

GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011 – 2026)

PUBLIC EXAMINATION:

Hearing session 2 – Housing Provision.



**CYNGOR SIR
YNNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY
COUNTY COUNCIL**

1] Action Point 1 (S2/PG1)

Prepare an explanatory paper dealing with the choice of vacancy rates used to develop the housing requirement option.

2] The Councils' Response:

- 2.1 There are a number of key variables that should be considered as part of the process of assessing future housing requirements. The variables include housing vacancy. A level of transactional housing vacancy is required to ensure the effective operation of any housing market. Second home ownership is also a common characteristic in many parts of the UK – particularly in those areas that are popular tourist destinations. Such dwellings would not be the primary residence of their owners and might be vacant for some (or much) of the year. The Plan area, particularly some of the settlements located within coastal areas, is popular with tourists. Therefore, there are a number of properties that aren't available to the general/ local housing market. Section 7.11 of Topic Paper 3A Population and Housing (PT.007) provides data about second homes in Gwynedd (the county) and Anglesey.
- 2.2 The amount of vacancy in the Plan area is therefore inevitably higher than most other Plan area district in Wales.
- 2.3 In any area, it is expected that housing vacancies and second homes, where relevant, will result in the number of new housing units required exceeding the number of households.
- 2.4 Vacancy and second homes rate can be calculated using Census Data. This data is provided on a local-authority basis.
- 2.5 Welsh Government in their comments about the Deposit Plan enquired whether the Plan's housing requirement included a vacancy rate. Focus Change NF 13 confirmed that the housing requirement did include a vacancy rate. However, no details of the rate was provided. In response to comments made during public consultation about Focus Change the Councils proposed additional amendments to the Plan.
- 2.6 The Councils' Statement for Hearing Session 2 confirmed that data from the 2011 Census had been used to calculate the housing requirement in each of the scenarios that were explored. The Statement also confirmed that the same conversion rates had been applied in the growth scenarios as they are considered to align best with local circumstances described above. Details of the vacancy rate used is included in

Appendix B (B38 – B40) of “Gwynedd & Anglesey Population & Household Forecasts – assumptions, methodology & scenario results (DC.016).

2.7 The Councils therefore confirm that the Plan’s housing requirement includes an allowance for the following vacancy rate:

- i. 12.2% in Gwynedd
- ii. 10.5% in Anglesey

2.8 For information, comparison with the results of the 2001 Census reveals similar rates for both areas:

- i. 13.3% in Gwynedd (county)
- ii. 9.5% in Anglesey

2.9 The Councils also confirm the following proposed amendments to be considered as Matters Arising Changes to paragraph 6.40 and the Glossary of Terms:

6.40 The basic housing requirement (the target)for the Plan area, i.e. 7,184 **which takes into account the vacancy rate (12.2% in Gwynedd Planning Authority area and 10.5% in Anglesey Planning Authority area)**, is based on assessment of all the evidence and is directly related to the Plan area’s growth prospects and the Councils’ aspirations. It is considered that linking housing requirements to wider economic prospects improves the robustness and deliverability of the Plan’s Strategy. It is anticipated that it will contribute to providing an opportunity and scope to live and work in the Plan area. The level of growth reflects the impacts of the recession as well as the transformational economic prospects expected later on during the Plan period. The Plan will facilitate the development required to complement each Council’s strategic plans and programmes. This should mean that the area will start to become a more age-balanced area, more independent and less reliant on outside sources of labour, with scope for reducing levels of out commuting and be on its way to becoming a sustainable and more self-contained set of communities.

Glossary of Terms

Vacancy rates

The relationship between households and dwellings is modelled using 'vacancy rates', which come from the 2011 Census. The vacancy rate includes second homes and holiday homes. The vacancy rate is calculated by dividing the number of places in occupied households (table KS401) with the total number of houses (table QS418). In the case of part of the Plan area that is within the Gwynedd Planning Authority, it was necessary to exclude parts of Gwynedd county that are inside the Snowdonia National Park. The total statistics for the Census Output Areas that are not within the SNP were used.

Empty spaces in households and households that are used as second homes are described in the Census as 'places in households without regular residents'. Because there are many holiday homes and second homes in Anglesey and Gwynedd, the vacancy rates are higher than places that have fewer households of this type.