

## 2011 Census: Welsh Language Data for Small Areas

The Census was held on 27 March 2011, and is a key source of information on the Welsh language. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for the Census in Wales and England.



The 2011 Census question asked 'Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?' – answered by ticking one or more of five boxes (one for each category and one for 'None of these') in any combination. This question was only asked in Wales, and results are presented for those aged 3 and over. The Census did not collect information on fluency levels or on frequency of use.

The first results on the Welsh Language (at national and local authority level) were published by the ONS on 11 December 2012. The Welsh Government's accompanying Statistical Bulletin ([SB 118/2012](#)) presented an analysis of this data at national and local authority level. It also provided contextual information on migration and country of birth for example.

This bulletin analyses data for lower levels of geography – including Electoral Divisions, Communities and Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Care should be taken when comparing Electoral Division and Community level data between 2001 and 2011 due to boundary changes and a slightly different estimation method. Further information on the geographical areas is provided in Annex A.

The bulletin focuses on analysing data on ability to speak Welsh. Information on wider Welsh Language skills has also been published by the ONS. An age breakdown has also been published by the ONS but has not been included in this bulletin.

### Key Results

In 2011, there were fewer electoral divisions with high proportions of people able to speak Welsh than in 2001.

- In 2011, there were 157 electoral divisions (18 per cent) where more than half the population were able to speak Welsh (in the North and West). This is a decrease from 192 electoral divisions (22 per cent) in 2001.
- The number of electoral divisions where more than 70 per cent of the population could speak Welsh decreased from 59 (7 per cent) in 2001 to 49 (6 per cent) in 2011. By 2011, all of these electoral divisions (apart from one in Conwy) were in Gwynedd or the Isle of Anglesey.
- There were no electoral divisions in Carmarthenshire where more than 70 per cent of the Population could speak Welsh. In 2001, there were 5 such electoral divisions.

**Statistician:** Luned Jones

**Tel:** 029 2082 5088

**E-mail:** [welshlanguagedata@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:welshlanguagedata@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

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Cyhoeddwyd gan Y Gwasanaethau Gwybodaeth a Dadansoddi

Llywodraeth Cymru, Parc Cathays, Caerdydd, CF10 3NQ

Ffôn – Swyddfa'r Wasg **029 2089 8099**, Ymholiadau Cyhoeddus **029 2082 3332**

**[www.cymru.gov.uk/ystadegau](http://www.cymru.gov.uk/ystadegau)**

Issued by Knowledge and Analytical Services

Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

Telephone – Press Office **029 2089 8099**, Public Enquiries **029 2082 5050**

**[www.wales.gov.uk/statistics](http://www.wales.gov.uk/statistics)**



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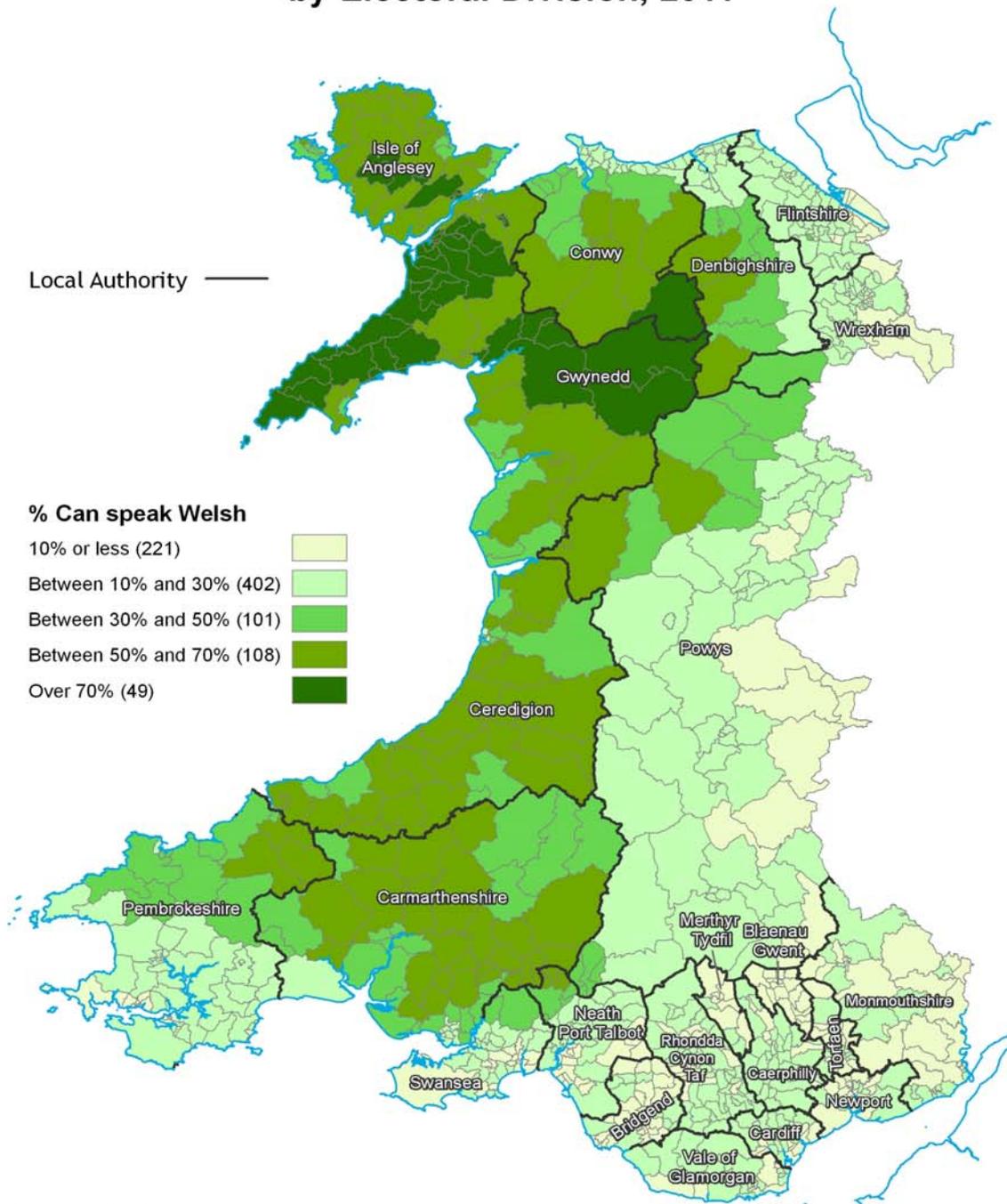
# Welsh Speakers – Electoral Divisions

As at December 2011, there were 881 electoral divisions in Wales. This is the same number as for 2001. However, these are not necessarily exactly the same electoral divisions. Boundary changes mean that care should be taken when comparing information from 2001 with 2011. Please see Annex A.

Map 1 shows the proportion of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh by electoral division for 2011. Map 2 shows similar information for 2001.

## Map 1

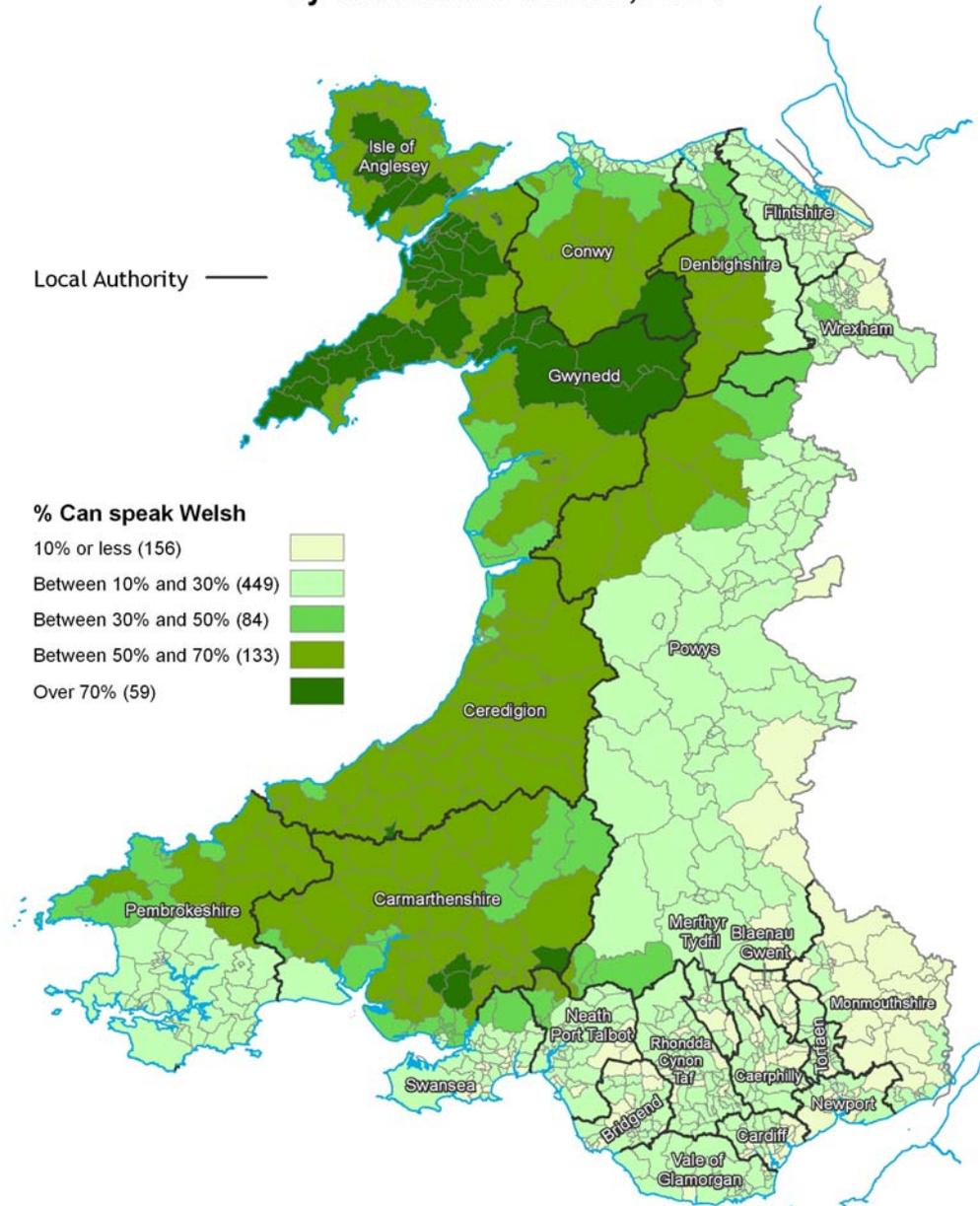
**Proportion of people (aged 3 and over) able to speak Welsh, by Electoral Division, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

## Map 2

### Proportion of people (aged 3 and over) able to speak Welsh, by Electoral Division, 2001



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Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of electoral divisions by the proportion of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh, for 2011 and 2001 respectively. The tables also show the number and proportion of Welsh speakers within each group.

The figures for 2001 may differ from other published analyses. This is due to different source tables being used. Due to data disclosure procedures, 2001 Census figures differed slightly from table to table. Though these differences were very small, in some cases they were enough to change the proportion of Welsh speakers from above a threshold to below a threshold (eg from 70.03% to 69.98%). The source table used for the purposes of this Bulletin is noted under each table.

**Table 1: Distribution of Electoral Divisions by the percentage of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh, 2011**

% aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh (x,y] (more than X%, less than or equal to y%)	Number of electoral divisions	Proportion of electoral divisions	Number able to speak Welsh	Proportion of total able to speak Welsh
[0,10]	221	25.1	81,267	14.5
(10,20]	345	39.2	170,152	30.3
(20,30]	57	6.5	38,635	6.9
(30,40]	46	5.2	40,557	7.2
(40,50]	55	6.2	49,277	8.8
(50,60]	77	8.7	82,496	14.7
(60,70]	31	3.5	37,312	6.6
(70,80]	34	3.9	39,216	7.0
(80,90]	15	1.7	23,104	4.1
(90,100]	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>562,016</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Based on unrounded figures*

Source: KS207(WA) (2011 Census)

**Table 2: Distribution of Electoral Divisions by the percentage of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh, 2001**

% aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh (x,y] (more than X%, less than or equal to y%)	Number of electoral divisions	Proportion of electoral divisions	Number able to speak Welsh	Proportion of total able to speak Welsh
[0,10]	156	17.7	57,942	9.9
(10,20]	389	44.2	183,816	31.6
(20,30]	60	6.8	39,938	6.9
(30,40]	42	4.8	38,536	6.6
(40,50]	42	4.8	40,349	6.9
(50,60]	77	8.7	76,757	13.2
(60,70]	56	6.4	65,499	11.2
(70,80]	39	4.4	50,898	8.7
(80,90]	20	2.3	28,633	4.9
(90,100]	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>582,368</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Based on unrounded figures*

Source: UV84 (2001 Census)

In 2011, there were fewer electoral divisions with high proportions of people able to speak Welsh than in 2001.

- In 2011, there were 157 (18 per cent) electoral divisions (in the North and West) where more than half the population were able to speak Welsh. This is a decrease from 192 (22 per cent) in 2001.
- The number of electoral divisions where more than 70 per cent of the population could speak Welsh decreased from 59 (7 per cent) in 2001 to 49 (6 per cent) in 2011. By 2011, all of these electoral divisions (apart from one in Conwy) were in Gwynedd or the Isle of Anglesey.
- In 2011, there were no electoral divisions in Carmarthenshire where more than 70 per cent of the Population could speak Welsh. In 2001, there were 5 such electoral divisions.
- In 2001, 38.1 per cent of Welsh speakers lived in electoral divisions where over half the population were able to speak Welsh. 13.7 per cent of Welsh speakers lived in electoral divisions where over 70 per cent of the population could speak Welsh. The equivalent figures for 2011 were 32.4 and 11.1 per cent respectively.
- Llanrug (Gwynedd) was the electoral division with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers (87.8 per cent).
- In parts of South East Wales eg Monmouthshire there was an increase in the number of electoral divisions where more than 10 per cent of people could speak Welsh.

## Welsh Speakers – Communities

Communities are the smallest type of administrative area in Wales. Communities cover the whole of Wales.

As at December 2011, there were 868 communities in Wales. Two of these communities (Baglan Bay and Margam Moors) had very small populations. Their results can be presented alongside a neighbouring Community. This analysis is therefore presented for 866 communities. There were 865 communities in 2001. Boundary changes mean that care should be taken when comparing information from 2001 with 2011. Please see Annex A.

Tables 3 shows the distribution of communities by the proportion of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh, for 2001 and for 2011 respectively.

The figures for 2001 may differ from other published analyses. This is due to different source tables being used. Due to data disclosure procedures, 2001 Census figures differed slightly from table to table. Though these differences were very small, in some cases they were enough to change the proportion of Welsh speakers from above a threshold to below a threshold (eg from 70.03% to 69.98%). The source table used for the purposes of this Bulletin is noted under each table

**Table 3: Distribution of Communities by the percentage of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh, 2001 and 2011**

% aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh (x,y] (more than X%, less than or equal to y%)	2001		2011	
	Number of communities	Proportion of communities	Number of communities	Proportion of communities
[0,10]	143	17	193	22
(10,20]	322	37	296	34
(20,30]	62	7	56	6
(30,40]	47	5	47	5
(40,50]	54	6	81	9
(50,60]	97	11	106	12
(60,70]	87	10	48	6
(70,80]	38	4	32	4
(80,90]	15	2	7	1
(90,100]	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>100</b>

*Based on unrounded proportions for 2011 and proportions rounded to 2 decimal places for 2001*

Source: WLP01 (2001 Census) and KS207(WA) (2011 Census)

In 2011, there were fewer communities with high proportions of people able to speak Welsh than in 2001.

- The number of Communities where over 70 per cent were able to speak Welsh (which was used as a basis for a target in the Welsh Government's earlier Iaith Pawb strategy, 2003) decreased from 53 in 2001 to 39 in 2011.
- In 2011, there were 193 communities (in the North and West) where more than half the population were able to speak Welsh. This is a decrease from 237 in 2001.

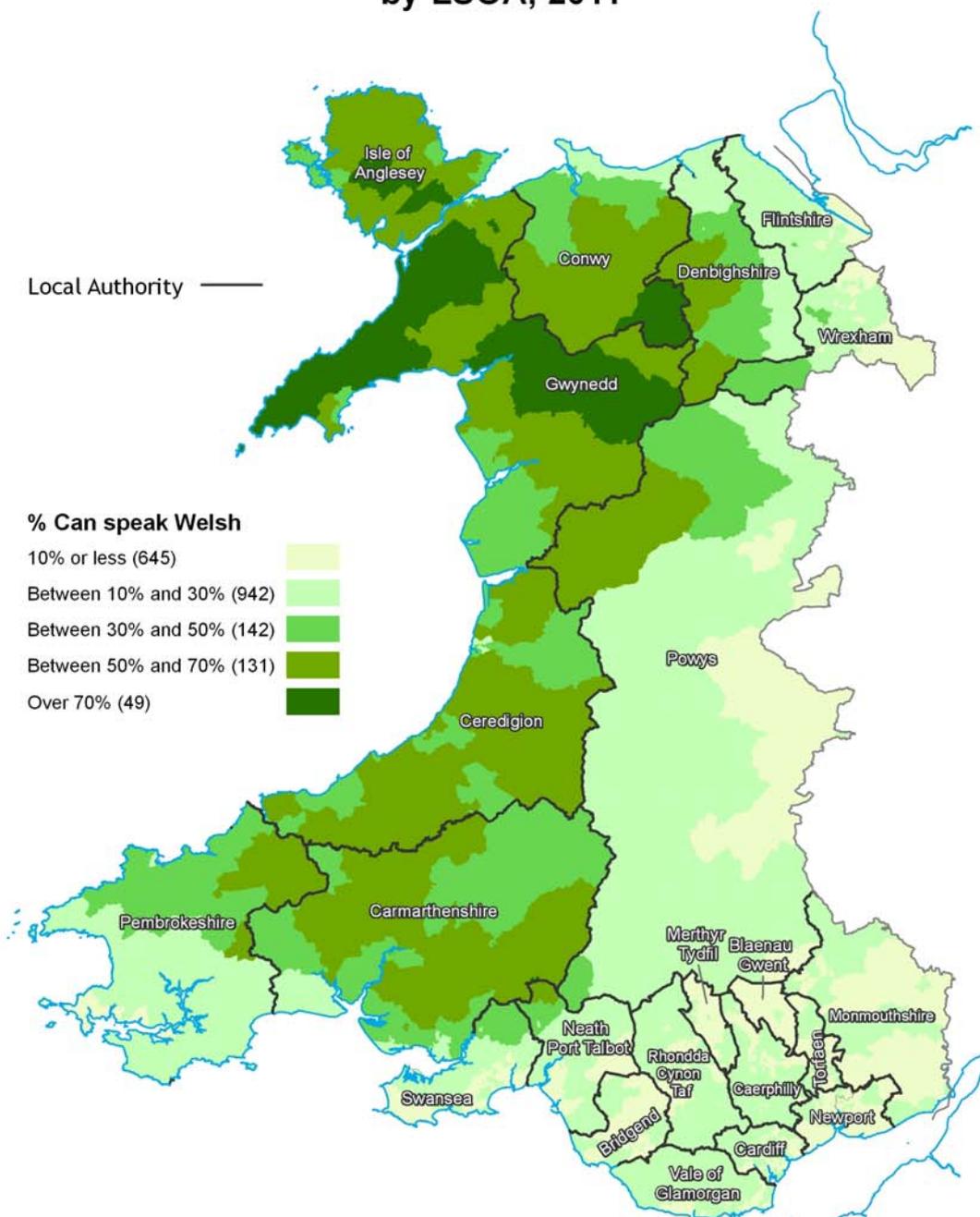
## Welsh Speakers – Lower Layer Super Output Areas

Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are part of a hierarchy of statistical geographies. They are designed to be as consistent in population size as possible. There are currently 1,909 LSOAs in Wales. Prior to the 2011 Census there were 1,896 LSOAs in Wales. Analysing data for LSOAs allows us to look at the distribution of Welsh speakers for areas smaller than electoral divisions and communities. Please see Annex A for further information on LSOAs.

Maps 3 and 4 show the proportion of people aged 3 plus able to speak Welsh by LSOA for 2011 and 2001 respectively.

### Map 3

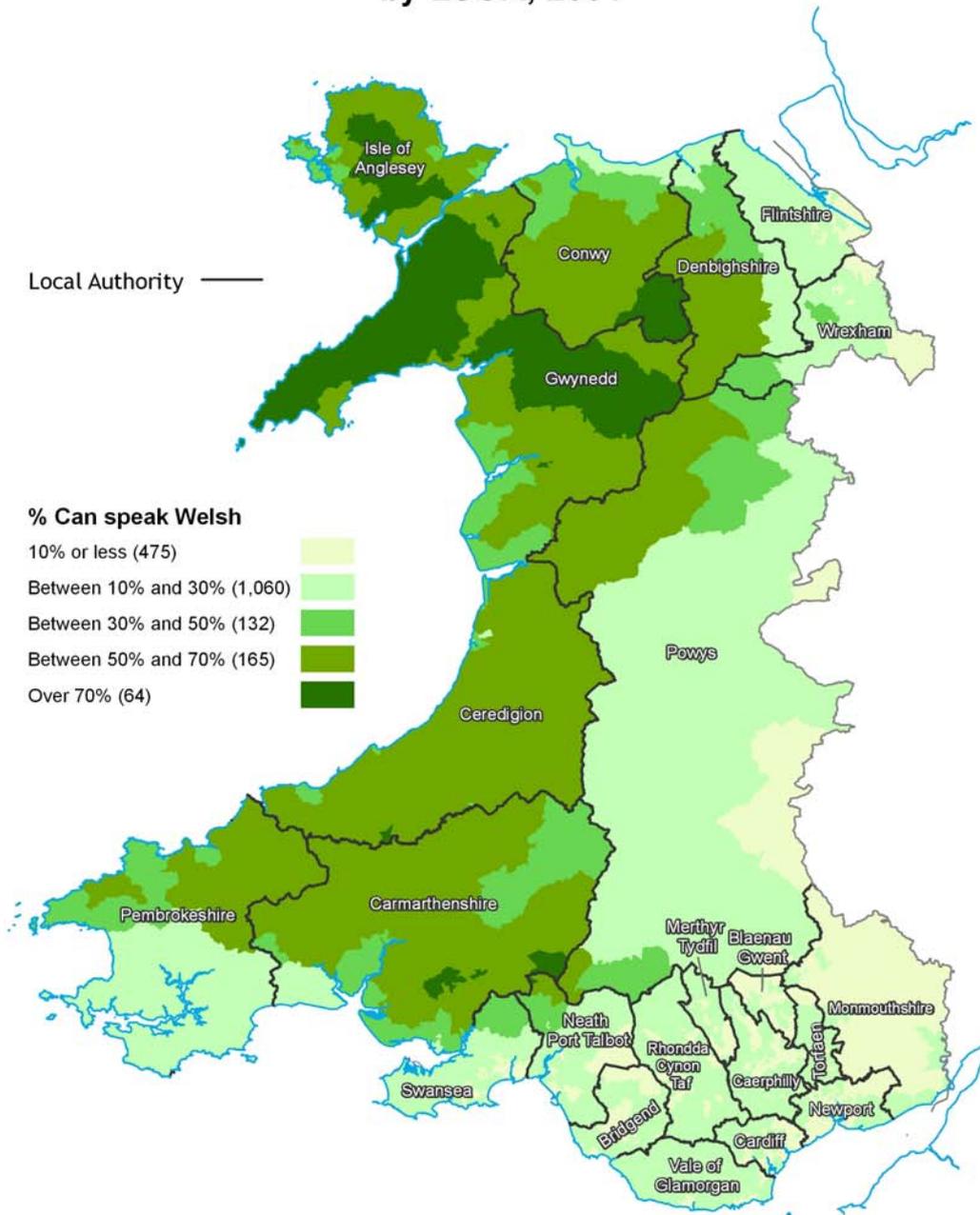
**Proportion of people (aged 3 and over) able to speak Welsh, by LSOA, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

# Map 4

## Proportion of people (aged 3 and over) able to speak Welsh, by LSOA, 2001



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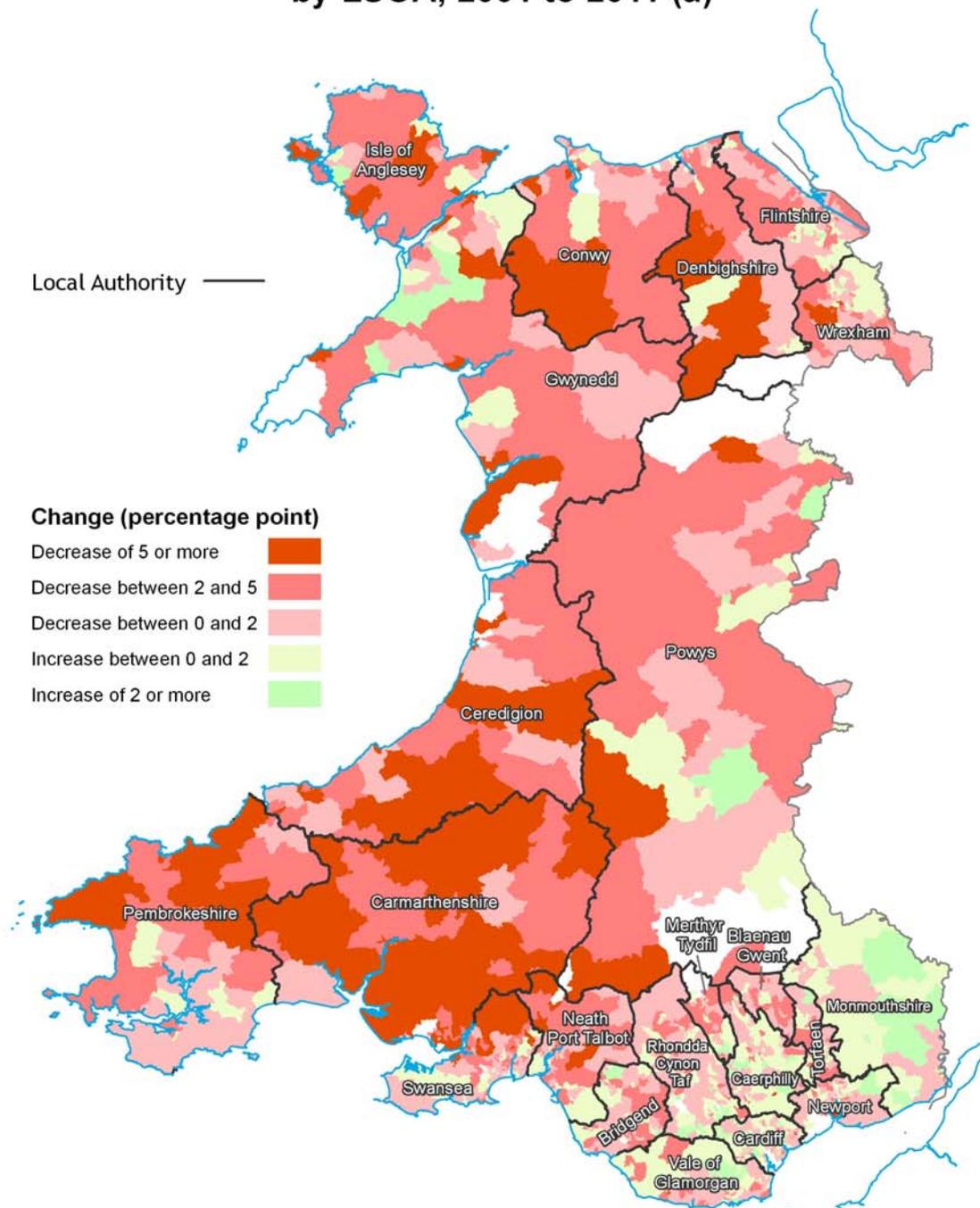


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Map 5 shows the difference in the proportion able to speak Welsh between 2001 and 2011. This is provided as a guide only at this stage as the map only includes LSOAs which did not change at all between 2001 and 2011. Further work is required in order to calculate equivalent figures for LSOAs that split/merged/changed between 2001 and 2011. This will be undertaken in due course.

**Map 5**

**Change in the proportion able to speak Welsh, by LSOA, 2001 to 2011 (a)**



Source: 2001 Census 2011 Census

(a) Presented for LSOAs that did not change between 2001 and 2011 only.

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On the whole, areas experiencing decreases in the proportion of people able to speak Welsh tend to be in the North and West. Of the twenty LSOAs experiencing the largest decrease, eleven were in Carmarthenshire. On the whole, areas experiencing increases in the proportion of people able to speak Welsh were in the South East (though there were pockets elsewhere). Of the twenty LSOAs experiencing the largest increases, nine were in Cardiff.

## Other sources of Information

The Census is a key source of information on the Welsh language.

The Annual Population Survey (APS) also collects information on Welsh Language Skills. The APS estimates (published on [StatsWales](#)<sup>i</sup>) of Welsh language ability are historically considerably higher than those produced by the Census. Potential reasons for this are explored in a [research paper by ONS](#)<sup>ii</sup>. Since the middle of the last decade, the APS estimates the proportion of Welsh speakers to be fairly stable at around 26 per cent.

The 2004-06 Welsh Language Usage Survey was conducted as an add-on to the Living in Wales survey. In this survey, approximately 20.5 per cent of people living in households (excludes communal establishments) said they were able to speak Welsh.

The Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) collects information on pupils' ability to speak Welsh (both fluently and non-fluently). From 2003/04 onwards, the proportion of pupils at maintained primary schools able to speak Welsh (both fluently and non-fluently) gradually increased from 33 per cent to 39 per cent. For secondary schools, the equivalent proportion increased from 39 per cent to 56 per cent.

## Further Information

The 2011 Census data can be accessed via the ONS website [www.ons.gov.uk/census](http://www.ons.gov.uk/census)

Interactive maps on the Welsh language are available on the ONS website at : <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/interactive/census-map-2-2---wlanguage-e/index.html>

The Welsh Government's Statistical bulletin on the first results ([SB 118/2012](#))

Local authority level data is available on StatsWales [www.statswales.wales.gov.uk](http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk). Data for small areas will be published during February 2013.

More detailed information on the Welsh language (including multivariate tables, information on language within households etc) will be published during 2013 and 2014. Please see the ONS [Census Outputs Prospectus](#) for further information.

2001 Census Tables about the Welsh language are included in the [Report on the Welsh language](#)<sup>iii</sup>

## **Annex A: Census Geographies**

The geography policy for the 2011 Census is in line with the geography policy for National Statistics.

### **Electoral Divisions**

Electoral divisions are the key building block of UK administrative geography, being the spatial units used to elect local government councillors in unitary authorities in Wales. As at December 2011, there were 881 electoral divisions in Wales. This is the same number as for 2001. However, these are not necessarily exactly the same electoral divisions. Boundary changes mean that care should be taken when comparing information from 2001 with 2011.

### **Communities**

The smallest type of administrative area in Wales is the community, which fit into and change with unitary authorities. The English equivalent are parishes. Communities cover the whole of Wales. There are currently 868 communities in Wales and over 700 of these have a council.

### **Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs)**

Lower Layer Super Output Areas form part of a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. Lower Layer Super Output Areas are built from groups of smaller Output Areas and have been automatically generated to be as consistent in population size as possible.

LSOAs created following the 2001 Census continue to exist unless a significant population change occurred between 2001 and 2011, and household minimum and maximum thresholds were breached. In simple terms, where populations have become too big, the LSOA/MSOA has been split into two or more areas; where populations have become too small the LSOA/MSOA has been merged with an adjacent one. Changes have been made to other LSOAs in a very small number of cases.

Prior to the 2011 Census, there were 1,896 LSOA in Wales. There are currently 1,909 LSOAs in Wales.

Maps for most LSOAs are available on StatsWales <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/lsomaps/lsa.htm>. These do not include new LSOAs created post the 2011 Census (i.e. those formed from a merger, split or other change to 2001 LSOAs).

### **Best-fit and Exact- fit**

In 2001, data for LSOAs, electoral divisions and communities were exact fit. This meant that the data was aggregated for each household within the area.

2011 Census data for LSOA areas are also exact fit. However, the 2011 Census estimates for electoral divisions and communities are best-fitted from the output area geographies. The best-fit from output areas to higher geographies is determined by plotting the (population weighted) centroid of each output area to the boundary of the higher geography. Best-fitting from output areas helps ensure that census statistics are non-disclosive and consistent with all national statistics produced using the best-fitting method.

Care should be taken when comparing 2001 with 2011 data due to boundary changes, and the slightly different estimation process (exact-fit v best-fit).

In terms of the Community boundary, two communities (Baglan Bay and Margam Moors) had very small populations (and therefore no OAs best fitting to them). These two communities have been attached to a neighbouring community. Therefore the analysis presented in this report is on the basis of 866 communities.

## Annex B: Contextual and Key Quality Information

### Policy Context

The Welsh Government's [Programme for Government](#) (2011-2016) states the Government's commitment to 'securing a bright future for the Welsh language'. An indicator on the 'Percentage of people able to speak and write Welsh' is included in the Programme for Government (OU99).

The Welsh Government's [Welsh-medium Education Strategy](#) was launched in April 2010. It sets out the Welsh Government's vision to have an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, and enables an increase in the number of people able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace.

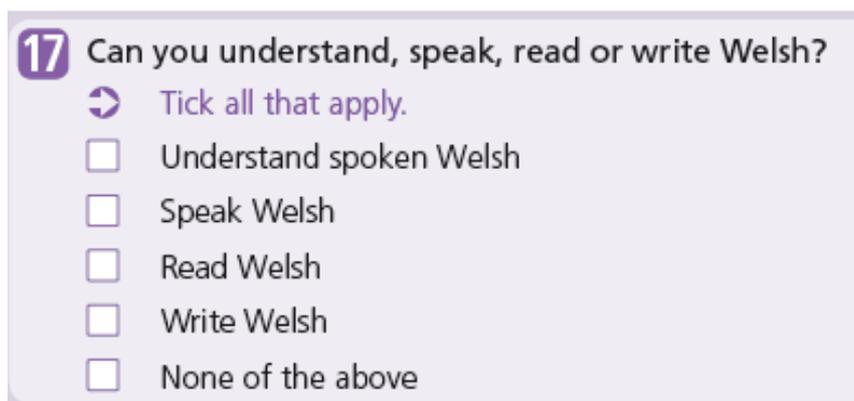
### Data Source (2011 Census)

ONS is responsible for the Census in England and Wales. The census has collected information about the population every ten years since 1801 (except in 1941). The latest census in England and Wales took place on 27 March 2011.

Census estimates describe the characteristics of areas down to small geographies, and are used to understand similarities and differences in the population's characteristics locally, regionally and nationally. This information is used for planning and delivering services.

### Census Language Questions

The 2011 Census question asked 'Can you understand, speak or write Welsh?' – answered by ticking one or more of five boxes in any combination (see below). This question was only asked in Wales, and results are presented for those aged 3 and over. The Census did not collect information on fluency levels or on frequency of use.



**17** Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?

➔ Tick all that apply.

- Understand spoken Welsh
- Speak Welsh
- Read Welsh
- Write Welsh
- None of the above

A main language question was asked for the first time in the 2011 Census. This question captured information on people living in England who regard their main language as Welsh (see below). This did not include information on Welsh speakers living in England who regard their main language as English (expected to be the majority of Welsh speakers living in England). Information on those living in England whose main language is Welsh was also published by the ONS on 30 January 2013.

**18** What is your main language?

English ➔ Go to **20**

Other, write in (including British Sign Language)

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## Methodology

Further information about the census estimates, including details about the methodology used and information about how population subgroups are defined and estimated, is available via the [2011 Census home page](#).

This bulletin is about usual residents in Wales. It does not refer to visitors or short-term residents. A usual resident is anyone who, on census day, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months.

## National Statistics

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Welsh-](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/PersonsAged3andOverWhoSayTheyCanSpeakWelsh-by-LocalAuthority-Measure)

[Language/PersonsAged3andOverWhoSayTheyCanSpeakWelsh-by-LocalAuthority-Measure](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/PersonsAged3andOverWhoSayTheyCanSpeakWelsh-by-LocalAuthority-Measure)

<sup>ii</sup> [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/census-2001/data-and-products/data-and-product-catalogue/reports/report-on-the-welsh-language/differences-in-estimates-of-welsh-language-skills.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/census-2001/data-and-products/data-and-product-catalogue/reports/report-on-the-welsh-language/differences-in-estimates-of-welsh-language-skills.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/census-2001-report-on-the-welsh-language/report-on-the-welsh-language/index.html>