



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

# Household estimates: mid-2012 to mid-2023

A report that includes information by household type, population and average size for mid-2012 to mid-2023.

**First published:** 11 December 2024

**Last updated:** 11 December 2024

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# Introduction

Household estimates provide the estimated number of households in Wales based on the latest mid-year population estimates. They are similar to household projections but the key difference between the two is that **household projections** (<https://www.gov.wales/subnational-household-projections>) are based on future population projections, whereas household estimates are based on past population estimates.

The latest household estimates are based on the **Office for National Statistics's (ONS) population estimates for mid-2023** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2023>), which were published on 15 July. The household estimates use data from the latest available censuses of the population about household formation rates and apply them to current population estimates.

The methodology behind how we calculate household estimates has changed for this publication. Further information on this change can be found in the **quality and methodology information section** (<https://www.gov.wales#160472>).

## Main results

- Between mid-2022 and mid-2023, the estimated number of households in Wales increased by around 14,500 (1.1%) to 1.38 million, largely due to an increase in one-person households.
- Since 2011, the estimated number of households has increased by 5.6%.
- The estimated number of households increased for all local authorities in Wales between mid-2022 and mid-2023, other than in Merthyr Tydfil.
- At Wales level, the estimated number of people living in private households

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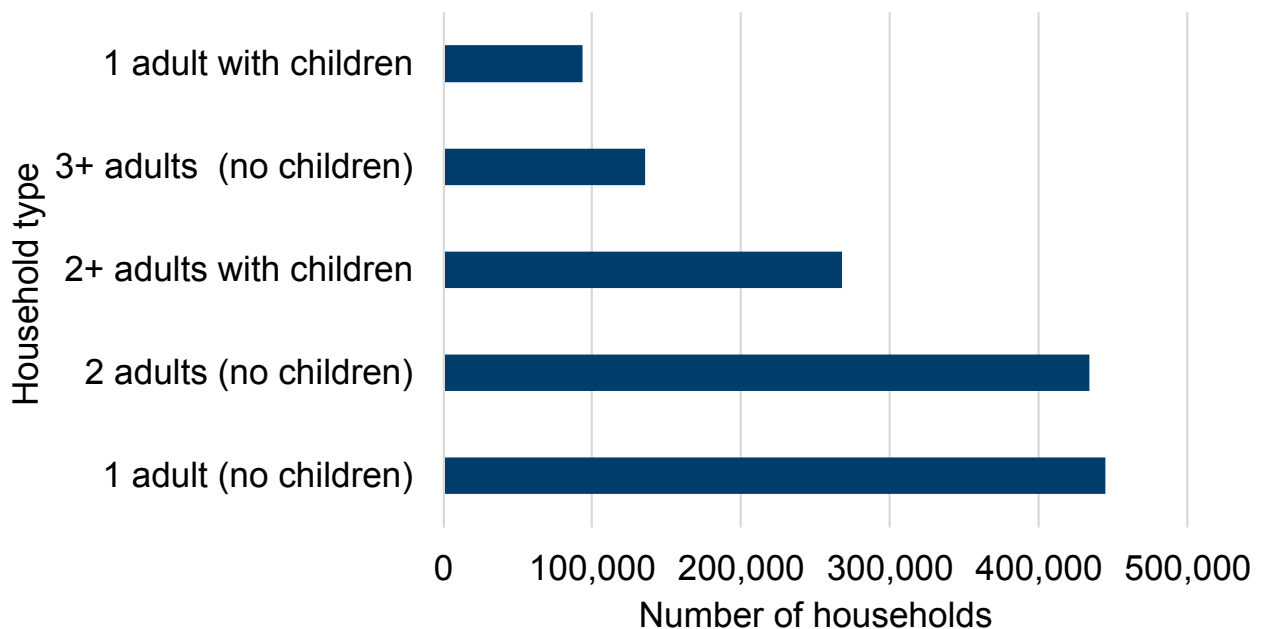
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(or 'household population') increased by around 31,400 (1.0%) to 3.11 million between mid-2022 and mid-2023.

- In mid-2023 the estimated average household size for Wales was 2.26 persons per household, compared with 2.52 persons in mid-1991.

## Mid-2023 household estimates

**Figure 1: Estimated number of households by household type in Wales, mid-2023**



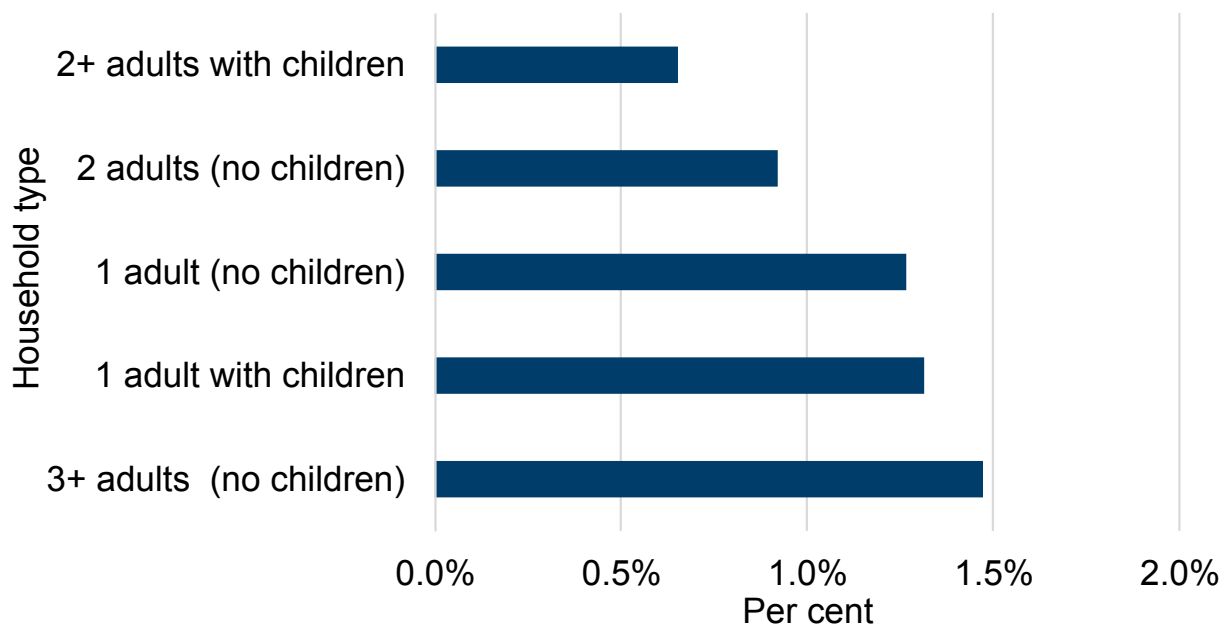
Description of Figure 1: This chart shows that, in mid-2023, one-adult households and two-adult households with no children were the most common household types in Wales.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

## As at mid-2023

- The number of one-adult households, and two-adult households with no children remain the most common household types, accounting for 32.3% and 31.5% of all households in Wales respectively.
- The number of households with children was estimated to be around 362,000, accounting for 26.3% of all households.
- The number of households without children was estimated to be just over 1 million.

**Figure 2: Percentage change in household types in Wales between mid-2022 and mid-2023**



Description of Figure 2: This chart shows that the number of households increased between mid-2022 and mid-2023 for each household type.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

## As at mid-2023

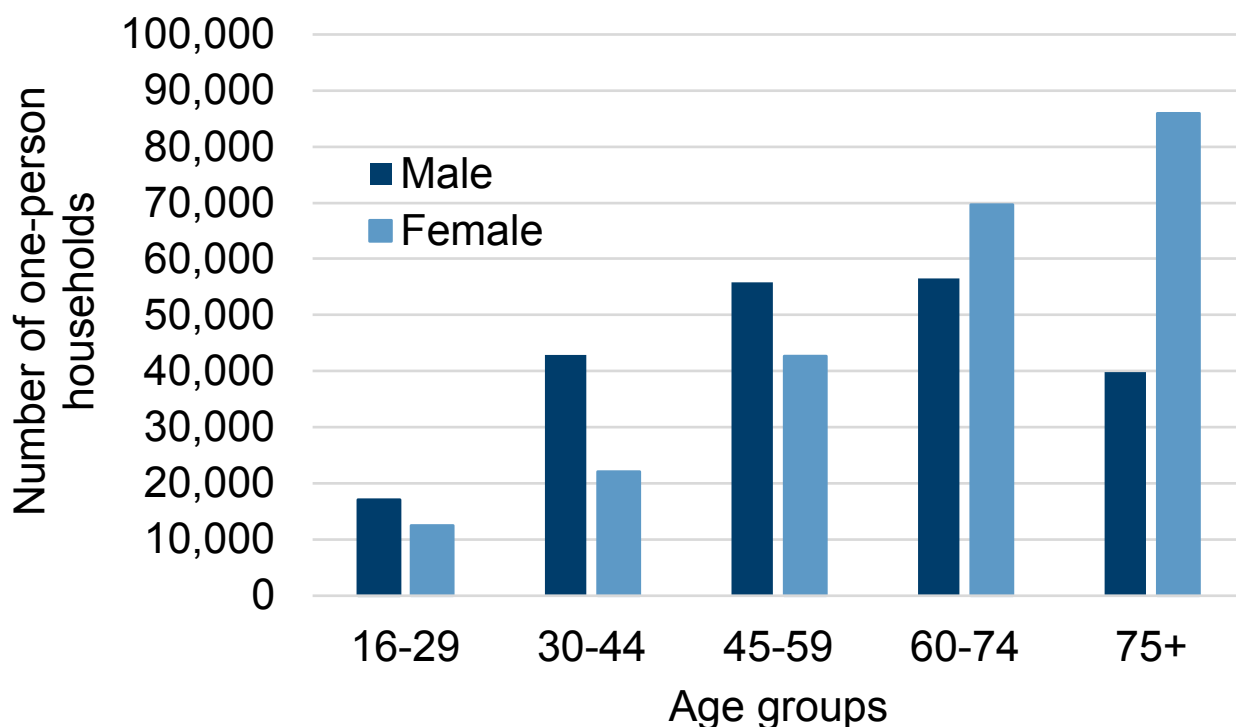
- The estimated number of households increased for all of household types compared with mid-2022.
- The estimated number of 3+ adult households with no children saw the largest percentage increase (up 1.5%).
- The estimated number of one-adult households with children has increased by 1.3% compared with mid-2022, mainly driven by an increase in the number of one-adult households with two children.
- The number of households with no children is estimated to have increased by around 11,500 (1.1%) compared with mid-2022, and the number of households containing adults with children is estimated to have increased by around 3,000 (0.8%).

## One-person households

It is estimated that the number of one-person households increased across Wales between mid-2022 and mid-2023, and that they continued to be the most common household type.

At Wales level, the estimated number of one-person households increased by around 5,600 (1.3%) since mid-2022. This increase is mainly driven by an increase in the estimated number of single male households aged 30 years or older.

**Figure 3: Estimated number of one-person households by age group and sex, mid-2023**



Description of Figure 3: This chart shows that, in mid-2023, one person households are more likely to be male households for younger age groups (for 16 to 59 year olds) and more likely to be female households for the older age categories (for people aged 60 or older).

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

### As at mid-2023

- It is estimated that people aged 60 years or older account for 56.6% of one-person households, with those aged 65 years or older accounting for 46.9%

of one-person households and people aged 75 years or older accounting for 28.3% of one-person households.

- The total number of female one-person households is estimated to continue to be higher than the number of male one-person households, at 232,800 for females compared with 212,100 for males.
- It is estimated that one-person households are more likely to be male households for the younger age groups (aged 16 to 59 years old), and more likely to be female households for the older age groups (aged 60 years or older).
- It is estimated that the total number of males living in one-person households has increased by 1.6% since mid-2022, with the number of one-person female households increasing by 0.9%.



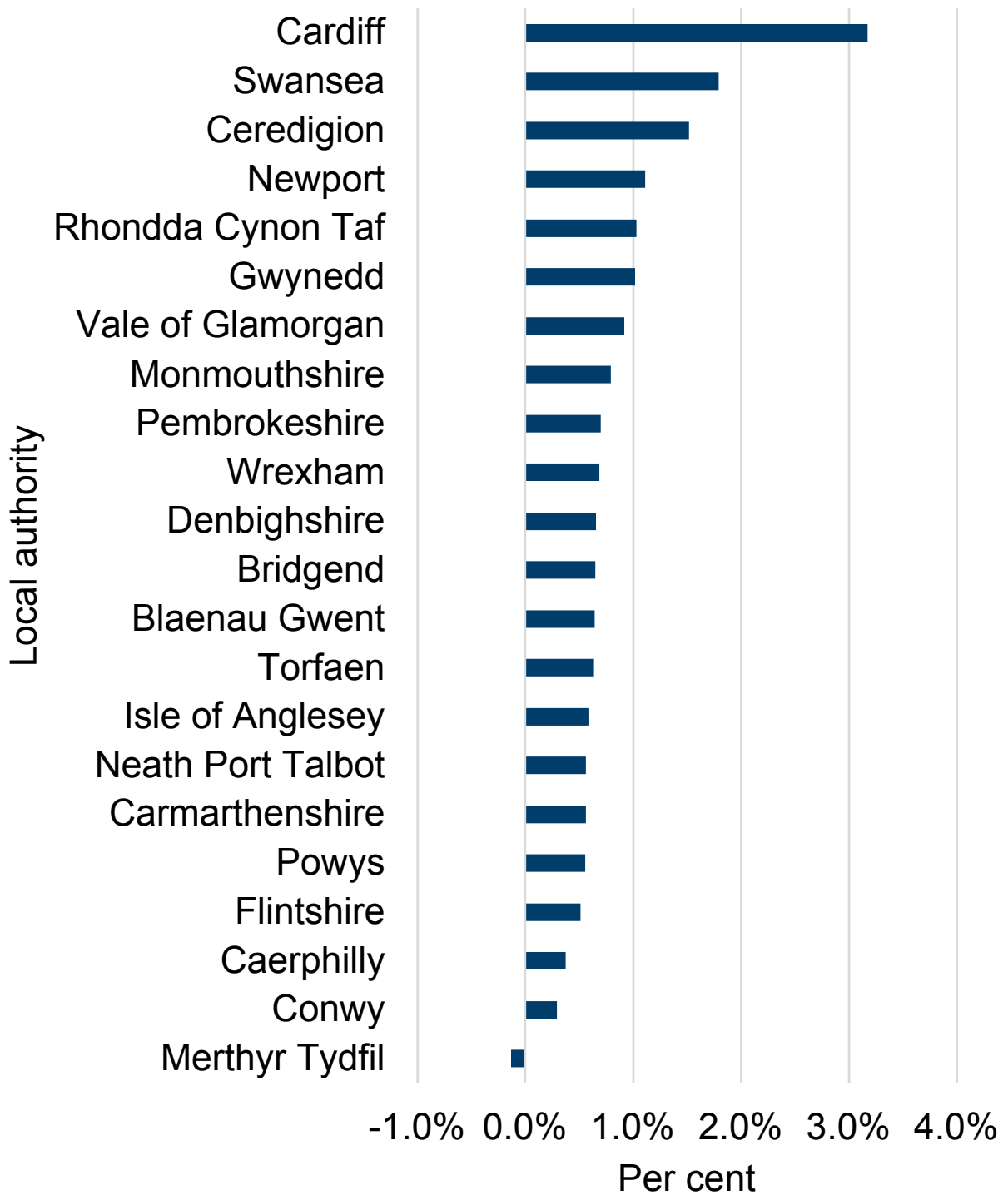
## Estimated number of households by local authority

**Figure 4: Percentage change in the estimated number of households between mid-2022 and mid-2023, by local authority**

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Description of Figure 4: This chart shows that it is estimated that the number of

households increased in each of the 22 local authorities in Wales between mid-2022 and mid-2023, except for in Merthyr Tydfil.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

### Between mid-2022 and mid-2023

- The estimated number of households increased in 21 of the 22 local authorities in Wales.
- The largest increases in the estimated number of households were in Cardiff (around 4,800 more households), Swansea (around 1,900 more households) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (around 1,100 more households).
- The largest percentage increases were in Cardiff (up 3.2%), Swansea (up 1.8%) and Ceredigion (up 1.5%).
- Cardiff and Swansea also saw the greatest percentage increases in the **ONS' mid-year estimates of the population** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2020>) during this period.
- Merthyr Tydfil saw a slight decrease in the estimated number of households (down 0.1%), around 30 less households.

## Household population

The household population is the estimated number of people living in private households. This is calculated by subtracting the population living in communal establishments from the total population estimate.

Communal establishments include residential care homes, university halls of residence, boarding schools and prisons. As communal establishment population estimates are not available on an annual basis, assumed numbers

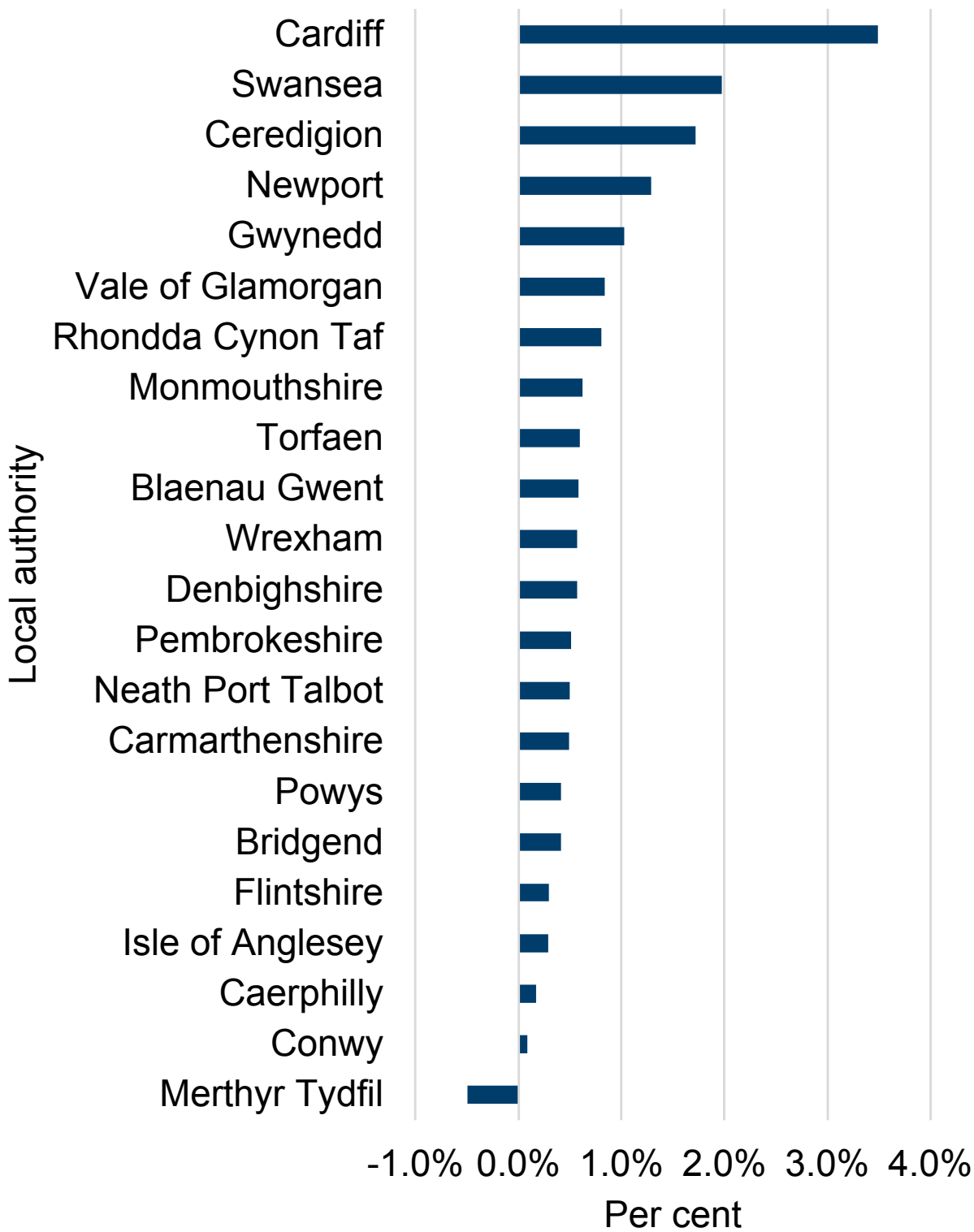
are calculated based on census data.

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## Figure 5: Percentage change in the estimated household population between mid-2022 and mid-2023, by local authority



Description of Figure 5: This chart shows that the estimated household population increased in each of the 22 local authorities in Wales between mid-2022 and mid-2023, except for in Merthyr Tydfil.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

## Between mid-2022 and mid-2023

- The estimated household population increased by around 31,400 (1.0%) in Wales, compared with an increase of around 26,600 (0.9%) between mid-2021 and mid-2022.
- This is a slightly lower percentage increase than the increase in household estimates, reflecting a pattern of smaller average household sizes.
- There were increases in the estimated household population for 21 of the 22 local authorities, with the largest percentage increases in Cardiff (up 3.5%) and Swansea (up 2.0%).
- Merthyr Tydfil was the only local authority with a decrease in the estimated household population (down 0.5%). This reflects the **mid-2023 population estimates from the ONS** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2023>), which showed that Merthyr Tydfil was the only local authority in Wales to see a decrease in its population estimate between mid-2022 and mid-2023.

## Average household size

Average household size is the number of persons per household. It provides a measure of household composition and is useful for comparing different local authorities and time periods. It is calculated by dividing the estimates of household population by the estimated number of households. Average household size does not change much year on year but has changed

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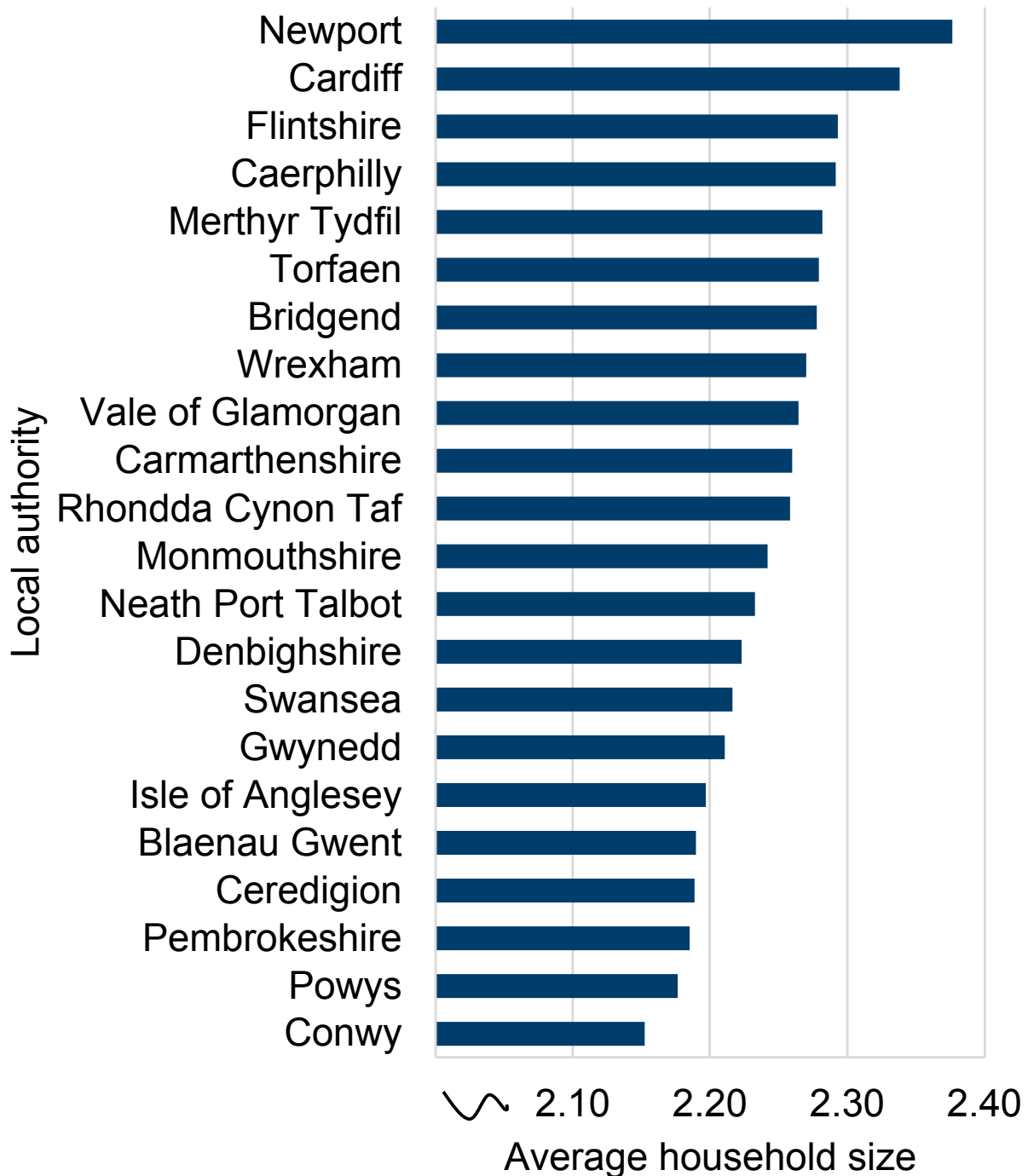
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substantially since 1991.

The estimated average household size in Wales has been decreasing since 1991, reflecting the recent increases in one-person households. In mid-2023, the estimated average household size was 2.26 persons per household, the same as in mid-2022. The estimated average household size was 2.52 in mid-1991 and 2.31 in mid-2011.



**Figure 6: Estimated average household size by local authority, mid-2023 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 6: This chart shows that, in mid-2023, the estimated average household size was highest for Newport and lowest for Conwy.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

[Note 1]: The average household size axis does not start at zero.

## In mid-2023

- The estimated average household size continues to be lowest for Conwy (2.15 persons per household), Powys (2.18 persons per household) and Pembrokeshire (2.18 persons per household).
- Conwy has had the lowest estimated household size of all local authorities in Wales since 2001.
- 69.4% of all households in Powys were one-person or two-person households with no children, while in Ceredigion and Conwy, the corresponding figures were 69.1% and 68.6% respectively.
- Powys and Conwy have the highest estimated proportions of people aged 65 years or older in Wales (28.5% and 28.0% respectively) according to [mid-2023 population estimates from the ONS](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2023) (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationestimatesforenglandandwales/mid2023>).
- Estimated average household size is the highest for Newport (2.38 persons per household).
- Newport had the highest proportion of people aged 0 to 15 years old in Wales (20.3%) according to ONS' mid-year population estimates.

## Comparison of the rebased estimates with previous household estimates

Following Census 2021, [population estimates for Wales were rebased by the ONS](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/rebasingofmidyearpopulationestimatesfollowing/) (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/rebasingofmidyearpopulationestimatesfollowing/>)

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[rebasingsofmidyearpopulationestimatesfollowingcensus2021englandandwales#population-estimates-data](#)). We have also rebased the household estimates previously published for the period mid-2012 to mid-2020 to reflect these rebased population estimates and the latest household data from Census 2021.

The following section compares the previously published household estimates that were based on Census 2011 data, referred to as 'rolled-forward household estimates', with revised household estimates that are based on Census 2021 data, referred to as 'rebased household estimates'.

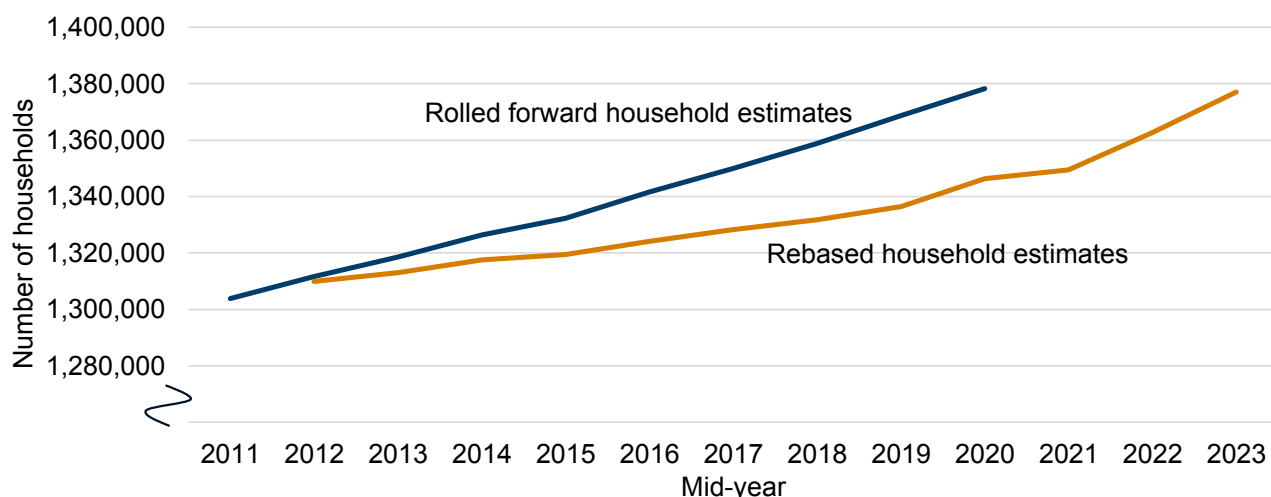
The rolled-forward household estimates refer to the household estimates that were based on 'rolled-forward mid-year population estimates'. These rolled-forward population estimates used Census 2011 as a starting point, and each year the data were aged on, and data on births, deaths and migration were used to reflect population change between mid-2011 and mid-2021. Over the ten-year period between censuses, these rolled-forward population estimates can 'drift' away from the next census results. Further information about the rolled-forward population estimates can be found in [Analysis of the rebased mid-year population estimates \(mid-2012 to mid-2021\) following Census 2021, Wales](#) (<https://www.gov.wales/analysis-rebased-mid-year-population-estimates-2012-2021-following-census-2021-wales>) which was published on 9 April.

The rebased household estimates refer to the household estimates that have been based on the rebased population estimates and household data from Census 2021. Further information about what household data has been used can be found in the [quality and methodology information](#) (<https://www.gov.wales#160472>).

The rebased household estimates are lower than the rolled-forward household estimates for Wales for every year between mid-2012 and mid-2020. By mid-2020, the rebased household estimate was 31,800 lower than the rolled-forward household estimate, decreasing from 1.38 million to 1.35 million. The same was also true for the mid-year population estimates, as the rolled forward

population estimates had over-estimated the population in Wales.

### Figure 7: Comparison between the rolled-forward household estimates and rebased household estimates, mid-2011 to mid-2023 [Note 1]

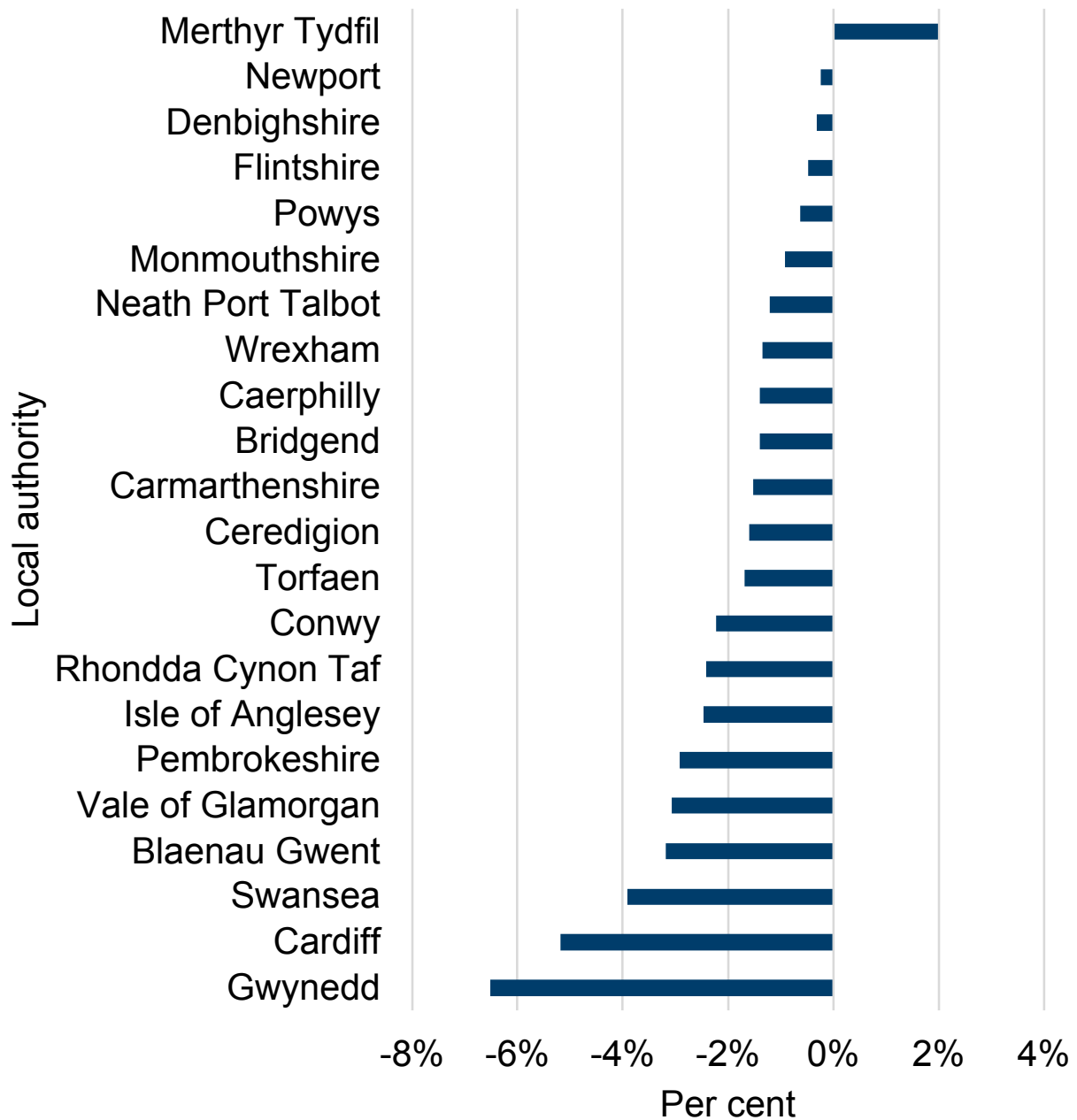


Description of Figure 7: Line chart showing that after mid-2011, the rebased household estimates are lower than the rolled-forward household estimates for every year up to mid-2020.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

[Note 1]: The number of households axis does not start at zero.

## **Figure 8: Percentage difference between the rolled-forward household estimates and rebased household estimates, by local authority in mid-2020 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 8: Bar chart showing that Gwynedd had the largest negative percentage difference between the rolled-forward household estimate and rebased household estimate, while Merthyr Tydfil had the only positive percentage difference in mid-2020.

[Note 1] A negative percentage difference means that the rebased household estimates are lower than the rolled-forward household estimates. A positive percentage difference means that the rebased household estimates are higher than the rolled-forward household estimates.

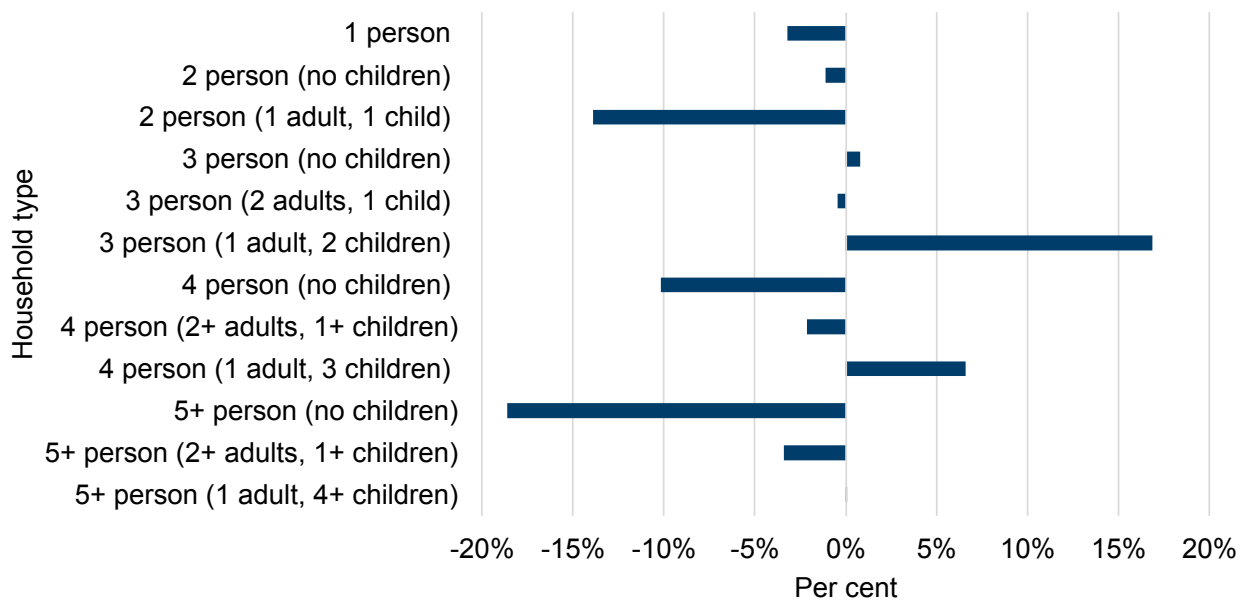
Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

## By mid-2020

- For 21 out of 22 local authorities in Wales, the rebased household estimates were lower than the rolled-forward household estimates.
- The largest percentage decrease in household estimates was for Gwynedd, whose number of households has been reduced by 6.5%, from 55,100 to 51,500.
- This is followed by Cardiff, whose household estimates have been reduced by 5.2%, from 156,300 to 148,200.
- Merthyr Tydfil is the only local authority whose rebased household estimates are higher than the rolled-forward household estimates by mid-2020, increasing by 2.0%, from 25,000 to 25,500 in mid-2020.



**Figure 9: Percentage difference between the rolled-forward household estimates and rebased household estimates, by household type in mid-2020 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 9: Bar chart showing that 5+ person (no children) households saw the largest negative percentage difference between the rolled-forward household estimate and rebased household estimate, while three-person (one adult, two children) households saw the largest positive percentage difference in mid-2020.

[Note 1] A negative percentage difference means that the rebased household estimates are lower than the rolled-forward household estimates. A positive percentage difference means that the rebased household estimates are higher than the rolled-forward household estimates.

Source: Household estimates for Wales, Welsh Government

## As at mid-2020

- For the majority of household types, the rebased household estimates were lower than the rolled-forward population estimates.
- The largest percentage decrease in household estimates was for 5+ person (no children) households, where the estimated number of households has been reduced by 18.6%, from 11,500 to 9,400.
- This is followed by two-person (one adult, one child) households, whose household estimates have been reduced by 13.9%, from 55,600 to 47,900.
- The rebased household estimates were higher than the rolled-forward household estimates for three-person (no children) households, three-person (one adult, two children) households, four-person (one adult, three children) households and 5+ person (one adult, 4+ children).
- Three-person (one adult, two children) households have seen the largest increase in household estimates due to rebasing, increasing by 16.9%, from 25,400 to 29,600 in mid-2020.

The rebased household population estimates are lower than the rolled-forward household estimates for Wales for every year between mid-2012 and mid-2020. It follows a similar pattern to the rebased household estimates. By mid-2020, the rebased household population estimate was 66,600 lower than the rolled-forward household estimate, decreasing from 3.12 million to 3.05 million.

The rebased household population estimates follow a similar pattern to the rebased population estimates. The rebased population estimates decreased the population of Wales by 66,600 between mid-2011 and mid-2021, from 3.17 million to 3.11 million.

Rebased average household size was very similar to the rolled forward average household size for every year between mid-2012 and mid-2020.

# Quality and methodology information

Full quality and methodology information for the household estimates will be published in 2025 alongside the publication of the subnational population and household projections. This will contain technical details about how these household estimates have been calculated, as well as for the household and population projections for local authorities and national parks (including variant projections).

These household estimates are not a count of the exact number of households in Wales, as there is some uncertainty inherent in the estimate of the population as well as household formation rates. Both population estimates and household formation rates become more uncertain the further away from the most recent census, with the current set of population and household estimates being based on Census 2021.

The mid-2012 to mid-2020 household estimates have been updated to be based on the latest Census 2021 data.

## Comparability and coherence

### Comparison with the Annual Population Survey (APS) estimates of households

**The ONS' Annual Population Survey (APS) also provides an estimate for the number of households in Wales by household type**

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/adhocs/>

[13586estimatednumberofhouseholdsbyselectedhouseholdtypeslocalauthoritiesinenglandandwalescountiesandregionsofenglandscottishcouncilareasandgreatbritainconstituentcount](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/adhocs/13586estimatednumberofhouseholdsbyselectedhouseholdtypeslocalauthoritiesinenglandandwalescountiesandregionsofenglandscottishcouncilareasandgreatbritainconstituentcount)

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ies2004to2019). The estimates from the Annual Population Survey are subject to sampling variability as they are based on a sample of household responses in Wales each year.

Annual Population Survey (APS) estimates were previously classed as accredited official statistics. The APS has seen a fall in sample sizes over recent years. Given this, and the fact that the survey has not been reweighted to latest population estimates, the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) has agreed that this accreditation should be temporarily suspended and that the estimates should be re-designated as **official statistics (OSR)** (<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/policies/official-statistics-policies/official-statistics-policy/>).

The household definitions used are broadly comparable with the Welsh Government household estimates. **For further information, see the methodology and quality information (ONS)** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/methodologies/familiesandhouseholdsqmi>). The latest estimates from the Annual Population Survey are broadly comparable with the Welsh Government's official household estimates, varying by local authority and household type. However, we consider these Welsh Government household estimates to be the headline estimates for the number of households in Wales.

## Household estimates across the UK

Household estimates for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland are published by the ONS, the National Records of Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency respectively. More information can be found at:

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## England

**Families and households in the UK (ONS)** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/previousReleases>)

## Scotland

**Household estimates (National Records of Scotland)** (<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/publications/households-and-dwellings-in-scotland-2023/>)

## Northern Ireland

**Population and household estimate (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency)** (<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/2011-census/results/population-and-household-estimates>)

The household estimates for Wales are calculated using a different approach to that used to produce household estimates for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Guidance on the differences between household estimates for the four countries of the UK is contained in the **Household and Dwelling Estimates Across the UK report (ONS)** (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/articles/householdestimatesandprojectionsacrosstheukuserguide/2022-03-09>).

## Related data for Wales

**Household projections for Wales can be found on StatsWales** (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Households/Projections>).

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## Population estimates for Wales and England are published by the ONS

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>).

**Population estimates and projections for Wales at a local authority and national park level can be found on StatsWales** (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population>).

Other housing statistics for Wales, including **dwelling stock estimates** (<https://www.gov.wales/dwelling-stock-estimates>) and **estimates of additional housing need** (<https://www.gov.wales/estimates-housing-need-2019-based>) can be found on the **Statistics and Research website** (<https://www.gov.wales/statistics-and-research>).

## Official statistics status

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the **Code of Practice for Statistics (UK Statistics Authority)** (<https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>).

These are accredited official statistics. They were independently reviewed by the OSR in August 2020. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

It is the Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of accreditation. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the OSR promptly. Accreditation can be cancelled or suspended at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

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# Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the OSR. OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in the **Welsh Government's Statement of Compliance** (<https://www.gov.wales/about-statistics-and-research#Statementofcompliance>).

These **accredited official statistics (OSR)** (<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/policies/official-statistics-policies/accredited-official-statistics-policy/>) demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value in the following ways.

## Trustworthiness

Household estimates are based on historical trends and provide estimates of past numbers of households. They are based on population estimates and historical information about household composition and characteristics. These household estimates are produced by applying assumptions about household formation to estimated population figures, by age and sex. The household estimates therefore reflect changes in household formation as well as trends in the underlying population estimates. The relative impacts of the migration, mortality, fertility and household formation assumptions on the growth in household numbers will vary between local authorities.

Specifically, these household estimates are calculated by:

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- subtracting the assumed population living in communal establishments from the estimated population by age group and sex to estimate the number of people living in private households
- using historical data to calculate household membership rates for mid-2012 to mid-2023
- multiplying the estimated number of people living in private households by the projected household membership rates
- dividing the results out by household size, then aggregating by age group, sex and household type to give the projected total number of households.

This process was carried out using the available population estimates for mid-2012 to mid-2023 for each local authority in Wales.

## Quality

The published figures provided are compiled by professional analysts using the latest available data and applying methods using their professional judgement and analytical skillset. Statistics published by the Welsh Government adhere to the Statistical Quality Management Strategy which supplements the Quality pillar of the **Code of Practice for Statistics (UK Statistics Authority)** (<https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>) and the European Statistical System principles of quality for statistical outputs.

Validation checks are performed by Welsh Government statisticians. The statistical release is then drafted, signed off by senior statisticians and published in line with the statement on confidentiality and data access which is informed by the trustworthiness pillar contained in the Code of Practice for Statistics (UK Statistics Authority).

The methodology for these household estimates was developed in close collaboration with the Wales Sub-national Projections (WaSP) working group, which includes local authority and national park officials in Wales. This group is



a forum for technical discussion on the methodology and to agree the assumptions and base data used. Members of WaSP include representatives with knowledge of and/or experience of demographic data and population and household projections.

As part of the development work for these household estimates, the WaSP working group agreed to the use of 2001, 2011 and 2021 Census data as the historical basis for household membership rates. A weighted combination of two sets of projected membership rates was used, which were produced using a modified two-point exponential model. One exponential model uses membership rates from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and the other model uses membership rates from the 2011 and 2021 censuses.

This followed extensive testing of different statistical models with census data for 2001, 2011 and 2021 in order to base household membership rates on trends from all three censuses. From this, a weighted two-point exponential model was chosen to produce the household membership rates. For these estimates, the weights used were 75% for the membership rates using 2011 and 2021 census data, and 25% for the membership rates using 2001 and 2011 census data.

Further information will be published in the technical report in 2025, alongside the publication of the subnational population and household projections.

## Value

The purpose of the statistical release is to provide evidence for policy development; to allow local authorities to monitor and benchmark their service provision against all other local authorities in Wales; and to inform for the wider public about provision household estimates.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing

[regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk)

(<https://www.gov.walesmailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk>) or via the OSR website.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016. The estimates within this release are used to calculate the rate for indicator 34: Number of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless per 10,000 households.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](https://www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales) (<https://www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales>).

As a national indicator under the Act, they must be referred to in the analyses of local well-being produced by public services boards when they are analysing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas.

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](https://www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015-guidance) (<https://www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015-guidance>).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

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# Contact details

Statistician: Stephanie Harries

Tel: 03000 256186

Email: [stats.popcensus@gov.wales](mailto:stats.popcensus@gov.wales)

(<https://www.gov.walesmailto:stats.popcensus@gov.wales>)

Media: 0300 025 8099

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