



Powys Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2022-2037

The Welsh Language

Background Paper

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Prepared in partnership with Iaith –
the Welsh Centre for Language Planning

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1 Introduction

1.1 This Welsh Language Background Paper is one of a range of background papers which form part of the evidence base for the Powys Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) (2022-2037). This paper specifically discusses the trends, status and the needs of the Welsh Language in Powys and provides context for the RLDP. An Integrated Sustainability Appraisal which assesses the anticipated impacts of the Plan on the Welsh language in Powys has been completed. A separate Welsh Language Impact Assessment of the Deposit RLDP will also be prepared.

1.2 The Welsh language is an important planning consideration in the creation of land use policies and in the decision-making process on planning applications. However, the future well-being of the language in Wales will depend on a wide variety of factors, including those which relate to education, demography, community changes and community capacity, housing access, and a sound economic base. These are factors that the planning system can influence to some extent, but which are not completely within its control. There is no intention to deal with all the factors which influence language in detail in this paper, but it is possible to address some of these elements and draw upon the available data to gain a better understanding of the current position of the Welsh language in Powys and the challenges which it faces.

1.3 The aims of the document are to:

- to set out the planning policy context for the consideration currently given to the Welsh language and planning;
- to set out the national and local context of how the Welsh language is used in Wales and Powys;
- to set out and consider the issues and challenges facing the Welsh language in Powys.

2 National and Regional Policy Context

Introduction

2.1 All policies and proposals contained within the Powys RLDP relating to Welsh Language and Culture must be consistent and integrated with national and regional legislation, regulations, plans and strategies. This section of the background paper provides an overview of the national and local policy context and highlights some of the key ways in which the Powys RLDP supports the aim to achieve a ‘Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language’.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act of 2015 (The Future Generations Act) seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales and create a Wales that we want to live in. The Act sets out seven well-being goals. Of particular relevance to the Welsh language is the goal to achieve ‘A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: 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’ (S.4).¹ The Act places a duty on certain public bodies, including Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to work in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle and contribute positively towards achieving the well-being goals it presents.

2.3 The Future Generations Act requires Powys County Council, as a representative of the Public Service Board to prepare a Well-being Plan. LDPs should have regard to the relevant local well-being plans and area statements which have been produced for the area (paragraph 1.27 Planning Policy Wales Ed 12).²

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015

2.4 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Sustainability Appraisals of Local Development Plans to include an assessment of the likely effects of the plan on the use of the Welsh language within the area of the Authority (S.11(3)).

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2.5 Section 61 of the Act requires LPAs to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area, including the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the authority and the extent to which the Welsh language is used in the area.

¹ [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/section/4)

² [Planning policy Wales | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/planning-policy-wales)

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011)

2.6 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 legislated to ensure that the Welsh Language has equal legal status with English and is not treated less favourably³. It also established the Welsh Language Standards, which has a requirement for new policies or the reviewing of policies to carefully consider how it might provide opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and not result in the Welsh language being treated less favourably than English.

2.7 Most recently, the Welsh Language Commissioner's *Policy Making Standards (Consultation Documents)* – guidance for public organisations as presented by the Commissioner's legal advisors in an on-line seminar on 21 November 2023⁴ sets out guidance on how the Welsh language is to be treated in policy-making:

- Bodies must demonstrate “conscientious effort” and not adopt ‘a tick box approach’ to considering the possible effects of the policy decision on the Welsh language.
- The threshold for “conscientious effort” will depend on the circumstances and require more scrutiny:
 - in an area of sensitivity or significance for the Welsh language
 - as the number and/or extent of the possible effects on the Welsh language increases
 - if there is local policy or guidance (e.g. in the planning or education contexts) that requires an assessment of possible effects on the Welsh language.
- “Conscientious effort” will be more likely if a wide range of positive, negative and neutral (direct and indirect) effects are considered.
- Treating Welsh language effects under a single “headline” in an integrated impact assessment is inadequate. The Welsh language should have the same status as environmental effects and be presented in a separate, stand-alone document.
- Bodies should move away from the over-simplistic approach of asking “what is the “net” effect on the Welsh language”? The effects on the Welsh language are complex and multidimensional as are the effects on the environment. Consequently, the various positive and negative effects on Welsh now need to be considered separately. Conflating these into a simple + or – net effect is not an appropriate approach because to do so is too simplistic.

³ Welsh Government (2011) ‘Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011’. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/contents/enacted>, accessed 15.08.2022

⁴ A recording of the seminar on Policy Making Standards (Consultation Documents) – guidance for public organisations and copies of the power point slides are available on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website here: [Advice documents \(welshlanguagecommissioner.wales\)](https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/advice-documents)

Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy

2.8 Cymraeg 2050 sets out the Welsh Ministers' national strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the Welsh language.⁵ The strategy's 'Vision' section outlines its long-term objectives:

'The year 2050: The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society and economy of Wales.' (p.4)

2.9 Three strategic aims are identified to help achieve this vision:

- *Increase the number of Welsh speakers to 1 million by 2050*
- *Double the percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily, and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, from 10 per cent (in 2013–15) to 20 per cent by 2050'* (p.11)
- *Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context* (p.4).

2.10 Creating favourable conditions includes:

'The land use planning system should contribute to the vitality of the Welsh language by creating suitable conditions for thriving, sustainable communities, supported by an awareness of the relevant principles of language planning.

Decisions regarding the type, scale and exact location of developments within a specific community has the potential to have an effect on language use, and as a result on the sustainability and vitality of the language. This calls for strengthening the relationship between language planning and land use planning.

The Welsh Government maintains that Welsh language considerations should inform the process of preparing local development plans, and guidance is available to assist planning authorities in this regard. Under the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, development planning at all levels now requires such plans to include an assessment of the likely effects of their policies on the Welsh language.' (p.63)

Welsh Government's proposed Welsh Language Education Bill

2.11 The Welsh Government's proposed Welsh Language Education Bill⁶ intends to introduce 'transformational changes to the way we think about the Welsh language and the role of education in this context' (p.5). The main proposals in the Bill include:

- 'reflecting the target of a million Welsh speakers in law;
- over time, enhance Welsh language provision in maintained schools that are not already designated Welsh-medium schools;
- a requirement for the Welsh Ministers to create a statutory National Plan for the acquisition and learning of Welsh, and review it in each Senedd term;

⁵ [Cymraeg 2050: Welsh language strategy | GOV.WALES](#)

⁶ [Welsh Language Education: white paper | GOV.WALES](#)

- reform how local authorities plan Welsh language provision in schools in order to meet targets set by the Welsh Ministers;
- requirements on local authorities to proactively promote Welsh-medium education, including late immersion provision.’

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

2.12 In 2021, the Welsh Government adopted Future Wales - The National Plan 2040, the development plan for Wales. Future Wales identifies a series of 11 outcomes to deliver on its aims which include creating:

‘A Wales where people live ... in places with a thriving Welsh Language. We aim to have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 – an increase of almost 80% on current levels. The language will be an embedded consideration in the spatial strategy of all development plans. Where Welsh is the everyday language of the community, development will be managed to ensure there are jobs and homes to enable the language to remain central to those communities’ identities. Elsewhere development will be a positive force towards encouraging the creation of education and social infrastructure to enable the language to develop as a natural, thriving part of communities.’ (p.54)⁷

2.13 These ambitions need to be reflected in other development plans and strategies, including Local Development Plans. There is a requirement that the RLDP’s spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy help meet the Future Wales outcomes, including creating or safeguarding places where the Welsh language can thrive in Powys.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12

2.14 National policy reinforces the provisions of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 by reiterating that the likely effects of development plans on the use of the Welsh language must be assessed as part of the Plan’s sustainability appraisal. Further guidance in respect of ‘The Welsh Language and Placemaking’ notes:

3.26 ...‘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.’ (p.30)

3.27 ‘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.’ (p.30)⁸

⁷ [Update to Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

⁸ [Planning policy Wales | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales)

2.15 Technical Advice Note 20⁹ comprises two elements: the first part outlines guidance on preparing LDPs and the consideration of the Welsh language in the development management process. Whilst the second part provides practical guidance to assist in the consideration of Welsh language issues during the preparation of LDPs. A summary of the key points pertinent to the production of an LDP is provided below:

- Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to consider the relationship of the LDP strategy, policies and site allocations with social and community needs and opportunities through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (paragraph 2.1.2).
- The Community Involvement Scheme, as part of the Delivery Agreement, can be utilised to seek community views on how the Welsh language and culture interact with LDP policies and proposals (paragraph 2.2).
- The SA should give consideration to the use of the language so far as it is relevant to the use of land which should assess evidence of the impact of the spatial strategy, policies and allocations on the use of the Welsh language (2.3.1).
- At the Preferred Strategy stage of the Plan's preparation the SA should record appraisal work undertaken to date including predicting and evaluating the effects of the LDP options on social, environmental and cultural objectives (2.5).
- At the Deposit stage of the Plan's preparation the LPA should ensure that the plan strategy, policies and land allocations are consistent with the SA which should have regard to the likely effects of the plan on the use of the Welsh language (2.6).
- The LDP can define areas of linguistic sensitivity or significance where the Welsh language may be a consideration (2.7).
- Mitigation measures should be identified in the LDP and developer contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy or section 106 agreements may be used to this end (2.8 and 2.9).
- In preparing and gathering evidence, the LPA should utilise existing sources of information such as the local well-being plan, census data, Welsh Language Use Survey data, local strategies and initiatives and information relating to education provision, economic factors and community facilities.
- In assessing the evidence gathered, the LPA's approach is likely to be influenced by some or all of the following factors:
 - Can the majority, or a significant number of the population, speak Welsh within communities in the plan area?
 - Are the numbers of Welsh speakers generally increasing or decreasing?
 - Migration patterns and the age profile of those moving out of, and in to, the area. What demands does this place on services and infrastructure?
- Key policy matters to be assessed may include policies relating to housing, employment land, community facilities and education infrastructure, planning obligations and signage.

⁹ [Technical advice note \(TAN\) 20: planning and the Welsh language | GOV.WALES](#)

- Measures may be required to mitigate the adverse impacts and actions to promote positive impacts may be required and should be identified during the plan-making stage and set out in the Deposit Plan and any matters of detail may be included in SPG.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 – Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)

2.16 This guidance defines affordable housing for the purpose of this TAN and provides advice to local planning authorities on how to determine affordability.¹⁰ The TAN requires Local Authorities to include an affordable housing target in the development plan which is based on the housing need identified in the local housing market assessment, indicate how the target will be achieved and monitoring arrangements. This TAN provides guidance on securing and delivering affordable housing for local people or to meet a local need and is therefore closely linked to the provision of housing within Welsh speaking communities.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)

2.17 TAN 6 provides practical guidance on the role of the planning system in supporting the delivery of sustainable rural communities.¹¹ It provides guidance on how the planning system can contribute to sustainable rural economies, rural housing and services and sustainable agriculture.

2.18 Part 3.1.2 states that the development plan should facilitate diversification of the rural economy by accommodating the needs of both traditional rural industries and new enterprises whilst minimising impacts on the local community and the environment (p.11). This TAN is relevant because it supports sustainable development in rural communities in Wales – and in the case of Powys, rural communities are more likely to contain higher numbers of Welsh speakers.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23 – Economic Development (2014)

2.19 TAN 23 provides advice on the national planning policy on economic development set out in Planning Policy Wales.¹² The TAN provides guidance for local authorities on developing high level economic planning objectives, assessing the economic benefits of new development, economic development and the rural economy, preparing an evidence base for a LDP, creating an economic development vision for a LDP and determining employment land supply. While this TAN does not directly reference the Welsh language, considerations of how economic development can be a means of protecting and promoting the use of the Welsh language need to be made explicit.

¹⁰ [Technical advice note \(TAN\) 2: planning and affordable housing | GOV.WALES](#)

¹¹ [Technical advice note \(TAN\) 6: planning for sustainable rural communities | GOV.WALES](#)

¹² [Technical advice note \(TAN\) 23: economic development | GOV.WALES](#)

3 Local Policy Context

Introduction

3.1 As a spatial land use plan, the Powys replacement Local Development Plan needs to be consistent and integrated with other plans and strategies that have been prepared for the County. This section references the most significant of these.

Powys Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2026

3.2 The Welsh Language and Culture are important planning considerations in Powys. The Adopted LDP reflects this in its key objectives and does so specifically and explicitly through Objective 15 as outlined below:

Objective 15 - Welsh Language and Culture: To support and protect Welsh language and culture in Powys and specifically the Welsh Speaking Strongholds of the north-west and south-west.

3.3 The Powys Adopted LDP includes a Development Management Policy (DM12) in relation to development in Welsh Speaking Strongholds:

*Policy DM12 - Development in Welsh Speaking Strongholds
Development proposals for 10 or more dwellings on windfall sites within or forming logical extensions to the following settlements will be subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment. Where the Impact Assessment demonstrates that the development may have an adverse impact, proposals must be accompanied by a Language Action Plan setting out the measures to be taken to protect, promote and enhance Welsh Language and Culture:*

<i>Towns</i>	<i>Llanfair Caereinion, Llanfyllin, Machynlleth and Ystradgynlais</i>
<i>Large Villages</i>	<i>Abercrave, Carno, Coelbren, Llanbrynmair, Llangynog, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, Llansilin, Pontrobert, Penybontfawr and Trefeglwys</i>

The implementation of any measures identified within the Language Action Plan shall be secured either by planning conditions or, where necessary, by planning obligations.

3.4 Policy DM12 limits the requirement for a Welsh Language Impact Assessment to windfall developments in a specific suite of settlements which are named in the identified settlement hierarchy. It does not take account of emerging areas of Welsh language growth or the wider setting of the settlements listed.

The Powys Well-being Plan: A Fair, Sustainable and Healthy Powys

3.5 The Powys Well-being Plan presents the Powys PSB's (Public Service Board) three well-being objectives and the ways in which they support the 'Well-being Goals' of the Future

Generations Act including the goal to achieve 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.¹³ The three well-being objectives are:

- people in Powys live happy, healthy, and safe lives;
- Powys is a county of sustainable places and communities; and
- an increasingly effective public service for the people of Powys. (p.7)¹⁴

3.6 Within the plan, the PSB explicitly states its intention to engage with Welsh speakers:

'Through engaging with a range of communities such as those who are Welsh language speakers, we will seek to understand what matters to them in being healthy and happy and use this to shape the future work of the PSB.' (p.11)

'Throughout all work undertaken, we will ensure the Welsh language is treated equitably and provide opportunities to promote this. We will seek to actively reach Welsh speaking groups to understand what matters to them.' (p.14)

Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys (December 2020)

3.7 In December of 2020, the local authority published 'Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys'. This document forms the basis of the Powys Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032. The WESP is the LA's statutory plan for ensuring well planned provision for increasing the opportunities for a growing number of children and young people in Powys to become fully bilingual.

3.8 The 'Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys' identifies the following five matters of strategic importance:

1. *Powys needs to normalise Welsh-medium/bilingual education.* (p.8)
2. *Powys County Council and its partner in Mudiad Meithrin need to work together to ensure that Welsh nursery and early years provision is available to every child.* (p.9)
3. *Powys needs to welcome newcomers to their locality, many of whom are new to Wales. We should also welcome those who wish to choose a Welsh-medium education after initially choosing English-medium provision for their child, by offering opportunities for immersion (rapid language learning) and an opportunity to join and be fully integrated into a Welsh-medium/bilingual classroom.* (p.9)
4. *Powys needs to have a network of Welsh-medium/bilingual primary providers in every locality across the county.* (p.10)
5. *Powys needs to develop a mutually supportive network of secondary providers that can offer a full curriculum across Powys in Welsh at all key stages.* (p.10)¹⁵

¹³ [The Powys Well-being Plan - Powys County Council](#)

¹⁴ [The Powys Well-being Plan - Powys County Council](#)

¹⁵ [Appendix B - Welsh-medium Education Strategy English.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

3.9 This vision document followed the ‘Transforming Education Strategy’ of April 2020. This strategy has four strategic aims in all, and amongst them is the following commitment to the future of education in Welsh for learners in Powys: ‘Strategic Aim 3: We will improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages.’

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032

3.10 The PCC Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032 is made under Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 (WESP, p.1).¹⁶

3.11 The plan recognises that the education system is the key driver for increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Powys and the Council’s contribution towards the Welsh Government target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 set out in the strategy Cymraeg 2050: a million Welsh speakers.

3.12 The WESP presents a ten-year vision for increasing and improving the planning of Welsh-medium education in order ‘to improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages’ (p.2). Aligned with the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, it makes key commitments ‘to develop Welsh-medium education across the county for the next ten years’ (WESP, p.3) and sets out plans for increased Welsh-medium pre-school and education provision in each of the County’s 13 localities.

3.13 The WESP states that:

‘Whilst the WESP is clearly focused on the education sector, there is also an opportunity to ensure that the development of Welsh-medium education is central to all Council policies and strategies across all service areas, including the Powys Local Development Plan, the Welsh Language Strategy, and economic regeneration plans such as the Mid Wales Growth Deal’ (p.3)

3.14 Within the WESP, the local authority commits to improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all the key stages of education. It also commits to increase the opportunities for children and young people in Powys to become fully bilingual. The plan explicitly notes Powys’s aim to increase the percentage of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh in the County from 22.2% in 2019/20 to 36% by 2030/31. It is intended that the WESP commitments will bear results that, in turn, will contribute towards the Welsh Government target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

3.15 The WESP is arranged around seven outcomes:

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

¹⁶ [Powys County Council Welsh Language Strategies - Powys County Council](#)

- 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.

Powys County Council Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2024-2028

3.16 The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 places a Welsh language promotion duty upon LPAs to produce and publish ‘a 5-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include (among other matters):

- a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5-year period concerned, and*
- b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).’ (Standard 145)¹⁷*

3.17 PCC’s Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (WLPS) 2024 – 2028 notes that its “ambition is for the Welsh language to be at the centre of everything we do and thrive in our communities” (p.3). It recognises that the percentage of speakers in the county has fallen between the 2011 and 2021 censuses (from 19% to 16%) and it states that halting this decline is a priority. It seeks to do so through the following three objectives (p.3):

1. *Increase the number of children and young people in Powys who speak Welsh confidently*
2. *Increase the number of our staff who learn Welsh and are confident to use the language regularly in their work.*
3. *Encourage shops and businesses in Powys to use Welsh with customers.*

3.18 The WLPS is aligned to the PCC Welsh in Education Strategy Plan for 2022-2032 and includes some of its objectives. It explicitly states the following (p.3):

¹⁷ [The Welsh Language Standards \(No. 1\) Regulations 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Increasing the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education is one of the most effective ways of creating more Welsh speakers according to Welsh Government. This strategy is therefore in line with our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022 to 2032.

- 3.19 The WLPS vision for the LPAs strategic direction has three components:
1. *'We will create conditions where Welsh speakers of all abilities and backgrounds will use the language as a matter of course in all parts of the county.*
 2. *We will take pride in Welsh as a Council and embed the language in our daily work when we offer services to the public, make policy and in our internal operations.*
 3. *We will reverse the decline in the number of Welsh speakers in Powys and maintain the current number of speakers during the period of this strategy. We will raise the number of speakers by the end of the next strategy to 20% by 2032'* (p.5).

4 The Welsh Language and Culture in Powys

Introduction

4.1 Powys County Council considers the Welsh language and its associated culture important and an integral part of community life within Powys. The Authority supports and encourages the use of the Welsh language through its service delivery and many other activities and operates a bilingual policy for its day-to-day management. This section provides information on the local context of Welsh Culture and language in the county. Baseline data is provided to outline the distribution of Welsh speakers and trends in Welsh language use within Powys using the data available at the time of writing.

4.2 The statistics and information utilised to consider the profile of the Welsh language in Powys includes data from the Office of National Statistics (Census data for 2011 and 2021), Welsh Government, and Powys County Council. Analysis of data was undertaken partly by IAITH Cyf. Some data was sought through Powys's Wellbeing Information Bank (which includes treated ONS data).

Welsh Culture

4.3 Powys has several important land designations and facilities across the county which seek to preserve and enhance Welsh culture. These include, but are not limited to, the Dyfi Valley Biosphere Reserve, the Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground and an array of community, town and village halls, theatres and religious and cultural venues.

4.4 The UNESCO Dyfi Valley Biosphere Reserve was designated in 2009, after receiving formal recognition from UNESCO. Its purpose is to promote sustainable development based on local community efforts and sound science. The Dyfi biosphere covers an area of 840 square kilometres. Some of this area is outside Powys and located in the neighbouring authorities of Ceredigion, Snowdonia National Park and Gwynedd. The areas within Powys include large parts of the Machynlleth locality.¹⁸ The Dyfi Biosphere Reserve's key objectives that relate to Welsh Language and Culture are:

- *To keep and improve the area as a great place to live, work and bring up children – and to create more opportunities for them to stay here; and*
- *To place a greater value on our natural environment and on Welsh language and Culture.*¹⁹

4.5 The Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground is an important facility which hosts several cultural events annually. Located in Builth Wells, the showground hosts over 400 events annually, the most significant being the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show which has attracted over 200,000 visitors every year since 1989.

¹⁸ [UNESCO Dyfi Biosphere, Mid wales](#)

¹⁹ Ibid.

- 4.6 Community, Town and Village Halls, Theatres and religious and cultural venues also provide an opportunity to support and protect Welsh Culture. These venues host clubs, societies, and sessions of worship which foster Welsh cultural activities and the Welsh language.
- 4.7 Mentrau Iaith are Welsh language initiatives that work to promote and support the use of the Welsh language in the community within their areas. Powys has two Welsh language initiatives - Menter Iaith Maldwyn operates in the north of the county while Menter Brycheiniog a Maesyfed cover the south. The mentrau give advice, provide support to individuals, organisations and businesses in the area, as well as organise activities to raise the profile of the Welsh language.
- 4.8 Urdd Gobaith Cymru is a national voluntary youth organisation which provides opportunities for children and young people throughout Wales to take part in activities through the medium of Welsh. Within Powys, the Urdd has regional officers divided into two teams - the 'Maldwyn' and 'Brycheiniog a Maesyfed' teams. The organisation holds its own annual eisteddfod, and in the summer of 2024, it was held in Meifod, Powys.
- 4.9 As the leading providers of extra-curricular and community opportunities that increase the use of Welsh among children and young people, the Urdd, Menter Maldwyn, and Menter Brycheiniog a Maesyfed are key partners with Powys County Council in increasing this age group's opportunities for increasing their use of Welsh.
- 4.10 Mudiad Meithrin is another key partner in delivering the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and the WESP. Mudiad Meithrin provide Welsh-medium play and learning experiences for children from birth to school-age. These experiences are provided in the form of support groups for different age groups: 'Cymraeg i Blant' (weekly support groups for those with babies), 'Cylchoedd Ti a Fi' (Baby and Toddler groups) and 'Cylchoedd Meithrin' (Welsh-medium Playgroups). In Powys, Cylchoedd Meithrin are provided in 21 locations.²⁰ As of 2022/2023, 569 children attended these Cylchoedd Meithrin.²¹ Data for the same period shows that 86.3% of children that attend Cylchoedd Meithrin go on to receive a Welsh-medium education.²²

Welsh language statistics – Wales

4.11 Historically, the Welsh language has been in decline since the turn of the century. The following points provide a summary of key results on the Welsh language in Wales from the 2021 census:

- The proportion of Welsh speakers decreased from 19% in 2011 to 17.8% in 2021.²³

²⁰ [Data on the Welsh language by local authority | GOV.WALES](#)

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ [Welsh language in Wales \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

- The 2021 Census identified that the overall population of Wales has grown to 3,107,493 – a growth of approximately 44,000 people since the 2011 Census when it was 3,063,456.²⁴ Despite an increase in the total population in Wales, the number of Welsh speakers resident in Wales decreased from approximately 562,000 (2011) to 538,300 (2021).²⁵
- The percentage of Welsh speakers living in Wales in 2021 is currently the lowest on record. This is not true of the number of Welsh speakers which was at its lowest at 503,500 in 1981.²⁶
- Excluding the 16-19 and 20-44 age groups, all age groups experienced a decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers. The decline was most pronounced amongst the younger age groups. The 5-15 age group experienced a 6 percentage point decrease, whilst the 3-4 age group experienced a 5.2 percentage point decrease.²⁷

4.12 The proportion of people aged 3 and over able to speak Welsh decreased in most local authorities in Wales between 2011 and 2021 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales by local authority in 2011 and 2021

Local Authorities	2011 %	2021 %	Change % points ²⁸	Rank ²⁹
Anglesey	57.2	55.8	-1.5	2
Blaenau Gwent	7.8	6.2	-1.6	22
Bridgend	9.7	9.2	-0.5	19
Caerphilly	11.2	10.5	-0.7	14
Cardiff	11.1	12.2	1.1	15
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	10
Gwynedd	65.4	64.4	-1.0	1
Merthyr Tydfil	8.9	8.9	0.0	21
Monmouthshire	9.9	8.7	-1.3	17
Neath Port Talbot	15.3	13.5	-1.8	9
Newport	9.3	7.5	-1.8	20
Pembrokeshire	19.2	17.2	-2.1	7
Powys	18.6	16.4	-2.1	8
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	12.3	12.4	0.1	12

²⁴ [Population and household estimates for Wales \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ The changes here were calculated - in line with Welsh Government practice - with unabridged percentages for each local authority, not the rounded off figures viewed in the middle columns of this table.

²⁹ With '1' here being the local authority with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers as of the 2021 census.

Swansea	11.4	11.2	-0.2	13
The Vale of Glamorgan	10.8	11.5	0.7	16
Torfaen	9.8	8.2	-1.6	18
Wrexham	12.9	12.2	-0.7	11
<i>Wales</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>17.8</i>	<i>-1.2</i>	<i>--</i>

Source: 2021 and 2011 census data

Welsh speaking ability in Powys

4.13 The population of Powys has grown by 0.14% from 132,976 in 2011 to 133,169 in 2021. This is a small growth but is not unordinary for Wales and also shows that the population in Powys is not experiencing a population decline as are some parts of the country.³⁰

4.14 As Table 1 demonstrates, despite the small growth in the population of Powys, the percentage of Welsh speakers aged three and over in the county has dropped by 2.1 percentage points since 2011, from 18.6% to 16.4%. Powys remains ranked as the local authority in Wales with the eighth highest percentage of Welsh speakers aged three years and over. Nevertheless, Powys experienced the joint second biggest decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers after Carmarthenshire (-4 percentage points). Denbighshire and Pembrokeshire also saw a 2.1 percentage point reduction. The only areas of Wales that saw an increase in Welsh speakers were Cardiff (+1.1 percentage points), the Vale of Glamorgan (+0.7) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (+0.1).

4.15 In Powys, 2021 census figures indicate there are 21,358 Welsh speakers aged three and over living in the county (see Table 2). In terms of numbers of speakers, Powys is the local authority with the ninth highest number of Welsh speakers in Wales. In 2021, there were just over 2,600 fewer Welsh-speaking residents in Powys in 2021 compared with the previous census.

Table 2. Welsh speakers in Powys (local authority level)

Census year	Can speak Welsh (over the age of three years)	
	Number	Percentage
2011	23,990	18.6%
2021	21,358	16.4%
Change	-2,632	-2.2

Source: 2021 and 2011 census data

4.16 Table 3 shows how there has been a reduction in the proportion of Welsh speakers in all Powys localities apart from Crickhowell between 2011 and 2021. The change in percentage points is greatest in the two localities with the highest percentage of Welsh

³⁰ [Census - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

speakers, namely Machynlleth and Ystradgynlais.

Table 3. Percentage of Welsh speakers in Powys by locality, comparing 2011 and 2021 census data

Locality ³¹	All ages 3+ 2021	All ages 3+ 2011	Change in percentage points
Machynlleth	49%	53%	-4
Ystradgynlais	31%	39%	-8
Llanfyllin	29%	31%	-2
Llanfair Caereinion	26%	27 %	-1
Llanidloes and Blaenhafren	17%	18%	-1
Builth Wells and Llanwrtyd	13%	15%	-2
Brecon	13%	14%	-1
Newtown, Kerry and Churchstoke	11%	13%	-2
Welshpool and Montgomery	11%	12%	-1
Llandrindod and Rhayader	10%	12%	-2
Crickhowell	10%	10%	0
Hay on Wye and Talgarth	8%	10%	-2
Knighton and Presteigne	7%	8%	-1

Source: Adapted from Table 5, Appendix 2 Powys Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2024-2028

4.17 Data from the 2021 Census shows that the percentage of Welsh speakers varies considerably among Powys wards (see Table 4). Glantwymyn was the ward where the percentage was at its highest at 54.5%. In contrast, the percentage was at its lowest in Churchstoke at 4.6%.

Table 4. Welsh speakers in Powys (by electoral ward)

Electoral ward	Percentage of the population that speaks Welsh
Glantwymyn	54.5
Machynlleth	47.4
Banwy, Llanfihangel and Llanwddyn	44.0
Llanfair Caereinion and Llanerfyl	37.4
Cwm-twrch	37.2
Ynyscedwyn	34.9
Llanbrynmair	33.6
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Llansilin	32.2
Llanfyllin	31.5
Aber-craf and Ystradgynlais	31.3

³¹ Older locality names are provided here so as to ensure a clear comparison between 2021 and 2011.

Caersws	25.0
Maescar and Llywel	23.7
Llangyniew and Meifod	23.5
Tawe Uchaf	22.7
Rhiwcynon	20.2
Llansantffraid	17.5
Llanwrtyd Wells	15.9
Llanidloes	15.7
Berriew and Castle Caereinion	14.4
Yscir with Honddu Isaf and Llanddew	14.4
Llandinam with Dolfor	14.2
Newtown West	13.7
Builth	13.5
Llanafanfawr with Garth	13.1
Talybont-on-Usk	13.0
Welshpool Llanerchuddol	12.7
Dolforwyn	12.7
Rhayader	12.6
Newtown North	12.4
Newtown Central and South	11.9
Guilsfield	11.8
Welshpool Gungrog	11.7
Llangors with Bwlch	11.6
Newtown East	11.5
Bronllys and Felin-fach	11.3
Brecon West	11.0
Llandysilio	11.0
Brecon East	10.8
Llandrindod North	10.8
Llanyre with Nantmel	10.7
Llangattock and Llangynidr	10.5
Kerry	10.5
Talgarth	10.5
Llandrinio	10.2
Llandrindod South	10.1
Llanelwedd	10.0
Welshpool Castle	9.9
Crickhowell with Cwmdu and Tretower	9.7
Forden and Montgomery	9.4
Ithon Valley	9.1
Disserth and Trecoed with Newbridge	8.8
Glasbury	8.7
Trelystan and Trewern	8.3
Presteigne	7.4
Old Radnor	6.9
Knighton with Beguildy	6.8

Hay	6.3
Gwernyfed	5.6
Llangunllo with Norton	5.5
Churchstoke	4.6

Source: 2021 Census data

4.18 In terms of ethnicity in Powys, those from ‘Mixed or multiple ethnic groups’ are most likely to be Welsh speakers, with 18.9% of this group identifying as Welsh speakers in the 2021 Census (Table 5). This is the case in the majority of local authority areas in Wales.³² Those Welsh speakers who identify as ‘White’ come in second place in Powys at 16.6% with, ‘Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African’ coming third at 5%.

Table 5. Welsh speakers in Powys by ethnic group

Ethnic group	Percentage Welsh speaking
Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British	4.0%
Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African	5.0%
Other ethnic group	4.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	18.9%
White	16.6%

Source: [Welsh language by population characteristics \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

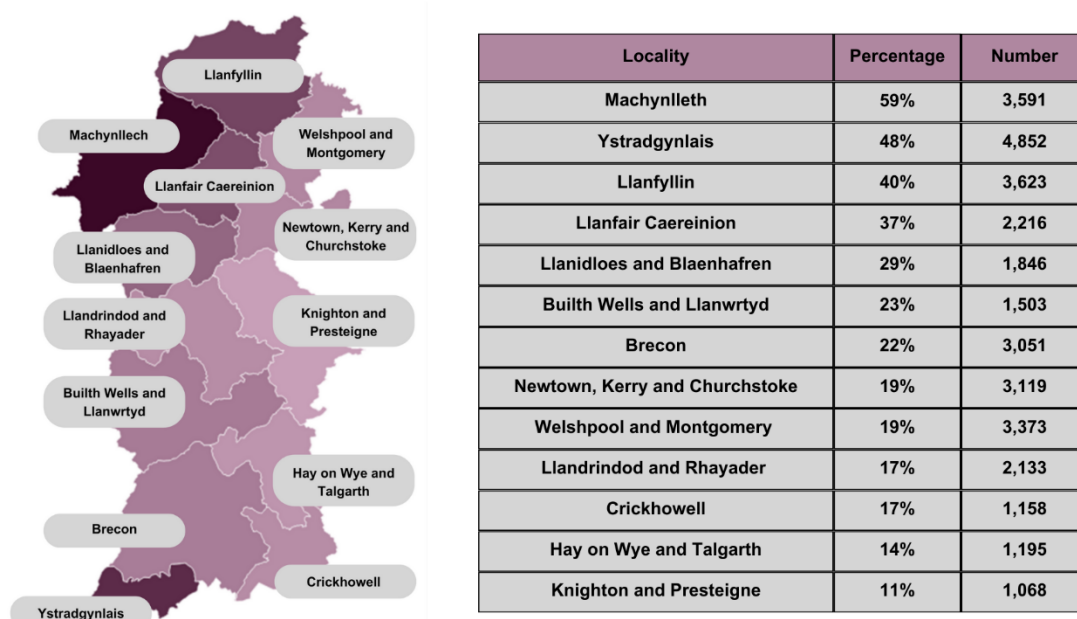
Welsh language skills in Powys

4.19 According to 2021 Census data, 25% of Powys residents have some combination of Welsh language skills. Within this figure, the following skills are included: ‘Can speak and read but cannot write Welsh’, ‘Can speak but cannot read or write Welsh’, ‘Can speak read and write Welsh’, ‘Can understand spoken Welsh only’ and ‘Other Combinations of skills in Welsh’. Exactly 75% of Powys residents have no Welsh language skills according to the 2021 Census. This is a 3 percentage point increase on the 72% reported in the 2011 Census.

4.20 Machynlleth is the locality that has the highest percentage of people with some combination of Welsh skills 59% (Figure 1 and Figure 2). This is followed by Ystradgynlais at 48% and Llanfyllin at 40%. The locality of Knighton and Presteigne has the lowest percentage at 11%.

³² [Welsh language by population characteristics \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#) (figure 4)

Figure 1: Percentage of Powys residents with Welsh language skills (by locality)³³

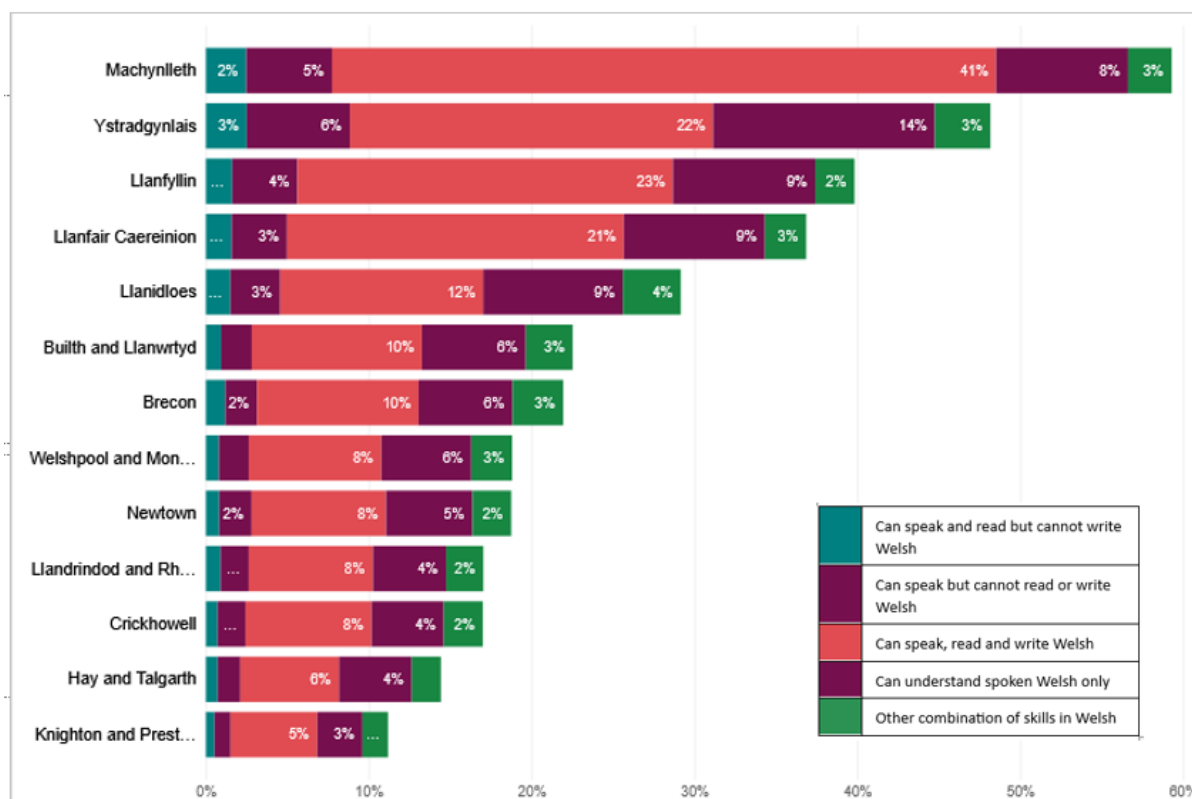


Source: Adapted from [Wellbeing Information Bank: View information about Welsh language - Powys County Council](#)

4.21 Figure 2 shows that the skill ‘Can speak read and write Welsh’ is the highest in each locality in Powys. The second highest skill in all localities is ‘Can understand spoken Welsh only’ and this indicates that there is considerable ability to understand spoken Welsh among people who don’t consider themselves to be Welsh speakers.

³³ Here ‘Welsh language skills’ includes the following variables: ‘Can speak and read but cannot write Welsh’, ‘Can speak but cannot read or write Welsh’, ‘Can speak, read or write Welsh’, ‘Can understand spoken Welsh only’ and ‘Other combination of skills in Welsh’.

Figure 2: Percentage of Powys residents according to locality and type of Welsh language skills



Source: [Wellbeing Information Bank: View information about Welsh language - Powys County Council](#) (Census 2021 data)

Annual Population Survey (Year Ending June 2023)

4.22 The most recent data provided in the Welsh Government Annual Population Survey (year ending 30 June 2023) indicates that 37,200 of Powys’s population aged 3 or over can speak Welsh, which equates to 29.0% of the county’s population.³⁴ The Survey indicates that 29.7% of the population of Wales can speak Welsh. These figures are much higher than those provided by the 2021 Census.

4.23 According to the Annual Population Survey data, 11.6% of Powys’s Welsh speaking population speaks Welsh on a daily basis, 5.9% speaks Welsh on a weekly basis and a further 9.6% speaks Welsh on a less frequent basis.³⁵ Survey data for Wales as a whole indicates that 14.9% of the Welsh speaking population speaks the language on a daily basis, 5.3% on a weekly basis and a further 7.4% on a less frequent basis.

³⁴ [Annual Population Survey - Ability to speak Welsh by local authority and year \(gov.wales\)](#)

³⁵ [Annual Population Survey - Frequency of speaking Welsh by local authority and year \(gov.wales\)](#)

4.24 The Welsh Government is aware of discrepancies between its Annual Population Survey and the Census, and it currently (at the time of writing this document) undertaking work to establish the cause of the discrepancy.³⁶

Age of Powys Residents and Welsh speakers

4.25 Powys has the highest average (median) age in Wales.³⁷ Between the 2011 and 2021 censuses, the percentage of the Powys population over the age of 65 has increased (see Table 6). In 2021, 27.9% of the population was over 65, an increase from the 23.4% recorded in 2011. The same is true of the 3-15 age group, though to a much lesser extent with a 0.8 increase between censuses.

4.26 According to 2021 census data, the 3-15 age group remains the age group with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers (27.7%) (see Table 7). However, this is also the age group that saw the biggest decline (a drop of 12.2 percentage points) in terms of the percentage of Welsh speakers compared with 2011. This mirrors a tendency with younger age groups seen Wales wide.³⁸

Table 6. Powys Population by Age Group, 2011 and 2021

Age group	Percentage of population		Increase/decrease
	2011	2021	
3-15	14.7	15.5	+ 0.8
16-64	61.8	56.6	- 5.2
65+	23.4	27.9	+ 4.5

Source: 2021 and 2011 census data

Table 7. Welsh Speakers in Powys by Age Group, 2011 and 2021

Age group	Percentage of Welsh speakers		Increase/decrease
	2011	2021	
3-15	39.9	27.7	-12.2
16-64	15.0	14.9	- 0.1
65+	14.8	11.8	- 3.0

Source: 2021 and 2011 census data

³⁶ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) and Welsh Government joint work plan on coherence of Welsh language statistics | GOV.WALES](#)

³⁷ [Demography and migration in Wales \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

³⁸ [Chief Statistician's update: understanding Census 2021 data about the Welsh language | Digital and Data Blog \(gov.wales\)](#)

4.27 Within each locality in Powys the age group with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers is the 3-15 age group (see Table 8). This reflects a common pattern throughout Wales. With the exception of Crickhowell, the percentage of speakers is at its lowest within the localities amongst either the 50-64 or 65+ age groups. Of all age groups, and all localities, the percentage of Welsh speakers is at its lowest amongst the 65+ age group in Knighton and Presteigne.

Table 8. Welsh speakers by locality and age

Area	All ages 3 and over	3-15 years	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65 +
Machynlleth	49%	72%	64%	56%	47%	22%	42%
Ystradgynlais	31%	38%	31%	29%	22%	20%	37%
Llanfyllin	29%	49%	42%	32%	24%	19%	23%
Llanfair Caereinion	26%	52%	41%	28%	21%	11%	17%
Llanidloes and Blaenhafren	17%	33%	20%	21%	16%	11%	12%
Builth Wells and Llanwrtyd	13%	34%	27%	14%	12%	7%	6%
Brecon	13%	26%	18%	12%	10%	8%	10%
Newtown, Kerry and Churchstoke	11%	24%	16%	10%	9%	9%	7%
Welshpool and Montgomery	11%	27%	17%	10%	8%	16%	6%
Llandrindod and Rhayader	10%	26%	22%	11%	9%	5%	4%
Crickhowell	10%	29%	18%	6%	8%	6%	6%
Hay on Wye and Talgarth	8%	25%	15%	10%	5%	7%	3%
Knighton and Presteigne	7%	23%	16%	7%	5%	5%	2%

Source: 2021 census data

4.28 Ward level data for the 3-15 age group (Table 9) further reinforces the assertion that Welsh speaking skills are strongest amongst this age group. In each ward in Powys - except for Ynyscedwyn - the percentage of Welsh speakers in the 3-15 group is higher than the percentage for the ward's population of Welsh speakers as a whole. In terms of numbers of Welsh speakers in the 3-15 age group, the number is highest in the town ward of 'Newtown Central and South' (246). This is followed by 'Llanfair Caereinion and Llanerfyl' (206) and 'Aber-craf and Ystradgynlais' (204).

Table 9. Welsh Speakers in Powys by ward (3-15 age group & general population aged 3+), 2021 Census data

Electoral wards and divisions	Number of Welsh-speaking 3-15 olds	Percentage of 3-15 olds that speak Welsh	Percentage of the general population aged 3+ that speaks Welsh
Glantwymyn	196	77.5	54.5
Banwy, Llanfihangel and Llanwddyn	196	75.1	44.0
Llanfair Caereinion and Llanerfyl	206	68.7	37.4
Machynlleth	191	67.5	47.4
Llanbryn-mair	126	59.4	33.6
Llanfyllin	121	54.8	31.5
Caersws	146	50.7	25.0
Cwm-twrch	171	49.6	37.2
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Llansilin	137	45.4	32.2
Rhiwcyron	124	43.4	20.2
Maescar and Llywel	97	41.6	23.7
Llandinam with Dolfor	86	40.4	14.2
Llangyniew and Meifod	96	40.2	23.5
Llansantffraid	110	40.0	17.5
Berriew and Castle Caereinion	94	37.8	14.4
Bronllys and Felin-fach	89	37.7	11.3

Aber-craf and Ystradgynlais	204	37.4	31.3
Builth	122	37.4	13.5
Llanwrtyd Wells	59	36.0	15.9
Ynyscedwyn	94	34.2	34.9
Rhayader	90	34.0	12.6
Llangattock and Llangynidr	88	33.0	10.5
Llanafanfawr with Garth	67	32.8	13.1
Talybont-on-Usk	74	32.7	13
Welshpool Llanerchuddol	80	32.1	12.7
Tawe Uchaf	76	31.5	22.7
Dolforwyn	77	31.0	12.7
Llandysilio	74	30.6	11.0
Talgarth	70	29.5	10.5
Llandrindod South	102	29.5	10.1
Crickhowell with Cwmdu and Tretower	112	29.2	9.7
Disserth and Trecoed with Newbridge	61	29.0	8.8
Llanyre with Nantmel	68	28.2	10.7
Llandrinio	77	28.2	10.2
Welshpool Castle	90	27.6	9.9
Llanidloes	156	27.4	15.7
Yscir with Honddu Isaf and Llanddew	56	27.2	14.4
Llangors with Bwlch	50	26.9	11.6
Ithon Valley	80	26.8	9.1
Guilsfield	49	26.3	11.8
Presteigne	60	26.1	7.4
Old Radnor	51	26.0	6.9
Llanelwedd	63	25.9	10.0
Kerry	56	25.7	10.5
Newtown North	60	25.6	12.4
Newtown East	82	24.8	11.5
Glasbury	52	24.8	8.7

Newtown Central and South	246	24.6	11.9
Forden and Montgomery	72	23.9	9.4
Newtown West	59	23.4	13.7
Welshpool Gungrog	76	22.5	11.7
Brecon West	163	22.1	11.0
Llandrindod North	87	21.8	10.8
Knighton with Beguildy	89	21.0	6.8
Brecon East	83	20.2	10.8
Llangunllo with Norton	30	20.0	5.5
Trelystan and Trewern	42	19.8	8.3
Hay	35	18.5	6.3
Gwernyfed	32	17.7	5.6
Churchstoke	18	8.9	4.6

Source: 2021 census data

4.29 Mid-year estimates for Powys in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 for the net inflow of younger adults (aged between 20 and 34) were +46, +58, +58 and -74 respectively.³⁹ This means that during this time, +88 people of this age group moved into the county. At present, there is no available data to analyse the location from which younger adults are moving into Powys (either other counties in Wales or outside Wales) and their language skills.

PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) data

4.30 PLASC data shows that 42.1% of 5- to 11-year-olds in Powys have some ability in the Welsh language, either fluent or not fluent (Table 10). This is a slight drop from the 44% recorded in 2021/2022 (Table 11).

4.31 In Powys, 71.3% of 11- to 15-year-olds have some ability in Welsh (either fluent or not fluent). This is a slight decrease from the 72.6% recorded in 2021/2022 (Table 10 and Table 11).

³⁹ Powys County Council (2022) [‘Annual Monitoring Report 2023’](#), p.179.

Table 10. 'Ability to Speak Welsh' & 'Speaking Welsh at home', as assessed by parents of pupils in Powys (PLASC, 2022/2023)⁴⁰

Powys PLASC data 2022/2023									
Age groups	Fluent in Welsh		Not fluent in Welsh		Cannot speak Welsh		Total	Ability (Fluent + Not Fluent)	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage
5 to 11	430	5.9%	2,625	36.1%	4,210	57.9%	7,265	3,055	42.1%
11 to 15	360	6.9%	3,385	64.4%	1,510	28.7%	5,255	3,745	71.3%
Totals	790	6.3%	6,010	48.0%	5,720	45.7%	12,520	6,800	54.3%

Source: [Welsh language \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/welsh-language) data treated by IAITH.

Table 11. 'Ability to Speak Welsh' & 'Speaking Welsh at home', as assessed by parents of pupils in Powys (PLASC, 2021/2022)⁴¹

Powys PLASC data 2021/2022									
Age groups	Fluent in Welsh		Not fluent in Welsh		Cannot speak Welsh		Total	Ability (Fluent + Not Fluent)	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage
5 to 11	425	5.8%	2,825	38.2%	4,140	56.0%	7,390	3,250	44.0%
11 to 15	565	10.3%	3,415	62.3%	1,505	27.4%	5,485	3,980	72.6%
Totals	990	7.7%	6,240	48.5%	5,645	43.8%	12,875	7,230	56.2%

Source: [Welsh language \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/welsh-language) data treated by IAITH.

4.32 PLASC data also provides a picture of the number and percentage of pupils studying Welsh as a first language in Powys (Table 12). The number and percentage are at their highest for the Reception school year. On average, considering each school year from Nursery to Year 13, 16.5% of pupils in Powys study Welsh as a first language.

Table 12. Number and percentage of pupils studying Welsh as a first language in Powys, 2022/2023

School year	Number	Percentage
Nursery	75	14.9%
Reception	290	23.9%
Year 1	275	22.0%

⁴⁰ Each category (Fluent in Welsh, Not fluent in Welsh, Cannot speak Welsh) includes 'Not applicable / cannot speak Welsh'

⁴¹ Each category (Fluent in Welsh, Not fluent in Welsh, Cannot speak Welsh) includes 'Not applicable / cannot speak Welsh'

Year 2	270	21.2%
Year 3	280	22.0%
Year 4	280	21.1%
Year 5	250	19.3%
Year 6	240	18.1%
Year 7	180	13.3%
Year 8	125	10.1%
Year 9	160	12.4%
Year 10	150	11.0%
Year 11	150	12.3%
Year 12	65	13.0%
Year 13	55	13.4%

Source: [Data on the Welsh language by local authority | GOV.WALES](#)

4.33 The potential to grow the number and proportion of Welsh speakers in Powys is largely dependent upon the implementation of the county’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032 (WESP). The following sections draw on key data from the WESP to set out the baseline and targets for increasing the number of children and young people who have Welsh language skills.

Increasing the number of Welsh speaking pre-school children

4.34 Powys aims to increase the number of three-year-olds receiving Welsh language early years education to 44% or 704 pupils by the end of the 2031/32 academic year (Table 13). The pupil number target has been estimated based on the number of 3-year-olds in Powys in the summer term 2021, therefore the final figure could vary.

Table 13. Estimated number and percentage of three-year-olds educated through the medium of Welsh in Powys 2023 - 2032

Year	Numbers	Percentage
2023-2024	448	28%
2024-2025	480	30%
2025-2026	512	32%
2026-2027	544	34%
2027-2028	576	36%
2028-2029	608	38%
2029-2030	640	40%
2030-2031	672	42%
2031-2032	704	44%

Source: [Powys Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(WESP\) 2022-2032](#), p.17

4.35 The Powys WESP sets out the intention to ensure access to Welsh medium early years provision in all areas of Powys. This will involve improving the Welsh-medium teaching skills of staff working in English-medium settings. It will also be accomplished by working with Mudiad Meithrin to establish new Welsh medium pre-school provision in the localities where Welsh-medium provision does not exist:

- Hay-on-Wye
- Crickhowell
- Presteigne
- Llanidloes
- North Powys border area (Arddleen, Four Crosses, Llandysilio, Carreghofa).

Welsh language transmission

4.36 As is the case in the rest of Wales, the Welsh language transmission rate is highest in Powys in households where two or more adults can speak Welsh, including at least both partners. In such households the transmission rate is 74% (Table 14).

Table 14. Welsh language transmission rate for dependent children (aged 3-4 years) in Powys

Household composition	Percentage
Couple household	
No adults can speak Welsh	8%
Only one partner (female) can speak Welsh (no other Welsh speaking adult)	38%
Only one partner (male) can speak Welsh (no other Welsh speaking adult)	26%
Two or more adults can speak Welsh, including at least both partners	74%
At least one other adult who is not the parent can speak Welsh	[c]*
Lone parent household	
Lone mother can speak Welsh (no other Welsh-speaking adults)	50%
Lone mother does not speak Welsh (no other Welsh-speaking adults)	9%
Lone father can speak Welsh (no other Welsh-speaking adults)	[c]*
Lone father does not speak Welsh (no other Welsh-speaking adults)	[c]*
At least one other adult who is not the parent can speak Welsh	[c]*
Total	
Total: All couple households	18%
Total: All lone parent households	14%
Total: All households	17%

Source: [Welsh language household transmission rates, by sex \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

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

4.37 Welsh language transmission rate for dependent children (aged 3-4 year) ‘two or more adults can speak Welsh, including at least both partners’ varies somewhat between the local authority areas of Wales. Powys ranks joint ninth with 74% (Table 15).

Table 15. Welsh language transmission rate 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

Local authority	Percentage	Ranking
Cardiff	90%	1
Gwynedd	89%	2
Ceredigion	85%	3
Carmarthenshire	83%	4
Isle of Anglesey	82%	=5
Denbighshire	82%	=5
Vale of Glamorgan	79%	6
Caerphilly	77%	7
Flintshire	76%	8
Powys	74%	=9
Rhondda Cynon Taf	74%	=9
Conwy	71%	10
Neath Port Talbot	70%	11
Wrexham	69%	12
Swansea	68%	13
Bridgend	67%	14
Pembrokeshire	65%	15
Newport	63%	16
Merthyr Tydfil	[c]*	=17
Blaenau Gwent	[c]*	=17
Torfaen	[c]*	=17
Monmouthshire	[c]*	=17

Source: [Welsh language household transmission rates, by sex \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](#)

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

Powys primary schools and Welsh-medium education

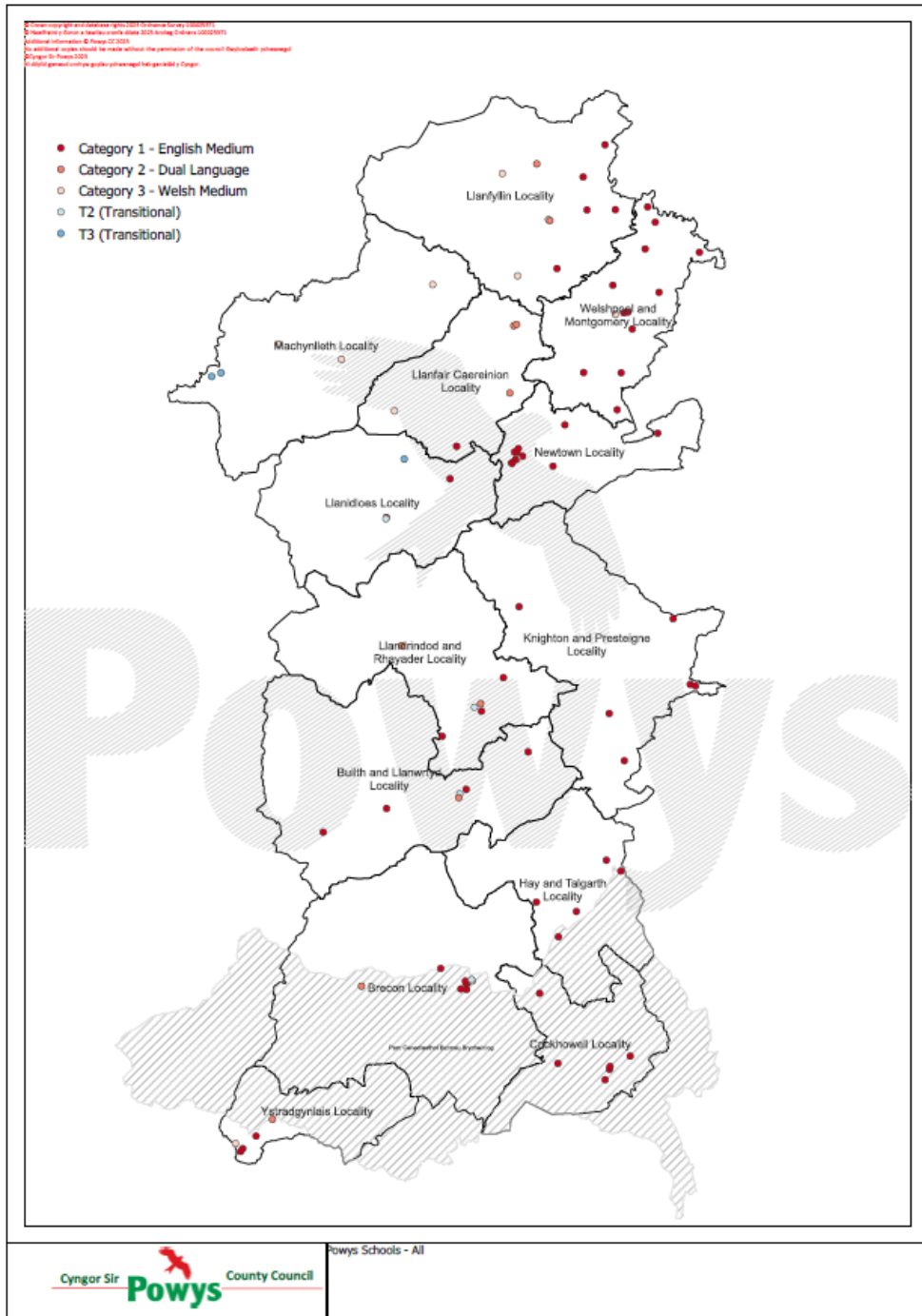
4.38 In line with Welsh Government guidance, each school in Powys is placed within one of five categories: Category 1 (English-medium), T2 (Transitional), Category 2 (Dual language), T3 (Transitional) and Category 3 (Welsh-medium).⁴² Figure 3 identifies the location of Powys primary schools according to category in each locality.

⁴² [School categories according to Welsh-medium provision | GOV.WALES](#)

4.39 The majority of primary schools in Powys (55 out of 76) are English medium C1 schools and the following localities currently only have English-medium provision:

- Newtown
- Knighton and Presteigne
- Hay and Talgarth, and
- Crickhowell.

Figure 3: Powys primary schools by all language categories and locality



Source: Powys County Council

4.41 The providers and the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium primary provision during 2020/21 is outlined in Table 16.⁴³

Table 16. Powys primary provision – type and number of pupils

School	Type	Total Welsh-medium pupils (R-Yr6) ⁸ PLASC 2021	Total English-medium pupils (R-Yr6) PLASC 2021
Ysgol Carno	Welsh-medium	45	N/A
Ysgol Cwm Banwy ⁹	Welsh-medium	46	N/A
Ysgol Llanbrynmair	Welsh-medium	59	N/A
Ysgol Pontrobert	Welsh-medium	41	N/A
Ysgol Glantwymyn	Welsh-medium	70	N/A
Ysgol Pennant	Welsh-medium	84	N/A
Ysgol y Bannau	Welsh-medium	111	N/A
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	Welsh-medium	153	N/A
Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr	Welsh-medium	400	N/A
Ysgol Gymraeg y Trallwng	Welsh-medium	79	N/A
Builth C.P. School	Dual Stream	92	109
Rhayader C.in W. School	Dual Stream	65	138
Sennybridge C.P. School	Dual Stream	56	79
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	Dual Stream	113	18
Ysgol Llanfyllin	Dual Stream	63	76
Ysgol Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Dual Stream	39	34
Ysgol Rhiw Bechan	Dual Stream	61	107
Ysgol Trefonnen	Dual Stream	91	117
Llanfair Caereinion	Dual Stream	85	77
Ysgol Bro Hyddgen (Primary)	Dual Stream	112	53
TOTAL		1,865	

Source: [Powys County Council WESP 2022-2032](#), p.18.

4.42 During 2020/21, a total of 9,541 pupils were receiving primary education in Powys. 1,865 (19.5%) of these were receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.⁴⁴

4.43 The Powys WESP (sets out the county's aim to increase the number of Reception Class Children / Five-year-olds who will be accessing Welsh-medium education by 2027

⁴³ [Powys County Council WESP](#) (p.18)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Table 17. Number and percentage of five-year-olds receiving Welsh-medium education

Year	Numbers	Percentage
2022-2023	272	22%
2023-2024	297	24%
2024-2025	312	26%
2025-2026	346	28%
2026-2027	371	30%
2027-2028	396	32%
2028-2029	420	34%
2030-2031	470	38%
2031-2032	494	40%

Source: [Powys County Council WESP 2022-2032](#), p.27.⁴⁵

4.44 By 2027 new Welsh language provision will be developed in the areas where there is currently no provision:

- Hay-on-Wye
- Crickhowell
- Presteigne
- Llanidloes
- North Powys border area.

4.45 In addition, existing Welsh language provision will be expanded in the following catchment areas:

- Llanfair Caereinion
- Llanfyllin
- Ystradgynlais
- Brecon
- Llandrindod Wells / Builth Wells
- Newtown
- Llanidloes.

Powys secondary schools and Welsh-medium education

4.46 Figure 5 locates each of the Powys secondary schools according to locality and language category. There are currently no C3 Welsh-medium secondary schools in Powys. Ysgol Bro Hyddgen in Machynlleth locality is a T3 category school in the process of transitioning to become a Welsh-medium school. The locality of Llanfair Caereinion has one C2 dual stream school.

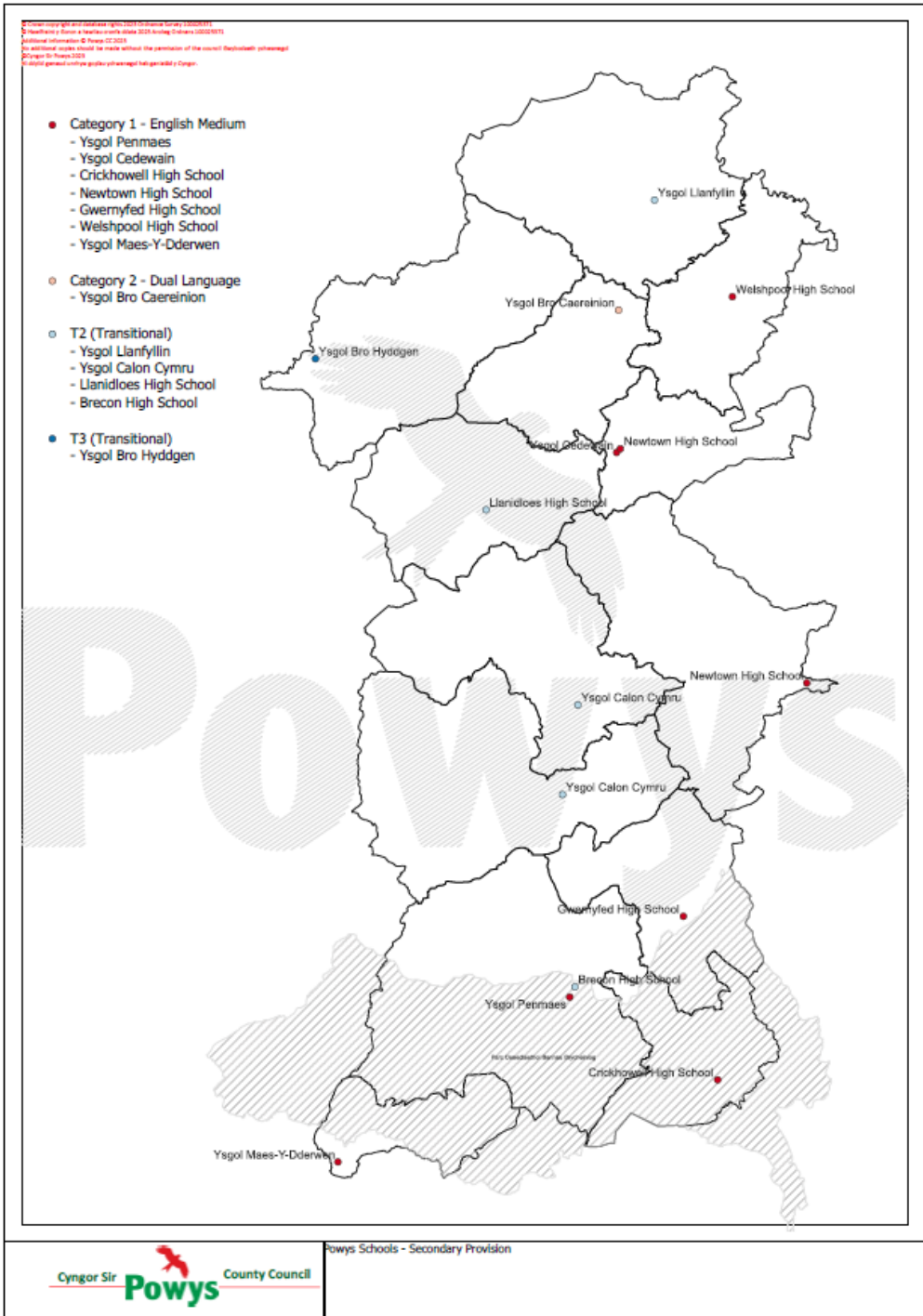
4.47 Over the next ten years a further four T2 schools will transition to dual stream provision in the following localities:

- Llanfyllin

⁴⁵ This table is taken from the Powys WESP, p.27 which omits data for the 2029-2030 school year.

- Llandrindod and Rhyader
- Builth Wells and Llanwrtyd
- Llanidloes and Blaenhafren
- Brecon.

Figure 5: Powys secondary schools by language category and locality



Source: Powys County Council

4.48 The aim is to grow Welsh-medium secondary school provision by increasing the number and percentage of Year 6 primary school pupils who continue to receive Welsh-medium provision in Year 7.

Table 18: Number and percentage of learners who will continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from Year 6 to Year 7 in their statutory education

Year	Number	Percentage
2022-2023	181	84%
2023-2024	185	86%
2024-2025	189	88%
2025-2026	194	90%
2026-2027	198	92%
2027-2028	202	94%
2028-2029	206	96%
2030-2031	211	98%
2031-2032	219	102%

Source: [Powys County Council WESP 2022-2032](#), p.33.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ This table is taken from the Powys WESP, p.33 which omits data for the 2029-2030 school year.

5 Powys Replacement LDP – Preferred Strategy

Key issues and the Vision

5.1 The ‘Powys Replacement LDP (2022–2037) seeks to provide for the future sustainable growth of the plan area by considering the social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues that face the area.

5.2 Key Issues for the ‘Replacement LDP’ have been derived from various sources including:

- Internal engagement exercises held during 2022/2023 involving County Councillors and Services.
- A review of the Issues / Considerations and Objectives of the Powys Adopted LDP (2011-2026).
- The Review Report (February 2022) and Annual Monitoring Reports (2021, 2022 and 2023) for the Adopted Powys LDP (2011-2026).
- Current legislation and national policy, including Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 and Welsh Government’s ambitions to, “decarbonise society, to be more prosperous, to grow the Welsh language and to improve health.”
- Plans and strategies for Powys and Mid Wales including the Powys Well-being Plan, the Corporate Strategic and Equality Plan, and the Mid Wales Area Statement.
- Feedback from Town and Community Councils in October 2022 on a Settlement Audit of the Adopted LDP’s 58 largest settlements.
- Feedback from a 3-week period of non-statutory public consultation in January 2024 on the Draft Key Issues, Vision and Objectives for the Replacement LDP.

5.3 There are 20 Key Issues identified for the ‘Replacement LDP. These are considered to be the main land use and spatial planning issues facing the plan area for the period up to 2037. The ninth key issue is ‘The Welsh Language - Promotion and Protection’.

5.4 The following context section is provided with Key Issue 9 (KI.9):

It is predicted that the Welsh speaking population in Wales will increase in line with the Welsh Government’s target to reach one million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy, Welsh Government).

The use of Welsh language varies considerably across Powys, with traditional Welsh Language Strongholds in the north-west and south-west communities. In these areas, Welsh language and Welsh culture is an integral part of the social fabric. However, the 2021 Census found that the number of Welsh speakers in Powys had decreased slightly over the ten year period 2011-2021.

The Council is committed to promoting the Welsh language and making it easier for residents to use. To facilitate this, the Council follows Welsh Language Standards, has a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Growth will be distributed by the Replacement LDP to enable Welsh language use to thrive, and to sustain the strength of the language in areas of linguistic sensitivity

and importance. Development proposals will be expected to contribute to initiatives which support and promote the Welsh language, and in so doing will complement the role of the education system in increasing the opportunities for children and young people to be bilingual.

5.5 In response to the Key Issues, the following Vision has been defined for the Powys Replacement LDP.

By 2037, the Powys plan area will be:

A place of vibrant, thriving and well-connected communities including prosperous towns and villages, accommodating the sustainable growth of both new homes and jobs, and providing good access to services and employment opportunities. Part of a more productive, enterprising and distinctive region that supports existing businesses, an expanded economy, and better job prospects based on innovation allied to a skilled workforce. Foundational economic sectors, including farming, tourism, and recreation and leisure, will continue their key roles and the rural economy will be resilient and diverse. Benefiting from a strategic approach to Green Infrastructure, ensuring it is promoted and protected for multiple benefits to both wildlife and people, and facilitating improved ecological networks.

By 2037, Communities across the plan area will have developed in a way which enable and support:

- *Age-balanced communities living well in places which meet social, economic, Welsh language and cultural needs.*
- *Nature to flourish through net benefit for biodiversity and resilient ecosystems.*
- *Adaptation to climate change and the transition towards net zero.*

Residents will live safer, healthier, and greener lives through the provision of well-designed developments within an outstanding physical and cultural environment. The wealth of resources within the natural, built, and historic environments, including iconic landscapes, will be maintained, protected, enhanced and valued, shaping a sustainable land-use legacy for the future.

Objectives

5.6 To meet and deliver the Vision, 22 Objectives are proposed for the Replacement LDP –.

The Objectives have been grouped under the following topic categories derived from the Key Issues and set out the broad intentions for managing development up to 2037:

- Climate Change.
- Nature Recovery and the Sustainable Management of Resources.
- Key Planning Principles, Placemaking, Health and Well-being.
- **Sustainable Communities, Housing and Services.**

- A Sustainable and Vibrant Economy.
- Infrastructure, Energy and Waste.

5.7 'Objective 11' relates to the Welsh Language, and comes under 'Sustainable Communities, Housing and Services':

To foster the Welsh language by protecting Welsh language Strongholds and supporting Welsh cultural, education and language initiatives.

5.8 The Replacement LDP – Preferred Strategy will outline Strategic Policies that respond to the Vision and Objectives and will be relevant for determination of all development proposals made to the LPA up to 2037.

Stakeholder Engagement

5.9 To inform the emerging RLDP, a stakeholder event was held on 29.02.2024 to discuss issues and opportunities to support the Welsh language. Arising from this event were the following which should be considered as the Plan develops:

- Stakeholders noted that the linguistic make-up of an area is not static. As such, areas that are not currently considered areas of linguistic significance can become so.
- All of the stakeholders raised concerns about the potential negative impacts of housing developments on the Welsh language. It was noted that it is of benefit to the Welsh language for housing development to be in alignment with local housing demand.
- The importance of the role of Welsh education in creating new speakers of Welsh was stressed.

5.10 In October 2023, the LPA attended a Planning event organised by the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities to discuss opportunities as to how the planning system can support Welsh speaking areas. The Commission is due to report in August 2024 and the recommendations arising from the Commission's work will be considered as the RLDP preparation progresses.

6. Recommendations

Monitoring

6.1 It is recommended that monitoring of the policies in the Powys Adopted LDP continues and is reported through the Annual Monitoring Review to ensure that development continues to positively support the Welsh Language.

Draft Strategic Policy for Replacement Local Development Plan

6.2 It is recommended that a Strategic Policy to inform the safeguarding and promotion of the Welsh language is included in the emerging RLDP. The following Strategic Policy wording is proposed:

Strategic Policy – Welsh Language and Culture

Development proposals must safeguard and promote the Welsh language and culture across the County.

In identified Welsh language strongholds, the provision of residential and employment development, together with other facilities, must be commensurate with the needs of local communities.

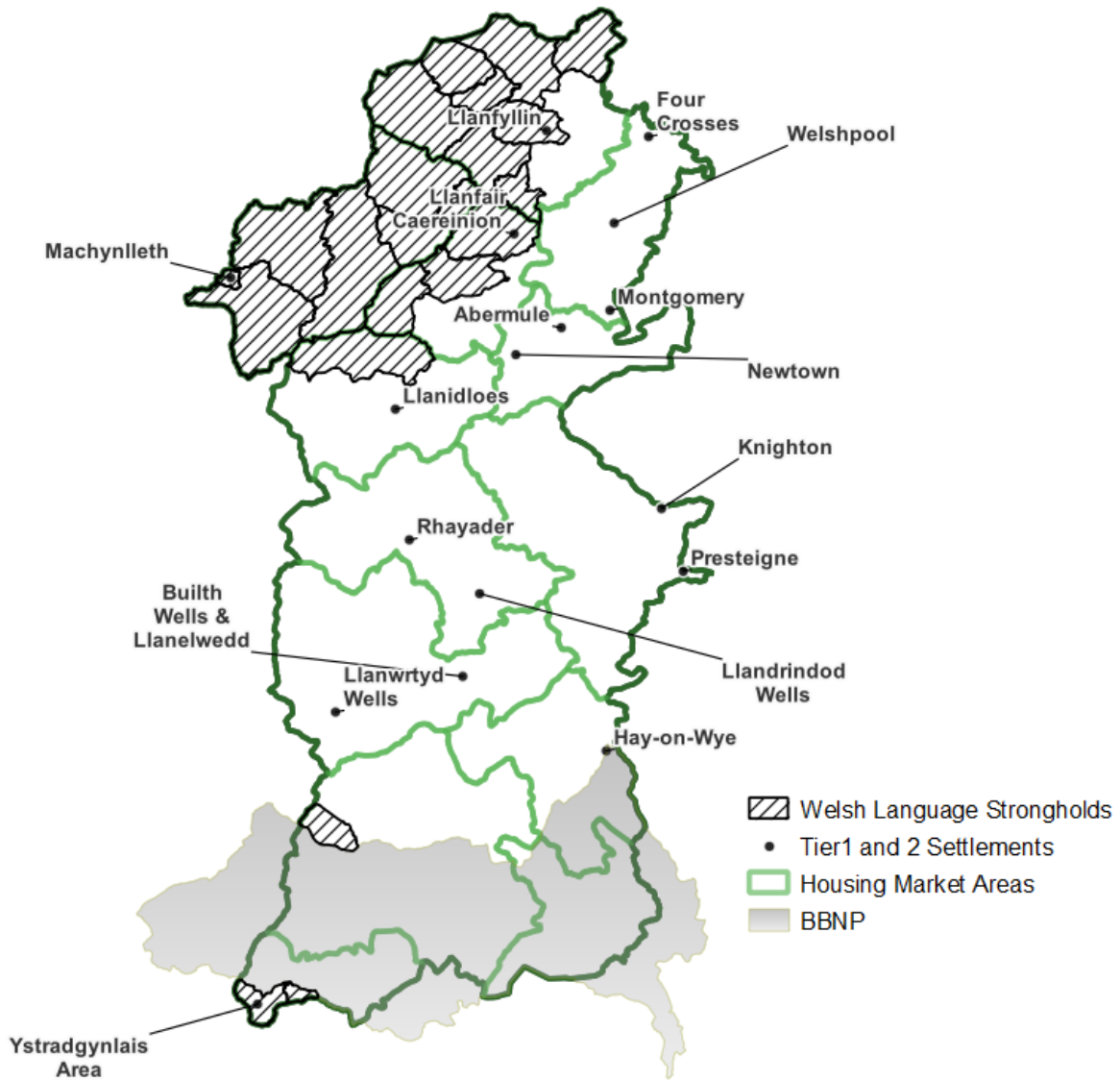
Development proposals which have a detrimental impact on the vibrancy of Welsh language and culture, or adversely impact social and community facilities in areas of Welsh language sensitivity, will not be permitted unless the impact can be mitigated.

6.3 To support the Strategic Policy, the following Justification text is proposed, which includes highlighting the location of the Welsh Language Strongholds:

The 2021 Census identified significant variation in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Powys, ranging from 54% of residents able to speak Welsh in the Glantwymyn Ward to 4% in the Churchstoke Ward. The Welsh language is a significant part of the social fabric of communities in the north-west, west and south-west of Powys, providing a strong sense of place and identity.

In Welsh Language Strongholds where Welsh is the everyday language of the community, development must be managed to ensure there are jobs and homes to enable the language to remain central to those communities. Development must be of an appropriate scale, type and character to meet the needs of these communities and should occur at a rate which can be absorbed and assimilated without damaging the character of the community.

Figure 12 - Welsh Language Strongholds



Elsewhere, development should be considered as a positive force for encouraging the creation of education and social infrastructure, community activities and a sound economic base to enable the language to develop as a natural, thriving part of sustainable communities.

Further policies will be included in the Deposit Plan to set out the circumstances where: mitigation measures may be required according to the Welsh language sensitivity of the area in which a proposed development is located; and where planning applications must be informed by a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Development Management Policies

6.4 It is recommended that the existing Adopted LDP Development Management policy (DM12) is reviewed in light of updated evidence and the emerging Welsh Language Impact Assessment. A revised Development Management policy supporting the Welsh language shall be developed during the Plan making process to inform the Deposit Stage,

which should look to move away from specifically listed settlements to consider wider community aspirations within and beyond the Welsh Language Strongholds.