

VALE OF GLAMORGAN
REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2021 - 2036

WELSH LANGUAGE

November 2025



BACKGROUND PAPER - BP30



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Executive Summary

- i. This background paper has been prepared as supporting evidence to the Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 – 20236 (RLDP). The background paper provides an evidence-based assessment of the status and trends of the Welsh language within the Vale of Glamorgan and outlines how the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) can support its protection and promotion in line with Welsh Government policy objectives.
- ii. Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 places strong emphasis on the Welsh language as a key cultural and planning consideration. The plan recognises the Welsh language as a national asset and an integral part of Wales' identity, culture, and heritage and Objective 4 of the plan supports the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy which aims to reach one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and identifies 'A Wales where people live in places with a thriving Welsh Language'.
- iii. In this regard, Future Wales is clear that Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans must consider the relationship between strategic housing, transport and economic growth and the Welsh language and that such plans should contain settlement hierarchies and growth distribution policies that create the conditions for Welsh to thrive.
- iv. Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) (PPW) continues to embed the Welsh language as a material consideration within the land use planning system and reinforces the statutory requirement for Local Planning Authorities to consider the effects of their plans and decisions on the language's use and well-being. By aligning the planning process with the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 goal of a 'thriving Welsh language' and encouraging the use of tools such as Welsh Language Impact Assessments, PPW seeks to ensure that sustainable development must actively support and avoid harm to the social and linguistic fabric of Welsh speaking communities.
- v. In the Vale of Glamorgan, the proportion of Welsh speakers is below the national average but has shown modest growth in recent years. Welsh-medium education provision is expanding, with new schools planned in the Western Vale.
- vi. To further safeguard and promote the Welsh language, the Replacement Local Development Plan will continue to support the delivery of Welsh-medium education infrastructure; encourage placemaking that reflects and celebrates Welsh cultural identity; require Welsh Language Impact Assessments (WLIA) for significant developments in sensitive linguistic areas and promote community cohesion and opportunities for Welsh language use in everyday life.
- vii. The RLDP recognises the Welsh language as a vital part of the Vale's cultural heritage and identity. Through targeted planning policies and infrastructure

investment, the Plan aims to contribute positively to the Welsh Government's goal of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

- viii. The paper supports the RLDP's strategic objectives by:
- Evaluating the current use and distribution of Welsh speakers across the Vale.
 - Identifying communities where the Welsh language is most prevalent.
 - Assessing the potential impact of development proposals on the Welsh language.
 - Informing policy responses that align with Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 20 (TAN 20).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Welsh Language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales. The 2021 Census of population indicated that 538,300 people or 17.8% of the Welsh population aged 3+ can speak Welsh, but many others have some knowledge of the language or are in the process of learning it. There are substantial variations between the proportions of Welsh speakers in different communities across Wales, with the lowest proportions of Welsh speakers in the South Wales Valleys and the highest in West Wales and North West Wales. There are also considerable differences in ability across age groups with younger age groups being much more likely to speak Welsh.
- 1.2 At the time of the 2021 Census, the population of the Vale of Glamorgan was 131,939 an increase of 4.4% on the 2011 Census. This compares with a population increase across Wales of 1.4%.
- 1.3 Within the Vale of Glamorgan, a total of 11.5% of the population aged 3+ had the ability to speak Welsh in 2021 and whilst this is lower than the Welsh average, the Vale of Glamorgan was one of only four local authorities that saw an increase in the number of Welsh speakers between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses.

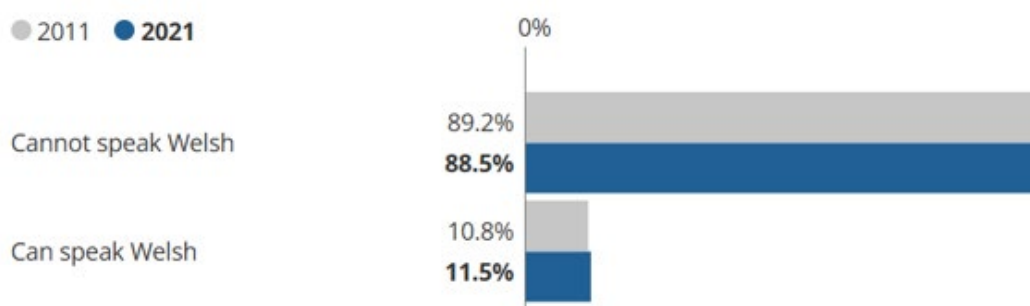


Figure 1: Percentage of people aged 3 years and over by ability to speak Welsh in the Vale of Glamorgan (Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 and 2021 Census).

- 1.4 Notwithstanding the increase in Welsh language ability, there was a decrease in the Vale of Glamorgan in the number of people that identified as “Welsh”, falling from 56.4% in 2011 to 55.5% in 2021. However, the percentage of people that identified as “Welsh and British only” increased from 8.6% to 9.6%.

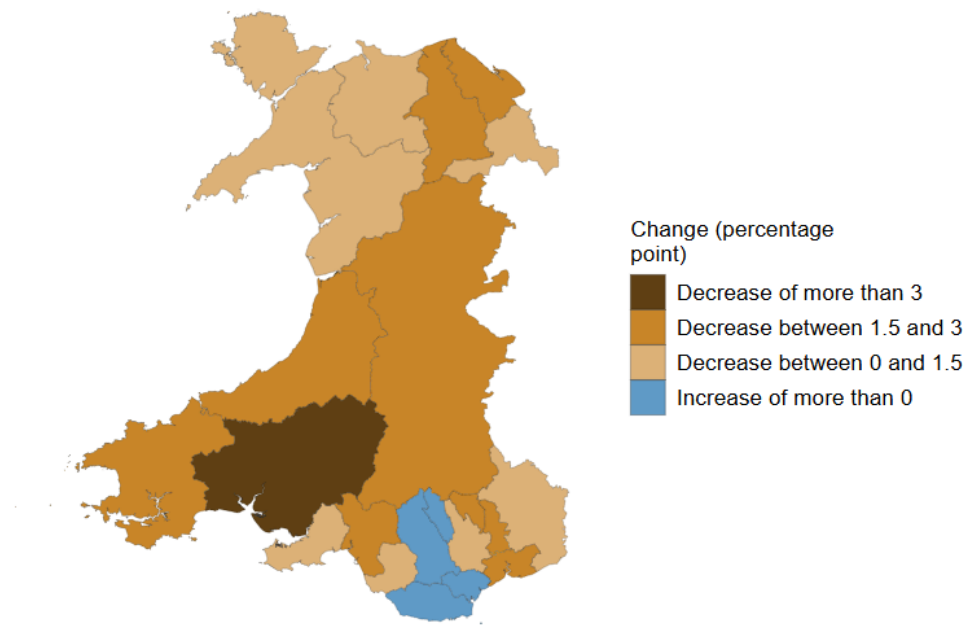


Figure 2: Change in the percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh by local authority, 2011 to 2021 (Source: *Welsh Language in Wales (Census 2021) Statistical Document* 6th December 2022).

- 1.5 There is a legislative requirement (section 62(6A) PCPA 2004 as inserted by section 11, PWA2015) for local planning authorities to consider the likely effects of their development plans on the use of the Welsh language as part of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and development plans should include a statement on how planning authorities have taken the needs and interests of the Welsh language into account in plan preparation and how any policies relating to the Welsh language interact with other plan policies.
- 1.6 This Background Paper presents a baseline of the Welsh Language within the Vale and highlights how the Welsh language has been considered in the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) and the wider planning context.
- 1.7 Section 2 provides a summary of relevant national and local planning guidance and legislation.
- 1.8 Section 3 outlines the baseline for the Welsh Language within the Vale.
- 1.9 Section 4 provides a framework for how the Welsh Language was considered within the planning process of the RLDP.

2. Legislation and Policy Context

Legislation

- 2.1 The section below firstly highlights the driving national policy and strategy that support the importance of considering the Welsh Language in the planning process. The second part of the section looks at the Council's local policies regarding Welsh Language as it is required to create five-year plans to support the development of the Welsh Language across the Vale. The final part of the section draws attention to the educational plans in respect of the Welsh language.

The Welsh Language Act and Education (Wales) Act 2025

- 2.2 The Welsh Language Act and Education (Wales) Act 2025 received Royal Assent on the 7th of July 2025. The Act contributes towards the goal of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050 by putting measures in place that aim to ensure that all pupils, by the time they cease to be of compulsory school age, are independent Welsh language users, at least.

- 2.3 In summary, the 2025 Act:

- Will require the Welsh language strategy to include a target of at least a million Welsh speakers by 2050, as well as other targets relating to the use of the Welsh language, including in the workplace and socially.
- Will establish a standard approach to describing Welsh language ability based on the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- Sets out three statutory language categories for schools ("Primarily Welsh language", "Dual Language", and "Primarily English language, partly Welsh"), and provides for the designation of those language categories, along with requirements relating to the minimum amount of Welsh language education provided and Welsh language learning goals, for each category.
- Will link the linguistic planning undertaken at a national level (by placing a duty on the Welsh Ministers to prepare a National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh), at local authority level (by placing a duty on local authorities to prepare local Welsh in education strategic plans), and at school level (by placing a duty on schools to prepare Welsh language education delivery plans).
- Will establish a National Institute for Learning Welsh as a new body, responsible for supporting people (of all ages) to learn Welsh.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

- 2.4 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure modernises the legal framework for using the Welsh Language in public services, ensuring it is treated no less favourably than English. The Measure establishes the office of the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Commissioner promotes and facilitates the use

of Welsh and ensures compliance with language standards. The Commissioner has the power to investigate and enforce compliance with these standards. Public bodies must adhere to the standards set out in their compliance notices.

- 2.5 Within this legislation, Councils need to ensure that any documents relating to a policy decision, should consider and seek the views on the potential impacts on opportunities to use the Welsh language, and not treat the Welsh language any less favourably than English.

National Policy

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 2.6 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act gives a legally-binding common purpose – the 7 well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. The 7 well-being goals ('the goals') show the kind of Wales we want to see and together they provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards. They are a set of goals; the Act makes it clear the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals, not just one or two. It details the ways in which specified public bodies must work to improve the well-being of Wales. It requires public bodies to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. One of the Well-being goals is '*Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*'. This envisages a "*society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.*"

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)

- 2.7 PPW Edition 12 integrates the Welsh language as a key consideration in the planning system, recognising it as part of cultural well-being under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. PPW sets out national sustainable placemaking outcomes, which includes 'creating and sustaining communities' where enabling the Welsh language to thrive is a key consideration.
- 2.8 Paragraph 3.25 of PPW states "*the Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. The land use planning system should take account of the conditions which are essential to the Welsh language and in so doing contribute to its, use and the Thriving Welsh Language well-being goal.*"
- 2.9 PPW sets out that planning authorities should consider the likely effects of their development plans on the use of the Welsh language as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. Furthermore, planning authorities should seek to ensure a broad distribution and phasing of development that takes into account

the ability of the area or community to accommodate development without adversely impacting use of the Welsh language.

- 2.10 Development plans should include a statement on how planning authorities have taken the needs and interests of the Welsh language into account in plan preparation and how any policies relating to the Welsh language interact with other plan policies.
- 2.11 Policies must not introduce any element of discrimination between individuals based on their linguistic ability and should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds.
- 2.12 If required, language impact assessments may be carried out in respect of large developments not allocated in a development plan which are proposed in areas of particular sensitivity or importance for the language. Any such areas should be defined clearly in the development plan.
- 2.13 Section 4.2 of PPW, which relates to housing, states that when setting the housing requirement, consideration should be given to a range of factors, with Welsh Language being one of these considerations.

Future Wales - The National Plan 2040

- 2.14 Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 is the Welsh Government’s national development framework, which sets the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.
- 2.15 Outcome 4 of the Plan identifies a Wales where people live in places with a thriving Welsh language and identifies a Welsh Government target of a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, an increase of almost 80% on current levels (2021). For the South East region, which includes the Vale of Glamorgan, the plan identifies 150,792 Welsh speakers and it is important that Strategic and Local Development Plans consider the relationship between strategic housing, transport and economic growth and the Welsh language. Strategic and Local Development Plans should contain settlement hierarchies and growth distribution policies that create the conditions for Welsh to thrive across the region and encourage the development of communities where Welsh can be the everyday language.”

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (2017)

- 2.16 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20, published in 2017, provides detailed guidance on how the Welsh language should be considered within the planning system. It supports Planning Policy Wales by ensuring that development proposals contribute to the sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities rather than undermining them.
- 2.17 Local planning authorities (LPAs) are required to assess the potential impact of **Local Development Plans (LDPs)** on the Welsh language. This means that

when shaping their policies, authorities should consider whether proposed developments could strengthen or weaken the use of Welsh in a given area. In cases where there is a potential for negative consequences, LPAs are expected to introduce policies that mitigate such risks and actively promote the use of the language.

- 2.18 One of the key tools outlined in TAN 20 is the ***Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)***, which should be carried out where strategic planning decisions may affect Welsh-speaking communities. This assessment allows planners to evaluate how a particular development could influence linguistic patterns and whether interventions—such as ensuring access to Welsh-medium education, supporting local employment opportunities, or setting language-sensitive planning conditions—are necessary.
- 2.19 ***Development management decisions*** should also take account of the Welsh language where relevant. This means that when considering individual planning applications, LPAs have the authority to impose conditions or planning obligations that encourage the continued use of Welsh. In areas where the language is particularly strong, planning policies may be designed to maintain or enhance linguistic vitality.
- 2.20 The identification of ***language-sensitive areas*** is an important part of this process. LPAs have the discretion to define areas where the Welsh language is a significant part of daily life, ensuring that planning policies reflect the cultural and linguistic importance of these places. However, the guidance makes it clear that the planning system cannot directly control population movement, meaning that planning policies must be carefully balanced to support Welsh-speaking communities without imposing restrictions that could be seen as discriminatory.
- 2.21 ***Public engagement*** is also a fundamental aspect of TAN 20. The guidance emphasises that planning consultations should be conducted in both Welsh and English, ensuring that Welsh-speaking residents can fully participate in decision-making. This aligns with broader Welsh Government commitments to promoting linguistic equality and ensuring that the Welsh language is treated with parity in public life.
- 2.22 Through these mechanisms, TAN 20 seeks to ensure that the planning system in Wales actively contributes to the Welsh Government's goal of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. It recognises that while planning alone cannot determine the future of the language, it plays a crucial role in shaping the conditions that allow Welsh-speaking communities to thrive.

Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050 (2017)

- 2.23 Cymraeg 2050 sets out the Welsh Government's ambition of achieving a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, setting out the far-reaching changes required. The policy aims to push boundaries and take ambitious action to enable more people to learn and use Welsh. The strategy builds on existing foundations and moves the Welsh Language on to the next stage in the collective journey. The Strategy identifies three strategic themes to achieve this Vision:

- 1) Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
 - 2) Increasing the use of Welsh
 - 3) Creating favourable conditions
- 2.24 To realise the Vision, the strategy recognises the need to provide Welsh speakers with easily accessible opportunities to use their skills in social and work settings. The strategy also identifies the imperative need to create favourable circumstances to encourage the number of Welsh speakers. This involves securing goodwill towards the language and providing language infrastructure such as technology and legislation but is also concerned with securing an economic and social future for Welsh speaking communities.
- 2.25 The overarching targets for the strategy are to achieve 1 million Welsh speaker in Wales by 2050 and to increase the percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, from 10 percent (2013-15) to 20 percent by 2050.

Local Policy

Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2025-2030

- 2.26 The Corporate Plan sets out five Objectives for the Council and how they will be delivered. Objective 5 is 'Being the Best Council We Can Be' and one of the ways that this will happen is to "*Promote the use of the Welsh Language in our work, schools and communities.*"
- 2.27 The Corporate Plan recognises that the Vale is one of the only areas in Wales to have seen a growth in the number of Welsh speakers and states that the Council will continue to support this growth through the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and gives a commitment to the continued increase in the use of the Welsh language in the Vale of Glamorgan by 2030.

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2022 -2027

- 2.28 The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy was originally produced for the period 2017-2022 but was updated in 2022 to align with the three key themes of Cymraeg 2050.
- 2.29 It also includes an Action Plan, which aims to build on the progress made by the Council and its partners in implementing the first 5-year Promotion Strategy. The Action Plan also draws the connections between actions and their contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. As actions are pursued, they will be reported upon annually in the Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report and will include case studies to show the impact the work is having.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032 (WESP)

- 2.30 The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 places a duty on all Local Authorities in Wales to consult on, produce and review plans that provide

the strategic direction for the planning and delivery of Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality.

2.31 The Welsh Government strategy places a duty on all local authorities in Wales to increase the proportion of all school year groups that receive their education through the medium of Welsh and places a particular emphasis on increasing the number of learners in Year 1 taught through the medium of Welsh.

2.32 The strategy aims to:

- Increase the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050 and,
- Ensure that the percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increase from 10% (in 2013–15) to 20% by 2050.

2.33 The strategy focuses on three themes:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers.
- Increasing the use of Welsh.

Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context.

2.34 The WESP has seven outcomes.

The outcomes set by Welsh Government, are:

Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

2.35 The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils within the Vale have every opportunity to attain the best possible outcomes, ensuring that the benefits of bilingualism are promoted to all parents and all learners have an opportunity to learn Welsh. Recognising the importance of Cymraeg 2050, and the role of education in achieving its vision, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (WESP) sets out the Council's ten-year plan for

further developing the provision of Welsh medium and Welsh language education.

- 2.36 The ten-year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in the Vale of Glamorgan is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh to 24% by 2031-32. This equates to approximately 390 year one places being made available by 2031-32 based on current population projections. This target is based on contributing to the overall long-term target of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, as set out in Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers (Cymraeg 2050).
- 2.37 Increasing capacity is a key part of the WESP. The Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (previously the 21st Century Schools Programme) is a long-term strategic investment in educational estate throughout Wales and there have been several new Welsh Medium schools proposed with further planned as part of the programme.

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal report

- 2.38 The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging development plan. The aim of ISA is to inform and influence the plan making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach the ISA seeks to maximise the plan's contribution to sustainable development. ISA integrates and fulfils the duties and requirements of Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG).

Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)

- 2.39 A Welsh language impact assessment evaluates how policies or proposals affect the Welsh language and its speakers, ensuring compliance with legislation and promoting bilingualism in Wales.
- 2.40 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) is an integral part of the ISA framework, requiring local planning authorities to evaluate whether proposals could strengthen or weaken the Welsh language. This process considers factors such as population movement, affordability of housing for Welsh speakers, and economic opportunities that support Welsh-speaking workforces. It recognises that changes in housing, employment, and infrastructure could influence the use of Welsh, particularly in areas where it is still widely spoken. If potential negative impacts are identified, the RLDP will include mitigation measures, such as prioritising affordable housing for local residents, promoting Welsh-medium education, and ensuring Welsh-language services in new developments.
- 2.41 Additionally, the ISA emphasises public engagement and consultation in both Welsh and English, ensuring that Welsh speakers can fully participate in

shaping planning policies. It highlights the importance of placemaking, where new developments should reflect and support the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Vale of Glamorgan. By embedding these considerations into planning decisions, the RLDP seeks to protect and promote Welsh as a living community language, ensuring that future growth is sustainable, inclusive, and aligned with national Welsh language goals.

- 2.42 The WLIA of the ISA identifies that in the Vale of Glamorgan at the 2021 Census 11.5% of the population aged three or older could speak Welsh, which represents an increase when compared with the 2011 Census. This is contrary to the trend experienced across Wales overall, where the number of Welsh speakers has decreased from 2011 to 2021. The ISA therefore recommended the strengthening the Deposit Plan to further support and protect the Welsh language in the Vale of Glamorgan. This could include measures to assess the potential effects of development on the use of Welsh Language, measures to ensure capacity in Welsh-speaking schools, measures to safeguard cultural identity, and to ensure that new developments contribute positively to local linguistic and cultural vitality.

3. Welsh Language Baseline

Introduction

- 3.1 The Welsh language baseline is established using a range of key data sources to assess the status and trends of the language within the Vale of Glamorgan. In line with TAN 20 Planning and the Welsh Language (October 2017), which emphasises the importance of setting a clear baseline for the Welsh language. This report builds upon the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) report and utilises annual population data alongside insights from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019 to understand the socio-economic factors influencing Welsh language use. Additionally, data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) provides a detailed picture of Welsh-speaking populations, while local and national education plans and strategies, including Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) and the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, highlight the role of education in supporting language growth. Together, these sources form a comprehensive foundation for assessing the impact of development policies on the Welsh language.
- 3.2 Deprivation and education are closely linked as socio-economic factors significantly impact access to and quality of education. In the context of the Welsh language, this relationship becomes even more relevant when considering the accessibility of Welsh-medium education and the role of education in language preservation.

2021 Census

- 3.3 The UK census is a nationwide survey conducted every ten years to collect detailed information about the population and households across the country. Managed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in England and Wales, and separate agencies in Scotland and Northern Ireland, the census provides vital data on demographics, housing, employment, education, and more. This information is used to inform government policy, allocate public funding, and support planning for services such as healthcare, transport, and education.
- 3.4 In Wales, the Census also includes questions about Welsh language ability, helping to monitor and support the growth and preservation of the language in Wales.
- 3.5 A summary of the key outputs on the Welsh language from the 2021 Census are:
- On Census Day, 21st March 2021, an estimated 538,000 usual residents in Wales aged three years or older reported being able to speak Welsh, or 17.8% of the population. This is a decrease of around 23,700 people since the 2011 Census, and 1.2% lower than the 2011 Census.
 - The 2021 Census identifies that the total population of Wales has grown to 3,107,493, an increase of 44,000 since the 2011 Census, but despite an increase in the overall population, the number of Welsh speakers' resident in Wales decreased by 24,000 to 538,000 in 2021.

- Excluding the 16-19 and 20-44 age groups, all age groups experienced a decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers with the decline being most pronounced in the younger age groups.
- The percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh decreased between 2011 and 2021 in all local authorities in Wales except Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.
- All local authorities saw a decrease in the percentage of children aged 3 to 15 reported as being able to speak Welsh between 2011 and 2021. The decreases tended to be larger in areas with lower concentrations of Welsh speakers, such as in Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Torfaen.

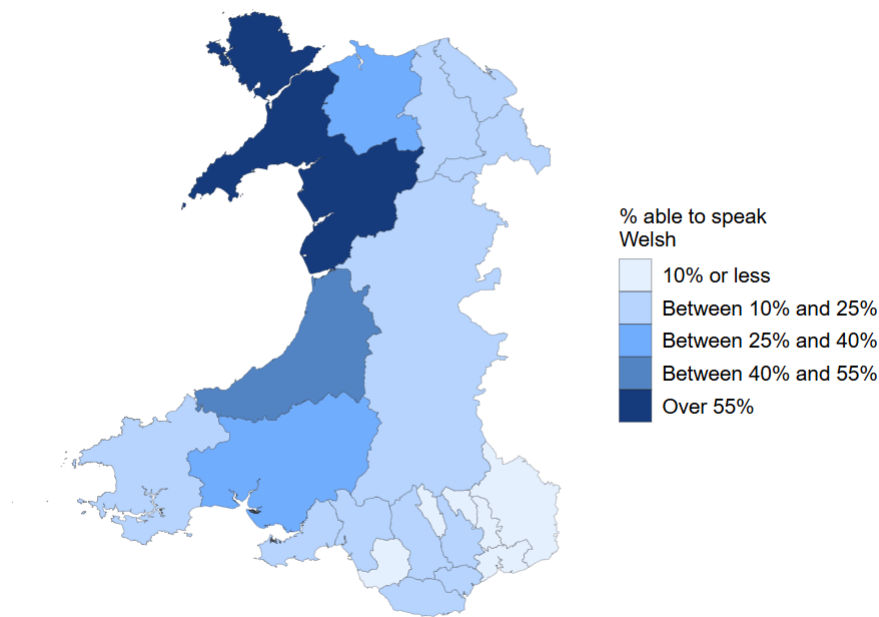


Figure 3: Percentage of people aged three or older able to speak Welsh, by local authority, 2021 Source: (*Welsh Language in Wales (Census 2021) Statistical Document 6th December 2022*).

- 3.6 The 2021 Census indicates that in the Vale of Glamorgan 14,735 (11.5%) of people aged 3 were able to speak Welsh which is an increase from the 2011 Census which recorded that 10.8% of people aged 3 were able to speak Welsh. This compares with 17.8% in Wales as a whole. Table 1 below illustrates the changes in the percentage of Welsh speakers by local authority between the 2011 and the 2021 Census.

Local Authority	2011 %	2021 %	Change % Points	Rank (2021 %)
Anglesey	57.2	55.8	-1.5	2
Blaenau Gwent	7.8	6.2	-1.6	22
Bridgend	9.7	9.2	-0.5	17
Caerphilly	11.2	10.5	-0.7	16
Cardiff	11.1	12.2	1.1	11
Carmarthenshire	43.9	39.9	-4.1	4
Ceredigion	47.3	45.3	-2.0	3
Conwy	27.4	25.9	-1.5	5
Denbighshire	24.6	22.5	-2.1	6
Flintshire	13.2	11.6	-1.6	13
Gwynedd	65.4	64.4	-1.0	1
Merthyr Tydfil	8.9	8.9	0.0	18
Monmouthshire	9.9	8.7	-1.2	19
Neath Port Talbot	15.3	13.5	-1.8	9
Newport	9.3	7.5	-1.8	21
Pembrokeshire	19.2	17.2	-2.1	7
Powys	18.6	16.4	-2.1	8
Rhondda Cynon Taf	12.3	12.4	0.1	10
Swansea	11.4	11.2	-0.2	15
Torfaen	9.8	8.2	-1.6	20
Vale of Glamorgan	10.8	11.5	0.7	14
Wrexham	12.9	12.2	-0.7	12
Wales	19.0	17.8	-1.2	

Table 1: Percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales by local authority in 2011 and 2021. *Source: Census 2011 and 2021*

Annual Population Survey (Year Ending 30 June 2025)

- 3.7 The Annual Population Survey is the largest ongoing household survey in the UK, based on interviews with the members of randomly selected households, the survey covers a diverse range of topics, including personal characteristics, labour market status, work characteristics, education and health. While the Census of Population is the key source used to measure the number of Welsh speakers in Wales, as a quarterly survey, the APS is useful to look at trends in the Welsh language between censuses. Notwithstanding this, in October 2024 the status of the outputs from the APS were downgraded by the ONS and OSR and re-designated as 'official statistics in development' due to increasing uncertainty around the robustness of the data due to a decrease in the sample size. Historically a far greater number of people are recorded as being able to speak Welsh in the APS than in the Census.
- 3.8 The most recent data provided in the Welsh Government Annual Population Survey (APS)(year ending 30th June 2025) indicates that 31,500 or 24.8% of the Vale's population aged 3 or over can speak Welsh, this is below the national average of 27.2% across Wales and is a significant decrease over the 12

months from June 2024 when 35,700 people identified as being able to speak Welsh.

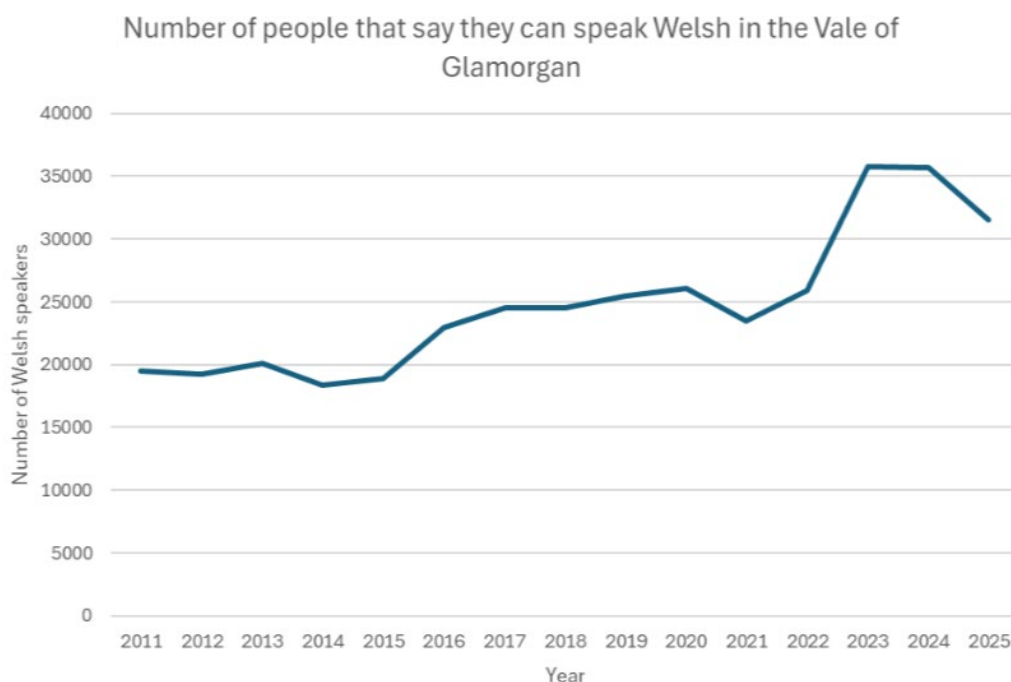


Figure 4: The people that say they can speak Welsh in the Vale of Glamorgan from 2011 to 2025 (Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS).

- 3.9 Notwithstanding the robustness of the APS statistics detailed above, Figure 4 illustrates that while there has been an increase in the percentage of Vale residents aged 3 plus that can speak Welsh since the 2011 Census, there have been variations between years, and the latest data set again shows a significant drop of 4,200 people since the year ending June 2024.
- 3.10 Figure 5 below shows the age and gender of Welsh speakers from 2021 Welsh National survey data which shows that the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in the Vale are in the younger age groups, reflecting an increase in the number of children attending Welsh Medium schools. There are also notably more female Welsh speakers than male.

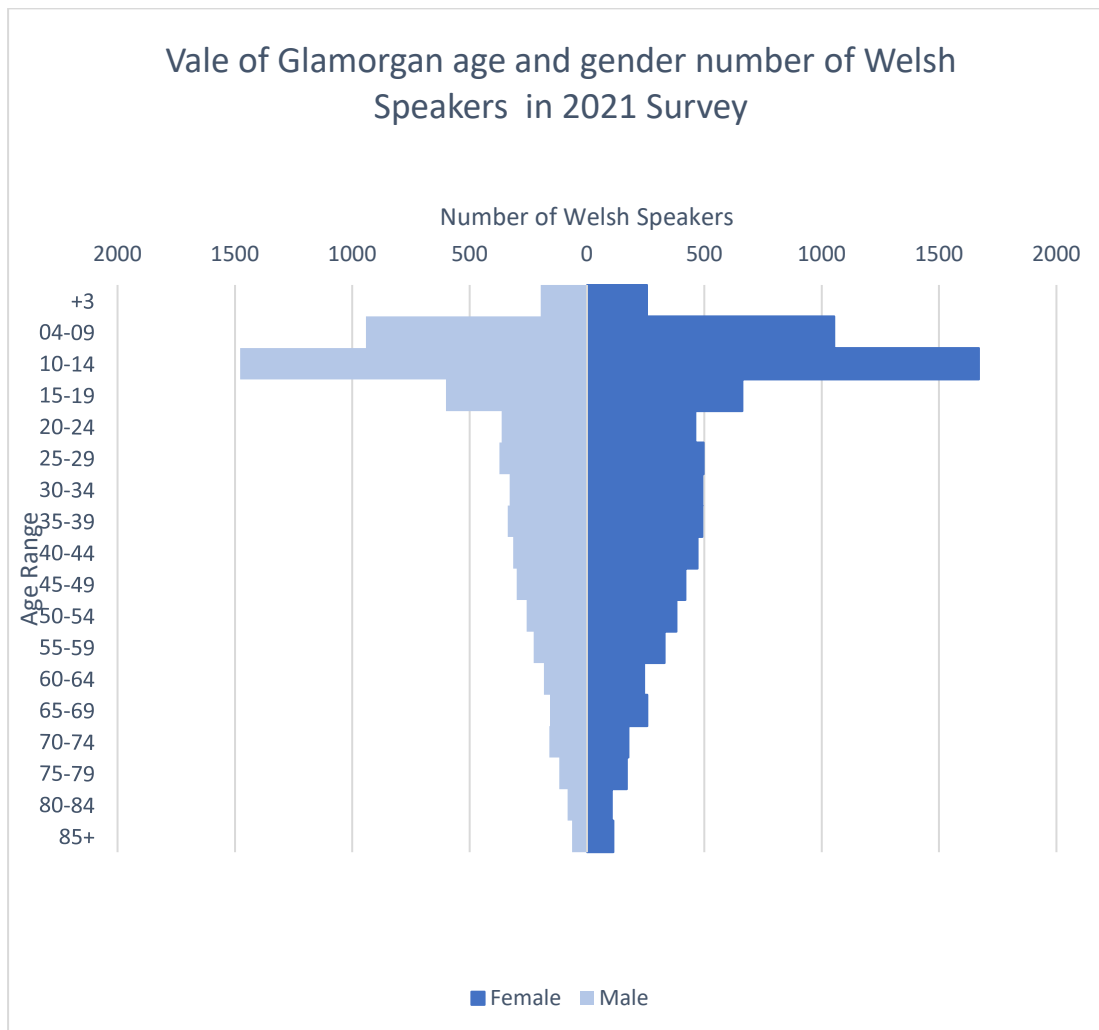


Figure 5: Age and gender of the Welsh speakers in Vale of Glamorgan (Source: Census 2021).

Distribution of Welsh speakers

- 3.11 The 2021 Census data allow us to look at how Welsh-speaking ability varies within local authorities, down to small geographic areas. Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are part of a hierarchy of statistical geographies (Office for National Statistics). They are designed to be as consistent in population size as possible. There are currently 1,917 LSOAs in Wales, each with a usually resident population of between 1,000 and 3,000 persons. Prior to Census 2021 there were 1,909 LSOAs in Wales.

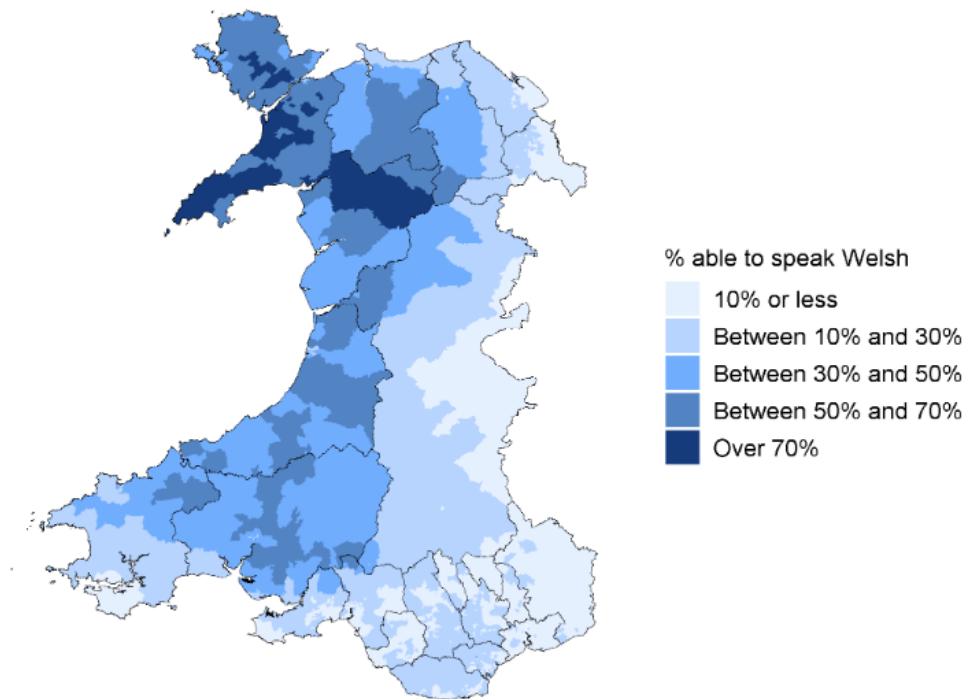


Figure 6: Percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh, by LSOA, 2021 (*Source: Census 2021*).

- 3.12 In 2021, more than half the population aged three years or older were able to speak Welsh in 7% of LSOAs, a decrease from 9% in 2011. The percentage of LSOAs in which more than 70% of their population aged three years or older were able to speak Welsh also decreased from 3% in 2011 to 2% in 2021. People able to speak Welsh were slightly less likely to live in areas that had a high proportion of people able to speak Welsh in 2021 compared with 2011. In 2021, 27% of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh lived in LSOAs where over half the population were able to speak Welsh, and 9% lived in LSOAs where over 70% of the population were able to speak Welsh. The equivalent figures for 2011 were 32% and 11% respectively.

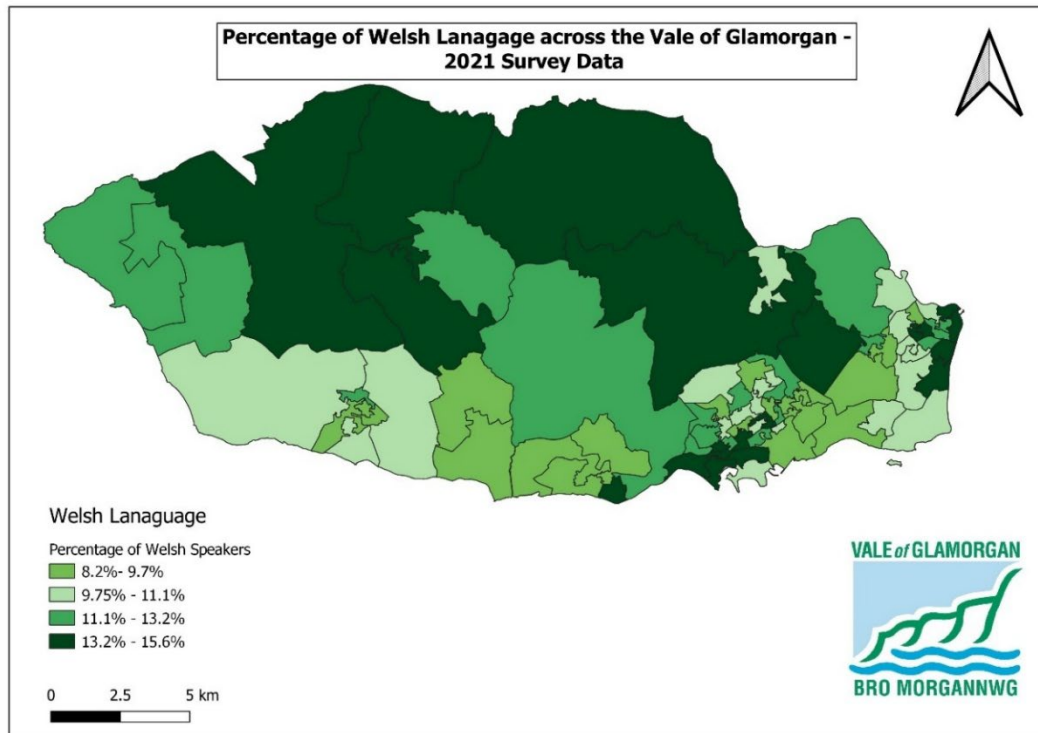


Figure 7: Percentage of Welsh speakers by LSOA across the Vale of Glamorgan
(Source: 2021 Census)

- 3.13 There are some localised differences in the number of Welsh speakers within the Vale of Glamorgan, with the highest concentrations in LSOAs in Penarth, Barry Waterfront, Rhoose and Cowbridge and some of the more rural areas in the northern Vale.
- 3.14 The lowest percentage levels of Welsh speakers are in Llantwit Major St Athan, Rhoose and East Barry.

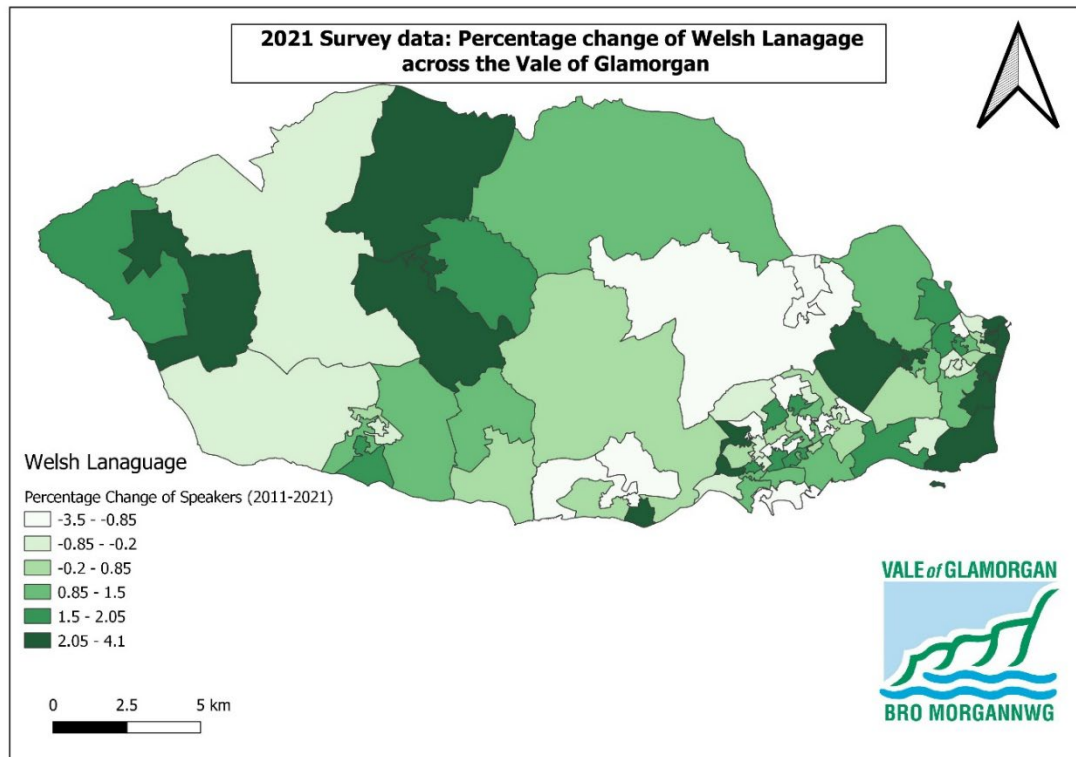


Figure 8 - The percentage change of Welsh speakers by LSOA between 2011 and 2021 (Source: 2011 and 2021 Census)

- 3.15 Figure 8 illustrates the percentage change in the number of Welsh speakers within the Vale of Glamorgan between the 2011 census and the 2021 census in each LSOA and indicates that many LSOA have seen increases in Welsh speakers. The distribution indicates that the core increase of Welsh speakers is centred around three main areas, St Brides, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge and Barry and Penarth. The data indicates that the increase in Welsh speakers is largely centred around the most populated and urban areas of the Vale of Glamorgan. St Athan and Peterston Super Ely have seen the most significant decrease in Welsh speakers within the Vale of Glamorgan. Within the Vale, a LSOA in Rhoose saw the most significant increase in Welsh speakers with a rise of 4.4% while a LSOA in the Barry / Cadoc ward saw a percentage decrease of -3.5%.
- 3.16 Table 2 compares the percentage change of Welsh speakers by age category of Vale Glamorgan Welsh speakers and the adjacent local authorities and indicates that Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan are the only local authorities with an overall net gain in Welsh speakers when all age categories are combined, with increases of 1.1% and 0.7% respectively. Except for the 16 to 64 age group, most other age categories for adjacent local authorities have seen decreases in Welsh speakers and in this category, the Vale of Glamorgan has seen an increase of 2%, 0.2% above any local authority within the area.

Local Authority	Aged 3 to 15	Aged 16 to 64	Aged 65+	All ages (3+)
All Wales	-5.7	0.3	-2.3	-1.2
Vale of Glamorgan	-2.5	2.0	-0.1	0.7
Bridgend	-6.6	1.0	-0.5	-0.5
Rhondda Cynon Taf	-5.4	1.8	-0.6	0.1
Cardiff	-0.5	1.4	0.7	1.1

Table 2 - Change in the percentage of people able to speak Welsh, by age group, 2011 – 2021 (Source: *Welsh Language in Wales Census 2021*).

Ward	Total Population 2021 (3+)	Can Speak Welsh 2021	Can Speak Welsh 2011 (%)	Can Speak Welsh 2021 (%)	% Change
Baruc	5,593	761	12.8	13.6	+0.8
Buttrills	6,334	557	8.8	8.8	0.0
Cadoc	9,143	827	9.0	9.0	0.0
Castleland	4,496	363	7.9	8.1	+0.2
Cornerswell	5,302	682	12.0	12.9	+0.9
Court	4,635	344	7.2	7.4	+0.2
Cowbridge	6,290	794	12.2	12.6	+0.4
Dinas	8,460	1,079	12.2	12.8	+0.6
Dyfan	5,618	517	8.9	9.2	+0.3
Illtyd	8,831	1,023	11.2	11.6	+0.4
Llandough	1,939	243	12.2	12.5	+0.3
Llandow / Ewenny	2,933	367	12.4	12.5	+0.1
Llantwit	10,757	1,114	10.2	10.4	+0.2
Peterston super Ely	2,298	321	13.5	14.0	+0.5
Plymouth	5,856	772	12.4	13.2	+0.8
Rhosee	7,938	848	10.4	10.7	+0.3
St Augustines	6,801	974	13.5	14.3	+0.8
St Brides Major	3,369	424	12.3	12.6	+0.3
St Nicholas and Llancafarn	3,121	423	13.0	13.6	+0.6
Stanwell	4,414	569	11.9	12.9	+1.0
Sully	4,964	517	10.0	10.4	+0.4
Wenvoe	2,987	342	11.2	11.5	+0.3

Table 3: Comparison of Welsh Speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan by Electoral Ward 2011 and 2021. Source *Census 2011 and 2021*.

- 3.17 Table 3 illustrates that from the 2011 to the 2021 Census, almost every electoral ward in the Vale of Glamorgan saw a modest increase in the number of Welsh speakers. This contrasts well with other parts of Wales where traditional Welsh speaking areas saw decreases. The growth is evenly distributed between the more urban coastal towns (Barry and Penarth) and the rural western Vale suggesting that Welsh-medium education and professional migration are likely driving factors across the whole county

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 (WIMD)

- 3.18 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It is designed to identify those small areas where there are the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. WIMD ranks all small areas in Wales from 1 (most deprived) to 1,917 (least deprived).
- 3.19 It is an accredited official statistic produced by the statisticians at the Welsh Government. WIMD is used by Welsh Government and other government bodies, local government and Public Service Boards, academics and students, as well as the third sector and private sector. The purpose of the index is to provide evidence about the most deprived areas of Wales to inform a variety of decisions and research, including funding or targeting of programmes and services for local areas.
- 3.20 The 2025 release methodology is broadly the same as for previous indices, with the same eight domains or types of deprivation captured i.e. Income, Employment, Health, Education, Access to services, Housing, Community Safety and Physical Environment. However, some new datasets. Methodologies and geographies have been used to produce WIMD 2025 meaning that the outputs are therefore not directly comparable to previous indices.

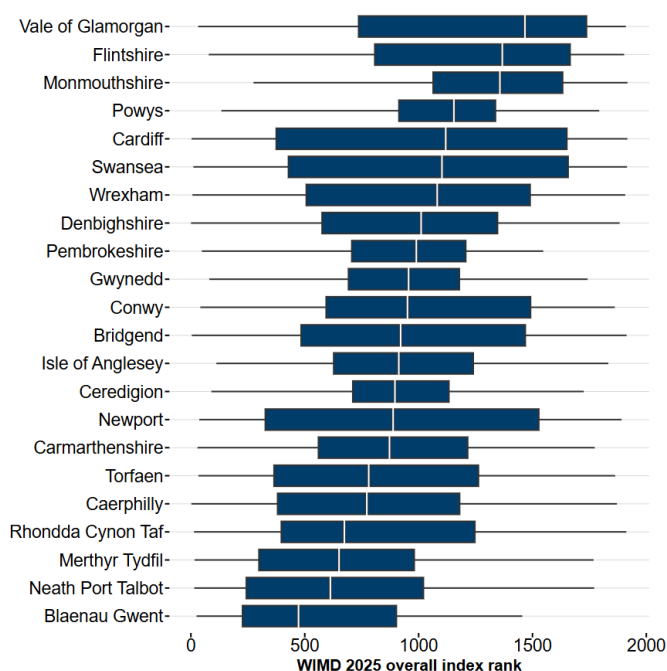


Figure 9: Box plot of WIMD 2025 ranks by local authority (Source: *Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Results 2025*).

- 3.21 The chart at Figure 9, illustrates that the Vale of Glamorgan is an affluent and attractive area to live and work and ranks as the least deprived local authority in Wales. The chart is centred on the median (middle) rank for each local authority and the 'whiskers' show the full range of ranks within the local

authority. Deprivation increases with decreasing rank (that is, towards the left-hand side of the plot).

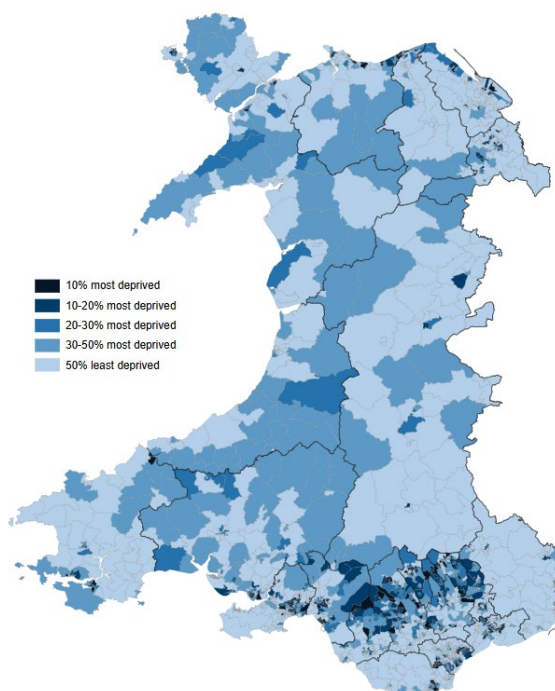


Figure 10: Map of LSOAs shaded by deprivation group in Wales, WIMD 2025 (Source: Welsh Government).

Welsh index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) Percentages of Most Deprived areas in the Vale of Glamorgan

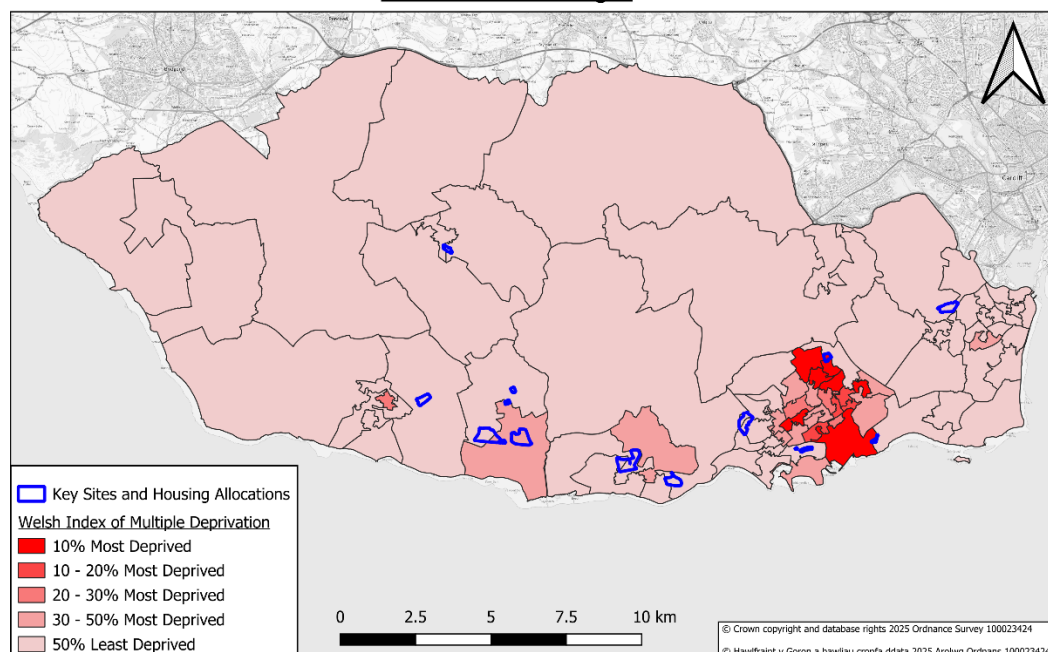


Figure 11 - Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation in Vale of Glamorgan with Replacement Local Development Plan Housing Sites (Source – STATSWALES 2025/Vale of Glamorgan)

3.22 The Vale of Glamorgan is regarded as an affluent and attractive area to live and work; however, pockets of poverty and deprivation do exist.

- 3.23 Figure 11 illustrates that most of the Vale of Glamorgan is within the 50% least deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Wales. However, there are areas of the Vale, most notably in eastern Barry where high levels of unemployment, low levels of income and educational deprivation exist that highlight the locations of pockets of deprivation. These exist primarily within certain areas and neighbourhoods of Barry and most significantly these areas fall within the 10% most deprived Wales. The three LSOAs with the highest overall deprivation in the Vale of Glamorgan are:
- Gibbonsdown 2 (ranked 32nd out 1,917 LSOAs in Wales).
 - Castleland (ranked 120th out of 1,907 LSOAs in Wales).
 - Gibbonsdown (ranked 135th out of 1,917 LSOAs in Wales).
- 3.24 There are also several LSOAs within Barry that fall in the 10 – 20% most deprived in Wales and there are further areas within and surrounding Barry that fall within the 20% - 40% most deprived LSOAs in Wales. There are also pockets of deprivation in Llantwit Major, St Athan, Rhoose and Penarth as shown in Figure 11. Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that while the Barry area includes some of the most deprived areas in the Vale, it also hosts 3 Welsh medium primary and one Welsh secondary school that provide opportunities for Welsh education.

Education

- 3.25 The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to inspiring children and young people to use Welsh in all aspects of their lives, working with partners across agencies locally in the Vale and beyond. Opportunities for pupils to use the Welsh language in formal and non-formal settings are provided by schools themselves, as well as partners such as Mudiad Meithrin, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Menter Bro Morgannwg.
- 3.26 Welsh primary and secondary schools in the Vale are primarily located within or near the main urban centres. Figure 7 illustrates the distribution of the Welsh primary and secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. Additional provision is also available within the neighbouring local authorities of Bridgend County Borough Council and Cardiff Council to the West and East respectively.

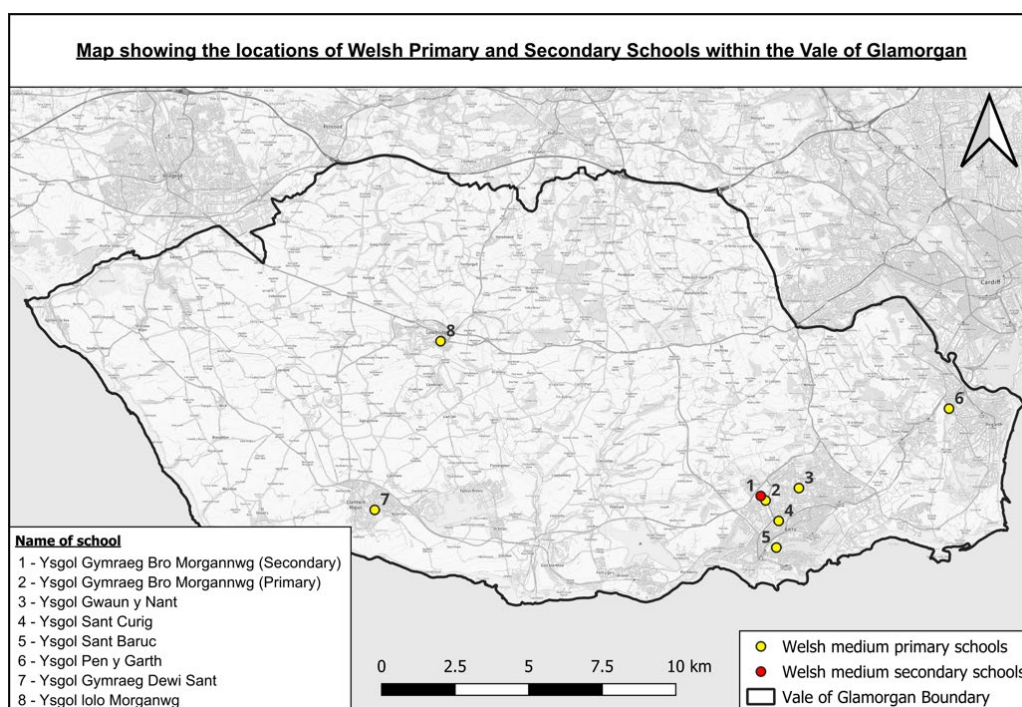


Figure 12 – Map of Welsh primary and secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan (Source – Vale of Glamorgan Council)

3.27 The Vale is served by 7 Welsh Medium primary schools and one Welsh Medium 3-18 school. In addition, the Vale of Glamorgan has good Welsh medium education provision for preschool age children at several Cylchoedd Meithrin, day nurseries and nursery classes in schools. Table 4 illustrates the level of this provision as detailed in the latest Welsh in Education Strategic plan 2022-2032.

Cylchoedd Meithrin	Area	Places available
Cylch Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr	Llantwit Major	30
Cylch Meithrin Dechrau Dysgu	Barry	30
Cylch Meithrin Bethel	Penarth	16
Cylch Meithrin Bethesda	Barry	24
Cylch Meithrin Dinas Powys	Dinas Powys	13
Cylch Meithrin Y Bontfaen	Cowbridge	29
Cylch Meithrin Pili Pala	Barry	35
	Total	177
Welsh Medium Primary School	Area	Places available
Ysgol Pen y Garth	Penarth	76
Ysgol St Baruc	Barry	48
Ysgol St Curig	Barry	114
Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant	Barry	82
Ysgol Dewi Sant	Llantwit Major	56
Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg	Cowbridge	66
3-19 Welsh Medium Schools		
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg	Barry	56
	Total	498

Table 4: Vale of Glamorgan Cylchoedd Meithrin, day nurseries and nursery classes. (Source – Vale of Glamorgan Council Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032)

- 3.28 There is currently one Welsh medium school teaching secondary age pupils in the Vale of Glamorgan, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg. The school teaches 3–19-year-olds and all learners attending the school study through the medium of Welsh. Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg has been expanded from 1,361 places to 1,660 places to meet the increased demand for places which became operational in September 2020 under the 21st Century Schools programme (Band B funding tranche).
- 3.29 Several new primary and secondary schools have been developed across the Vale as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme (previously known as 21st Century Schools), with further plans as part of the programme progressing. This includes replacement schools with increased capacity at St Richard Gwyn Catholic School in Barry (secondary), Ysgol Gymraeg Iolo Morganwg in Cowbridge (primary) and increased Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision at Ysgol Llyn Derw at Cosmeston. In preparing the RLDP, the Council has considered educational needs arising from planned growth, especially within those areas where capacity is limited.
- 3.30 The latest StatsWales School Census returns 2024/25 (authorised by headteachers and validated by Local Authorities) indicate that in the year groups 1-11 in 2024/25 2,431 pupils were taught Welsh as a first language in primary, middle and secondary school in the Vale of Glamorgan. This is a slight decrease from the previous year, although this is reflective of overall numbers on roll falling due to a declining birth rate. Figure 13 illustrates the change in pupil numbers taught Welsh as a first language since 2020/21 and Table 5 illustrates the latest figures for 2024/25.

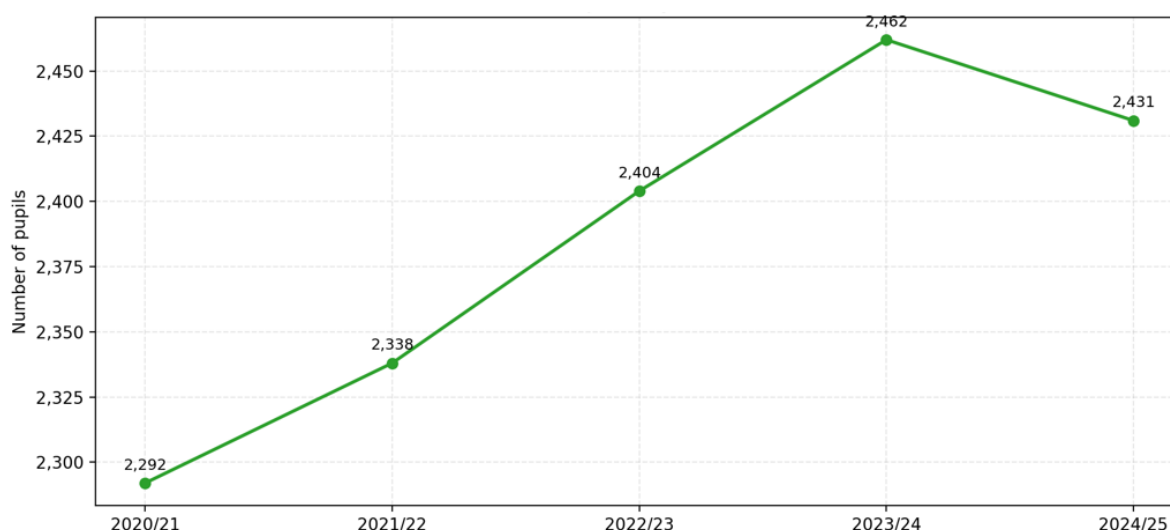


Figure 13: Pupils taught Welsh as a first language in primary, middle and secondary schools in year groups 1-11 in the Vale of Glamorgan 2020/21 to 2024/25. (Source: StatsWales)

Year/Group	Total Number	Total Number taught Welsh as 1 st language	Percentage
2024/2025			
Nursery	1,635	290	17.7

Reception	1,430	250	17.5
Year Group 1	1,425	225	15.7
Year Group 2	1,575	255	16.3
Year Group 3	1,605	250	15.6
Year Group 4	1,620	245	15.0
Year Group 5	1,665	235	14.2
Year Group 6	1,565	205	13.0
Year Group 7	1,600	210	13.2
Year Group 8	1,685	215	12.7
Year Group 9	1,665	190	11.3
Year Group 10	1,690	195	11.5
Year Group 11	1,635	205	12.7
Year Group 12	845	115	13.6
Year Group 13	680	75	11.3
	22,330	3,165	

Table 5: Pupils in maintained schools taught Welsh as a first language in the Vale of Glamorgan 2024/25. (Source: StatsWales).

- 3.31 Figure 5 above illustrates the age demographic of Welsh speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan and shows that by far the largest concentration of Welsh speakers, more than 50%, are below 20 years of age, and this statistic is a key competent in planning for Welsh language going forward in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 3.32 The WESP 2022-2032 states that the “*key driver in the planning of additional Welsh medium places is to ensure that wherever possible, parents have an opportunity to access Welsh medium education close to home. It is acknowledged that this is currently challenging for families residing in some areas of the rural Vale.*”
- 3.33 The WESP identifies that there has been substantial investment in increasing Welsh Medium capacity in the Vale as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. Band A of the programme delivered an increase in capacity for Welsh medium education via the creation of two new primary schools, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg in Barry (Primary provision) and Ysgol Dewi Sant in Llantwit Major and the expansion of Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant. As part of Band B of the programme a new 2-form entry primary school building was constructed as part of the Barry Waterfront Development with Ysgol Sant Baruc transferring to the new school building, providing an additional 210 primary places. The Council has also invested more than £21m increasing secondary capacity at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg to provide an additional 299 secondary places, whilst also upgrading existing facilities to provide state of the art learning environments.
- 3.34 The WESP identifies further schools including future Welsh medium primary expansion in Cowbridge. This will involve the relocation of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg to Land North West of Darren Farm, known as Clare Gardens, with an increased capacity from 210 to 420 places.
- 3.35 The WESP has identified that “*based on the evidence to-date on the increasing demand stemming from new provision, identification of additional secondary*

provision is required and will be considered as part of ongoing school organisation planning. The Council will seek to identify a new site in the Penarth or Cowbridge area following an evaluation of the sufficiency of demand to support the proposed school. It is considered this would need to form part of the Council's Replacement Local Development Plan which is currently in the initial stages of being produced. This would result in new school sites being allocated in the replacement plan to ensure they are considered appropriate through the planning process and can be delivered in planning terms."

- 3.36 In recognising a potential demand for additional Welsh Medium secondary school in the Cowbridge area, the Council have undertaken an initial assessment of available land where no suitable sites in the area were identified. As part of the RLDP, new development, including two key sites, is targeted to St Athan and therefore consideration has been given to the potential to locate a 3-18 school in the St Athan area. Land is safeguarded in the Deposit Plan for community facilities on land south of the railway in St Athan, which may include Welsh Medium school provision, subject to an evaluation of demand and approval of a strategic outline business case. This 3-18 school could serve the Welsh Medium needs of the Western Vale.

Welsh Language Transmission Rates

- 3.37 The Welsh language transmission rate refers to the percentage of children who are able to speak Welsh when living in a household with at least one Welsh speaking adult. It is considered the most crucial metric for the longer-term survival and vitality of the Welsh language.
- 3.38 Where both adults speak Welsh within a household, approximately 81% (the transmission rate) of their 3–4-year-olds can speak Welsh. If only one adult within the household speaks Welsh, the transmission rate drops to approximately 40% highlighting that single adult Welsh speaking households are not as effective at passing on the language. Female speakers are more likely to transmit Welsh (45%) than male speakers (34%) in partnered households, while lone parent Welsh speaking households maintain a consistent 53% transmission rate.

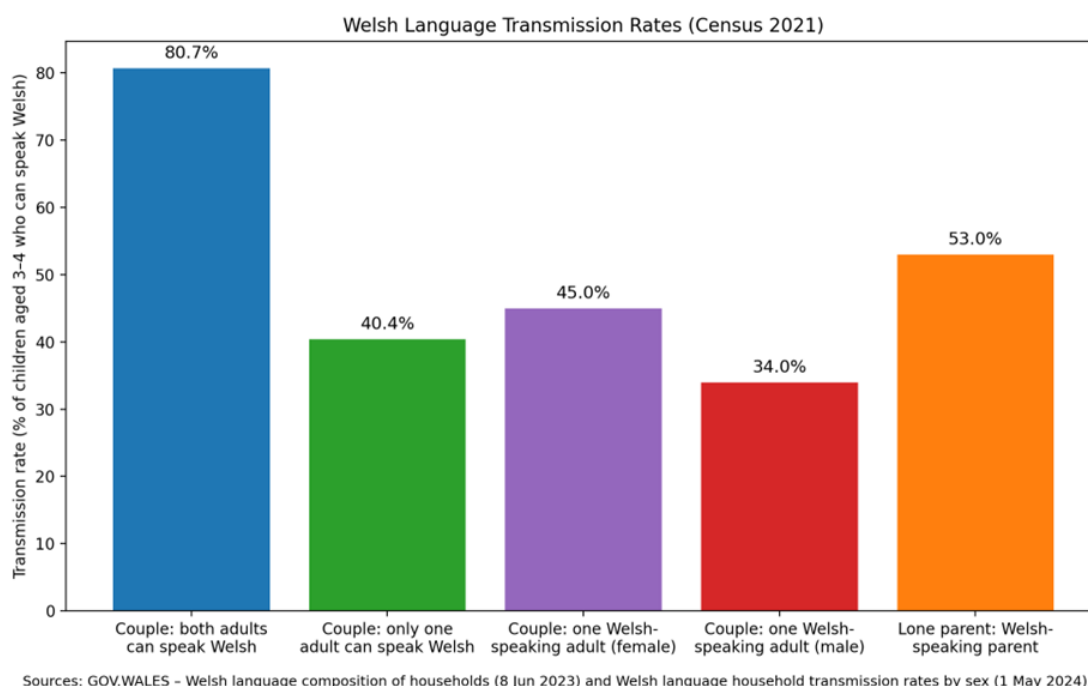


Figure 14: Welsh Language Transmission Rates 2021. (Source Census 2021)

3.39 Table 6 below illustrates the Welsh language transmission rates for dependent children (aged 3-4 years) living in households where two or more adults can speak Welsh, including at least both partners, by local authority in Wales. The table shows that while the transmission rate varies somewhat between the local authority areas, the Vale of Glamorgan performs well and ranks 6th with a transmission rate of 79%.

Local Authority	Transmission Rate (%)	Rank
Anglesey	82	=5
Blaenau Gwent	(c*)	=17
Bridgend	67	14
Caerphilly	77	7
Cardiff	90	1
Carmarthenshire	83	4
Ceredigion	85	3
Conwy	71	10
Denbighshire	82	=5
Flintshire	76	8
Gwynedd	89	2
Merthyr Tydfil	(c*)	=17
Monmouthshire	(c*)	=17
Neath Port Talbot	70	11
Newport	63	16
Pembrokeshire	65	15
Powys	74	=9
Rhondda Cynon Taf	74	=9
Swansea	68	13
Torfaen	(c*)	=17
Vale of Glamorgan	79	6

Wrexham	69	12
Wales	81	

Table 6: Welsh language transmission rates for dependent children (aged 3-4 years) living in households where ‘two or more adults can speak Welsh, including at least both partners’ by local authority. (Source Census 2021)

* [c] = data item is disclosive (i.e. figure is low, and not reported to protect anonymity)

4. Replacement Local Development Plan

Delivery Agreement

- 4.1 The Delivery Agreement (DA) sets out the timetable to produce the RLDP and includes the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS). The CIS sets out details of how and when the Council intends to engage with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders, partners, and members of the public throughout the plan preparation process. The CIS provides details of the form that this engagement will take and how the Council will respond to representations received and how these representations might inform subsequent stages of plan preparation. who we will consult, and when we will consult them.
- 4.2 As well as including specific groups and organisations which represent the interests of Welsh Culture within the Vale of Glamorgan as consultation bodies such as Cymdeithas yr iaith Gymraeg, Institute of Welsh Affairs and Menter Iaith Bro Morgannwg the DA includes a specific section on the Welsh Language which confirms the Council's commitment to implementing the Welsh Language Standards and providing Welsh language services across all the services which it provides. Specific to the RLDP, this section also includes details of how bilingual engagement on the RLDP will be undertaken including:
- Welcoming correspondence in Welsh and English and where correspondence is received in Welsh and a reply is necessary, this will be in Welsh.
 - All consultation letters, comment forms, public notices (including site notices) and newsletters associated with the LDP will be bilingual.
 - Any RLDP pages on the Council website and social media posts published on Twitter and Facebook will be bilingual.
 - Any public meetings will be conducted bilingually where a request has been made ahead of time.
 - Draft RLDP documents can be made available in Welsh if requested. The adopted RLDP will be available in both Welsh and English.

Preferred Strategy Consultation

- 4.3 To inform the emerging RLDP the Preferred Strategy consultation included a question on the impacts of the proposals set out in the Preferred Strategy on the Welsh language. The Preferred Strategy included details on the strategic priorities for development during the RLDP period and outlined the key economic, social and environmental issues that needed to be addressed.
- 4.4 The Preferred Strategy included a vision of how the Vale of Glamorgan should develop and identified the general locations of where development was considered appropriate. The strategy also set out objectives for the plan and established a series of strategic policies that would guide future growth and address the needs identified.

- 4.5 The consultation form included at Question 11, a question which asked how the Preferred Strategy would impact the Welsh language within the Vale of Glamorgan. Specifically, the question stated that - *“We would like to know your views on the effects that these proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?”*.
- 4.6 Table 7 below sets out the count of responses to question 11 and it should be noted that most of the objections received were in relation to the relevance of the inclusion of the question itself rather than to the impacts of the Preferred Strategy proposals on the Welsh language in the Vale of Glamorgan. In future public consultations a better explanation of the purpose of the question may be needed to avoid unnecessary frustrations from the public over the validity of the question to increase meaningful responses.

Survey Category	Count of Reps
Comment	182
Object	1,042
Support	118
Grand Total	1,342

Table 7: Count of representations to Question 11 (Welsh language) within the Preferred Strategy consultations. (Source Vale of Glamorgan Council)

- 4.7 In summary and excluding the superfluous objections to the inclusion of the question itself, the feedback from question 11 largely generated a strong commitment from residents to preserve and promote the Welsh language and cultural heritage within their communities. Many respondents expressed concerns about potential negative impacts on local identities due to housing projects that threaten green spaces and vital cultural sites. Comments emphasised the need for educational resources that incorporate the Welsh language and called for greater community engagement in planning processes. Residents advocate for a more inclusive dialogue with local councils to ensure that the voices of Welsh speakers are heard in decisions affecting infrastructure and community amenities.
- 4.8 Additionally, as with most development plan proposals, concern was expressed regarding the adequacy of public services, including healthcare and transportation, to support growing populations in Welsh-speaking areas. Residents emphasised that effective public transport is crucial for accessing language resources and cultural activities, thereby enhancing community engagement. Furthermore, many assert that local planning policies must

prioritise the Welsh language and its integration into economic growth initiatives, ensuring that future developments are sympathetic to the needs and aspirations of Welsh-speaking communities. The collective sentiment underscores the importance of safeguarding the Welsh language as an integral aspect of community identity amidst ongoing urbanisation.

- 4.9 More details and analysis of the responses to the Welsh language impact question of the Preferred Strategy consultation are available in Annex 7 of the updated Initial Consultation Report May 2024 (Updated September 2024).

Housing Allocations in the RLDP

- 4.10 It is responsibility of the local planning authority to provide for the broad distribution and phasing of housing development considering the ability of different areas and communities to accommodate the development without eroding the position of the Welsh language. Appropriate development plan policies regarding the broad scale, location and phasing of new development and policies on affordable housing inter alia can contribute and support this objective. However, policies should not seek to introduce any element of discrimination between individuals based on their linguistic ability and should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds.
- 4.11 If the Welsh language is identified as a significant part of the social fabric of a community, the early stages of plan preparation (preferred strategy, sustainability appraisal) should seek to incorporate assessment criteria which should consider the potential impact on Welsh language. Depending on the significance assigned to the Welsh language one of the issues that LDPs may need to address is how the land use planning system can be used to consider and support and, if necessary, mitigate any effects of development on the Welsh language and the sustainability of the Welsh language communities that have been identified.
- 4.12 A recent report by the Commission for Welsh speaking Communities titled Empowering communities, strengthening the Welsh language (August 2024) makes 57 recommendations in several key policy areas aimed at strengthening the Welsh language within communities in Wales. Central to the proposals to protect and strengthen Welsh as a thriving community language is the designation of area of higher density linguistic significance. While the report recommends that the statistical threshold should be set by the Welsh Government, the Commission is of the view that there should be a presumption in favour of designating the threshold as 40% with discretion for local authorities to designate areas of higher density linguistic significance and thresholds. Areas of linguistic sensitivity are areas where a significant proportion of the population speak Welsh, either compared with the local area in general or where the percentage is equal or higher to the national average. Each local planning authority's areas of linguistic sensitivity or significance will therefore be different; however, these areas are usually areas where at least 20% of the resident population speak Welsh.

- 4.13 Within the Vale of Glamorgan, there are no designated areas of linguistic sensitivity identified (these are usually areas where at least 20% of the population speak Welsh), however the latest 2021 Census data indicates that the highest level of Welsh speakers within the Vale of Glamorgan averages around 14%, well below the 20% threshold. Figure 15 illustrates the percentage of Welsh language across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 4.14 From the analysis of the Welsh survey data and overlaying the allocated sites (see figure 6) from the LDP no development is located within area that has reach the threshold for Welsh language to be specially incorporated within the plan.

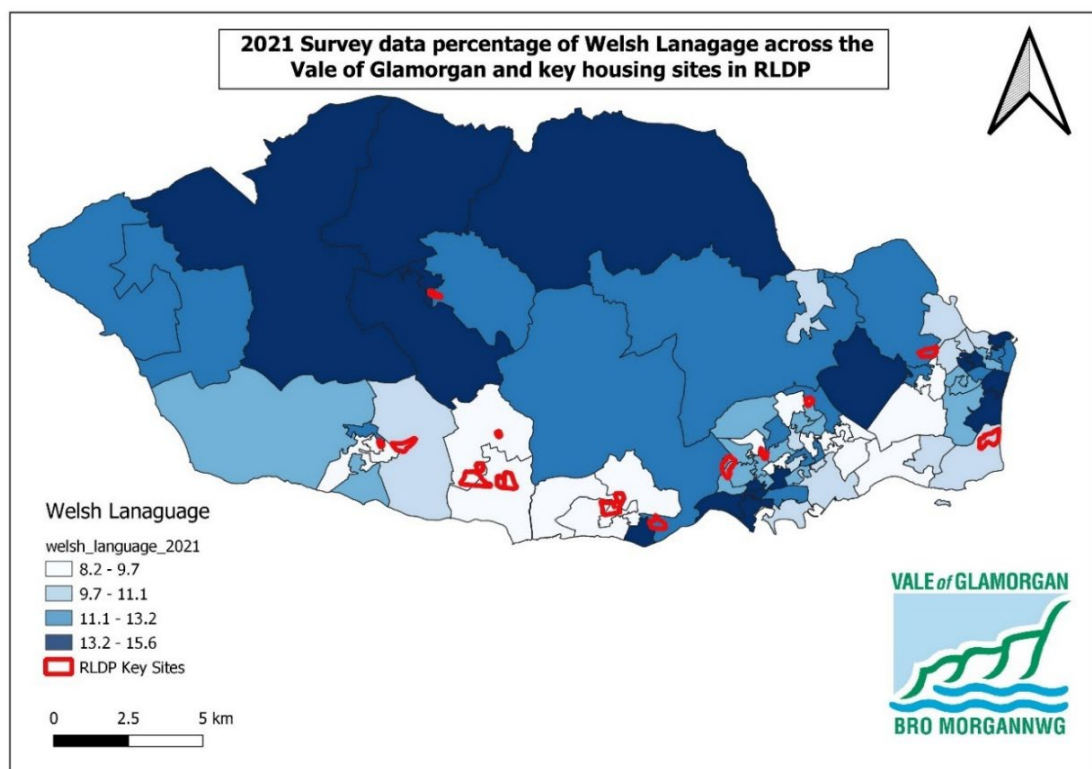


Figure 15 - Allocated Housing in the RLDP cross referenced with Welsh survey data. (Source: Vale of Glamorgan Council).

- 4.15 Notwithstanding the above, the RLDP includes key themes that seek to ensure that the plan provides a policy framework that will address the land use issues faced by the Vale of Glamorgan and all its communities including Welsh speaking communities. Having regard to the above context and characteristics of the Vale, including key issues in national policy and other local and regional plans and strategies, the RLDP includes nine Key themes which have guided and shaped the plan. These include:



Housing supply needs to be able to respond to the authority's growing population but must also be appropriate in terms of type, tenure and location. In addition, there must be an adequate provision of affordable, older persons and specialist housing in order to cater to those in need.



Placemaking

Facilitate the development of adaptable, safe, accessible, well-connected communities that have a strong sense of identity, offer a sustainable range of services and facilities and are equipped with appropriate supporting infrastructure.



Embracing Culture and Heritage

Preserve and enhance the authority's cultural and heritage assets, maximising opportunities presented by the Vale's historic built and natural environmental and cultural identity.



Fostering Diverse, Vibrant and Connected Communities

Foster the development of well-connected, safe and cohesive communities and ensure all engagement processes are as inclusive as possible, allowing everyone that wishes to share their views throughout the RLDP process to do so.

- 4.16 The development of the core elements of the RLDP; namely the Vision, objectives and strategic policies of the deposit plan have been shaped by these key themes. The following extracts from the Vision and strategic objectives are directly relevant to ensuring that the Welsh language is not prejudiced by new development proposed in the Deposit Plan or other development that may come forward over the plan period.

Vale of Glamorgan RLDP Vision (extracts)

The Vale of Glamorgan is a healthy and inclusive place for everyone, with equitable access to services and facilities both physically and digitally. Residents are proud of where they live and have access to the homes they need. Housing growth has delivered homes which caters for all, including affordable homes and older person's housing; contributing towards diverse and cohesive communities where residents can maintain their independence.

Through placemaking, places and spaces are safe, accessible and socially inclusive. Development respects local character and sense of place is valued by residents and contributes positively towards health and well-being. Positive improvements have been achieved in narrowing the disparities in the quality of life and causes of ill health have been reduced for residents living in the most deprived areas through improved access to employment, education, training, services, and investment in the built environment.

The Vale continues to be a place where the culture and diversity of people, and the unique qualities of its communities, are recognised and championed. Placemaking supports a strong sense of community and has contributed to improving the quality of life for all generations.

RLDP Strategic Objectives (extracts)

Objective 3 - Homes for All

- Ensure that all new residential developments provide high quality housing that includes the right mix, tenure and type of homes that respond to the changing needs of the Vale's population. This includes homes that are affordable, accessible and adaptable for people of all ages and that address the identified accommodation needs of all the Vale's communities through all stages of life.

Objective 4 – Placemaking

- Through placemaking, ensure that all development will contribute positively toward creating a sense of place. All new development will be appropriately located and contribute toward creating active, safe, and accessible places that contain a range of uses. The character of existing communities will be protected and enhanced by developing places that respect local distinctiveness and the existing setting.
- Facilitate the provision of accessible community infrastructure that is tailored to meet the needs of the community, including high quality health, education, training, cultural, social, recreation, and community facilities and spaces.

Objective 6 - Embracing Culture and Heritage

- Maintain and enhance the Vale's cultural facilities, and where appropriate secure opportunities for cultural enrichment within new developments, including promoting the use of the Welsh language, the public realm and through the provision of multi-purpose community spaces and buildings.

Objective 7 - Fostering Diverse, Vibrant, and Connected Communities

- Facilitate physical, economic, and social regeneration, reflecting the needs and aspirations of local communities, through the provision of new homes, employment, and enhanced transport connectivity.

4.17 While the key themes, Vision and strategic objectives set the overall direction of the Plan, the Strategic and Development Management policies aim to guide development proposals towards positive economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes, including support for cultural identity and the Welsh language.

4.18 In this regard, policy SP13 – Community Infrastructure and Planning Obligations seeks to ensure that where appropriate and having regard to development viability, the Council will secure new and improved community infrastructure, facilities, and services appropriate to the scale, type, and location of proposed developments using planning obligations. Community infrastructure may include the provision, improvement and long-term maintenance of a range of infrastructure including Welsh language facilities.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The evidence presented in this background paper demonstrates that the Welsh language, while an important part of Wales' cultural heritage, does not hold a position of significant cultural prominence within the Vale of Glamorgan and that the RLDP is unlikely to materially influence the status, use or vitality of the Welsh language within the area.
- 5.2 The 2021 Census data and local surveys confirm that Welsh speakers account for approximately 11.5% of the population, which is below the national average and dispersed across the county with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in the Vale of Glamorgan being found within the school age population.
- 5.3 While available data indicates a gradual increase in the use of the Welsh language within the Vale of Glamorgan, no designated areas of linguistic sensitivity i.e. areas where at least 20% of the population speak Welsh, have been identified and the analysis of allocated housing sites within the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) indicates that these sites do not intersect with areas where the Welsh language is a defining characteristic of community life.
- 5.4 Therefore, in this context, it is considered that the inclusion of a standalone Welsh language policy within the RLDP is not warranted. However, the Plan acknowledges its statutory duty to consider the Welsh language and has embedded relevant provisions within broader thematic policies to ensure compliance with national targets and guidance. These include commitments to sustainable placemaking, cultural identity, and community infrastructure, which collectively support opportunities for Welsh language use across the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 5.5 In this regard, the plan, allocates land for the provision of new and enhanced education facilities in Cowbridge, St Athan, Barry, and Cosmeston, in response to increased demand for school places, including Welsh-medium education school places, in these local communities.
- 5.6 The Vale of Glamorgan Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022–2032 identifies a forecasted increase in demand for Welsh-medium secondary school places, and while Welsh Medium secondary school provision would need to be considered following an evaluation of the sufficiency of demand, the RLDP safeguards land for additional community facilities on land to the south of the railway in St Athan, which may include new Welsh-medium school provision. Further, the provision of Welsh language facilities is identified amongst a range of community infrastructure that could be provided through the use of planning obligations on new development that support sustainable communities.
- 5.7 In summary therefore, given the limited prevalence of the Welsh language use in daily life within the Vale of Glamorgan, the policies and proposals of the Vale

of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan are considered unlikely to adversely affect the existing patterns of Welsh language use within the Vale of Glamorgan and the plans commitments to sustainable placemaking, cultural identity, and community infrastructure, will collectively safeguard opportunities for Welsh language use through the planning process ensuring that the Welsh language is treated as an essential and integral component of sustainable development in support of national policy objectives.



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