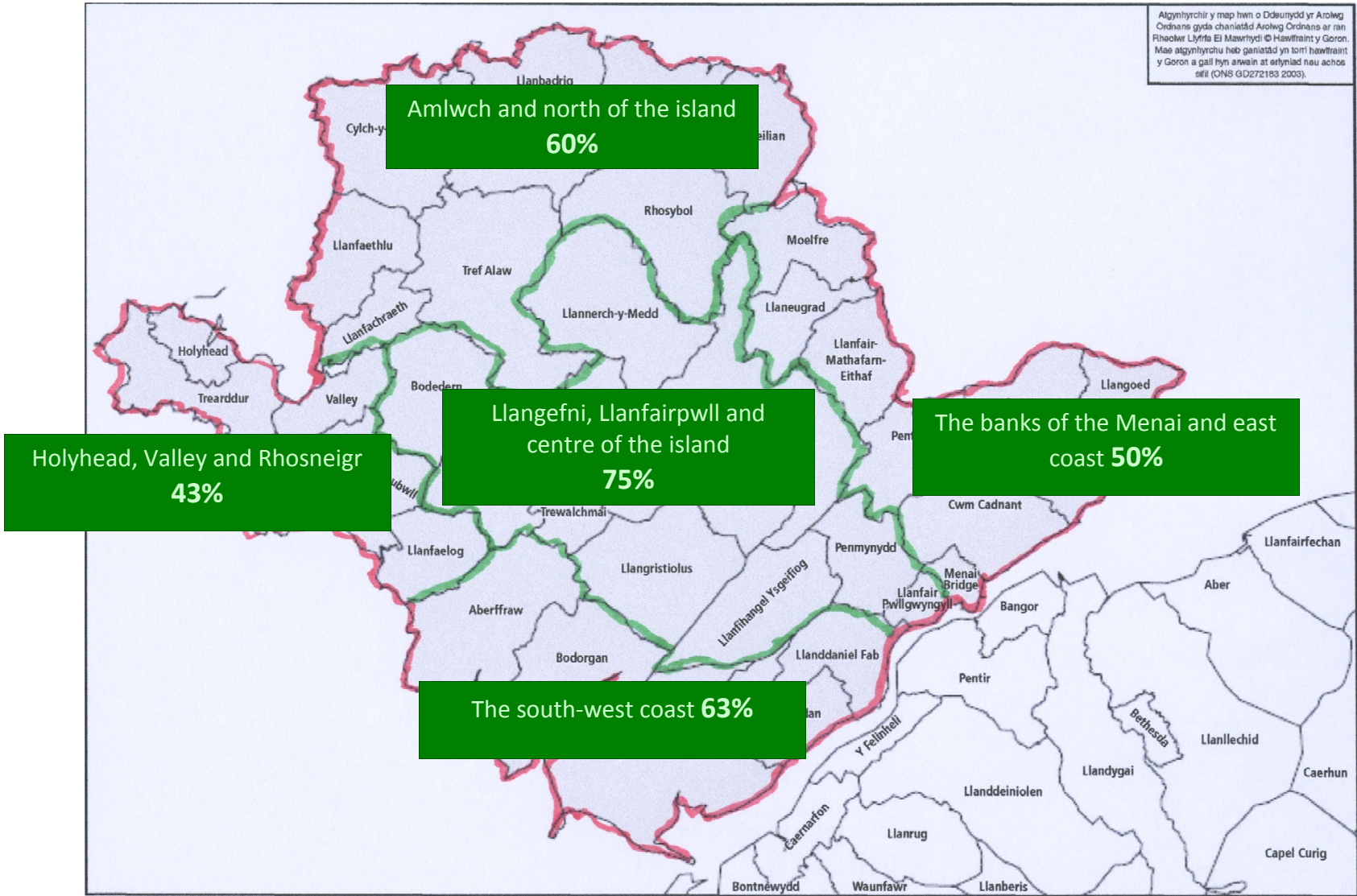
(iv) **Amlwch and north of the island**

60% of the population speak Welsh in Amlwch and the villages in the north of the island, which is slightly higher than the island's average.

(v) **The banks of the Menai and east coast**

This part of Anglesey has become very Anglicized over the years, and approximately half of the population was able to speak Welsh in 2011.

**The percentage of people aged over 3 who are able to speak Welsh in various parts of the county, 2011**

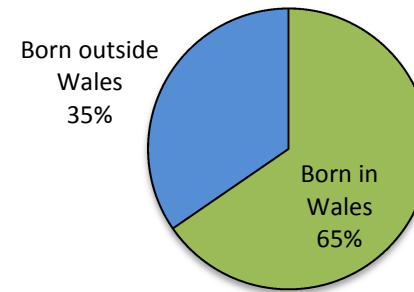


### 1.3 The ability to speak Welsh according to place of birth

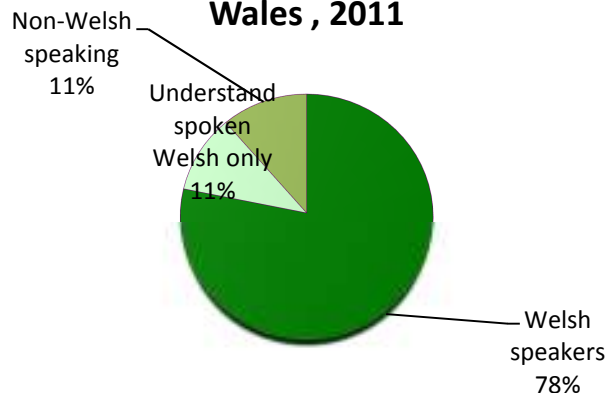
Just over a third of the county's people have been born outside Wales, and in many coastal areas the numbers who have been born in Wales are in the minority.

We can see from the chart below and the table opposite that a substantial majority (78%) of those people who were born in Wales speak Welsh. Yet again, this is much lower than in Gwynedd, where the proportion is 89%. As we can see from examining individual areas, the proportion varies from 58.8% in the Holyhead area to 90.4% in the centre of the island. The proportion is also high in rural areas on the coast, even where much inward migration has occurred. The other chart shows that 17.6% of the

**The percentage of the population born in Wales, 2011**

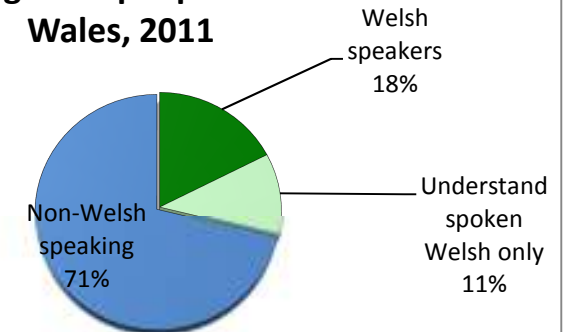


**The ability to speak or understand Welsh amongst the people born in Wales, 2011**



people born outside Wales, a percentage that rises to almost a quarter, is 24.6% in the centre of the island.

**The ability to speak or understand Welsh amongst the people born outside Wales, 2011**



<b>Area</b>	<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	<b>Total of Welsh speakers</b>	<b>Percentage of Welsh speakers</b>	<b>Number of people born in Wales</b>	<b>Percentage of people born in Wales</b>	<b>Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers</b>	<b>Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers</b>	<b>Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers</b>	<b>Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers</b>
<b>Anglesey as a whole</b>	67,403	38,568	57.2	44,088	65.4	34,465	78.2	4,103	17.6
<b>Llangefni, Llanfairpwll and centre of the island</b>	17,286	12,947	74.9	13,209	76.4	11,945	90.4	1,002	24.6
<b>The south-west coast</b>	5,439	3,421	62.9	3,582	65.9	3,090	86.3	331	17.8
<b>Holyhead, Valley and Rhosneigr</b>	18,884	8,132	43.1	12,403	65.7	7,290	58.8	842	13.0
<b>Amlwch and north of the island</b>	10,827	6,504	60.1	6,559	60.6	5,700	86.9	804	18.8
<b>The east coast</b>	14,967	7,564	50.5	8,335	55.7	6,440	77.3	1,124	16.9

## 1.4 The ability to speak Welsh according to age

The table below shows the ability to speak Welsh according to age and place of birth in Anglesey. Over three-quarters of the children aged between 3 and 15 years are able to speak Welsh, however the percentage drops slightly to just over two-thirds amongst young people aged between 16 and 24 years. We can see that the percentages reduce with age, whereby less than half the population aged over 50 on the island are able to speak Welsh. These are the exact groups where the lowest percentages of the population have been born in Wales.

When comparing ages and places of birth, we can see that the percentage of those born in Wales who are able to speak Welsh is relatively consistent throughout the age groups, except for the group aged over 65 years, where it is considerably higher, at 84.7%. When examining the figures according to area, we can see that this is particularly true about Holyhead town, and the town's figures have affected the figures for the entire county in this respect.

When examining the people born outside Wales who are able to speak Welsh, we can see that the percentages are much higher amongst children and young people.

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers
Total population aged over 3	67,403	38,568	57.2	44,088	65.4	34,465	78.2	4,103	17.6
3 to 15 years	9,513	7,221	75.9	8,241	86.6	6,461	78.4	760	59.7
16 to 24 years	6,941	4,663	67.2	5,430	78.2	4,136	76.2	527	34.9
25 to 34 years	7,166	4,362	60.9	5,140	71.7	3,925	76.4	437	21.6
35 to 49 years	13,237	7,265	54.9	8,606	65.0	6,437	74.8	828	17.9
50 to 64 years	14,900	7,312	49.1	8,395	56.3	6,496	77.4	816	12.5
65 years and over	15,646	7,745	49.5	8,276	52.9	7,010	84.7	735	10.0



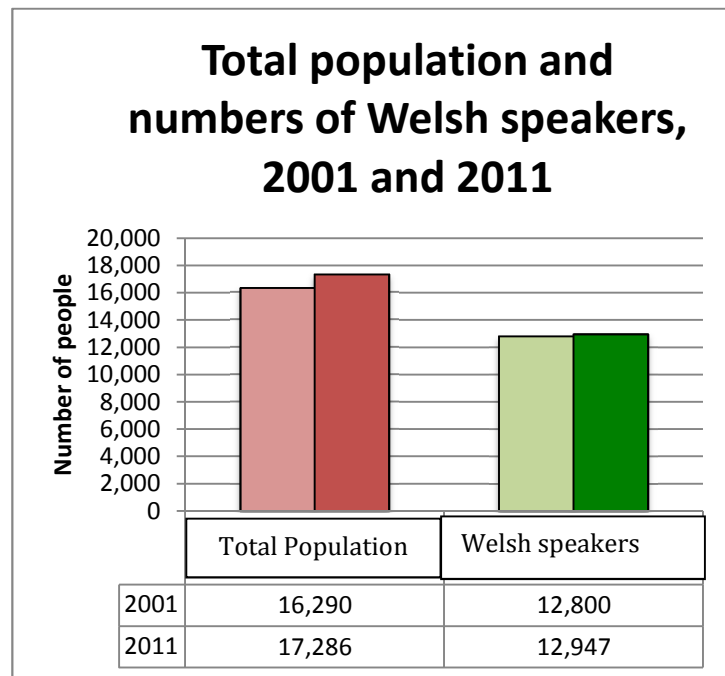
## **1.5 The ability to speak Welsh amongst children and young people**

## Part II - The Welsh language in various areas

### 2.1 Llangefni, Llanfairpwll and centre of the island

This area includes the town of Llangefni and the communities of the centre of the island: Bodedern, Bryngwran, Llannerchymedd, Trewalchmai, Bodffordd, Llangristiolus, Llanddyfnan, Llanfihangel Esceifiog and Penmynydd. Llanfairpwll was also included in this area due to its linguistic similarity.

Llangefni town, with its population of approximately 5,000 is the

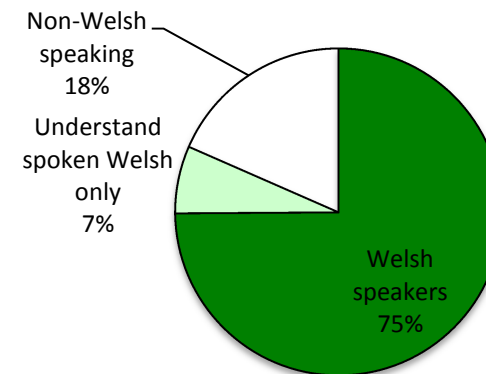


largest town and this is also the most Welsh community with 80.7% able to speak Welsh. The town's population

increased between 2001 and 2011 and an increase (less) was seen in the numbers of Welsh speakers; however, the percentage dropped. On the other hand, the numbers of Welsh speakers in the rural catchment area reduced, with a percentage of just over 70% in the majority of villages.

As the chart on the left shows, there was an increase of almost 1,000 in the area's

**Llangefni, Llanfairpwll and centre of the island:  
The ability to speak and understand spoken Welsh as a percentage of the population, 2011**



population between 2001 and 2011; however, as the number of Welsh speakers only increased by 147, the percentage dropped from 78.6% to 74.9%.

We can see from the table below that the lowest percentages of Welsh speakers can be found amongst the older age groups, 50 to 64 years and over 65 years, where the proportions are approximately two-thirds compared with three-quarters and more amongst the younger groups. This is the case as the highest percentages of people born outside Wales can be found amongst these age groups.

We can see that the vast majority - between 89.2% and 91.8% - of the people born in Wales are able to speak Welsh in all age groups.

Amongst the people born outside Wales, the percentages of them who are able to speak Welsh are much higher amongst children and younger adults than amongst older people.

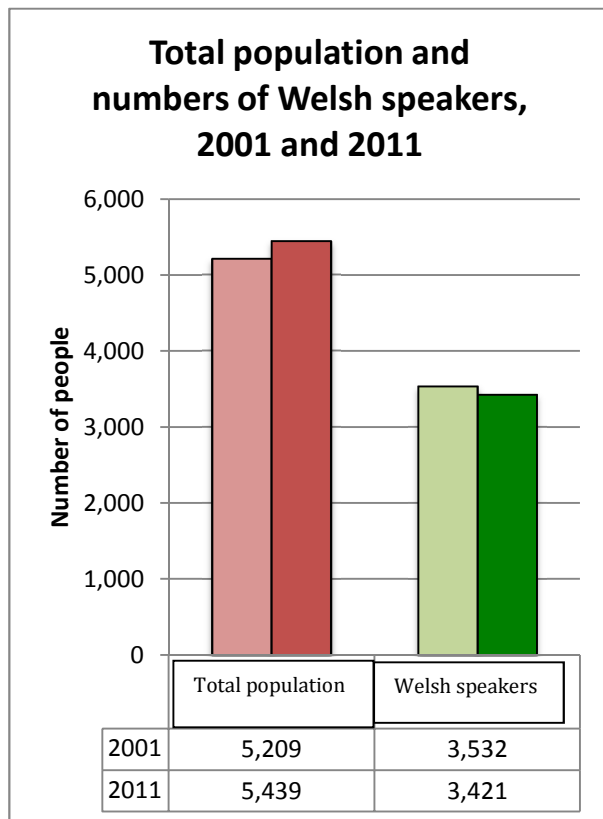
Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	17,286	12,947	74.9	13,209	76.4	11,945	90.4	1,002	24.6
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	2,594	2,300	88.7	2,377	91.6	2,156	90.7	144	66.4
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	1,804	1,515	84.0	1,528	84.7	1,396	91.4	119	43.1
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,881	1,486	79.0	1,510	80.3	1,372	90.9	114	30.7
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	3,623	2,643	73.0	2,680	74.0	2,393	89.3	250	26.5
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	3,761	2,522	67.1	2,582	68.7	2,304	89.2	218	18.5
<b>65 years and over</b>	3,623	2,481	68.5	2,532	69.9	2,324	91.8	157	14.4

## 2.2 The south-west coast

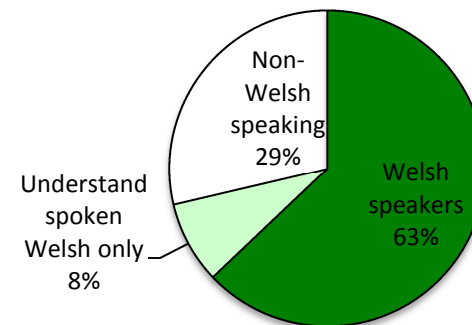
A rural area with a sparse population including the villages of Aberffraw, Bodorgan, Llanddaniel Fab, Llanidan and Rhosyr. Its main villages are Aberffraw, Dwyran, Newborough and Brynsiencyn.

An area that used to be thoroughly Welsh until recent decades but where substantial reductions have been seen in the percentages of Welsh speakers. With an increase of over 200 in the general population between 2001 and

2011, and a reduction of 100 in the number of Welsh speakers, the percentage reduced from 67.8% to 62.9% during the same period.



### The south west coast: The ability to speak and understand spoken Welsh as a percentage of the population, 2011



We can see in the table opposite that just under two-thirds of the population were born in Wales, but that the proportion reduces to just over half amongst the older age groups. The impact of this can be seen clearly on the percentages of Welsh speakers, with the percentage dropping to under half amongst the people aged over 65.

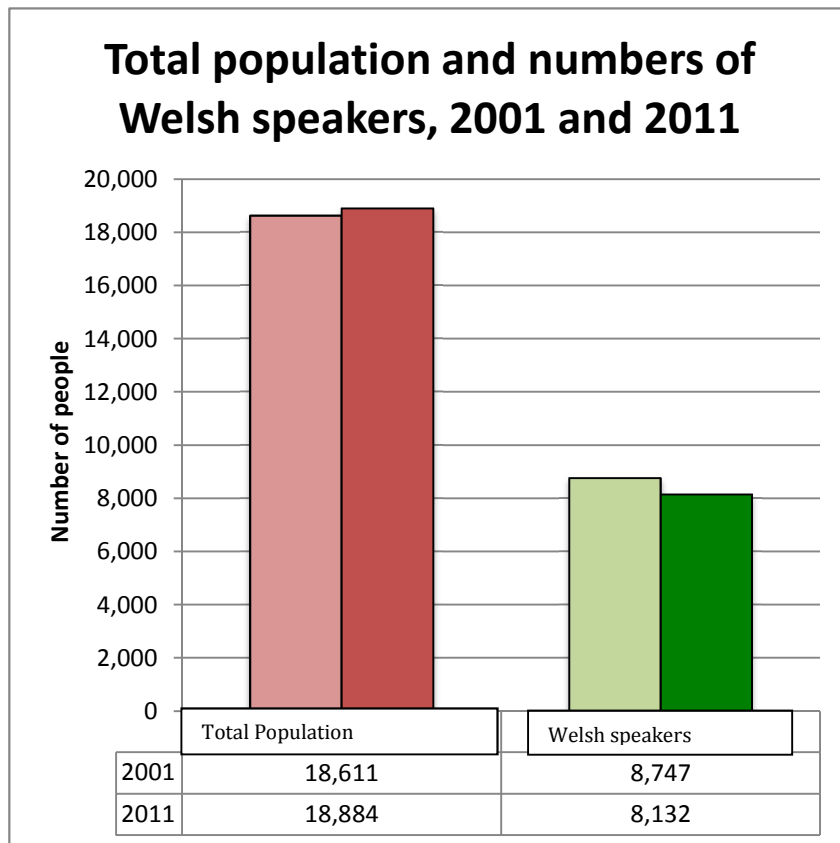
On the other hand, amongst the people born in Wales, the vast majority in all age groups are able to speak Welsh. The proportion of people from outside Wales who are able to speak Welsh reduces regularly the older people are.

## The south-west coast

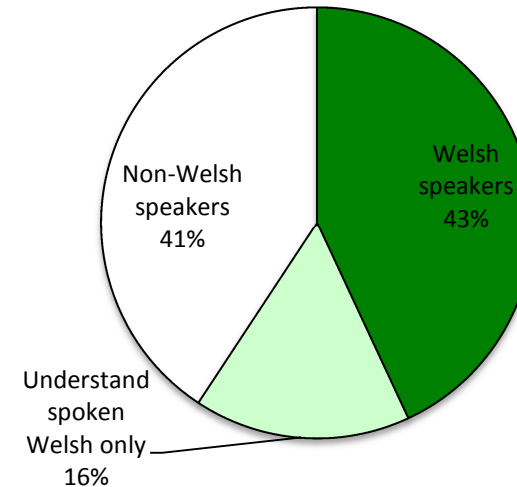
Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	5,439	3,421	62.9	3,582	65.9	3,090	86.3	331	17.8
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	713	595	83.5	629	88.2	544	86.5	51	60.7
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	535	413	77.2	450	84.1	379	84.2	34	40.0
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	526	372	70.7	380	72.2	333	87.6	39	26.7
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	1,093	691	63.2	733	67.1	623	85.0	68	18.9
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	1,257	696	55.4	704	56.0	613	87.1	83	15.0
<b>65 years and over</b>	1,315	654	49.7	686	52.2	598	87.2	56	8.9

## 2.3 Holyhead, Valley and Rhosneigr

This area which includes Holyhead town, along with the communities of Trearddur, Rhoscolyn, Valley, Llanfair yn Neubwll and Llanfaelog, are less Welsh than the rest of the county, and this is where the greatest decline was seen between 2001 and 2011 when a reduction of over 600 was seen in the number of Welsh speakers, and the percentage dropped from 47.0% to 43.1%.



**Holyhead: The ability to speak and understand spoken Welsh as a percentage of the population , 2011**



Holyhead town, with a population of just over 11,000 is the largest town in Anglesey and this is where over half of this area's population is located. The percentage of Welsh speakers in the town, 42.2%, is similar to that of the surrounding area, but as there are some fundamental differences, it is worth considering the town separately.

A reduction of over 480 was seen in the number of Welsh speakers in the town between 2011 and 2001. Contrary to the rest of the island, it

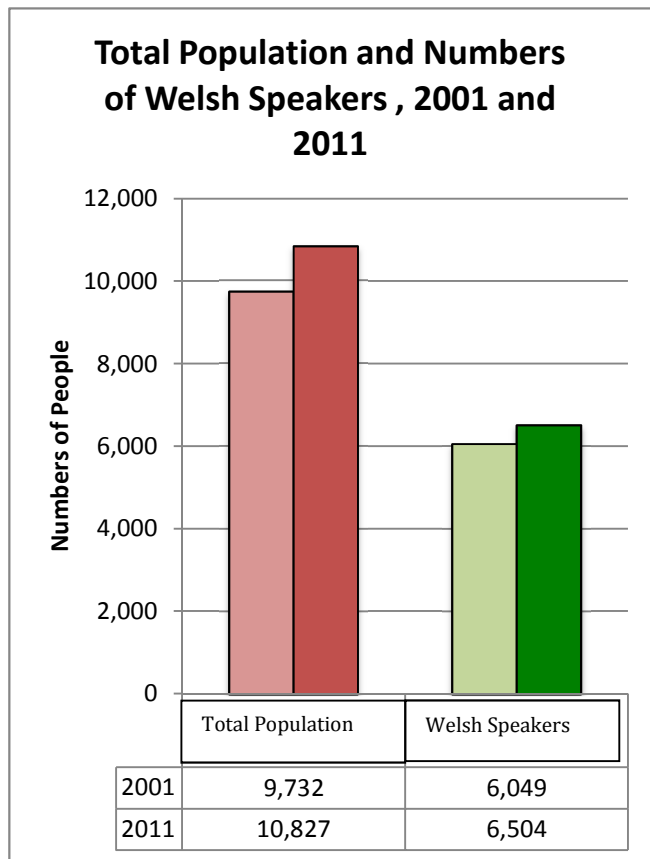
appears that the main reason behind the Welsh language's decline is the fact that the Welsh language is losing ground amongst the native population, and not inward migration. Almost three-quarters of the town's population had been born in Wales - one of the highest percentages on the island - but only just over half, 52.2%, were able to speak Welsh.

Only half of the town's children are able to speak Welsh, which is slightly lower than the proportion amongst people aged over 65. There are less than 40% in all other age groups. Amongst those born in Wales, 77.5% of those aged over 65 are able to speak Welsh, which is a much higher percentage than any other age group. It suggests a trend of linguistic change that goes back decades.

In the areas outside the town, the proportion is slightly higher, 44.4% are able to speak Welsh, but a much lower proportion, 54.4% of the population born in Wales. Amongst these, 71.1% were able to speak Welsh, and the percentage rose to 79.1% amongst people aged over 65.

## 2.4 Amlwch and north of the island

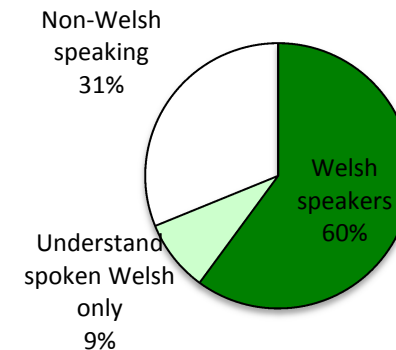
Two-thirds of the population of the island's communities on the northern coast live in Amlwch. It includes the communities of Llanfachraeth, Llanfaethlu, Tref Alaw, Cylch y Garn, Mechell, Llanbadrig, Amlwch, Llanelian and Rhosybol, and its main villages include Camaes, Pensarn, Llanfechell and Llanelian.



A little over 60% of the population of approximately 11,000 were able to speak Welsh in 2011, which is slightly higher than the island's average. The percentage of the population born in Wales is almost exactly the same; and of these, the vast majority in each age group is able to speak Welsh, although the percentages are slightly lower than in the centre of the island. As in other parts of the island, a large proportion of people in these age groups have been born outside Wales, and they account for the majority of the people aged over 50.

The graph on the left shows a substantial increase in the population between 2001 and 2011; however, this can be partly due to an error in the 2001 census in Amlwch, therefore it is difficult to make accurate comparisons.

### Amlwch and north of the island: The ability to speak and understand spoken Welsh only as a percentage of the population , 2011



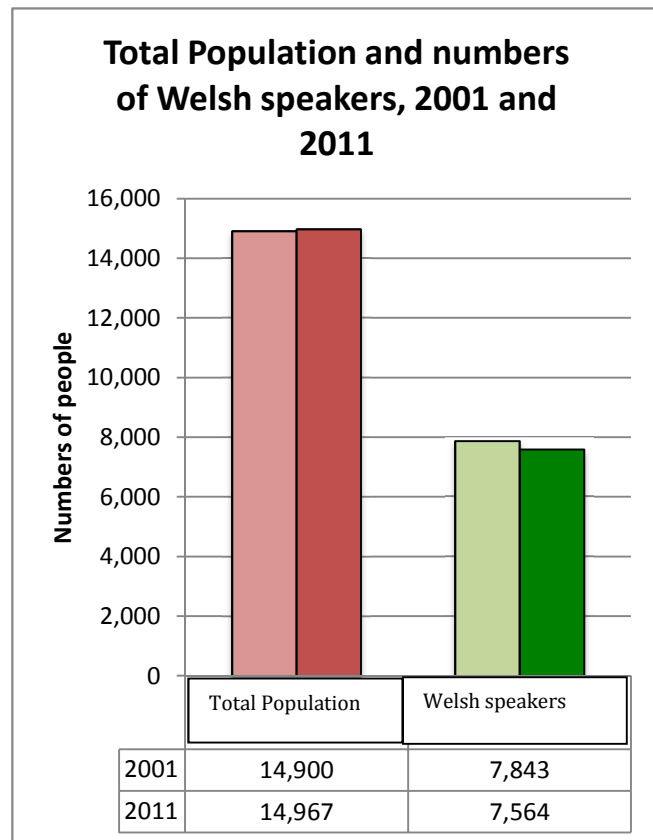


## Amlwch and north of the island

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	10,827	6,504	60.1	6,559	60.6	5,700	86.9	804	18.8
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	1,494	1,269	84.9	1,288	86.2	1,115	86.6	154	74.8
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	1,093	832	76.1	830	75.9	722	87.0	110	41.8
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,017	732	72.0	736	72.4	638	86.7	94	33.5
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	2,074	1,216	58.6	1,249	60.2	1,049	84.0	167	20.2
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	2,543	1,221	48.0	1,222	48.1	1,071	87.6	150	11.4
<b>65 years and over</b>	2,606	1,234	47.4	1,234	47.4	1,105	89.5	129	9.4

## 2.5 The banks of the Menai and east coast

This area extends along the coast from the banks of the Menai to Moelfre and includes the communities of Menai Bridge, Cwm Cadnant, Beaumaris, Llangoed, Llanddona, Pentraeth, Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf, Llaneugrad and Moelfre. Over half the population lives in the three main settlements, namely Menai Bridge, Beaumaris and Benllech.



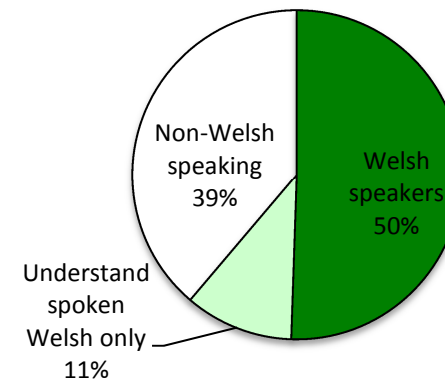
It is an area that has seen regular inward migration over the years, and just over half the population, 55.7%, was born in Wales, and the percentage is lower than half amongst the people aged over 50, and is substantially lower amongst people aged over 65.

The percentage of the population that is able to speak Welsh has reduced slightly from 52.7% in 2001 to 50.5% in 2011.

The most Anglicized town is Beaumaris where only 39.5% are able to speak Welsh, and contrary to the rest of the area, the proportion that is able to speak Welsh has been less than half for many decades. Just over half the town's population was born in Wales, and of these, 58.7% spoke Welsh, the lowest percentage that can be seen anywhere on the island, excluding Holyhead.

Menai Bridge is a mixed town in terms of its language, where the percentage of people able to speak Welsh dropped from 60.2% in 2001 to 54.9% in 2011. The community of

**The east coast: The ability to speak and understand spoken Welsh only as a percentage of the population , 2011**



Llanfair Mathafarn Eithaf, where Benllech is located, has more than doubled in population from approximately 1500 in 1961 to approximately 3300 in 2011, and now more of the population has been born in England than in Wales.

### The banks of the Menai and east coast

Age	Total population aged over 3	Total of Welsh speakers	Percentage of Welsh speakers	Number of people born in Wales	Percentage of people born in Wales	Number of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born in Wales who are Welsh speakers	Number of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers	Percentage of people born outside Wales who are Welsh speakers
<b>Total population aged over 3</b>	14,967	7,564	50.5	8,335	55.7	6,440	77.3	1,124	16.9
<b>3 to 15 years</b>	1,833	1,464	79.9	1,553	84.7	1,267	81.6	197	70.4
<b>16 to 24 years</b>	1,425	954	66.9	1,048	73.5	828	79.0	126	33.4
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	1,446	831	57.5	922	63.8	730	79.2	101	19.3
<b>35 to 49 years</b>	2,643	1,338	50.6	1,511	57.2	1,132	74.9	206	18.2
<b>50 to 64 years</b>	3,461	1,395	40.3	1,590	45.9	1,151	72.4	244	13.0
<b>65 years and over</b>	4,159	1,582	38.0	1,711	41.1	1,332	77.8	250	10.2

## Part III - Conclusions

The figures of the last Census provide a relatively mixed picture of the situation of the Welsh language in Anglesey. They show the obvious impact of inward migration over the past decades, and also the language losing considerable ground amongst the population of the county's largest town, Holyhead. At the same time, the majority of the centre of the island is amongst the most Welsh areas in Wales, and is a substantial part of the main Welsh language heartland mainly seen in Gwynedd.

If you consider the island as a whole, it appears that there was no major change between 2001 and 2011. The reduction in the number of Welsh-speakers is very small, just over 400, over the decade; however, the drop in the percentage shows the continuation of a consistent trend over the past 50 years. The county where three-quarters of the population were Welsh-speakers in 1961 is now a county where just over half its population is able to speak the language.

A substantial reduction was seen in the numbers of Welsh-speakers in Holyhead and the vicinity. In reality, the reduction of almost 500 in the town itself was more than the reduction seen in the entire island, with a small increase in numbers here and there across the island counteracting this. Holyhead also differs to the rest of the island in the sense that a much higher proportion of the population has been born in Wales. When examining age patterns, it becomes apparent that what can be seen in the town is a decline in the language amongst the indigenous population, rather than the impacts of inward migration.

On the contrary, the influence of inward migration is very obvious along most of the island's coastline, with over 40% of the population having been born outside Wales in many areas.

Although almost three-quarters of the island's inland population is able to speak Welsh, and that the numbers have increased slightly, the percentage has dropped by 3.6% since 2001. Substantial reductions have been seen in many of the villages, and the figures suggest that this is partly due to local Welsh-speakers moving to Llangefni and non-Welsh-speakers moving in.

The Welsh language is not as strong in Anglesey as it is in Gwynedd, its only neighbouring county. The percentage of children, particularly those aged 3-4 years, appears disappointingly low, although it is almost the same as it was in 2001.

Although the vast majority - 78.2% - of the people born in Wales can speak Welsh, this is 2 percentage points lower than it was in 2001. It is likely that the majority of this decline happened in Holyhead. A very similar linguistic pattern can be seen at work in Bangor also, but as Anglesey is a much less-populated county than Gwynedd, Holyhead has a heavier influence on the figures for the rest of the island.

As in Gwynedd, approximately a third of the island's population has been born outside Wales, and the proportions are much higher amongst people aged 50+. A low percentage of those people are able to speak Welsh.

Llangefni remains one of the most Welsh towns in Wales, and the percentage of Welsh-speakers there is higher than anywhere else, except for Caernarfon and the vicinity. Although high percentages are able to speak Welsh in nearby villages, they are lower than in the town itself.

From examining the trends over the past 50 years, what has happened is that an increase in the population has led to a reduction in the percentages of Welsh-speakers. It could be argued that the language has held its ground relatively well considering the rates of inward migration from outside Wales. However, a further increase in the population could be a real threat to the Welsh language in many parts of the isl