

Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033

Background Paper

BP69: Rural Housing

Deposit Plan

October 2024



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

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**Sir Conwy, yr amgylchedd iawn i fyw, gweithio
a darganfod**

**Conwy County, the right environment to live,
work and discover**

Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Policies, guidance and legislation	4
2.1	National planning policy, guidance and legislation	4
2.2	Regional guidance and strategies	7
2.3	Local guidance and strategies	8
2.4	Eryri National Park policy approach	9
3	Review of adopted Conwy LDP approach	9
3.1	Local need market housing policy	9
3.2	Rural Enterprise Dwellings	11
3.3	C3 occupancy condition	12
4	RLDP strategy and policy links	12
4.1	RLDP growth strategy	12
4.2	Employment policies in the rural areas	13
5	Data and indicators	13
5.1	Population	13
5.2	Housing	19
5.3	Welsh language	37
5.4	Schools	39
5.5	Disability and care	41
5.6	The rural economy	44
6	Data findings	46
7	Recommendations for RLDP policies	49
7.1	Local need market housing	49
7.2	RED approach	52
7.3	C3 occupancy condition	52

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is one of a series of Background Papers (BP) accompanying the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). When the Council publishes its Deposit Plan, it must also explain how the policy has been formulated based on the evidence base available to the Council at the time.
- 1.2 The purpose of this background paper is to consider the Council's approach for local need market housing (where occupancy is restricted to occupiers with a local connection only) and applying C3 occupancy conditions in the Rural Development Strategy Area. The paper also considers the local policy approach for Rural Enterprise Dwellings (REDs) and how this sits alongside national planning guidance.
- 1.3 This paper has been prepared alongside BP2: Spatial Distribution Options Report, BP4: SA/SEA, BP9: Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA), BP16: Planning and the Rural Economy and BP52: second homes and short-term holiday lets.

2 Policies, guidance and legislation

2.1 National planning policy, guidance and legislation

- 2.1.1 [Planning Policy Wales \(PPW\)](#) outlines that planning authorities should understand their local housing market and factors that influence it (para 4.2.3). A collaborative approach between development plans and local housing strategies is required, which includes housing and planning stakeholders in both the public and private sectors and communities.
- 2.1.2 In order to identify an appropriate strategy for delivering housing in the area, a wide range of evidence is needed, including household projections, the Local Housing Market Assessment (BP9) and the Well-being plan. These need considering alongside other evidence relating to the RLDP objectives to ensure sustainable and cohesive communities.

- 2.1.3 Para 4.2.9 of PPW states planning authorities: “must develop policies to meet the challenges and particular circumstances evident in their areas”. Policies can “diverge from national policies in order to meet specific local housing needs for market housing, which normally would have no occupancy restriction”. This must be supported by clear, robust evidence base to support the approach. Examples given include: land supply, environmental or social impacts and the sustainability appraisal, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (BP04).
- 2.1.4 Occupancy restriction of dwellings on the basis of the Welsh language is prevented by national planning policy (para 2.6.4 of [Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language](#)).
- 2.1.5 New residential development in the open countryside is rightly restricted by national planning policy (PPW 3.60). One of the few circumstances where new housing may be permitted away from established settlements is to provide justified housing for workers required for existing or proposed new Rural Enterprise Dwellings (REDs) as set out in PPW 4.2.37-4.2.38.
- 2.1.6 The in-principle support for REDs is supplemented by [Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities](#) which identifies a number of tests which must be considered when assessing applications for REDs. The [Rural Enterprise Dwelling Practice Guidance](#) provides further information and guidance to support applicants and decision makers.
- 2.1.7 The [Development Plans Manual](#) states that local authorities should understand: “how places function at both a strategic and local level” and that this should influence how plans are prepared and implemented (para 5.2). Local needs housing is one of the need and demand factors that should be considered (table 13). Para 5.22 requires the settlement hierarchy policy to clearly set out the type of development allowed in each layer of the hierarchy. This includes the type of housing (private, affordable, local needs).
- 2.1.8 [Future Wales the National Plan 2040](#) is a national development plan, which sets a strategy for addressing key national priorities. Policy 1 where Wales will

grow is relevant and states: “Development and growth in towns and villages in rural areas should be of appropriate scale and support local aspirations and need”. Policy 4 Supporting Rural Communities is also relevant and requires development plans to identify their rural communities and set out policies to support them, including balancing age structures, depopulation and the role of affordable and market housing.

2.1.9 [The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010](#) and [The Community Infrastructure Levy \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#) are relevant. Regulation 122 requires obligations, which includes occupancy restrictions, all to be:

- i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- ii) directly related to the development; and
- iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

2.1.10 [Planning obligations \(circular 13/97\)](#) provides guidance on the use of planning obligations, which can be used to apply occupancy restrictions such as those proposed by this evidence paper. Para 7 requires planning obligations, which include restricting occupancy of new dwellings, to meet the following tests:

- a) necessary;
- b) relevant to planning;
- c) directly related to the proposed development;
- d) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development;
- e) reasonable in all other aspects.

2.1.11 The obligations created run with the land and therefore can be enforced against both the original covenantor and anyone acquiring the land.

2.1.12 Occupancy of dwellings can also be controlled, in some instances, by the use of planning conditions. Any planning proposals granted planning permission with conditions attached must comply with [the use of planning conditions for](#)

[development management \(WGC 016/2014\)](#). Conditions imposed must meet the following tests:

- a) necessary;
- b) relevant to planning;
- c) relevant to the development to be permitted;
- d) enforceable;
- e) precise; and
- f) reasonable in all other aspects.

2.1.13 Paras 5.85- 92 regarding residential occupancy conditions and REDs are relevant. The Circular provides model conditions for restricting occupancy for REDs and One Planet Developments (98-100). The Circular also provides model conditions for removing permitted development rights (104-106), which is relevant to any restrictions for C3 use class only.

2.2 Regional guidance and strategies

2.2.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a statutory requirement on each Public Services Board to produce a Local Well-being Plan for their area. The objective of the [Conwy and Denbighshire Well-being Plan \(2023-2028\)](#) is to make Conwy and Denbighshire a more equal place with less deprivation. The Plan has identified four key themes to support this:

- Well-being – Communities are happier, healthier and more resilient in the face of challenges, such as the Climate Change and Nature Emergency, or the rising cost of living.
- Economy – There is a flourishing economy, supported by a skilled workforce fit for the future.
- Equality – Those with protected characteristics face fewer barriers.
- Housing – There is improved access to good quality housing.

2.2.2 It identifies the availability of housing as a key area to help deliver the overall aim of 'A more equal Wales'. It identifies the following step, which is relevant:

“Review the amount of available housing in our county to ensure that there is quality provision that meets the needs of residents, assisting them to lead independent lives in appropriate accommodation for as long as possible”.

2.3 Local guidance and strategies

2.3.1 Relevant outcomes from the [Conwy Corporate Plan 2022-27](#) are below:

- Outcome 4) People in Conwy have access to affordable, appropriate, good quality accommodation that enhances the quality of their lives.

2.3.2 The [Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023](#) sets out Conwy’s strategic vision and priorities for housing and housing related services. Conwy’s vision is that ‘people in Conwy have access to affordable, appropriate and good quality accommodation that enhances their quality of life’.

2.3.3 [Conwy Empty Homes Strategy 2019](#) sets out how the Council will address the level of empty homes in the County Borough, through returning them to use and therefore providing accommodation.

2.3.4 Kickstarting Place Planning in Rural Conwy, explores community led plan-making for rural communities. It considers the challenges rural communities face, and options available to support them. It summarises the following for housing challenges in the area:

“A growing interest to live in the countryside has pushed up house prices and rents and rural homes are being turned into holiday accommodation. The lack of housing for local people has severe impacts on rural communities, rural businesses, and the economy in rural areas and is viewed as a key contributor to labour shortages.

A more diversely aged population could support a wider range of local services and businesses, but this relies on a sufficiently diverse supply of homes. This is recognised by the planning system, which is increasingly encouraging and enabling rural

development, particularly for affordable housing. However, provision of disproportionate sized estates on larger rural settlements can impact upon character, so careful, balanced approaches are needed. There is increasing interest in rural enterprise dwellings, one planet developments and community-led housing schemes.”

- 2.3.5 There is also a Llanrwst Kickstarter Plan (2023). The lack of housing and affordable housing, together with the need to make better use of vacant houses are highlighted as challenges by the community of Llanrwst.

2.4 Eryri National Park policy approach

- 2.4.1 Eryri National Park have their own planning authority and adopt their own [LDP](#). Strategic policy G: Housing states: “New housing within the National Park will be required to meet the need of local communities”. They do not currently have a specific policy for local need market housing. Where open market housing is permitted, occupancy is not normally restricted in any way. This means that there could be a difference in approach in the shared settlements, should CCBC progress a policy managing this through the RLDP.
- 2.4.2 Development Policy 17 provides guidance on the removal of planning restrictions for agricultural and holiday accommodation. Agricultural occupancy conditions may be replaced with conditions for a RED or an affordable housing for local needs if justified by evidence. Holiday accommodation restrictions may be replaced with a condition for affordable housing for local needs.

3 Review of adopted Conwy LDP approach

3.1 Local need market housing policy

- 3.1.1 The Conwy LDP (2007-22) has no policy for local need market housing in the plan area, and therefore, they are not permitted. Policies HOU/1 and HOU/2 allow 100% affordable housing for local need dwellings in Tier 2 main villages, minor villages and hamlets. Open market dwellings are permitted in

exceptional circumstances in Tier 2 main villages, where it assists with financial viability of a scheme.

3.1.2 There have been applications approved at planning committee for open market dwellings, contrary to officer recommendation and local policy. A list of those approved since adoption of the LDP (2007-22) is below:

- 0/45820 Plot 6 Nebo Road Pentrefoelas Betws Y Coed LL24 0AT
Approved with conditions 29-07-2020
- 0/48299 Llifon Aber Pwll Pentrefoelas LL24 0LE
Approved With Conditions 21-06-2021
- 0/50081 Lliwedd Llangernyw To Rhydeden Llangernyw LL22 8PP
Approved With Conditions 05-10-2022
- 0/46167 Land at Gogr Ganol Ffordd Gogr Llansannan Abergele LL16 5HS
Approved with conditions 25-04-2019

3.1.3 Reasons for granting permission are linked to the applicant having a local connection to the settlement, and are not eligible for affordable housing. These sites are located in smaller settlements in the Rural Development Strategy Area, suggesting that a RLDP policy to guide occupancy restrictions could be beneficial in this area.

3.1.4 There have also been applications submitted to the local planning authority to remove occupancy conditions specifying a local connection.

- 0/46879 Muriau Clyd, Cae Haidd to Pentrefoelas, Pentrefoelas, Conwy, LL24 0AT
Deed of Release Granted 29-11-2019

3.1.5 There have also been relevant planning appeals in neighbouring planning authorities for removing occupancy conditions. Planning inspectors have overturned the decisions and removed the occupancy restriction on the basis of it not serving a useful purpose, and therefore not being compliant with Circular 13/97 and the CIL Regulations.

- 3.1.6 It should be noted, however, that these appeals are in areas where there is no policy requirement for local need housing. The affordable housing for local need policies of the plans do apply to the proposal locations, however, the applicants demonstrated that the dwellings could not be considered as affordable housing, and therefore these policies were not relevant.
- 3.1.7 Careful consideration will be needed for any proposed policy to ensure that any occupancy restriction meets the requirement of national guidance.

3.2 Rural Enterprise Dwellings

- 3.2.1 There is no specific policy in the LDP (2007-22) for Rural Enterprise Dwellings (RED). LDP policy HOU/1 and supporting text provides some guidance. National planning guidance provides the main steer. Planning applications relating to agricultural/forestry workers dwellings and REDs indicate that there is a need for local policy to guide proposals for these dwellings so that they support rural businesses in the long-term. Based on local evidence, there are two key areas of RED policy that would benefit from additional policy:
- managing REDs where there are temporarily no eligible occupiers; and
 - the process for removing occupancy restrictions.
- 3.2.2 Changes to family circumstances can result in REDs that were built due to a genuine need at the time, no longer being required. Under the current national policy approach, lack of demand for a RED, even on a temporary basis, can result in occupancy restrictions being removed, resulting in an open market dwelling. This is contrary to the national objectives of the general restriction of open market dwellings in the open countryside, and that REDs should be retained to support the rural enterprises that they were built for.
- 3.2.3 A previous application and appeal (0/42414) highlighted a potential policy gap. The approach proposed in the Conwy RLDP is to expand on the requirements of TAN6 and the RED Practice Guidance to support (where justified) temporary use of REDs as holiday accommodation. In the case of family farms where a younger generation is likely to become involved in the business

in future, and require a home of their own in due course, it may not be appropriate to market a RED for sale. Applying for temporary use as a holiday let could support the future residential needs of the household, whilst making use of the property in the short-term. A local level policy could be beneficial to manage these scenarios in planning terms, to ensure our rural communities are supported and prevent unnecessary new house building in the open countryside.

- 3.2.4 Applications have been submitted for the removal of existing occupancy restrictions for agricultural or forestry workers. National policy supports replacing these with RED conditions, but national guidance is sparse for this policy area. It is, therefore, considered that local level policy would be beneficial to guide these applications.

3.3 C3 occupancy condition

- 3.3.1 The changes to the Use Classes Order, which introduced separate use classes for C5 second homes and C6 holiday lets were not in place at the time of preparation of the adopted LDP. Current LDP policies, therefore make no reference to restricting dwellings for C3 use only. Proposals for new dwellings have not (to date) been granted permission with occupancy restricted on this basis.

4 RLDP strategy and policy links

4.1 RLDP growth strategy

- 4.1.1 The RLDP growth strategy aims to deliver 10% of both housing and employment growth in the Rural Development Strategy Area (RDSA). The majority of the rural growth is focused to Llanrwst, the Key Service Centre, where there is a Strategic Site allocation. No allocations will be made in the smaller settlements. Instead, a flexible policy approach to support a sustainable level of growth through mixed use (market and affordable) housing schemes within the settlement boundary, or 100% affordable housing

exception sites adjacent them. Policies will also guide proposals for REDs and conversions of rural buildings to residential use.

4.2 Employment policies in the rural areas

4.2.1 The proposed new policy approach for employment in the RDSA is covered through flexible criteria based policies, which will support the development of new and expansion of existing employment sites in the area. BP16 the rural economy is relevant.

5 Data and indicators

5.1 Population

5.1.1 The total population for Conwy County Borough on Census day in 2021 was 114,741. The proportion of the population aged over 65 years is higher in Conwy County Borough than is typical for Wales. Looking in detail at our rural Town and Community Councils (T&CC) shows that this proportion varies across the areas. Caerhun has the highest at 32.1% of people. Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr has the lowest at 20.3%. Similarly, levels of residents aged under 16 years also varies when compared to the County Borough average at 16%.

Figure 1: table showing age structure in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total	Aged 0-15 years	Aged 16 to 64 years	Aged 65 years and over
Conwy County Borough	114,741	16.0%	56.6%	26.0%
Rural area	15,081	15.9%	58.4%	25.7%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	11,948	15.4%	58.7%	25.9%
Betws yn Rhos	965	16.5%	58.9%	24.7%
Bro Garmon	672	16.1%	61.8%	22.2%
Caerhun	1,276	13.3%	54.5%	32.1%
Cerrigydrudion	722	15.8%	55.8%	28.4%
Dolgarrog	436	17.2%	59.9%	22.9%
Eglwysbach	912	17.9%	55.2%	27.0%
Henryd	657	12.8%	58.0%	29.2%
Llanddoded & Maenan	604	12.7%	63.2%	24.0%
Llanfairtalhaearn	969	13.2%	59.3%	27.5%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	202	15.3%	64.4%	20.3%
Llangernyw	1,115	17.8%	57.6%	24.7%
Llangwm	475	15.2%	59.8%	25.1%
Llanefydd	536	13.1%	64.9%	22.0%
Llanrwst	3,133	18.0%	57.1%	24.9%
Llansannan	1,252	16.9%	59.7%	23.4%
Pentrefoelas	350	16.0%	53.4%	30.6%
Trefriw	805	14.9%	61.7%	23.4%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS007 and PP012

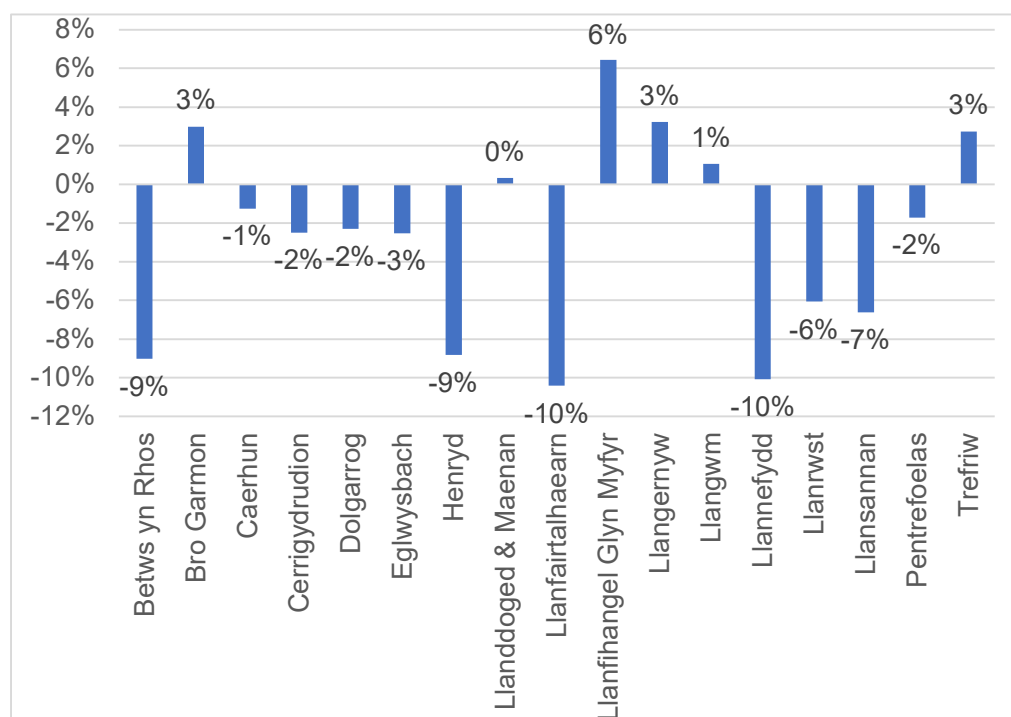
5.1.2 The table and chart below show the population change over 10 years. There was an estimated population decrease of 0.4% (-487 residents) for Conwy County Borough between 2011 and 2021. The change in some communities is significantly higher, with -10% change in Llanfairtalhaearn and Llanefydd. Some areas had an increase in population over the 10 year period, including Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr (6%), Bro Garmon (3%), Llangernyw (3%) and Trefriw (3%).

Figure 2: table showing population change in rural T&CCs (2011 & 2021)

Area	2011 number	2021 number	Change number	Change %
Conwy County Borough	115,228	114,741	-487	-0.4%
Rural area	15,629	15,081	-548	-4%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	12,306	11,948	-358	-3%
Betws yn Rhos	1,052	965	-87	-9%
Bro Garmon	652	672	20	3%
Caerhun	1,292	1,276	-16	-1%
Cerrigydrudion	740	722	-18	-2%
Dolgarrog	446	436	-10	-2%
Eglwysbach	935	912	-23	-3%
Henryd	715	657	-58	-9%
Llanddoged & Maenan	602	604	2	0%
Llanfairtalhaearn	1,070	969	-101	-10%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	189	202	13	6%
Llangernyw	1,079	1,115	36	3%
Llangwm	470	475	5	1%
Llanefydd	590	536	-54	-10%
Llanrwst	3,323	3,133	-190	-6%
Llansannan	1,335	1,252	-83	-7%
Pentrefoelas	356	350	-6	-2%
Trefriw	783	805	22	3%

Source: 2011 Census table KS101EW and 2021 Census tables TS007 and PP012

Figure 3: chart showing population change in rural T&CCs (2011 & 2021)



Source: 2021 Census table PP012

- 5.1.3 Most people live in a household: one person living alone, or a group of people living at the same address with common housekeeping – that is, sharing either a living room or at least one meal a day (Office for National Statistics definition).
- 5.1.4 The table below shows the household type that people live in and the average household size. All rural communities have average household sizes above the County Borough average of 2.16. The County Borough has a high proportion of one person households at 34%. The majority of rural communities are below this, with the lowest being 19% in Llanddodged and Maenan. The proportion of single family households are also higher in rural communities than the County Borough average. Other household types varies.

Figure 4: table showing households in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total	Average household size	One-person household	Single family household	Other household types
Conwy County Borough	52,237	2.16	34%	61%	4%
Rural area	6,488	2.31	28%	67%	5%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,092	2.34	27%	68%	5%
Betws yn Rhos	405	2.43	23%	71%	6%
Bro Garmon	272	2.47	24%	71%	6%
Caerhun	575	2.19	28%	67%	5%
Cerrigydrudion	314	2.24	32%	62%	6%
Dolgarrog	194	2.21	31%	67%	2%
Eglwysbach	379	2.45	26%	67%	7%
Henryd	301	2.23	29%	66%	5%
Llanddoged & Maenan	242	2.48	19%	75%	7%
Llanfairtalhaearn	433	2.23	31%	64%	6%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	84	2.37	29%	70%	1%
Llangernyw	455	2.39	21%	73%	5%
Llangwm	207	2.33	27%	71%	3%
Llanefydd	213	2.56	25%	67%	8%
Llanrwst	1,396	2.21	35%	62%	3%
Llansannan	531	2.39	27%	69%	4%
Pentrefoelas	136	2.31	29%	67%	4%
Trefriw	351	2.30	28%	64%	8%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS001, TS003 and PP007

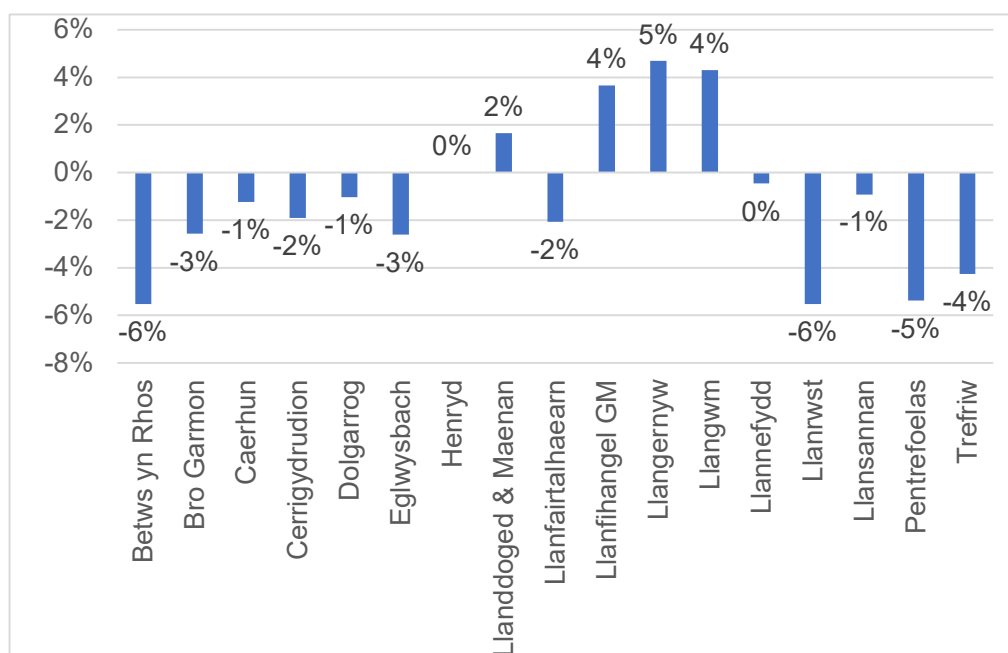
5.1.5 The table below shows change in household numbers over time (between 2011 and 2021). Although population hasn't increased during this 10 year period, the numbers of households has increased across the County Borough as a whole. This is due to changes in the average household size and long-term trends for smaller households. The table below shows that the change to the number of households in rural communities varies, with some seeing a decrease of as much as 10%. A small number have seen increases.

Figure 5: table showing household change in rural T&CCs (2011 & 2021)

Area	2011 number	2021 number	Change number	Change %
Conwy County Borough	51,177	52,237	1,060	2%
Rural area	6,638	6,506	-132	-2%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,166	5,111	-55	-1%
Betws yn Rhos	1,052	965	-87	-9%
Bro Garmon	652	672	20	3%
Caerhun	1,292	1,276	-16	-1%
Cerrigydrudion	740	722	-18	-2%
Dolgarrog	446	436	-10	-2%
Eglwysbach	935	912	-23	-3%
Henryd	715	657	-58	-9%
Llanddoged & Maenan	602	604	2	0%
Llanfairtalhaearn	1,070	969	-101	-10%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	189	202	13	6%
Llangernyw	1,079	1,115	36	3%
Llangwm	470	475	5	1%
Llanefydd	590	536	-54	-10%
Llanrwst	3,323	3,133	-190	-6%
Llansannan	1,335	1,252	-83	-7%
Pentrefoelas	356	350	-6	-2%
Trefriw	783	805	22	3%

Source: 2011 Census table KS105EW and 2021 Census table PP001

Figure 6: chart showing population change in rural T&CCs (2011 & 2021)



Source: 2021 Census table PP001

5.2 Housing

House types

5.2.1 The 2021 Census also collected information around house types. The table below shows the proportions of different house types available in the rural areas. The majority of communities have much higher proportions of detached housing than compared with the County Borough average. Dolgarrog and Llanrwst are the only exceptions. Proportions of terraced vary, but many communities have lower proportions than is typical for the County Borough. The level of flats is much lower across all rural communities, except for Llanrwst, where it is similar to the County Borough.

Figure 7: table showing house types in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats	Other
Conwy County Borough	52,235	36%	32%	14%	11%	6%
Rural area	6,509	55%	27%	13%	3%	2%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,111	63%	25%	9%	1%	1%
Betws yn Rhos	415	72%	20%	5%	1%	0%
Bro Garmon	272	71%	21%	6%	1%	2%
Caerhun	565	56%	29%	14%	0%	1%
Cerrigydrudion	313	48%	27%	21%	1%	2%
Dolgarrog	194	14%	78%	7%	1%	1%
Eglwysbach	383	73%	17%	8%	0%	2%
Henryd	315	62%	17%	14%	0%	2%
Llanddaged & Maenan	241	78%	17%	5%	0%	0%
Llanfairtalhaearn	435	56%	29%	11%	1%	2%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	83	81%	19%	0%	0%	0%
Llangernyw	446	73%	19%	7%	1%	1%
Llangwm	209	74%	21%	5%	0%	0%
Llannefydd	214	77%	18%	4%	0%	0%
Llanrwst	1,398	24%	33%	25%	10%	6%
Llansannan	541	71%	23%	4%	0%	1%
Pentrefoelas	130	61%	27%	12%	0%	0%
Trefriw	355	50%	29%	14%	2%	4%

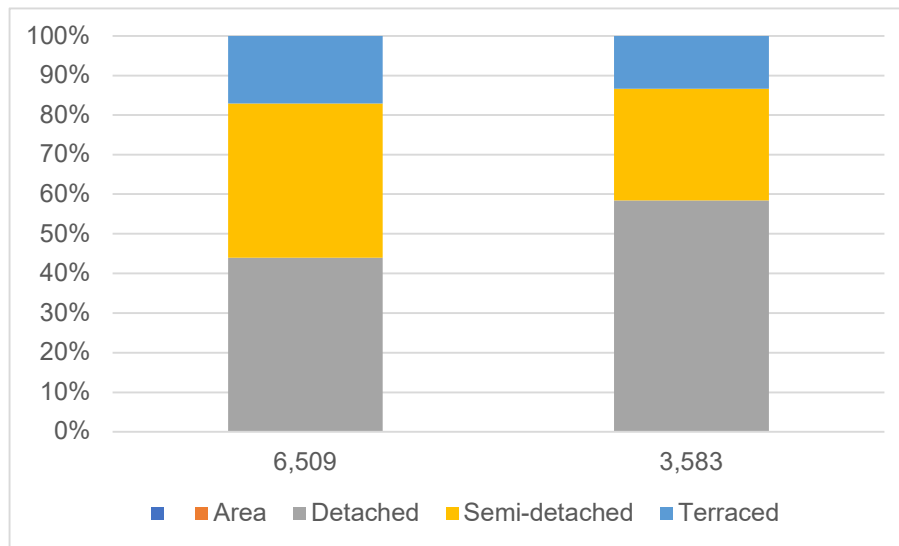
Source: 2021 Census table TS044

Note: Llanrwst Town Council area is calculated from the Lower Super Output Area level data; other Community Councils are calculated from Census Output Areas.

Other includes house shares, commercial buildings, caravan or temporary structure.

5.2.2 The chart below shows the proportions of each house type for the RDSA as a whole compared with the proportion for the County Borough. It shows that detached properties, which are usually more expensive, are more common in the RDSA than in the County Borough as a whole.

Figure 8: chart showing house types in rural T&CCs (2021)



Source: 2021 Census table TS044

Note: other includes house shares, commercial buildings, caravan or temporary structure.

Council tax bands

5.2.3 Across most of the rural lower super output areas (LSOAs), there is a smaller proportion of Band A and B properties when compared with the Conwy County Borough average. Some also have fewer Band Cs as a proportion of properties. This implies there are proportionally fewer of the lowest value properties within the dwelling stock than is found across other parts of the County Borough.

Figure 9: table showing council tax band in rural LSOAs (2024)

LSOA	All bands	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Band I
Conwy CB	57,510	9%	14%	27%	21%	16%	9%	3%	1%	0%
Rural area	7,820	6%	15%	24%	17%	20%	12%	4%	1%	0%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	6,250	3%	11%	17%	14%	19%	11%	4%	1%	0%
Caerhun	1,010	2%	7%	22%	20%	23%	14%	10%	3%	1%
Betws yn Rhos	920	4%	11%	21%	14%	23%	17%	9%	1%	0%
Llangernyw	660	3%	12%	18%	21%	27%	14%	3%	0%	0%
Llansannan	810	4%	12%	15%	17%	26%	19%	6%	0%	0%
Uwchaled	670	4%	21%	18%	25%	22%	9%	1%	0%	0%
Crwst	1,060	17%	14%	39%	15%	9%	5%	1%	0%	0%
Eglwysbach	700	1%	6%	16%	13%	34%	23%	6%	0%	1%
Gower	510	14%	31%	31%	10%	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%
Trefriw	640	5%	22%	36%	14%	13%	8%	3%	0%	0%
Uwch Conwy	840	7%	26%	23%	17%	18%	8%	2%	0%	0%

Source: Council Tax: stock of properties, Valuations Office Agency

Empty homes

5.2.4 There needs to be some level of vacant accommodation within the housing stock, to allow for churn within the housing market. There is no optimum level of vacancy, as the housing market in each area is different and changes over time. The Development Plans Manual requires local planning authorities to make an allowance for this in their dwelling target. 8.9% is used in the Conwy RLDP projections to reflect past trends. It includes all unoccupied household spaces as defined by the 2011 Census, and not just empty homes. BP01 provides further details.

5.2.5 The table below shows those properties classed as long-term empty and pay a council tax premium. There are other classes of empty dwellings, but these are not included below. Proportions are generally found to be higher in the rural communities when compared to the County Borough average. Some are lower, but this could be due to the small numbers involved in some communities, however, when looking at the Rural sub-area overall (including communities in the Eryri National Park), the proportion of long-term empty homes is 2.8%, which is above the County Borough average (1.9%).

Figure 10: table showing long-term empty homes liable for Council tax premium in rural T&CCs (2024)

Area	All dwellings	Number	%
Conwy County Borough	58,217	1,097	1.9%
Rural area	8,468	233	2.8%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	6,897	194	2.8%
Betws yn Rhos	461	9	2.0%
Bro Garmon	321	11	3.4%
Caerhun	659	17	2.6%
Cerrigydrudion	349	8	2.3%
Dolgarrog	210	4	1.9%
Eglwysbach	427	14	3.3%
Henryd	350	19	5.4%
Llanddoded & Maenan	264	5	1.9%
Llanfairtalhaearn	483	10	2.1%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	93	0	0.0%
Llangernyw	488	18	3.7%
Llangwm	230	3	1.3%
Llanefydd	238	4	1.7%
Llanrwst	1,571	39	2.5%
Llansannan	591	16	2.7%
Pentrefoelas	151	9	6.0%
Trefriw	413	8	1.9%

Source: Council Tax premium register, CCBC

- 5.2.6 The Council provides support to [empty homeowners](#) seeking to bring properties back into use.

Second homes and short-term holiday lets

- 5.2.7 Conwy County Borough is a popular choice for holidays, which has resulted in levels of second home ownership and short-term holiday lets in the area being above the national average. Some rural communities are particularly impacted by high levels of both second homes and holiday lets. WG has introduced new planning powers to manage this. Please see BP52 for more details.
- 5.2.8 The table below shows the number and level of second homes and holiday lets in the rural communities. Not all holiday lets are appropriate for permanent residents. Those with a planning condition to restrict occupancy to holiday use

only are excluded from the figures below. Proportions vary across the communities. Areas where proportions are low, could still be negatively impacted, as the number of these properties reduces the availability of homes to buy or rent for the local population.

Figure 11: table showing second homes and short-term holiday lets in rural T&CCs (2024)

Area	Total dwellings*	2nd homes & holiday lets** Total	2nd homes Number	Second homes %	Holiday lets** Number	Holiday lets %
Conwy County Borough	59,566	4.9%	1,567	2.6%	1,349	2.3%
Rural area	8,783	8.0%	386	4.4%	315	3.6%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	7,198	9.2%	359	5.0%	301	4.2%
Betws yn Rhos	465	2.4%	7	1.5%	4	0.9%
Bro Garmon	360	18.6%	28	7.8%	39	10.8%
Caerhun	684	10.8%	49	7.2%	25	3.7%
Cerrigydrudion	356	4.2%	8	2.2%	7	2.0%
Dolgarrog	212	1.9%	2	0.9%	2	0.9%
Eglwysbach	437	4.3%	9	2.1%	10	2.3%
Henryd	362	7.7%	16	4.4%	12	3.3%
Llanddoged & Maenan	283	9.2%	7	2.5%	19	6.7%
Llanfairtalhaearn	493	4.1%	10	2.0%	10	2.0%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	94	5.3%	4	4.3%	1	1.1%
Llangernyw	498	4.8%	14	2.8%	10	2.0%
Llangwm	239	7.5%	9	3.8%	9	3.8%
Llanefydd	244	3.7%	3	1.2%	6	2.5%
Llanrwst	1,585	2.6%	27	1.7%	14	0.9%
Llansannan	600	3.3%	11	1.8%	9	1.5%
Pentrefoelas	157	7.6%	6	3.8%	6	3.8%
Trefriw	430	9.3%	23	5.3%	17	4.0%

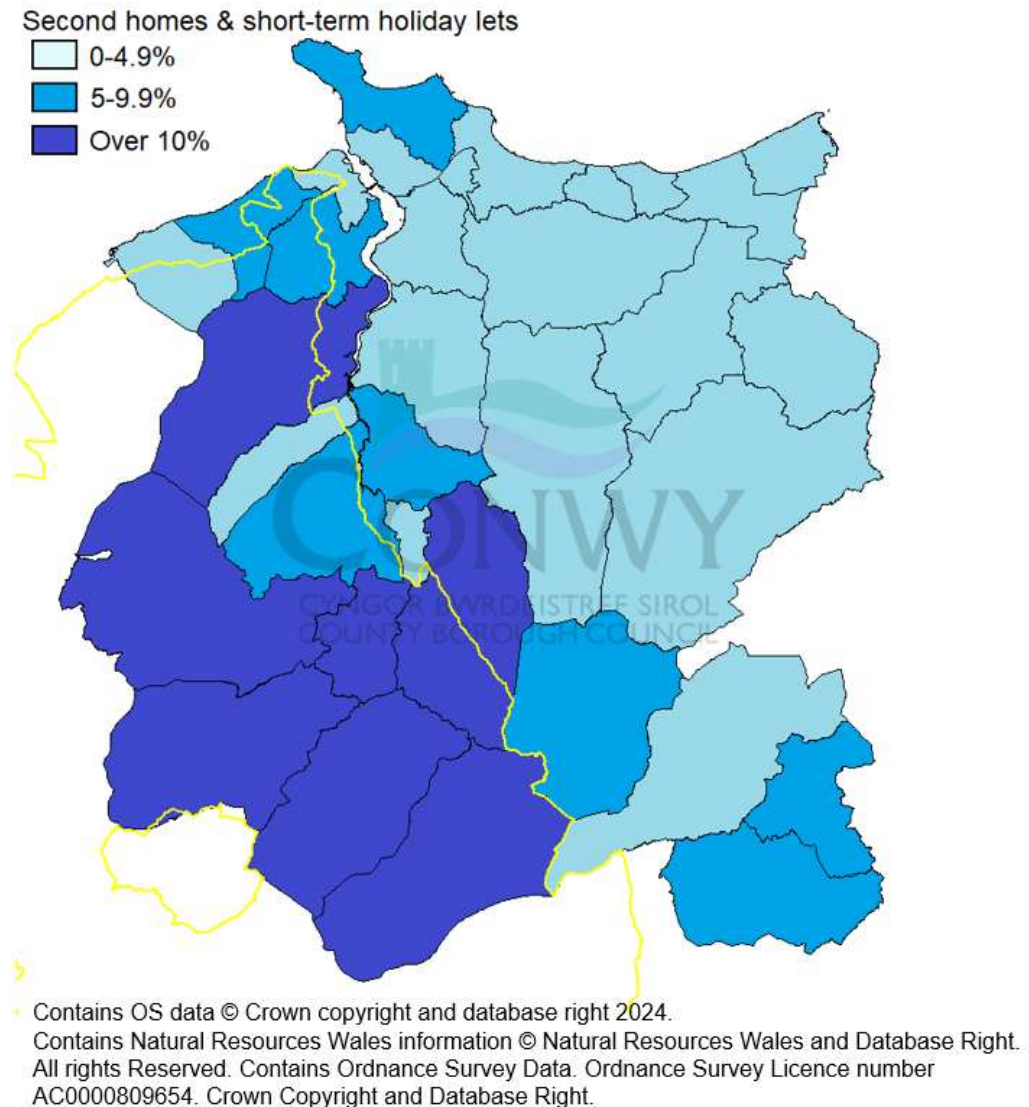
Sources: Second homes from Council Tax; short-term holiday lets from Non-Domestic Rates register, CCBC

* includes all dwellings on the council tax register and properties on the non-domestic rates register that could be permanent dwellings

** excludes any NDR holiday lets with planning conditions restricting occupancy to holiday use only within CCBC plan area.

5.2.9 The map below shows the levels of second homes and holiday lets by T&CC. Those with higher proportions are generally within and adjacent to the Eryri National Park boundary.

Figure 12: map showing second homes and short-term holiday lets in rural T&CCs (2024)



Sources: Second homes from Council Tax; short-term holiday lets from Non-Domestic Rates register, CCBC

Notes: see figure 10 above

5.2.10BP52 second homes and holiday lets provides further analysis of the levels of these uses and potential impacts on communities.

New house building

5.2.11 National and local planning policy are fairly restrictive on housebuilding in the open countryside in order to protect it from inappropriate development.

Residential development in smaller settlements is managed so that it is at an appropriate scale to avoid any detrimental impact to the local character.

Larger villages have a more flexible approach to residential development.

5.2.12 The table below shows the number of new dwellings granted planning permission by the type of dwelling. It does not include schemes for replacement dwellings. Over the five year period, a total of 62 new homes were granted planning permission in the rural communities. 25 of these were in Llanrwst.

Figure 13: table showing planning approvals in rural T&CCs (2019-24)

Area	All approvals	Affordable	Open market	Local need	Rural Enterprise
Rural area	67	12	42	4	9
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	42	5	24	4	9
Betws yn Rhos	4	0	3	0	1
Bro Garmon	2	0	1	0	1
Caerhun	2	1	1	0	0
Cerrigydrudion	5	3	1	0	1
Dolgarrog	4	0	4	0	0
Eglwysbach	3	0	3	0	0
Henryd	0	0	0	0	0
Llanddoded & Maenan	0	0	0	0	0
Llanfairtalhaearn	1	0	0	0	1
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	1	1	0	0	0
Llangernyw	4	0	0	1	3
Llangwm	1	0	0	0	1
Llanefydd	1	0	1	0	0
Llanrwst	25	7	18	0	0
Llansannan	9	0	7	1	1
Pentrefoelas	2	0	0	2	0
Trefriw	3	0	3	0	0

Sources: Strategic Planning Policy Service, CCBC and Planning Policy Eryri
National Park Authority

Tenure

5.2.13 Tenure refers to whether a household rents or owns their accommodation.

The most robust information currently available for this is from the Census. The table below shows tenure for rural areas. It shows that owner occupied, including those on a shared ownership scheme, is more common across most rural communities when compared to the County Borough average. Cerrigydrudion and Llanrwst have slightly lower proportions. Pentrefoelas has the lowest at 43%. Social rented is much lower than the County Borough average in some communities. The table below shows no social rented households in Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr. It should be noted that this does not match the Councils affordable housing stock list for this area (see figure 21).

5.2.14 The proportion of households living in private rentals are generally slightly lower in the rural communities when compared to the County Borough average. Levels of private rented or living rent free are much higher in Pentrefoelas (44%) than the County Borough (19%). In 2023, the Rural Housing Enablers conducted a study of housing need in Pentrefoelas and found high levels of private renting. The report concluded that this was likely due to there being a number of National Trust owned farms and smallholdings locally.

Figure 14: table showing tenure in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total households	Owned or shared ownership	Social rented	Private rented or lives rent free
Conwy County Borough	52,235	69%	12%	19%
Rural area	6,493	71%	11%	18%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,097	74%	8%	17%
Betws yn Rhos	404	74%	7%	20%
Bro Garmon	272	75%	7%	18%
Caerhun	575	79%	9%	12%
Cerrigydrudion	314	60%	16%	24%
Dolgarrog	195	80%	6%	14%
Eglwysbach	381	71%	6%	23%
Henryd	301	79%	4%	17%
Llanddoged & Maenan	239	85%	2%	14%
Llanfairtalhaearn	436	71%	12%	17%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	84	88%	0%	12%
Llangernyw	456	76%	7%	17%
Llangwm	207	72%	5%	23%
Llanefydd	213	76%	9%	15%
Llanrwst	1,396	61%	18%	21%
Llansannan	532	78%	10%	13%
Pentrefoelas	136	43%	13%	44%
Trefriw	352	77%	11%	12%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS054 and PP008

Owner occupied

5.2.15 Owner occupier is the most common housing tenure in the rural communities (see tenure section above for more details). Land Registry publish unit level transaction data for house sales. There are limitations with this data, but it is the most complete register of house prices available in the UK. Only those new build properties which are registered as change of land ownership are included, and so some self-build properties will be excluded. Not all house sales are recorded through the Land Registry and some transactions may see a delay in registration.

5.2.16 The table below shows the total number of sales by area for 2023. The number of sales in the rural areas is very low.

Figure 15: table showing number of registered sales by accommodation type in rural T&CCs (2023)

Area	All house types	Detached	Flats	Semi-detached	Terraced
Conwy County Borough	1,441	474	273	461	233
Rural strategy area	130	52	3	38	37
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	100	47	1	27	25
Betws yn Rhos	4	4	0	0	0
Bro Garmon	7	3	0	3	3
Caerhun	9	6	0	2	1
Cerrigydrudion	2	1	0	1	0
Dolgarrog	8	3	0	4	1
Eglwysbach	3	3	0	0	0
Henryd	3	2	0	1	0
Llanddoged & Maenan	4	2	0	2	0
Llanfairtalhaearn	6	2	0	2	2
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	0	0	0	0	0
Llangernyw	6	0	0	4	2
Llangwm	0	0	0	0	0
Llanefydd	1	1	0	0	0
Llanrwst	30	5	2	11	12
Llansannan	3	3	0	0	0
Pentrefoelas	3	2	0	1	0
Trefriw	10	5	1	3	1

Source: Land Registry Price Paid data

5.2.17 The table below shows median house prices for the different house types in the RDSA. The number of sales for T&CCs are too small in number for sales prices to be meaningful at smaller area. Breakdown by house type for the RDSA should also be treated with caution due to the small number of sales involved. The comparison below for all house types does indicate that properties in the RDSA have higher prices than the County Borough average. Flats show to be significantly less, however, the number of sales is 3 for this house type in the RDSA and therefore unlikely to be reflective.

Figure 16: table showing house prices (median) by accommodation type (2023)

Area	All house types	Detached	Flats	Semi-detached	Terraced
Conwy County Borough	£202,000	£295,500	£124,000	£203,500	£155,000
Rural strategy area	£228,500	£347,500	£92,000	£203,500	£155,950

Source: Land Registry Price Paid data

5.2.18 The table below looks at the affordability of properties at median and lower quartile house prices when compared to median household income. A house price to household income ratio (or multiplier) gives some indication of how affordable housing is in the area for first time buyers. Typically a ratio of 4 to 4.5 times income is needed to be able to afford a mortgage. Data from WG shows that the typical house price to income ratio for those who have purchased a home in Conwy County Borough recently is 4.4.

5.2.19 In 2023 the ratio for average (median) house price to median income was 6.0 for Conwy CB, and 6.5 for the RDSA. This is higher than the ratio of 4.4 for recent property purchases. Even if a buyer has managed to save a deposit of 20% (£45,700 in the RDSA; £40,400 in the County Borough), the median price is out of the reach of people with average household income, as the ratio of 5.2 is above the normal loan range. Relative to household incomes, households in rural communities are more expensive places to buy a home than other parts of the County Borough. First time buyers are most likely priced out of the market.

Figure 17: table showing house price to median household income ratio (2023)

Indicator	Conwy County Borough	Rural strategy area
Median house price	£202,000	£228,500
Median household income	£33,750	£34,950
Median house price ratio with no deposit	6.0	6.5
Median house price ratio with 10% deposit	5.4	5.9
Median house price ratio with 20% deposit	4.8	5.2
Lower quartile house price	£150,000	£160,000
Lower quartile household income	£19,500	£20,350
Lower quartile house price ratio	7.7	7.9

Source: CACI Paycheck & Land Registry Price Paid data

5.2.20 Though it is seemingly more affordable, housing in the lower quartile range is mostly smaller properties (for example one bedroomed properties and/or converted flats) or those which need a lot of refurbishment. Other data (see relevant sections above and below) indicate that there are fewer of these properties available in the rural communities. We cannot assume that these cheaper properties provide suitable accommodation for all first time buyers, or are available in rural areas.

5.2.21 This analysis has just looked at the situation for households with median income. Obviously individuals and households who have income that falls below this level find it even harder to buy a home, in terms of both being eligible for a mortgage based on their income, and saving for a deposit. This applies to existing homeowners who may not be able to move to more appropriate accommodation as their circumstances change as well as those who wish to enter the housing market for the first time.

Private rented

5.2.22 Information about private rental costs is very difficult to obtain, and there are severe limitations with the data that is available. BP09 LHMA (2022-37) has

more details on these limitations. The table below shows the median monthly rent values for the County Borough and RDSA. Rates are similar, although, the limitations with this data does mean that these differences should be treated with caution. Data is not available for small areas.

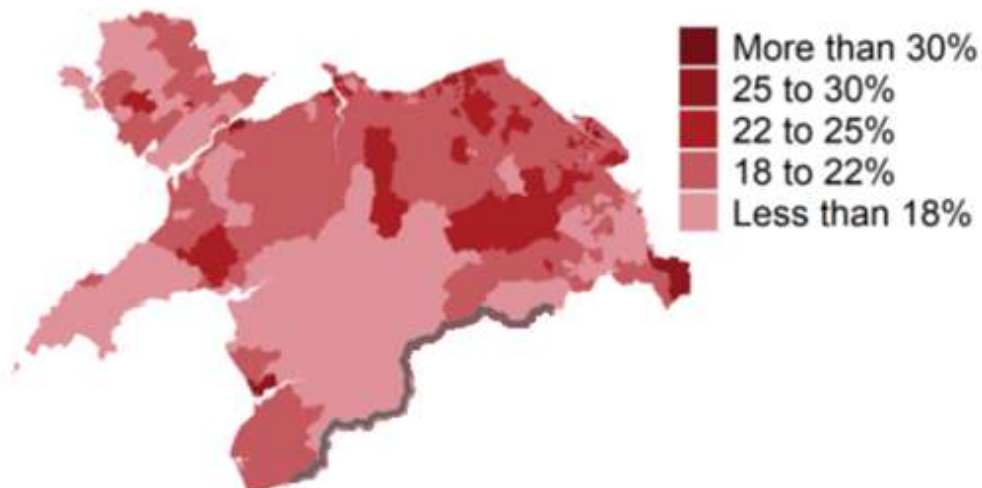
Figure 18: table showing median monthly rent values (2022-23)

House size	Conwy CB	RDSA
1 bed monthly rent	£450	£450
2 bed monthly rent	£595	£550
3 bed monthly rent	£695	£660
4+ bed monthly rent	£945	£945

Source: private sector rents, Rent Officers Wales

5.2.23 WG suggest that for rent to be affordable, a household should spend less than 30% of its income on rent. The map below shows this affordability ratio by Lower Level Super Output Area (LSOA). It shows variances across the County Borough. Parts of the Rural Development Strategy Area have worse affordability than others for private rent costs. Llangernyw and Pentrefoelas T&CC areas have higher affordability ratios at 22-25% than other parts of the County Borough.

Figure 19: map showing affordability ratio for the private rental market by LSOA (2023)



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Source: Rent Officer Wales (2023) in Data mapping and visualisation on the housing rental market in Wales (Alma Economics for WG)

Affordable housing

5.2.24 There are two types of affordable housing; social and intermediate housing.

To register for either types, households must meet certain criteria to be eligible. Social housing is rented housing owned and managed by registered social landlords. Intermediate housing schemes offer homes for sale or rent at prices discounted from the open market. Intermediate rented properties are also owned and managed by registered social landlords. Rent levels are set at around 80% of local market rents.

5.2.25 The Council has two affordable housing registers; one for social and housing and a second for intermediate housing. The table below shows the first choice location of households who are eligible and in need of affordable housing by T&CC area. Around 10% of households are eligible for both social and intermediate housing and so there is a small element of double counting in the numbers below. There are a total of 156 households. Almost half (46%) of these have Llanrwst as their first area choice to be housed.

Figure 20: table showing households on the affordable housing registers by first area choice in the RDSA (2024)

Area	Social	Intermediate	Total
Rural area	83	73	156
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	41	44	85
Betws yn Rhos	7	4	11
Bro Garmon	0	0	0
Caerhun	3	6	9
Cerrigydrudion	1	3	4
Dolgarrog	0	3	3
Eglwysbach	3	2	5
Henryd	3	0	3
Llanddoged & Maenan	0	0	0
Llanfairtalhaearn	3	4	7
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	0	2	2
Llangernyw	1	2	3
Llangwm	0	0	0
Llanefydd	0	4	4
Llanrwst	42	29	71
Llansannan	11	11	22
Pentrefoelas	0	1	1
Trefriw	9	2	11

Source: SARTH and Tai Teg housing registers, Housing Services, CCBC

5.2.26 Households are able to choose up to nine locations for social housing and up to 3 locations for intermediate housing. It should be noted that households may choose where they are more likely to be offered a social property, and not where they would prefer to live. Need could therefore be higher in areas where affordable stock is low. The table below shows the number of households with rural communities as any of their preferred locations. Llanrwst is the most popular choice, but is now at 28% of rural area choices.

Figure 21: table showing households on the affordable housing registers by all area choices in the RDSA (2024)

Area	Social need	Intermediate need	All affordable need
Rural area	292	159	451
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	208	116	324
Betws yn Rhos	33	17	50
Bro Garmon	2	2	4
Caerhun	17	11	28
Cerrigydrudion	4	7	11
Dolgarrog	19	13	32
Eglwysbach	12	5	17
Henryd	14	2	16
Llanddoged & Maenan	2	1	3
Llanfairtalhaearn	22	9	31
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	0	3	3
Llangernyw	13	5	18
Llangwm	1	0	1
Llanefydd	7	7	14
Llanrwst	84	43	127
Llansannan	23	13	36
Pentrefoelas	0	3	3
Trefriw	39	18	57

Source: SARTH and Tai Teg housing registers, Housing Services, CCBC

Note: SARTH has up to nine area options; Tai Teg (intermediate) has up to three area options.

5.2.27 The new [Local Housing Market Assessment \(2022-37\)](#) estimates the number of households in need of affordable housing by sub-area. For the first five year period, an estimated 44 households will be in need of affordable housing in the Rural DSA (including parts in Eryri National Park). Assuming this back log is met, the remaining 10 year period estimates 7 households will be in need of affordable housing each year.

5.2.28 The table below shows the current levels of affordable housing stock which is managed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the rural communities. Almost half of the stock (46%) is in Llanrwst. The remainder is spread across

communities, with larger numbers generally found in the larger settlements. There are very small numbers of RSL managed intermediate stock.

Figure 22: table showing affordable housing stock in the RDSA (2023)

Area	Social stock	Intermediate stock	All affordable stock
Rural area	671	27	698
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	376	4	380
Betws yn Rhos	33	0	33
Bro Garmon	4	0	4
Caerhun	41	1	42
Cerrigydrudion	50	0	50
Dolgarrog	12	1	13
Eglwysbach	14	0	14
Henryd	16	0	16
Llanddoged & Maenan	3	0	3
Llanfairtalhaearn	40	2	42
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	3	0	3
Llangernyw	22	0	22
Llangwm	10	0	10
Llanefydd	18	0	18
Llanrwst	295	23	318
Llansannan	57	0	57
Pentrefoelas	10	0	10
Trefriw	43	0	43

Source: Housing Services, CCBC

Intermediate includes Home Buy, intermediate rent and shared ownership.

Figures include RSL managed stock only.

Housing related benefits

5.2.29 Data about housing related benefits claimants helps us understand the impacts of housing costs on our residents. In the County Borough, 187 in every 1,000 households claim housing related benefits. Claim rates for the rural communities vary significantly. Both LSOAs that make up Llanrwst Town Council have higher rates when compared to the County Borough. Other rural LSOAs are below the County Borough rate, significantly so for some communities (75.2 in Eglwysbach).

5.2.30 The level of housing related benefits paid to claimants limits their ability to afford their housing. Social tenants will mostly have their rents covered (except for those under-occupying). Private rented tenants are likely to have to find the difference between the rent they are charged and their benefit. It is very rare for private rental housing to be offered on the market at a rent close to the local housing allowance rates.

Figure 23: table showing households receiving housing related benefits in rural T&CCs (August 2023)

Area	All recipients	Rate per 1,000 households
Conwy County Borough	9,765	187.0
Rural area	892	129.8
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	563	102.8
Betws yn Rhos	105	125.7
Caerhun	80	88.6
Crwst	215	229.6
Eglwysbach	45	75.2
Gower	110	248.9
Llangernyw	60	104.2
Llansannan	75	99.2
Trefriw	65	115.4
Uwchaed	80	132.2
Uwch Conwy	55	83.1

Source: Housing Benefit Caseload and Households on Universal Credit, Stat-Xplore, Department of Works and Pensions

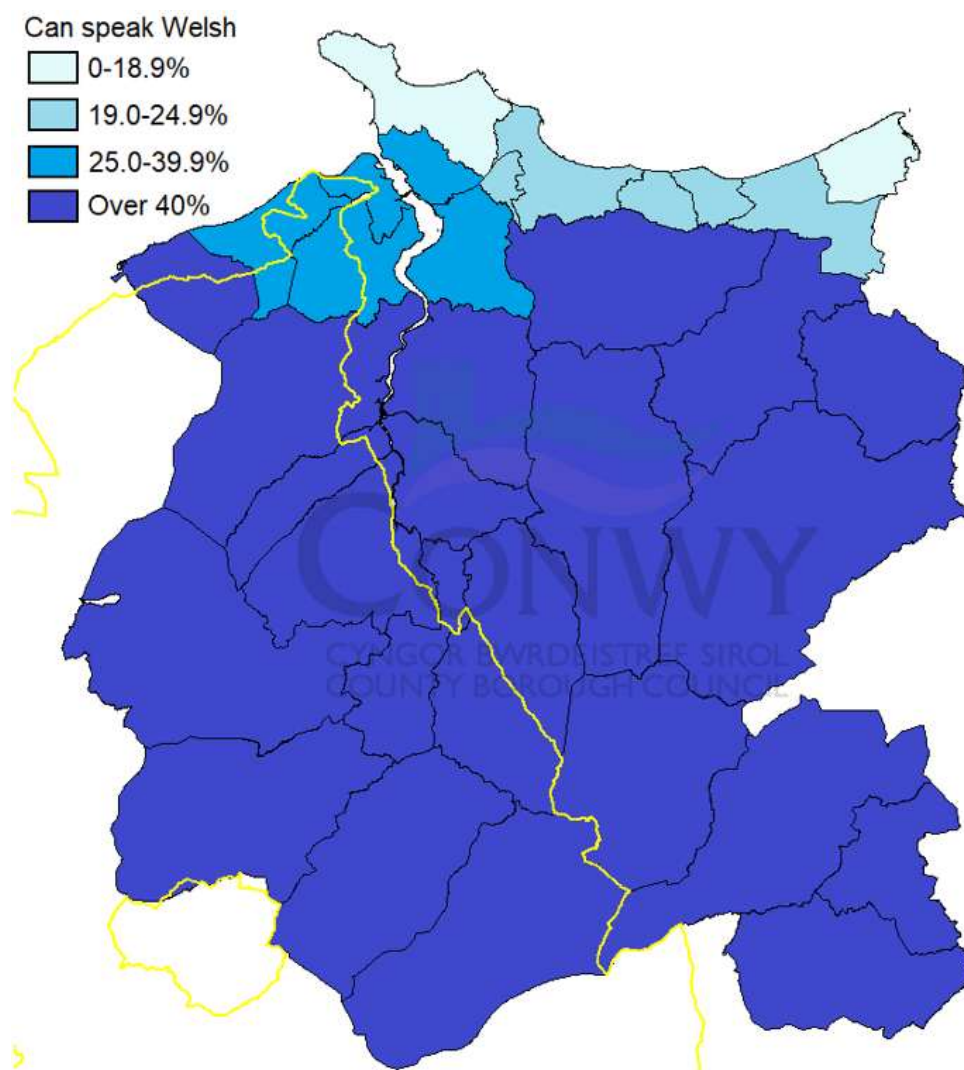
Note: rate calculated using Census 2021 table TS041

5.3 Welsh language

5.3.1 Welsh language and culture is an important part of rural communities and their character. The Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities makes policy recommendations with the aim of strengthening Welsh-speaking communities in their report: [Empowering communities, strengthening the Welsh language](#). It recommends that areas where Welsh speakers are above 40% be designated as areas of higher density linguistic significance. These areas are shaded dark

blue in the map below and are found in the rural parts of the County Borough. Henryd is the only rural T&CC where proportions who can speak Welsh is below 40%, but it still above the County Borough average at 34%. Recommendations for areas where 25-40% speak Welsh will follow in a later report. The map below also shows these areas.

Figure 24: map showing people who can speak Welsh in Conwy County Borough (2021)



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Source: 2021 Census table PP014

5.3.2 The table below shows the proportions of people who can speak Welsh for rural areas of the County Borough. Pentrefoelas has the highest proportion of people who can speak Welsh at 73%. Levels across all rural communities are significantly higher than the County Borough average.

Figure 25: table showing people who can speak Welsh in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total (age 3+)	Cannot speak Welsh	Can speak Welsh
Conwy County Borough	111,805	74%	26%
Rural area	14,713	6,848	47%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	11,674	5,585	48%
Betws yn Rhos	948	57%	43%
Bro Garmon	650	34%	66%
Caerhun	1,247	58%	42%
Cerrigydrudion	702	32%	68%
Dolgarrog	428	58%	42%
Eglwysbach	894	51%	49%
Henryd	647	66%	34%
Llanddoged & Maenan	596	41%	59%
Llanfairtalhaearn	950	60%	40%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	199	33%	67%
Llangernyw	1,083	40%	60%
Llangwm	462	42%	58%
Llanefydd	527	39%	61%
Llanrwst	3,039	42%	58%
Llansannan	1,218	40%	60%
Pentrefoelas	340	27%	73%
Trefriw	783	57%	43%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS033 & PP014

5.4 Schools

5.4.1 Schools are a vital part of rural communities. A lack of available housing in a community, can have a negative impact on pupil numbers. A fall in pupil numbers can result in school closures, which have negative impacts not only on the community as a whole, but also for sustainability, where pupils will have

much longer distances to travel to school some cases. A fall in the population locally, through a lack of housing options, can lead to recruitment difficulties.

- 5.4.2 The table below shows the current school capacity and pupil numbers compared with projected pupil numbers for 2029. These projections are produced by CCBC Education Services. Their methodology is different to the population projections produced for the RLDP, as they do not take any in or out migration into account. They also do not take any parental choice into account, and assume new pupils will attend their catchment school. It should be noted that projections do change over time, and are a best guess using the most up-to-date and relevant data and information available to us at the time.
- 5.4.3 The table below shows that most rural schools have capacity. In some schools, there are a high number of unfilled spaces. The pupil projections show a mixed picture for future pupil numbers, with some having a fall in numbers, and others an increase.

Figure 26: table showing pupil numbers and capacity in rural schools (2024)

School	Capacity 2024	Unfilled spaces 2024	Pupil numbers 2024	Pupil numbers 2029	Predicted change 2024-29
Llanddoged	97	61	36	35	-1
Pentrefoelas	71	34	37	35	-2
Bro Aled, Llansannan	94	35	59	55	-4
Llangelynnin	101	34	67	70	3
Llanfairtalhaiarn	60	16	44	21	-23
Eglwysbach	69	15	54	51	-3
Dyffryn yr Enfys, Dolgarrog	120	24	96	85	-11
Betws yn Rhos	77	14	63	40	-23
Cerrigydrudion	85	10	75	95	20
Bro Gwydir, Llanrwst	311	17	294	266	-28
Bro Cernyw, Llangernyw	98	2	96	99	3
Dyffryn Conwy, Llanrwst	813	166	647	660	13
Betws y Coed	100	86	14	17	3
Capel Garmon	46	31	15	13	-2
Dolwyddelan	59	38	21	23	2
Penmachno	56	21	35	41	6
Ysbyty Ifan	40	23	17	14	-3

Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census, CCBC Education Services, 2024

5.5 Disability and care

5.5.1 CCBC Social Care have reported that there are few residential care home places in the rural areas of the County Borough. Recruitment to both care homes and care in the community can be challenging. Unpaid carers are a key part of providing care for many older, ill, vulnerable or disabled friends, relatives or neighbours. Care can be provided at home, at someone else's home, or from a distance. Unpaid carers may provide care on a temporary or permanent basis and caring can include physical, practical, emotional and mental health support. The care provided prevents deterioration in individuals' condition and ability to remain at home (preventative service approach), which is recognised in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It is vital that they too are able to stay living local to their community and extended family.

5.5.2 The table below shows the number of unpaid care hours people living in each T&CC provide per week. While a higher than average proportion of rural residents are not providing any care, the proportion caring for more than 19 hours a week is higher than the average in Conwy. The proportion of people providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care is higher in many rural areas, when compared to the County Borough average. The proportion providing 50+ hours is generally slightly higher across the rural areas compared to the County Borough average.

Figure 27: table showing provision of unpaid care in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total (aged 5+)	Provides no unpaid care	Provides less than 19 hours	Provides 20 to 49 hours	Provides 50+ hours
Conwy County Borough	109,711	89%	4%	2%	3%
Rural area	14,480	90%	5%	2%	3%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	11,514	90%	5%	2%	3%
Betws yn Rhos	949	89%	7%	2%	2%
Bro Garmon	633	91%	5%	1%	3%
Caerhun	1,234	91%	5%	1%	3%
Cerrigydrudion	684	92%	3%	2%	4%
Dolgarrog	408	90%	4%	3%	3%
Eglwysbach	891	88%	7%	2%	4%
Henryd	659	90%	4%	2%	3%
Llanddoged & Maenan	593	88%	7%	1%	3%
Llanfairtalhaearn	932	89%	4%	2%	4%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	191	94%	4%	0%	2%
Llangernyw	1,041	90%	5%	2%	3%
Llangwm	460	90%	4%	1%	4%
Llanefydd	530	91%	6%	1%	2%
Llanrwst	2,966	91%	4%	2%	3%
Llansannan	1,214	91%	5%	1%	3%
Pentrefoelas	320	92%	4%	2%	3%
Trefriw	775	89%	6%	2%	3%

Source: 2021 Census table TS039

Note: Llanrwst Town Council area is calculated from the Lower Super Output Area level data; other Community Councils are calculated from Census Output Areas.

- 5.5.3 Information from the North Wales [Population Needs Assessment 2022](#) detailed that many care homes and domiciliary care providers find it difficult to follow through with the provision of a Welsh speaker. The health and social care sector has a duty to ensure the service users are able to access the service in their preferred language. The 'Active Offer' is the key principle within the Welsh Governments strategic framework for Welsh language services 'More Than Just Words'. This means that people should be offered services in Welsh without having to ask. Accessing services in Welsh is an important element of care and support provision across all patient groups. However, some groups, including children, older people and people with learning difficulties, have a greater need to receive their services in Welsh. For these groups, the Welsh language should be viewed as an even more fundamental element of service provision.
- 5.5.4 A key element of ensuring that services across the health and social care sector are available in the medium of Welsh, in line with the Active Offer principle, is recruitment and retention of a workforce with Welsh language skills. To achieve this, they must be able to live in the community they work. Ensuring that there are appropriate housing choices for care staff in rural areas is key to providing care provision through the Welsh language.
- 5.5.5 The table below shows the proportion of disabled people living in our rural communities. The definition of disability aligns with that in the Equality Act (2010): a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The proportions of people who consider themselves disabled are generally lower in the rural areas when compared to the County Borough average.

Figure 28: table showing disability in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total	Disabled under the Equality Act	Not disabled under the Equality Act
Conwy County Borough	114,741	23%	77%
Rural area	15,081	18%	82%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	11,947	18%	82%
Betws yn Rhos	965	18%	82%
Bro Garmon	670	13%	87%
Caerhun	1,274	19%	81%
Cerrigydrudion	722	18%	82%
Dolgarrog	437	21%	79%
Eglwysbach	915	20%	80%
Henryd	657	18%	82%
Llanddoged & Maenan	605	15%	85%
Llanfairtalhaearn	970	19%	81%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	200	11%	90%
Llangernyw	1,115	17%	83%
Llangwm	476	14%	86%
Llanefydd	535	14%	86%
Llanrwst	3,134	21%	79%
Llansannan	1,253	20%	80%
Pentrefoelas	349	21%	79%
Trefriw	804	19%	81%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS038 and PP003

5.6 The rural economy

5.6.1 The 2021 Census collected information on the industry of employment of residents aged 16 and over. There are differences in the proportions employed in each industry between rural communities and County Borough averages. The proportions employed in agriculture, energy and water and manufacturing are generally higher.

Figure 29: table showing industry of employment in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	Total	Agriculture, energy & water	Manufacturing	Construction	Distribution, hotels & restaurants	Transport & communication	Financial, real estate, professional & admin	Public admin, education & health	Other
Conwy County Borough	48,723	4%	5%	9%	24%	61%	12%	37%	5%
Rural area	7,345	9%	9%	10%	19%	45%	11%	32%	5%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,905	11%	9%	10%	17%	47%	11%	32%	5%
Betws yn Rhos	495	9%	9%	11%	17%	60%	16%	27%	5%
Bro Garmon	372	16%	10%	7%	18%	30%	12%	27%	9%
Caerhun	550	6%	8%	9%	21%	49%	12%	35%	4%
Cerrigydrudion	350	11%	11%	12%	13%	58%	9%	31%	5%
Dolgarrog	199	3%	6%	11%	19%	55%	13%	35%	7%
Eglwysbach	422	9%	5%	10%	16%	34%	13%	37%	5%
Henryd	317	4%	5%	12%	19%	54%	18%	34%	2%
Llanddoged & Maenan	316	9%	8%	9%	19%	23%	12%	36%	4%
Llanfair-talhaearn	459	10%	9%	12%	19%	47%	9%	33%	3%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	120	11%	17%	9%	9%	73%	11%	31%	6%
Llangernyw	572	15%	12%	10%	17%	42%	7%	31%	3%
Llangwm	249	13%	9%	8%	16%	80%	11%	29%	8%
Llannefydd	294	15%	13%	4%	14%	133%	13%	33%	4%
Llanrwst	1,440	4%	6%	11%	28%	39%	10%	33%	5%
Llansannan	639	13%	11%	12%	11%	34%	11%	35%	3%
Pentrefoelas	177	20%	11%	11%	18%	10%	8%	27%	3%
Trefriw	374	6%	9%	9%	24%	47%	10%	29%	9%

Source: 2021 Census tables PP009 and TS060

5.6.2 The table below shows the distances residents travel to work in the rural areas. Generally, longer distances are travelled in rural areas when compared to the County Borough average. Working from home is higher in the rural communities.

Figure 30: table showing travel to work distances in rural T&CCs (2021)

Area	All people (age 18+)	Less than 5km	5-20km	20km +	Works mainly from home	Other
Conwy County Borough	48,723	24%	24%	13%	23%	16%
Rural area	7,359	11%	25%	15%	30%	19%
Rural area excluding Llanrwst	5,922	7%	25%	15%	34%	19%
Betws yn Rhos	513	7%	27%	9%	39%	18%
Bro Garmon	374	12%	11%	16%	43%	18%
Caerhun	350	8%	17%	29%	25%	22%
Cerrigydrudion	543	5%	32%	12%	34%	18%
Dolgarrog	196	8%	36%	15%	16%	24%
Eglwysbach	428	6%	26%	14%	35%	19%
Henryd	322	9%	23%	14%	37%	17%
Llanddoged & Maenan	320	11%	23%	11%	38%	18%
Llanfairtalhaearn	461	7%	32%	9%	34%	20%
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	120	4%	19%	28%	31%	18%
Llangernyw	556	4%	32%	11%	34%	20%
Llangwm	247	4%	15%	28%	36%	17%
Llanefydd	299	7%	27%	14%	35%	17%
Llanrwst	1437	28%	23%	17%	13%	18%
Llansannan	649	3%	29%	16%	34%	18%
Pentrefoelas	166	8%	17%	19%	35%	20%
Trefriw	378	12%	21%	17%	31%	18%

Source: 2021 Census tables TS058

Note: Llanrwst Town Council area is calculated from the Lower Super Output Area level data; other Community Councils are calculated from Census Output Areas. Other definition: Works mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place, or outside the UK.

5.6.3 Further detail on the rural economy in Conwy and how this relates to planning matters such as land needed for employment, tourism, farm diversification and rural housing can be found within BP16 Planning and the Rural Economy.

6 Data findings

6.1 Key headlines for the data indicators above are as follows:

Population and households

- Population structure varies across the rural communities. Some are comparable to the County Borough average, others have younger or older age profiles.
- Population change between 2011 and 2021 also varies across the rural communities. Some have seen significant decreases in proportion (10%). Others have remained stable and some had increases.
- Household size is larger in rural communities when compared to the County Borough average.
- Household types differ in the rural communities when compared with the County Borough as a whole. Most communities have fewer single person and single family households. Llanrwst is more comparable to the County average.
- Despite population decreasing, the number of households in the County Borough grew between 2011 and 2021. Most rural communities saw a decrease. Some significantly at 9-10%.

Housing

- Rural communities have much higher proportions of detached houses compared to the local average, except for Llanrwst and Dolgarrog. There are few flats in rural areas, except for Llanrwst, which is similar to the County Borough average.
- When looking at council tax bands, the rural communities generally have fewer of the lower charge bands, except for Llanrwst, which has more.
- The proportion of properties liable for the long-term empty homes Council tax premium is higher in the Rural subarea when compared to the County Borough.
- Many rural communities have higher levels of second homes and short-term holiday lets than the County Borough average.
- The level of new build homes granted planning permission is low across the rural area outside of Llanrwst, even in larger villages, where current LDP policy allows more flexibility.

- Owner occupied is the most common tenure in rural communities; proportions are higher than the County Borough average. Some communities have very low levels of social rented households.
- The number of house sales is very low across the rural area. In 2023, there were 130 in total across the rural strategy area, with 30 of those being in Llanrwst. Some communities saw no sales at all.
- Average (median) house prices are higher on average in the rural strategy area compared to the County Borough.
- The average (median) house price to median income ratio is 6.6 in the rural areas; higher than the County Borough average (6.0) and the amount recommended by lenders for mortgages.
- Average monthly rentals in the rural communities are comparable to the County Borough average. When analysed alongside rural household incomes, private rentals were less affordable in some areas. Figures are based on a small sample and should be treated with caution.
- 156 households are registered for affordable housing with rural communities as their first location choice. 451 households are registered with rural communities as any choice.
- There are currently 698 affordable homes in the RDSA. The majority of these are social tenancies. Almost half of all affordable stock is located in Llanrwst.
- Rates of households claiming housing related benefits are lower than the County Borough for most rural communities, except for Llanrwst, where it is higher.

Community and other indicators

- There are high proportions of Welsh speakers across all rural communities, including Welsh 'heartlands', where over 50% speak Welsh.
- Rural schools have capacity, some have a high number of unfilled spaces. People projections are mixed with some schools projected to increase in pupil numbers, well others are projected to decrease.

- Providing social care for rural residents can be challenging. The provision of unpaid carers is similar to the County Borough average, but the level of carers providing 0-19 hours is higher.
- The proportion of residents who are disabled is lower in rural communities when compared to County Borough averages.
- The levels of people employed in agriculture, energy and water and manufacturing are higher in rural communities compared to the County Borough average.
- Rural resident generally have longer to travel to work when compared with the County Borough average.

7 Recommendations for RLDP policies

7.1 Local need market housing

7.1.1 It is considered that a policy approach for local need market housing would be beneficial to ensure delivery of RLDP Strategic Objective 2 (SO2) in rural areas:

“Promote a holistic and co-located employment and housing growth strategy by delivering new homes, including affordable homes and gypsy and traveller accommodation needs in sustainable and accessible locations, and ensuring that the right range of housing types, sizes and tenure are brought forward alongside the necessary community infrastructure”.

7.1.2 Data indicators were analysed to assess whether there were communities in the RLDP area where it would be justified and beneficial to implement this policy approach. This reflects requirements in national planning requirements PPW para 4.2.9.

7.1.3 It is recommended that this policy approach be applied to smaller settlements of the Rural DSA only (Tier 2 main villages, minor villages and hamlets). The findings relevant to justifying this are:

- House sizes are generally larger; detached properties and Council tax bands D and above are more common.

- Average house prices as a result are higher. Average household income is also higher, but affordability ratios mean most households are priced out of the market.
- The housing supply is lower; fewer new build properties are available, house sales of existing properties are low in number, levels of empty homes, second homes and short-term holidays are higher.
- Population decline is more prominent in some rural communities. Evidence included in planning applications indicate that local people are finding it difficult to buy homes in smaller rural communities.
- The rural economy is different to that of the coast and travel to work distances are longer.
- There are some challenges to providing social care for residents in rural areas and the level of disabled residents is lower.

7.1.4 The findings highlighted above show that there is more limited justification for implementing this policy approach in Llanrwst. House types and council tax bands are more in-line with County Borough averages here. Llanrwst is a larger settlement than others in the RDSA, which means a larger number of homes without any occupancy restriction. The benefits of this policy approach are therefore more likely to be diluted here, as prospective buyers have the choice of other properties for sale nearby. In addition, introducing this occupancy restriction will have an impact on the viability of residential schemes in the area, which will mean that fewer affordable homes are delivered through the planning system. There is a Strategic Site allocated in Llanrwst. There are no allocations in the smaller settlements and so viability is less of a consideration. Affordable housing registers show that there is a high need for affordable homes in Llanrwst, and so it is recommended that this be prioritised over restricting occupancy of new build properties in this area.

7.1.5 The SA/SEA of the RLDP supports including this policy in the RLDP. It contributes positively towards SA objectives, in particular, housing, equality and social inclusion and sustainable placemaking.

7.1.6 The following policy criteria are recommended to ensure that the provision of local market housing is in line with evidence base and national planning policy requirements:

- Settlements/areas where the policy will apply.
- Eligibility criteria for occupancy, including definition of a local connection. This will include criteria for those who have lived and/or worked in the local area for a set number of years. It will also include those moving to the area for local employment, or for the provision of social care from extended family.
- Criteria for applications seeking to lift or amend existing occupancy restrictions.

7.1.7 The policy could have a positive impact on the Welsh language in rural communities through enabling local people to stay. The local connection criteria will not specify a linguistic connection due to national planning policy (see TAN20 above).

7.1.8 Eryri National Park Authority are currently reviewing their LDP and may consider introducing a local market need housing policy in future. Close working will need to continue to ensure that there is an appropriate approach to residential policies in the shared settlements (Dolgarrog, Trefriw, Tal y Bont, Llanbedr y Cennin and Nebo).

7.1.9 For clarity, settlements this policy will apply to are:

- Tier 2 main villages: Betws yn Rhos, Cerrigydrudion, Dolgarrog, Eglwysbach, Llanfair TH, Llangernyw, Llansannan, Trefriw, Tal y Bont/Castell.
- Minor villages: Groes, Henryd, Llanbedr y Cennin, Llanddoged, Llanellian, Llangwm, Llannefydd, Pentrefoelas, Tal y Cafn, Tyn y Groes.
- Hamlets: Bryn Rhyd-yr-Arian, Brymbo, Bylchau, Cefn Berain, Cefn Brith, Dinmael, Glasfryn, Groesffordd, Gwytherin, Hendre, Llanfihangel GM, Maerdy, Melin y Coed, Nebo, Pandy Tudur, Pentre Isa, Pentre Llyn Cymmer, Pentre Tafarn y Fedw, Rhydydan, Tan y Fron.

7.2 RED approach

- 7.2.1 The data indicators above highlight high house prices and affordability issues in the RDSA of the RLDP (and also the County Borough as a whole). Para 8.28 of the RED practice guidance suggests that valuations of this type of restricted occupancy home are typically at 70-75% of their open market value.
- 7.2.2 National planning policy allows the occupancy of REDs for affordable housing. The discount applied to market housing for discounted Section 106 properties is currently 44% in the RDSA. Due to the lower levels of affordable housing stock, high need for affordable housing and other affordability issues in the rural areas, it is considered justified to seek a commuted sum in-line with the Section 106 discounts applied to the local housing market area that the application site falls in.
- 7.2.3 Applications have been received to lift or amend conditions for agricultural workers dwellings or similar. In order to ensure consistency across the plan area, applications to lift these occupancy restriction and bring them in-line with the latest national policy will generally be supported. It is considered beneficial for policy criteria in the RLDP to provide clear guidance for applications of this nature.
- 7.2.4 The policy gaps highlighted in Section 3 are likely to be relevant to the whole plan area. It is not possible to extrapolate data outside of recognised settlements in the Coastal DSA to undertake meaningful analysis. Data highlighted above and in the LHMA (2022-37) for other areas of the RLDP area indicate that high demand for affordable housing, not enough affordable stock to meet this identified need and general affordability difficulties are also issues in other parts of the plan area. Therefore, it is recommended that this policy apply to all REDs in the RLDP area.

7.3 C3 occupancy condition

- 7.3.1 This section should be considered alongside findings in BP52 second homes and holiday lets.

- 7.3.2 The data above indicates that it would be beneficial for small settlements in the RDSA to have C3 occupancy restrictions placed on new build properties. The indicators above show that there is a lack of housing supply in these settlements, which is having a negative impact on affordability and the ability of local households to purchase on the open market. Therefore, ensuring that any open market and local need market housing built in future remains in the permanent housing stock would be beneficial. It would not apply retrospectively, so will not impact existing dwellings.
- 7.3.3 Should an Article 4 Direction to manage second homes and short-term holiday lets be implemented in Llanrwst, a C3 occupancy condition for all new builds will need to apply at this stage. Until then, it is recommended that a C3 condition on new builds is not required within the settlement boundary of the Key Service Centre (Llanrwst), due to the limited impact it would have. There is a larger number of dwellings in Llanrwst than other rural settlements. Only a very small proportion would have this condition, and therefore, it is considered that it would have very limited to no impact on the housing supply. A site is allocated as part of the RLDP. There will likely be a negative impact on the financial viability of this site, should the open market units be restricted to C3 only. This would in-turn have a negative impact on the affordable provision on the site. There are a significant number of households on the affordable housing registers for Llanrwst. Maximising affordable housing delivery on the Strategic Site allocation will be needed to meet this identified local need.
- 7.3.4 A C3 condition will be imposed on some new build or newly converted property types in Llanrwst, as outlined in BP52.