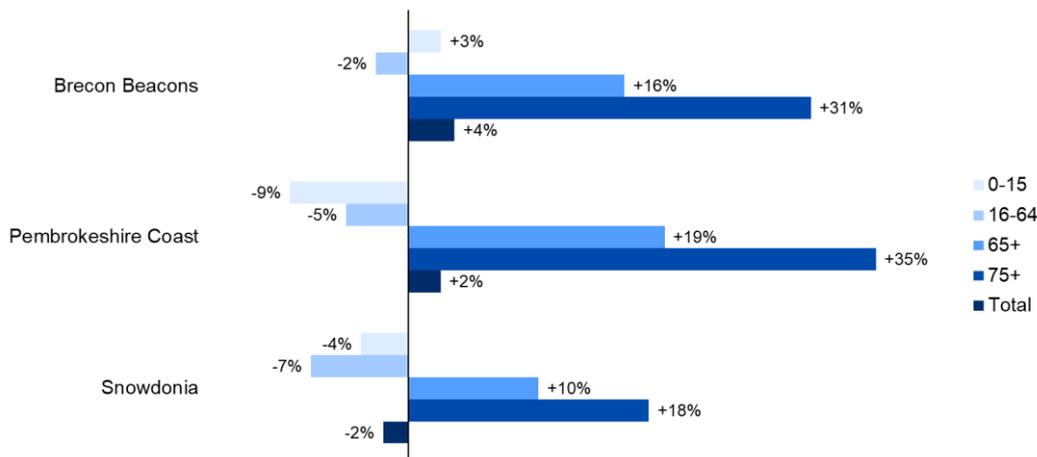


National park population projections for Wales: 2018-based

5 May 2021
SFR 131/2021

Chart 1: Percentage change in the population projections by national park and age band, 2018 to 2028



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Between 2018 and 2028:

- the populations of the Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast are projected to increase by 3.5% (1,190) and 2.5% (550) respectively, with the population of Snowdonia declining by 1.9% (480)
- all three national parks are projected to see a large percentage increase in the populations aged 65 or over, and a larger increase in people aged 75 or over
- the number of people of working age (aged 16 to 64 years old) and children (aged 0 to 15 years old) are projected to decrease in Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia, whereas the Brecon Beacons is projected to see a smaller decrease in the number of people of working age and an increase in the number of children

About this release

This release presents the results of the 2018-based national park population projections for Wales for the 25-year period from 2018 to 2043.

They are based on the [mid-year population estimates](#) for 2018 published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Population projections provide estimates of the size of the future population and are based on assumptions about births, deaths, and migration. The assumptions are generally based on trends in recent years.

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About these projections

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes [national population projections for the UK](#) and its [constituent countries](#). The Welsh Government publishes subnational population projections for Wales, which are based on the ONS' national population projections. The subnational population projections include projections for local authorities and for national parks. [2018-based local authority population projections for Wales](#) were published on 4 August 2020.

These projections provide estimates of the size of the future population of national parks within Wales, and are based on assumptions about future fertility, mortality and migration, considered to best reflect demographic patterns at the time.

The projections are available for the 25-year period, from 2018 to 2043. However, this release focusses on the first 10 years of the projection period, as projections tend to become increasingly uncertain in the longer-term, as trends may change over that timescale. We do not produce any variants for these projections and what is presented in this release is the 'principal' projection.

It is important to note that these projections are not forecasts, and do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances, or other factors, such as the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, might have on demographic behaviour. The [key quality information](#) section provides more information on the methodology used.

The projections for national parks include projections for the national park areas, and projections for the parts of the local authorities that are outside the national park boundaries. These are called 'residual' areas. While the focus of this release is on the national park projections, the [projections for the residual areas](#) are also included for completeness. Further information about the projections for residual areas can be found in the [key quality information](#) section.

It is possible to compare these projections with the [2018-based local authority projections](#). However, the projections for the national parks and the areas outside the national park boundaries ('residual' areas) are not constrained to the local authority population projections. This means that the sum of the national park projections do not necessarily match the local authority population projections. This is similar to how the sum of the local authority population projections do not necessarily match the national population projections published by the ONS. Further information can be found in the [Comparisons](#) section.

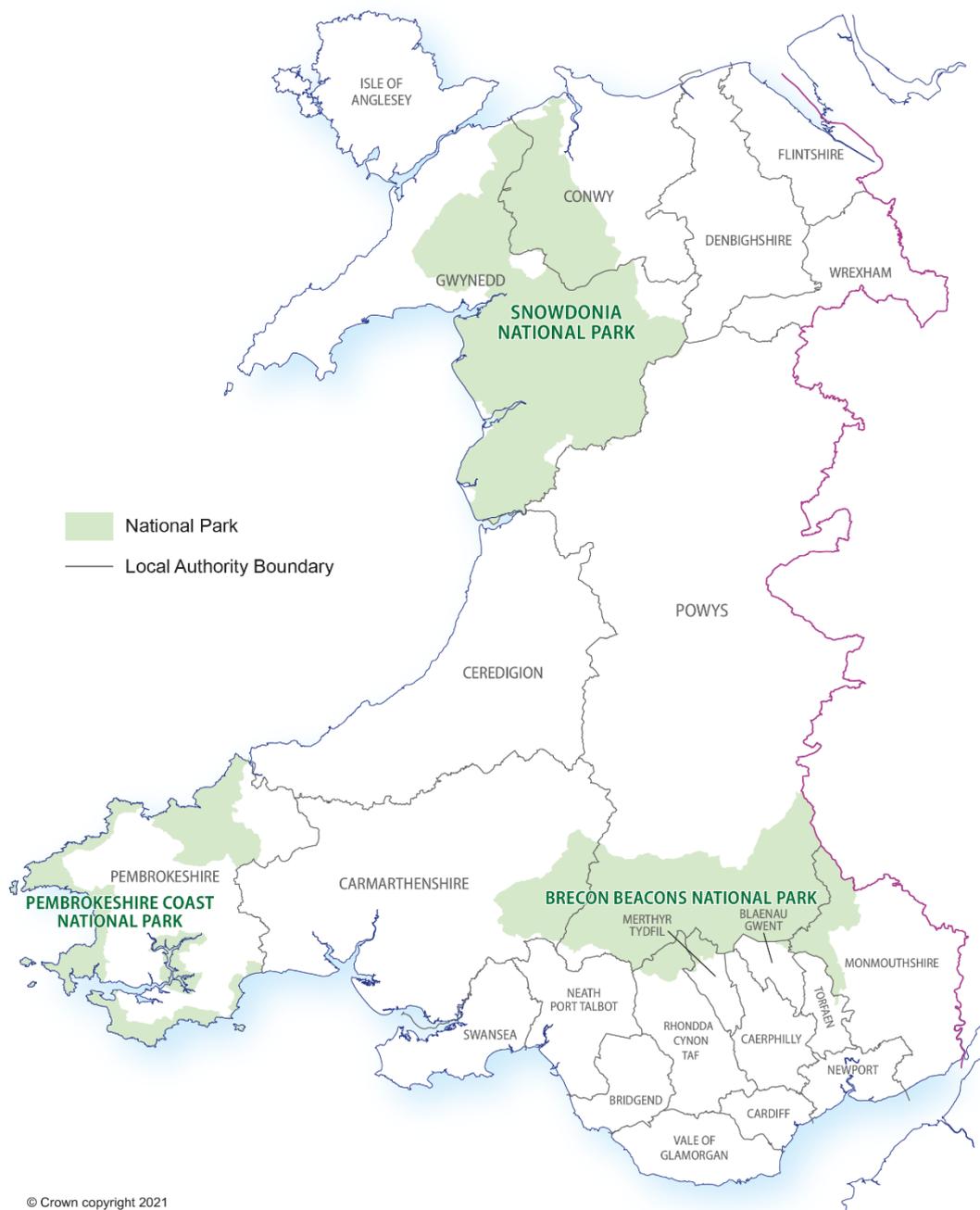
National parks in Wales

An Act of Parliament was passed in 1949 to establish national parks with the aim of preserving their natural beauty, protecting wildlife, and providing recreational opportunities for the public.

There are three national parks in Wales, as shown in Map 1. These are:

1. Snowdonia national park
2. Pembrokeshire Coast national park
3. Brecon Beacons national park

Map 1: National parks in Wales



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January 2021



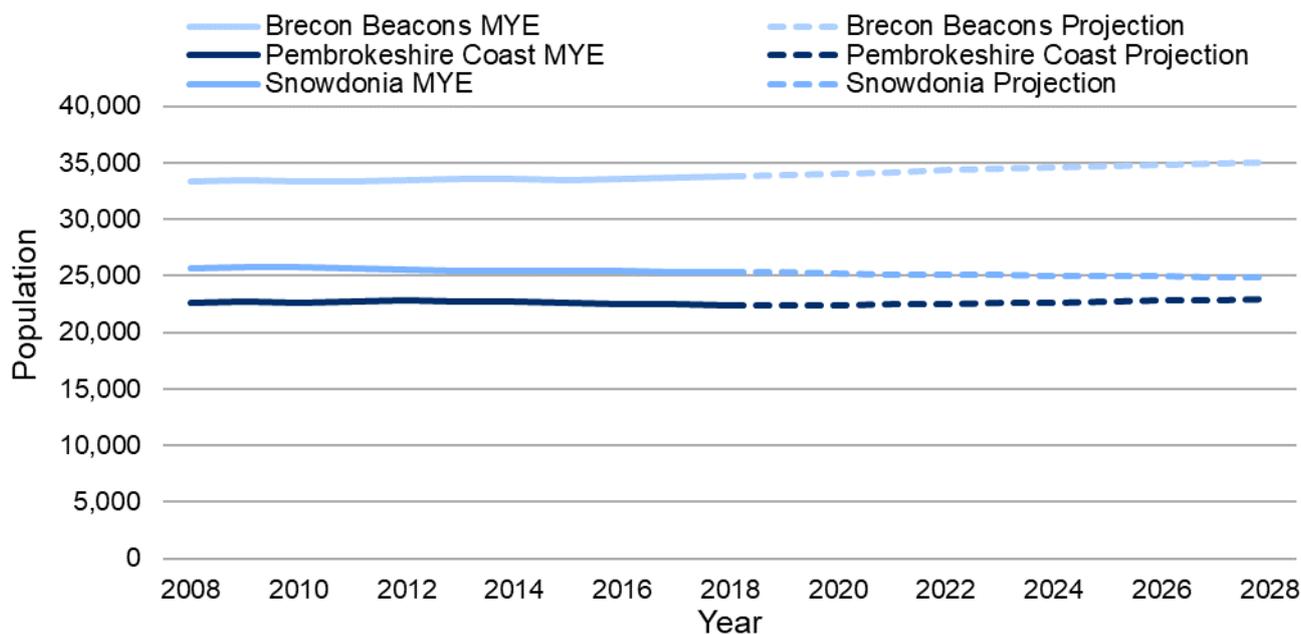
In Wales, each national park has its own national park authority, which is also the statutory planning authority for the park area.

The three national parks cover 19.5% of Welsh land area but as of mid-2018¹ had 2.6% of the population.

¹ Mid-2019 data is available, however, mid-2018 data is used here as it is the base year for these projections.

2018-based national park population projections

Chart 2: Mid-year estimates (MYE) of the population and population projections, 2008 to 2028



Source: National park mid-year population estimates, ONS, and 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

The estimated populations of all the national parks have been relatively stable from 2008 to 2018. For the period 2018 to 2028, it is projected that the populations of each national park will continue to remain relatively stable.

Between 2018 and 2028, it is projected that the population of the Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast will increase by 3.5% and 2.5% respectively, while the population of Snowdonia is projected to decrease by 1.9%. However, this is projected to vary by age (see Chart 1).

Chart 1 showed that the number of people aged 65 or over and 75 or over is projected to increase between 2018 and 2028 in all national parks. This trend is in line with the projected increases seen in the 2018-based national population projections and in the 2018-based local authority population projections. The local authority projections noted that the greatest percentage decreases in 16 to 64 year olds were projected to be seen in mainly rural areas. This is echoed for all three national parks, with the number of 16 to 64 year olds projected to decrease in all national parks between 2018 and 2028.

Brecon Beacons national park

Brecon Beacons national park is the most populous in Wales with an [estimated population](#) in mid-2018 of over 33,800 people. It covers an area of 1,345km² giving a population density of 25 people per square kilometre.

The national park lies within multiple local authorities, with varying proportions of the population.

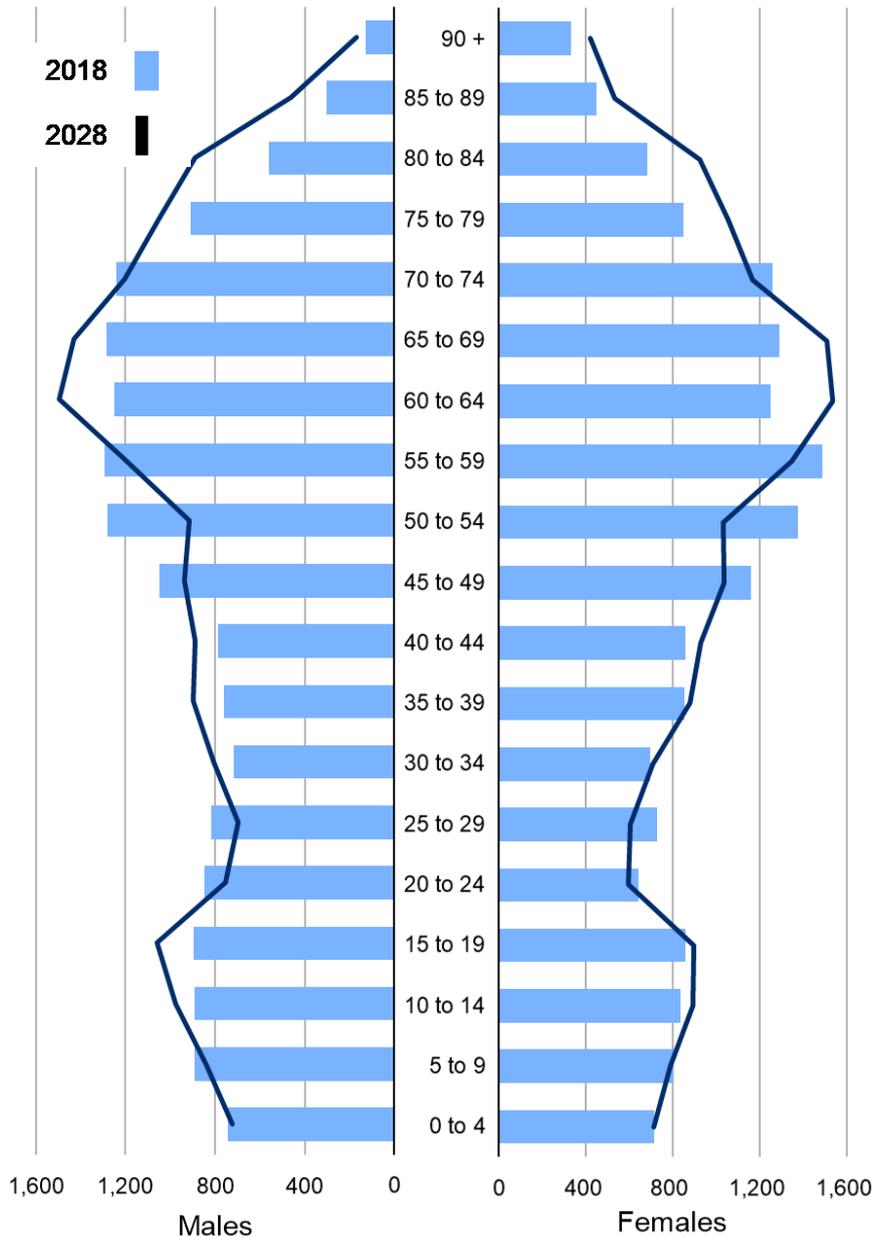
The local authorities included in the Brecon Beacons national park area are:

- Powys
- Carmarthenshire
- Neath Port Talbot
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Caerphilly
- Blaenau Gwent
- Torfaen
- Monmouthshire

As at mid-2018, Powys and Monmouthshire account for most of the national park population, with Powys accounting for 70% of the population and Monmouthshire 22%. Carmarthenshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf (r) and Merthyr Tydfil (r) account for a smaller proportion of the national park population (4%, 3% and 1% respectively). A very small part of Neath Port Talbot, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen are inside the Brecon Beacons national park area therefore for the purposes of these projections, we do not calculate residual area projections for these areas.

(r) Revised on 19 May 2021 due to incorrect ordering of the local authorities.

Chart 3: Population projections for Brecon Beacons by age and sex, 2018 to 2028



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

This population pyramid shows how the population distribution of Brecon Beacons national park is projected to change from 2018 to 2028, by age group and sex.

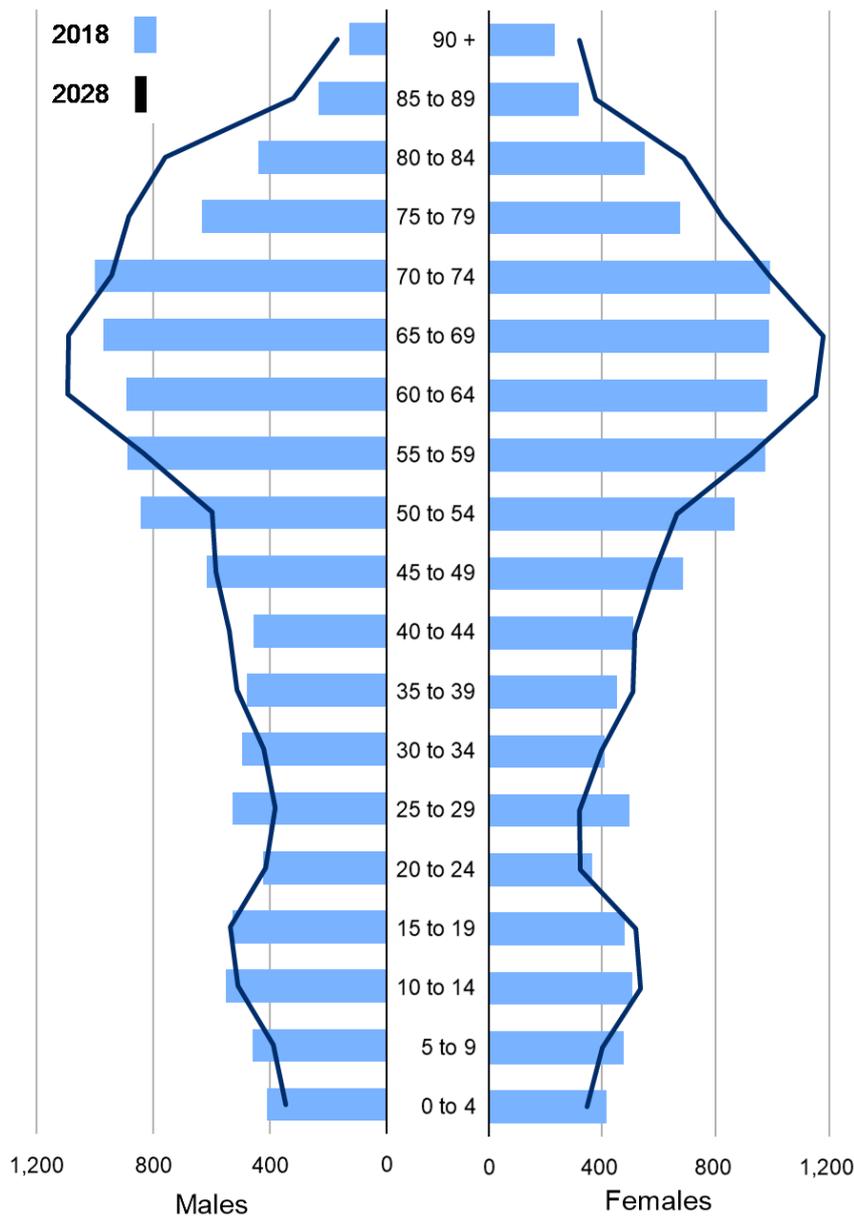
Between 2018 and 2028:

- the population is projected to age in general, with more older males and females by 2028
- the number of people aged 75 or over is projected to increase by 31%, with more females than males
- there is some variation with the other age groups across both sexes, with a slight increase projected in the population of 10 to 19 years olds, but a slight decrease for 45 to 59 year olds

Pembrokeshire Coast national park

Pembrokeshire Coast national park is the only national park to be fully contained within one local authority (Pembrokeshire) and has the smallest [estimated population](#) at just under 22,400 people in mid-2018. It covers 586km² giving it a population density of 38 people per kilometre squared. In mid-2018, the population of the national park area was estimated to be 18% of Pembrokeshire local authority area.

Chart 4: Population projections for Pembrokeshire Coast by age and sex, 2018 to 2028



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

The population pyramid shows how the population distribution of the Pembrokeshire Coast national park is projected to change from 2018 to 2028, by age group and sex.

Between 2018 and 2028:

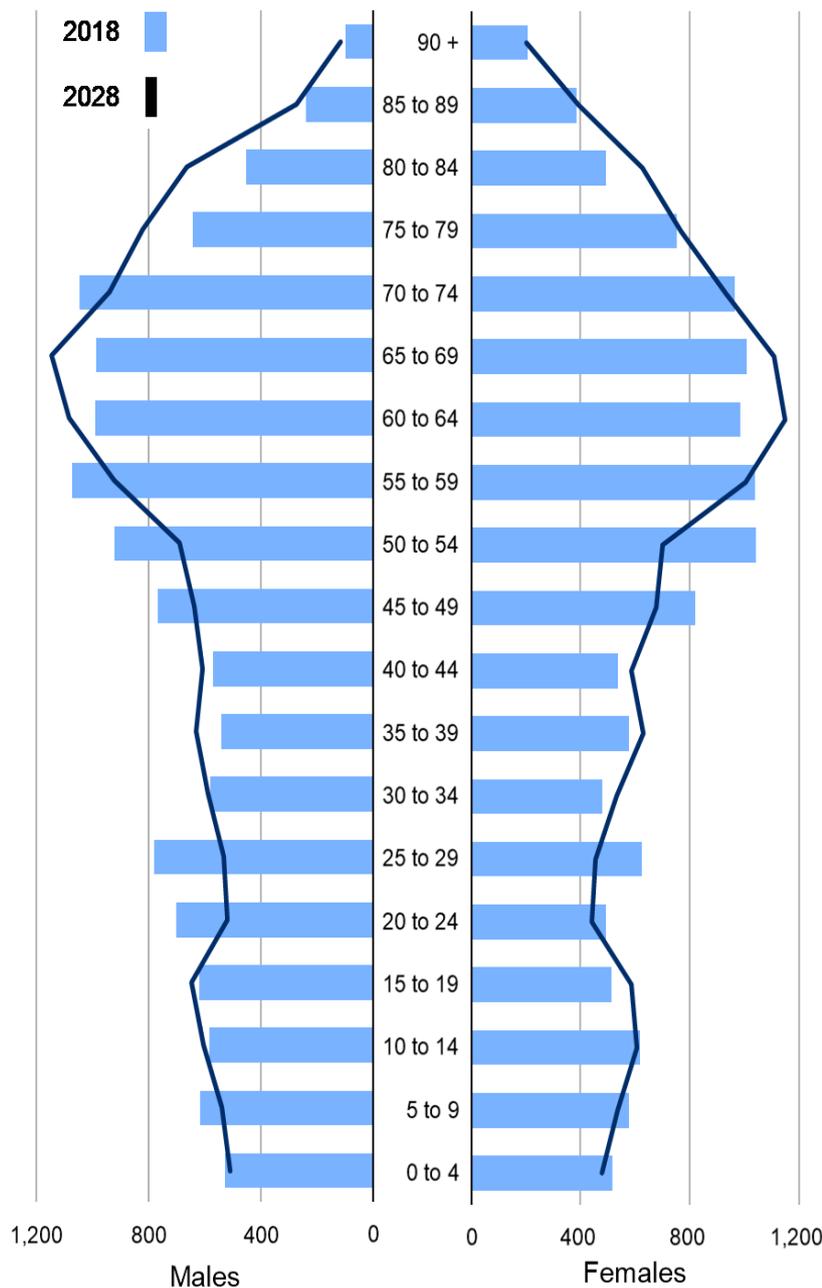
- the population is projected to age in general, with more older males and females by 2028

- the number of people aged 60 or over is projected to increase by 20% and the number of people aged 85 or over is projected to increase by 30%, with more females than males
- there is some variation with the other age groups across both sexes, however, the majority of age groups younger than 60 are projected to see population decreases

Snowdonia national park

Snowdonia national park is the largest in Wales at 2,110km², with an [estimated population](#) of just under 25,400 in mid-2018, giving it a population density of 12 people per kilometre squared. The population is split between Gwynedd and Conwy, with 84% living in Gwynedd and the remaining 16% in Conwy as at mid-2018.

Chart 5: Population projections for Snowdonia by age and sex, 2018 to 2028



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

This population pyramid shows how the population distribution of Snowdonia national park is projected to change from 2018 to 2028, by age group and sex.

Between 2018 and 2028:

- the population is projected to age in general, with more older males and females by 2028
- the number of people aged 60 or over is projected to increase by 11%, with more females than males
- there is some variation with the other age groups across both sexes, however, the majority of age groups younger than 60 are projected to see population decreases, with the population of 20 to 29 year olds projected to decrease by 25%

Components of change

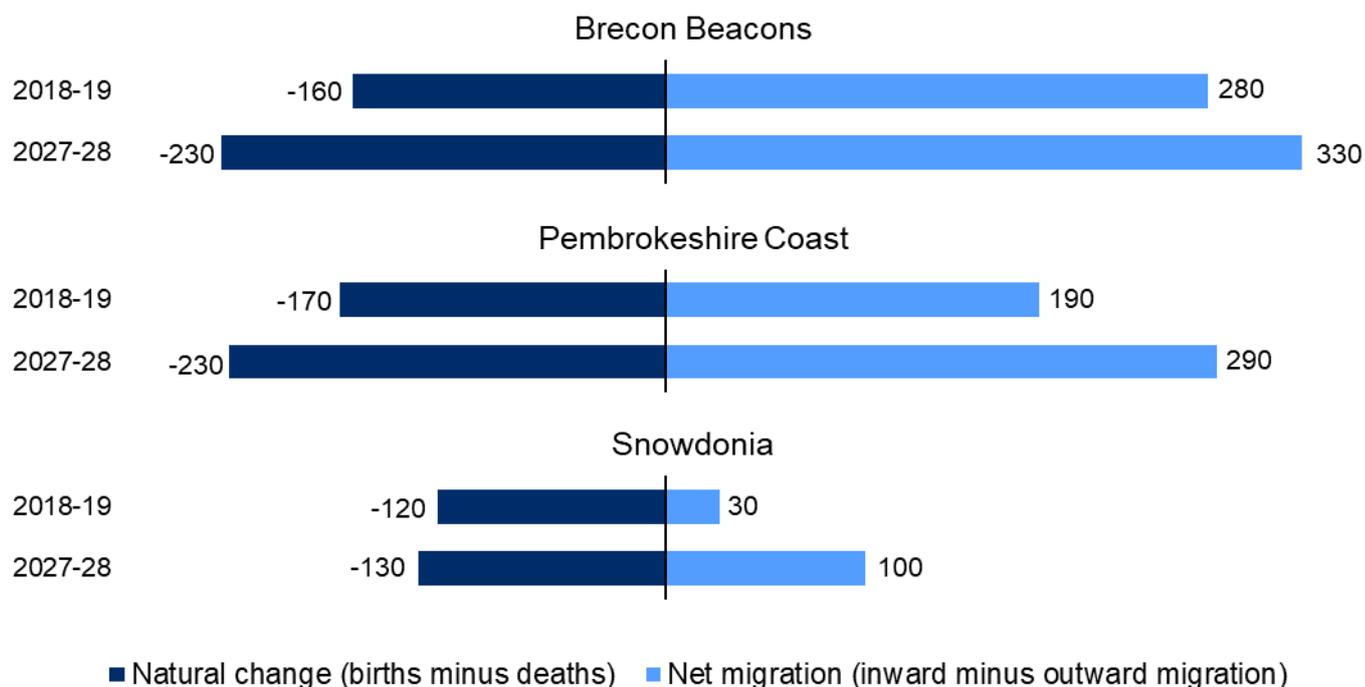
The national park population projections broadly consist of the following 'components of change':

1. births
2. deaths
3. international migration
4. internal migration (i.e. migration between national parks in Wales and other parts of the UK)

Natural change, which is the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths, is negative when there are more deaths than births. It is positive when there are more births than deaths.

Net migration is the difference between the number of people moving into an area, and the number of people moving out of an area. It is negative when more people move out of an area than move in. It is positive when more people move into an area than move out.

Chart 6: Change in the national park population projections by components of change, for 2018-19 and 2027-28



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Between 2018 and 2028:

- negative natural change is projected to increase in all three national parks
- positive net migration is projected to increase in all three national parks
- positive net migration is projected to be larger than the negative natural change in both Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast, leading to overall projected population increases
- positive net migration is projected to be smaller than the negative natural change in Snowdonia, leading to overall projected population decreases

Table 1: Components of change of the national park population projections, 2018-19 and 2027-28

	Births		Deaths		Net migration	
	2018-2019	2027-2028	2018-2019	2027-2028	2018-2019	2027-2028
Brecon Beacons	265	260	425	490	280	330
Pembrokeshire Coast	125	115	290	340	195	285
Snowdonia	190	190	310	320	30	105

Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

In Table 1, both international and internal migration have been combined to provide an overall net figure for migration as the numbers of people moving in and out of the national park areas every year are relatively small (especially so for international migration).

Between 2018 and 2028:

- the number of births is projected to decrease slightly in the Brecon Beacons and Pembrokeshire Coast, while the number is projected to stay the same in Snowdonia.
- the number of deaths is projected to increase in all three national parks, with the largest projected percentage increase in Pembrokeshire Coast (17%)
- this means that natural change for all three national parks is projected to be increasingly more negative (as shown in Chart 6). This is likely due to the increased number of older people living in the national parks
- positive net migration is projected to increase over the period in all national parks

Residual areas

Several local authorities lie partly inside a national park and partly outside. The area that lies outside the national park is known as a 'residual area'. Please see the [key quality information](#) section for more information on how projections for residual areas are calculated.

Brecon Beacons



Pembrokeshire Coast



Snowdonia

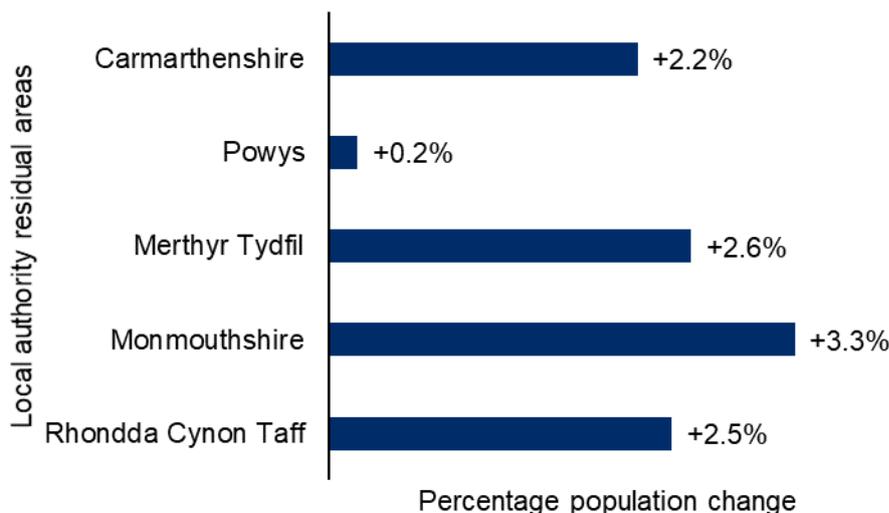


Brecon Beacons national park residual areas

There are five main local authorities that lie partly within Brecon Beacons national park (with another four local authorities that have very small parts within the national park area, which are not included here).

Powys and Monmouthshire have the largest proportion of their populations within the national park (18% and 8% respectively). Less than 1% of the populations of Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf are within the national park, as of mid-2018.

Chart 7: Percentage change in the population projections by residual area, 2018 to 2028



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Between 2018 and 2028, the population in Monmouthshire residual area is projected to increase the most by 3.3% (nearly 2,900). The population in Powys residual area is projected to increase the least (0.2%). All the residual areas show projected decreases in the younger age groups while the population aged 65 or over is projected to increase. This is in line with the projected trends

seen in the [2018-based local authority population projections](#), which showed that the population of Powys is projected to increase the least out of all of the five local authorities, and Monmouthshire projected to increase the most.

Pembrokeshire Coast national park residual area

Pembrokeshire Coast is contained solely within Pembrokeshire local authority, with 18% of Pembrokeshire's population being within the national park as at mid-2018.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Pembrokeshire residual area is projected to increase by 2.3% (2,300). The population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 18.5% in Pembrokeshire residual area, while the younger ages are projected to decrease.

Snowdonia national park residual areas

Gwynedd and Conwy lie partly within Snowdonia national park. 17% of Gwynedd's population is within the national park, while 4% of Conwy's population is within the national park, as of mid-2018.

Conwy and Gwynedd residual areas are projected to increase by 2.0% and 4.4% respectively between 2018 and 2028. Similar to the other residual areas, the population aged 65 and over in Conwy residual area is projected to increase by 16.3%, while the younger ages are projected to decrease. In Gwynedd residual area, the population aged 0 to 15 and 16-64 are projected to increase slightly by 0.1% and 3.8% respectively.

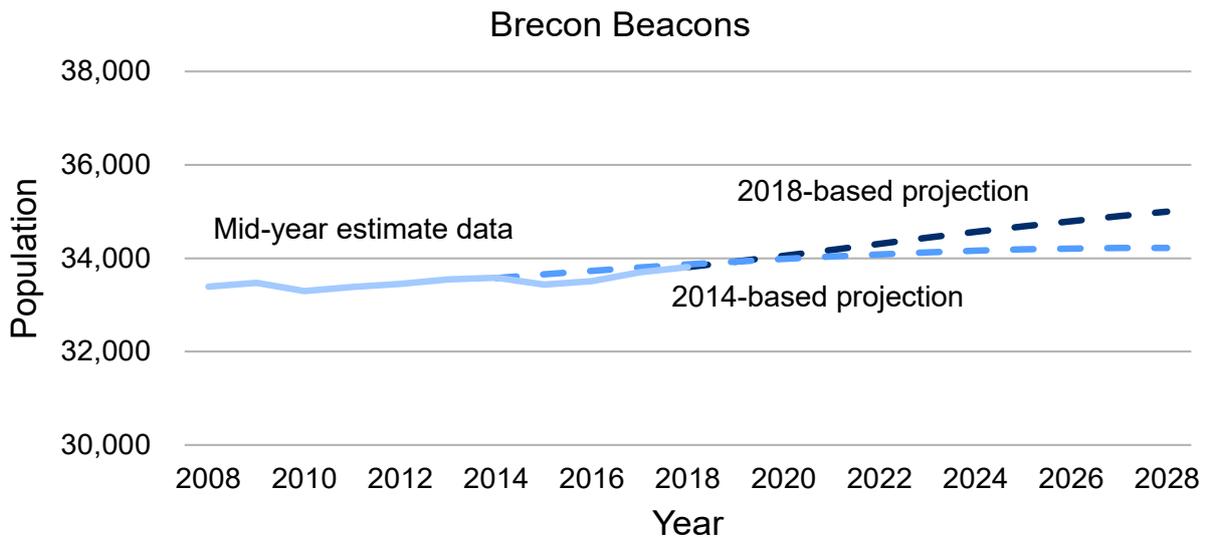
Comparisons

Comparisons with the 2014-based national park population projections

Since the publication of the [2014-based national park population projections](#), a change has been made to the methodology for calculating the migration assumptions for both the local authority projections and the national park projections. For the national park projections, international migration assumptions and internal migration assumptions are now calculated separately (for the 2014-based projections, both internal and international migration assumptions were combined). In line with the changes made to the local authority projections, internal migration assumptions are now calculated based on rates rather than fixed numbers. The international migration assumptions continue to be a fixed number over the projection period.

The differences between the 2014-based and 2018-based national park population projections therefore reflect not only the change in demographic trends seen during this time period, but also the change in the methodology between the two sets of projections, as well as the change in the base year of the projection.

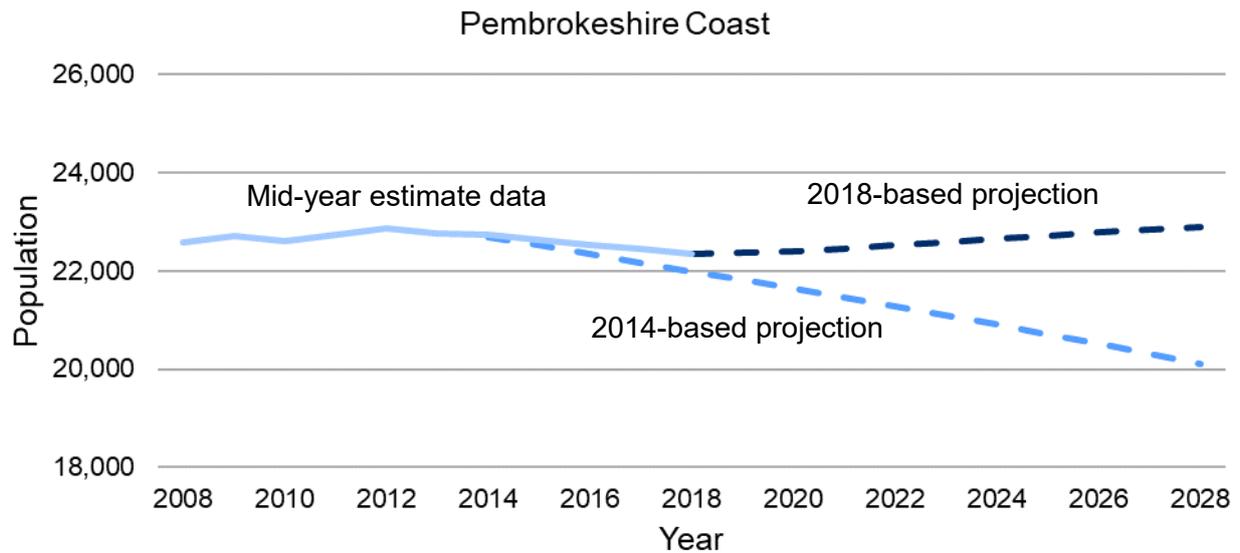
Chart 8: Mid-year estimates of the population and 2014-based and 2018-based population projections for Brecon Beacons, 2008 to 2028



Note: The axis of the chart does not start at 0.

Source: National park mid-year population estimates, ONS and 2014-based and 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

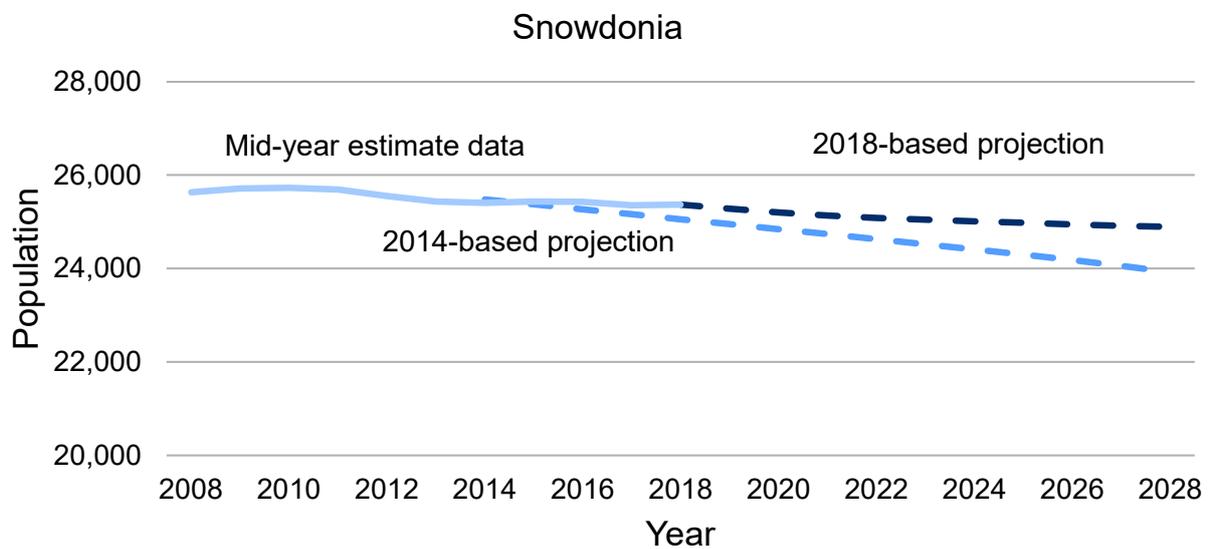
Chart 9: Mid-year estimates of the population and 2014-based and 2018-based population projections for Pembrokeshire Coast, 2008 to 2028



Note: The axis of the chart does not start at 0.

Source: National park mid-year population estimates, ONS and 2014-based and 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Chart 10: Mid-year estimates of the population and 2014-based and 2018-based population projections for Snowdonia, 2008 to 2028



Note: The axis of the chart does not start at 0.

Source: National park mid-year population estimates, ONS and 2014-based and 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Charts 8, 9 and 10 show that the projected population for 2028 is higher in the 2018-based projections than in the 2014-based projections for all three national parks.

The projection for Brecon Beacons national park in 2028 is 2.3% higher in the 2018-based population projections than the 2014-based population projections. For Snowdonia national park, the projection for 2028 is 4.0% higher in the 2018-based population projections than the 2014-based population projections, and it is 13.9% higher for Pembrokeshire Coast.

There are a number of possible reasons for this:

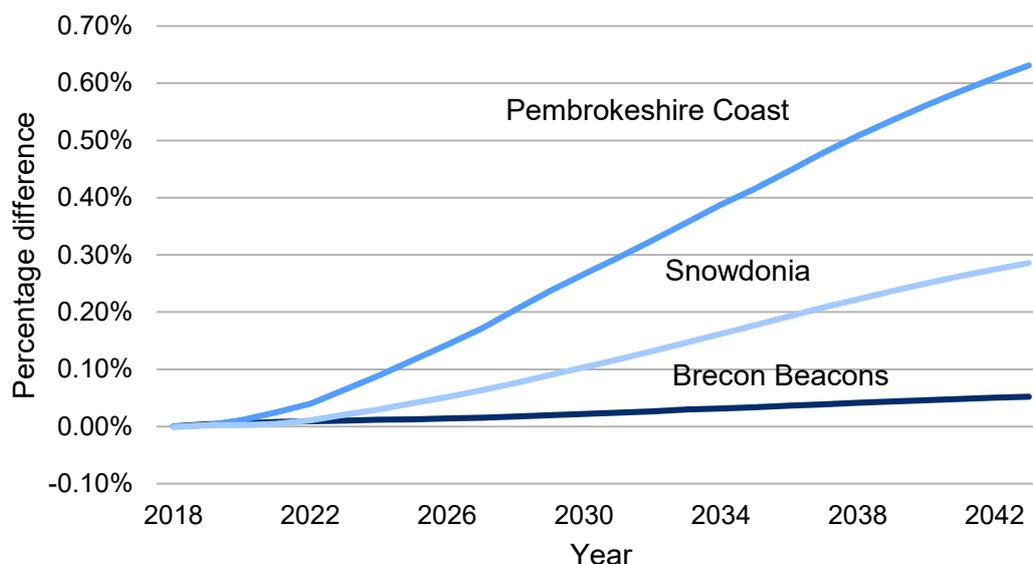
- the mid-year population estimate for Pembrokeshire Coast in 2018 was 1.6% higher than what was projected using the 2014-based population projections, therefore the 2018-based population projections started from a higher baseline and the components of change (natural change and migration) are projected to be higher than in the 2014-based projections. This difference in the mid-year estimate is reflected in the 2018-based population projections for Pembrokeshire Coast
- the methodology used for migration has changed between the 2014-based population projections and the 2018-based population projections. Internal migration assumptions are now calculated based on rates rather than fixed numbers. Further information can be found in the [key quality information](#) section. This methodological difference may impact the comparability between the two sets of projections.
- the internal migration estimate data for national parks has some limitations due to difficulties in estimating migration for small areas. This appears to be more pronounced for Pembrokeshire Coast than the other national parks. For more information on this, please see the [key quality information](#) section

Comparisons with the 2018-based local authority population projections

The three national parks in Wales are contained within several different local authorities. As we calculate projections for the areas both inside and outside of the national park areas, it is possible to compare these projections with the 2018-based local authority projections.

As we do not constrain the national park projections to the local authority projections, they will not match exactly. Differences between the two sets of projections can be affected by the relatively small numbers used in the calculation of the national park projections. There are also some definitional differences in the migration data used in the national park projections compared with the local authority projections. Comparisons between the two sets of projections are therefore limited, but they are broadly comparable. Further information can be found in the [key quality information](#) section.

Chart 11: Percentage difference in the population between the national park projections and the local authority projections, 2018 to 2043



Source: 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government and 2018-based local authority population projections, Welsh Government

This chart shows the percentage difference between the sum of the national park projections and residual area projections, and the local authority projections. For example, for Snowdonia, the sum of the projections for Snowdonia national park, Gwynedd residual area and Conwy residual area is compared with the sum of the local authority projections for Gwynedd and Conwy.

The chart shows that the national park projections and local authority projections are broadly comparable over the projection period, differing by less than 1% for all national parks by 2043. The differences between the projections are likely to be driven mainly by the migration components due to limitations of the data and the relatively small numbers migrating in and out of national parks.

Comparisons with the mid-year population estimates for national parks

The ONS published [population estimates for national parks for mid-2019](#) on 9 September 2020. It is therefore possible to compare the mid-year estimate for 2019 with the projected population for 2019 for all national parks.

Table 2: Comparison of the mid-year estimate of the population and the 2018-based national park population projections

	2019 mid-year estimate	2019 population projection	Difference	Percentage Difference
Brecon Beacons	33,980	33,930	- 50	-0.14%
Pembrokeshire Coast	22,320	22,370	60	0.26%
Snowdonia	25,530	25,280	- 250	-0.97%

Note: The data in this table are rounded to the nearest 10, therefore the difference between the estimate and the projections may not match what is shown in the 'Difference' column

Source: National park mid-year population estimates, ONS and 2018-based national park population projections, Welsh Government

Table 2 shows that the population projections are broadly in line with the mid-year estimates of the population for 2019. For Brecon Beacons, the population projections for 2019 are 0.14% lower than the mid-year estimates, while the population projections in 2019 for Pembrokeshire Coast are 0.26% higher than the mid-year estimates. For Snowdonia, there is a slightly larger difference between the population projections for 2019 and the mid-year estimate. We would expect some differences due to fluctuations in annual births, deaths and migration data.

Key quality information

Relevance

Population and migration statistics are important for policy development, planning, and the provision of public services. There is a high demand for population and migration statistics for a range of uses. These include:

- planning services and estimating future need at national and local level, (for example, schools, health, and social services) including the preparation of Local Development Plans
- contributing to the Local Government Finance revenue settlement
- policy development
- advice to Ministers
- informing debate in the Senedd and beyond
- the calculation of further statistics (for example, household projections)
- denominators in rates (for example, birth rates and mortality rates)
- the production of the weights in some sample surveys
- geographic profiling, comparisons, and benchmarking
- analysis of population cohorts and migration trends
- supporting well-being assessments required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

There is a range of users of population data from national and local government, national park authorities, charities and voluntary sector organisations, other government departments, students, academics and universities, individual citizens, and private companies. Those who plan for the future to deliver services and to help frame sustainable policies need to consider the population analysed by age and sex. Population projections can identify trends that shape the context for future policy development.

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in July 2015. A key element of the Act is to enable local planning authorities to come together and prepare a Strategic Development Plan which transcends local authority boundaries, covering a wider geographical area and dealing with not just local issues. The Local Government Elections (Wales) Bill, which came into force on 21 January 2021, replaces the governance structure of preparing strategic development plans.

Evidence to support plan preparation will include demographic statistics and population and household projections, which will need to be considered in a strategic context. Future iterations of projections will play a role in shaping strategic plans.

All local planning authorities with adopted Local Development Plans (LDPs) have to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which measures how policies have performed and what corrective action may be required. AMRs play a critical role in ensuring that the LDP is kept up-to-date. The progress demonstrated within the AMRs can have a bearing on future population levels

and distribution, demographic profiles, and house prices. These outcomes and their relationship to the key objectives of the plan will form part of the AMR.

Accuracy

Population projections are trend-based projections that provide estimates of the size of the future population, and are based on assumptions about births, deaths and migration. The assumptions are generally based on past trends. Projections done in this way do not make allowances for the effects of local or central government policies on future population levels, distribution, and change.

Population projections have their limitations. These national park population projections are not policy-based forecasts. They indicate what is expected to happen if the trends on which they are based continue.

As the process of demographic change is cumulative, projections become increasingly uncertain the further they are carried forward. Demographic change affects some populations more rapidly and to a greater effect than others. Due to the size of estimated migration flows for the national parks, migration assumptions are more critical than fertility and mortality assumptions. Therefore, migration assumptions can have a significant long-term effect on certain areas.

Assumptions around birth and death rates are based on historical levels of mortality and fertility and their interaction with the population size at each age. They are subject to variation (for example, through changes in fertility trends, or increases in life expectancy) but such changes are not usually short-term. Migration can also interact with these trends, but the migration assumptions themselves are subject to short-term fluctuations based on economic or social circumstances.

Therefore, the setting of migration rates for the future using the rates for the previous five years means that the projections are potentially vulnerable to short-term volatility in migration rates. This may be particularly true for current projections, since the assumptions are based on a period that included changes in levels of migration and the referendum for leaving the European Union.

There are factors that can influence the projections and the three main components of population change, for example, changes in the economy, changes in individual, family, and household behaviour, and events outside the UK.

Methodology

Population projections are based on mid-year population estimates (as at 30 June each year). Mid-year population estimates for Wales and England are produced by the ONS. In order to produce the national park projections, the population estimates are combined with assumptions about births, deaths, and migration. These assumptions are based on past trends.

For migration, the United Nations definition of an international migrant is used, that is, those changing country of residence for a period of at least 12 months. Short-term migrants (for example, migrant workers from Eastern European countries) are not counted in the population estimates.

These national park projections are based on the mid-2018 population estimates for national parks in Wales.

The base data used in the calculations are produced by the ONS for the length of the projection period, usually twenty-five years. In order to produce population projections, assumptions need to be formed to project future levels of fertility, mortality, and migration for each national park.

National park population projections are produced using a well-established demographic approach known as the cohort component method. That is:

- taking the most recent year's population estimate
- taking out special population groups
- ageing every person on one year
- adding births and subtracting deaths
- allowing for inward and outward migration
- adding back in the special population groups

The assumptions are generally based on trends during the most recent five years, and the projections indicate what may happen should these trends continue.

Special population groups include the number of prisoners within each national park and residual area. From mid-2011 onwards, prisoners were regarded as usually resident at an institution if they were serving a custodial sentence of six months or more.

When producing national park projections we also calculate projections for the parts of the local authority outside the national parks, which we call 'residual areas'. These are:

Brecon Beacons

- Carmarthenshire
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Monmouthshire
- Powys
- Rhondda Cynon Taf

Snowdonia

- Conwy
- Gwynedd

Pembrokeshire Coast

- Pembrokeshire

Very small parts of the national parks lie in other local authorities as well but these areas are so small that they are not included in these projections. The population estimates for the residual areas are built-up from small area estimates, and from making assumptions about how the population is distributed amongst areas not within national parks. Therefore, although they are a useful indication of population size and population change, they should not be treated as precise figures.

As the populations within the national parks split into each local authority are small, it is not practical to project trends for these individual populations, therefore we project the population

within the whole national park. However, we are able to provide an estimate of the split of the population for the base year of the projections across all local authorities. As the population trends are broadly similar across the entire national park we would expect this split to remain fairly consistent over the projection period.

Migration

Since the publication of the [2014-based national park population projections](#), a change has been made to the methodology for calculating the migration assumptions for both the local authority projections and the national park projections. For the national park projections, international migration assumptions and internal migration assumptions are now calculated separately (for the 2014-based projections, both internal and international migration assumptions were combined). In line with the changes made to the local authority projections, internal migration assumptions are now calculated based on rates rather than fixed numbers. The international migration assumptions continue to be a fixed number over the projection period.

While quality assuring the internal migration data that is used in the calculation of the projections, we identified a limitation in the migration estimates that we receive from the ONS that affects all national parks but is more pronounced for Pembrokeshire Coast. It is largely affecting the migration estimates for people aged 20 to 29 years old, in particular males in that age group.

The internal migration estimates are based on the GP Patients Register. Therefore, any individuals who have not registered with a GP following a move will be excluded. This is most likely to apply to young adults, especially males. Because the Patients Register data are received in the form of annual extracts, people who move into a national park and then move out again (or vice versa) between successive extracts will be excluded. In addition, the quality of administrative data used in the production of internal migration estimates may change over time. The migration data should therefore be treated with caution.

We have also had to apply an adjustment to the migration estimates for Pembrokeshire Coast. This adjustment made sure that the numbers moving in or out of Pembrokeshire Coast did not exceed that of Pembrokeshire local authority. This adjustment was largely made to some of the data for older migrants.

The methodology for these projections has been developed in close collaboration with local authorities, national parks and key users in Wales through the Wales Subnational Projections (WaSP) group. This group has met on a regular basis during the preparation of the projections and has been a forum for technical discussion on the methodology and the base data used. Members of WaSP include local authority and national park representatives, and others with knowledge of, and experience of, demographic data and population projections.

Regular updates have also been provided at full meetings of the Welsh Statistical Liaison Committee (WSLC).

Guidance on the detailed methodology used to produce subnational population projections for Wales will be published in a technical report in due course. It will describe how the local authority

and national park population projections are calculated, and describe in detail the methodology used to derive assumptions on fertility, mortality, and migration.

Timeliness and punctuality

The national park population projections are usually calculated and published every three years, in response to user need in Wales.

The last set of national park population projections were [2014-based projections](#), published in July 2017.

The Welsh Government's Chief Statistician announced in a [blog](#) in October 2019 that the 2017-based subnational population and household projections would be postponed. A [statistical article](#) was also published, setting out the challenges in producing the 2017-based subnational population projections in more detail, and announcing the planned update of the national park projections to be 2018-based.

Proposed timing of next projections

The ONS usually publishes national population projections every two years. Between 15 October and 12 November, the ONS ran a user engagement exercise to give users the opportunity to provide feedback on how they might approach the publication and timing of the next set of national population projections and subnational population projections. An article was published on 19 April summarising the responses and results from the [user engagement exercise](#), as well as discussing the final recommendations.

A final recommendation on the production of 2020-based national population projections was made by the National Population Projections Committee, comprising the Office for National Statistics (ONS), National Records Scotland (NRS), Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Welsh Government. This recommendation was presented to the UK Census Committee (UKCC) for a final decision. The UKCC, chaired by the National Statistician, co-ordinates UK-wide statistical issues and reviews alternative approaches to meeting future user needs for population and small area socio-demographic statistics.

The UKCC decided that, in order to meet user needs identified through this user engagement, a principal national population projection only will be published for each UK constituent country and for the UK as a whole, with no variant projections. This is in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and to support the forthcoming State Pension Age Review. The ONS plans for these to be published in December 2021 and be titled '2020-based interim national population projections' using an updated set of demographic assumptions.

The Welsh Government usually publishes subnational projections once every three years, therefore, the next set of projections for Wales would be 2021-based. We are therefore proposing that the next set of subnational population projections for Wales will be based on 2021.

We would welcome any feedback on this proposed approach via our mailbox stats.popcensus@gov.wales.

Accessibility and clarity

This statistical release is pre-announced and then published on the [Statistics and Research](#) section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on [StatsWales](#), a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

Comparability and coherence

The National Records of Scotland publishes subnational population projections, which include national park population projections. The [2018-based subnational population projections](#) were published on Tuesday 24 March 2020.

The ONS and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency do not publish population projections at a national park level for England and Northern Ireland.

User [guidance](#) is available on the comparison of data sources and methods for the subnational population projections across the UK.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

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

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in January 2020 following a [compliance check](#) by the Office for Statistics Regulation. These statistics last underwent a [full assessment](#) against the Code of Practice in 2015.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- worked with the Wales Subnational Projections (WaSP) group to make and agree improvements to the methodology for calculating the projections and their variants
- made improvements to the presentation of the statistics
- enhanced trustworthiness by reducing pre-release access

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

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

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/subnational-population-projections>

Next update

To be confirmed

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.popcensus@gov.wales.

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