

Mapping creative activity in Bridgend County



Research report prepared for Bridgend County
Borough Council by Creative Lives - August 2024



Table of Contents

01	Foreword	07	Demographic analysis
02	Executive Summary	08	Mapping creative opportunities in Bridgend County
03	About this report	09	Findings and recommendations
04	Context	10	About Creative Lives
05	The benefits of participation in creative activity	11	Appendices: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of creative opportunities• Demographic information• Survey
06	Our methodology		

01. Foreword



Councillor Jane Gebbie **Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing**

Creativity is thriving across Bridgend County in many forms. Whether you are crafting as an individual or taking to the stage in a group, there are many creative outlets spread across the borough.

It has been shown that there are massive benefits to physical and mental well-being from taking part in creative activities for even a few hours a week. People have been switching on to the positive effects of nature and spending time outdoors, but the creative arts are not as well recognised for their well-being powers to combat loneliness, improve skills and increase physical fitness.

Most of us did something in school days, from dancing and singing, to writing and artwork. But just how many of us carried this on into our adult lives and took up pottery, knitting, dance or joined a choir?

Here in the Council we had the opportunity, through the Shared Prosperity Fund, to look at the current state of our creative communities. The Reach Team in BCBC commissioned an investigation from Creative Lives, a charity that champions creative activity. They engaged with a wide range of individuals across Bridgend, held workshops, had in-depth conversations and ran an online survey. Their conversations and research have gone into this report, with solid recommendations to secure the future of the sector.

I would finish by saying: take every chance you can to show your creative side. The benefits to you, your family and your community are immense if you make the time to get involved.

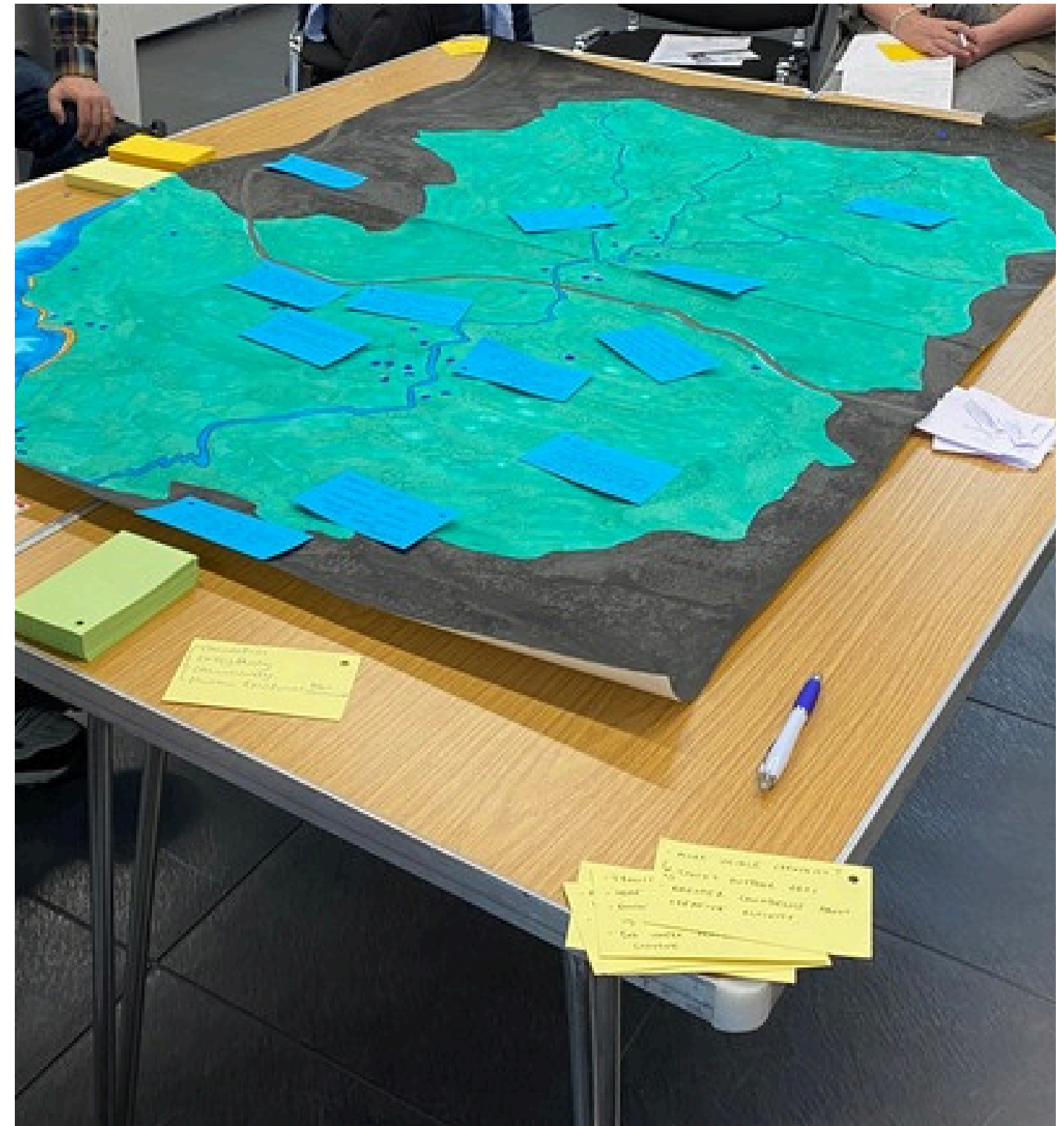
02. Executive Summary

Creative Lives was commissioned by Bridgend County Borough Council to map all the opportunities for people to take part in creative activities in Bridgend County Borough and build an up-to-date database that can signpost people to these opportunities.

We conducted desk-based research, published a survey of creative opportunities within the county, and held three creative conversation events - delivered in partnership with a local artist.

Our findings reveal a vibrant and diverse creative scene in Bridgend, with a wide range of artforms and opportunities available to people of all ages and backgrounds.

However, there are also significant gaps and unmet needs, particularly in terms of awareness, accessibility, and support for creative individuals and groups.



Summary recommendations



1. Recognise the connections: creativity as an ecosystem within Bridgend

Bridgend County benefits from a diverse range of creative opportunities, and a more ecological model is needed to understand and appreciate all the connections between these opportunities.

2. Improve local awareness of the benefits of creativity

There is increasing public awareness of the benefits of creativity, which can be further strengthened through education and promotion.

3. Increase visibility and celebrate creative activity

Creativity in Bridgend would benefit from greater recognition through local and national events, public art, and a central platform for showcasing creative activities.

4. Facilitate opportunities for networking and collaboration

Regular networking opportunities, peer support, and artist-led initiatives would be beneficial for individuals and groups.

5. Offer guidance and support

There is a need for guidance, advice, and peer support for creative individuals and group leaders.

6. Strengthen the local cultural infrastructure

Existing venues could be repurposed, and under-used spaces could host more creative activity. Transport issues also need to be addressed.

7. Provide small grants to expand existing work

Micro-grants could be offered to creative groups to develop their work, expand their offer, and welcome new members.

(See more detail on pages 25-32)

03. About this report

Creative Lives was commissioned by Bridgend County Borough Council to map all the opportunities for people to take part in creative activities in Bridgend County Borough, and build an up-to-date database that can signpost people to these opportunities.

We aimed to explore the full extent of creative opportunities across Bridgend County. In addition to the formal arts and cultural organisations, we wanted to explore the informal, un-constituted groups and gatherings that take part in creative activities (e.g. knitting groups, craft clubs), as well as the creative activities that take place in other settings (e.g. older people's groups, disability charities).

The project set out to explore the following questions:

- What opportunities are available to people to participate in different creative activities across Bridgend County?
- What are the gaps and needs for creativity in Bridgend?
- What would help creativity to thrive within Bridgend County?

Our methodology (set out in more detail below) was to conduct desk-based research, share a survey, convene in-person

and online open conversations, and complement this activity with one-to-one interviews and field research.

Acknowledgements

We are extremely grateful to everyone who gave their time and shared their expertise to inform this report: those who completed and shared the survey, and attended the open conversation events.

In addition, we'd particularly like to thank Tracy Breathnach, the artist commissioned to lead the events; Alice Wilkins, who volunteered her time to assist with the desk-based research; Claire Hiett, who painted the map used in our events; and Data Culture Change, who provided the demographic analysis of Bridgend County. We're very grateful to the Reach team in Bridgend County Borough Council for their guidance and input throughout.

04. Context

“Any creative activity is important. It brings people together, gives confidence to those without, and changes lives.”

Survey respondent

Local creative groups contribute a huge amount to the cultural and civic life of their communities. There are extensive proven benefits to communal participation in creative cultural activities, including improved mood; increased social connection; improved physical and mental health and wellbeing; and skills development.

But the people participating in these vital community groups often don't think of themselves as part of the art sector, nor of the voluntary sector. For example, if someone sings in a choir one evening a week, they don't necessarily think of themselves as an 'artist', nor as a 'volunteer'. In surveys of publicly-funded arts organisations, this everyday creativity is regularly overlooked as it is often unfunded, amateur creativity, rather than professional arts. But it is no less valuable.

In 2016, Creative Lives, as an elected member of the Third Sector Partnership Council, worked with Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) data to consolidate information about creative, cultural and heritage groups in Wales. At the time, we estimated that there were around 90 such groups in Bridgend.

But these data are historical (a number of years before the upheaval of the pandemic), and did not count un-constituted, informal groups.

Despite the extensive benefits to wellbeing that these groups offer, it is our experience that they are often under-acknowledged and do not feature on official surveys or databases.

Local creative groups have a considerable amount to contribute to public policy areas. The untapped potential of the creative groups in Bridgend could be better realised if they were more connected to each other, and to public bodies.

In the long-term, we hope this project will surface and celebrate the full extent of voluntary and amateur creative activity within different communities of place and interest in Bridgend; lead to a greater recognition of all the benefits to individuals and communities that arise from this activity; and the conditions that will enable the sector to thrive.

We have adopted a broad definition of creative activity: any opportunities for creative expression alongside others, from drama, dance and music through visual arts, crafts and writing, to film, digital creativity and multi-artforms. Our categorisation of artforms is set out below.

05. The benefits of participation in creative activity

“The group has helped me develop as a musician and singer; has helped me grow in confidence; has helped me make new connections and friends; improves my mood every week.”

Survey respondent

The fact that so many people have, for so many years, chosen to spend their time undertaking creative cultural activity means that it is self-evidently valuable. In 2016, [the Welsh Government estimated](#) that there were around 4,000 amateur arts, crafts and heritage groups across Wales, and that an estimated 650,000 people regularly engage in them: as active participants and audience members. People come together to create, to share experiences, to support each other and to have fun.

But local creative activity also brings significant benefits to participants, and has a considerable amount to contribute to the fulfilment of public policy agendas in Wales, and in particular the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, such as improving health and wellbeing, building community cohesion, and reducing loneliness and social isolation.

There is now an extensive body of evidence which collectively demonstrates the considerable benefits that arise from taking part in communal creative activity, such as personal satisfaction, improved mood and resilience, new social connections, improved physical and mental health, and skills development.



1.Reduced loneliness and isolation

Maintaining social connection and reducing loneliness and isolation are vital to improving our quality of life.

In 2018, the UK Government recognised loneliness as one of the most pressing public health issues. Its Loneliness Strategy (2018) summarised the evidence about the negative impacts of loneliness: “Feeling lonely often is linked to early deaths – on a par with smoking or obesity. It’s also linked to increased risk of coronary heart disease and stroke; depression, cognitive decline and an increased risk of Alzheimer’s. It’s estimated that between 5% and 18% of UK adults feel lonely often or always.” It is worth noting that this summary was before the extreme societal disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the extensive changes to working practices that resulted.

The Welsh Government’s most recent national survey on loneliness (2022-23) found that 13% of people in Wales were regularly lonely; that 48% were sometimes lonely;

and that factors including health, mental illness, material deprivation and ethnicity were all compounding variables. Loneliness is one of the 50 national indicators used to measure progress against the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The voluntary creative sector is, and has long been, the space where people convene around shared interests, and involvement in communal creative activity is an effective means of reducing loneliness and social isolation.

A review of loneliness interventions published by the UK Government’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (September 2023) found that arts and culture interventions were the second most effective means of addressing loneliness - rated more beneficial than befriending projects and other types of social support and social interaction. The only category of intervention that scored more highly was psychological interventions such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The range of creative groups in Bridgend County therefore represent a valuable resource in addressing this pressing health issue.

2. Improved physical and mental health

There are extensive proven health benefits arising from participation in shared creative activity, from addressing particular conditions and issues such as lung health, anxiety reduction or falls prevention, to extensive improvements in mental health.

For example, the Creative Health Review from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (December 2023), highlighted the following interventions that can prevent, manage or treat specific health conditions:

- Singing for breathing programmes ease symptoms of COPD, asthma and long-covid
- Dance and movement can prevent falls and support people to recover from stroke and brain injury
- Music-making can slow cognitive decline, and improve wellbeing for people living with dementia
- Gardening can modify risk factors for conditions such as cancer, cardiovascular disease and musculoskeletal conditions

Extensive reviews of the evidence on arts and health can be found in the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing's two reports, from 2017 and 2023.

The recommended dose: two hours

A study published in 2016 which explored the relationship between arts engagement and mental wellbeing, showed that those who participate in the arts for 2 or more hours per week report significantly better mental wellbeing than those with lower levels of arts engagement.

Although the evidence about the health benefits of participation in creative activity is perhaps still less well known than, say, physical activity, good diet or smoking cessation, our survey respondents who were creatively inactive were well aware of the links between creative participation and wellbeing (see section 8 below).

3. Emotional regulation

Regular participation in creative activities has also been shown to help manage mood and boost wellbeing.

In 2018, the BBC Arts Great British Creativity Test, involving nearly 50,000 participants, demonstrated there were three main ways that creativity is used as coping mechanisms to help control emotions:

1. A distraction tool - using creativity to avoid stress
2. A contemplation tool - using creativity to provide the mind space to reassess problems in our lives and make plans
3. A means of self-development to face challenges by building up self-esteem and confidence

In particular, the research found that trying new creative activities is especially good for our emotions and wellbeing: regardless of skill level, it is the taking part that counts.

Importantly, the survey revealed that the greatest benefit comes from participating in group creative activities. Although individual and virtual / remote creative participation is still beneficial, the research shows that these are less emotionally beneficial than in-person, face-to-face social interaction.



4. Increased prosocial co-operation

Regular involvement in local creative groups can encourage individuals to participate more actively and widely in their communities. A frequent consequence of participation in local creative groups is that people are more likely to volunteer, more likely to give to charity, and more likely to participate in local democracy.

This was demonstrated by research conducted by the University of Kent (2017), which showed that engagement in the arts is a strong predictor of further civic engagement. The research found that engagement with the arts acts as a catalyst that promotes “prosocial cooperation”, i.e. volunteering and charitable giving, over a period of 2 years.

The research stated: “The evidence is consistent with the hypothesis that the arts provide an important vehicle for facilitating a cohesive and sustainable society.” Importantly, the report says that “Fostering a society in which engagement in the arts is encouraged and accessible to all

may provide an important counter to economic, cultural, and political fracture and division,” suggesting that local creative groups may have a role to play in healing divisions within communities. We would suggest that some of these benefits might arise simply from actual physical engagement in the creative process, unmediated by digital technologies.

Creative Lives’ own research (Common Ground: Rewilding the Garden, 2020) has seen that increased visibility of creative activity in public (e.g. arts festivals, craft bombing) can change the aspect of communities and contribute to local regeneration.



5. Skills development and educational attainment

There is evidence that participation in arts activities helps individuals with skills development and educational improvements. Research from 2011 (Connected Communities: The role of grassroots arts activities in communities), enumerated these benefits. Participation in arts activity:

- Helps develop literacy, verbal and communication skills;
- Helps develop knowledge and technical skills;
- Develops greater cultural awareness.

This improvement in skills development, as well as greater socialisation, can result in increased employment opportunities of participants, which generates additional economic benefit. While estimations for the added economic value of the professional creative industries in the UK are well-reported (DCMS estimated that gross value

added [GVA] by the creative industries in 2022 was £126bn), grassroots arts activities also generate a considerable amount of economic activity and value in a number of ways, including:

- the unpaid contribution of volunteers;
- purchase of materials and equipment;
- donated goods and services;
- revenue from membership subscriptions;
- revenue for local venues;
- revenue from fundraising through an arts activity for other charitable purposes;
- potential savings for health and social services due to enhanced wellbeing of participants (detailed on p.10 above).

06. Our methodology

In order to explore the extent of creative opportunities within Bridgend County, we used the following methodology:

a. Desk-based research

The project began with remote, desk-based research of all the creative opportunities within Bridgend County. We partnered with Data Culture Change, who produced the demographic context for our work (set out below). We also reviewed the literature on the benefits of creative activity on individuals and communities.

b. Survey of creative participation in Bridgend

We conducted a bilingual survey of all the opportunities for people to experience and take part in creative and cultural activities within Bridgend County. We also wanted to hear from people who weren't currently creatively active, but wanted to be. As an incentive, a small grant of £150 was offered to one creative group drawn at random who completed the survey.

In total, we received 90 responses to the survey: 38 from creative group leaders; 10 from participants in creative groups; and 42 from people who would like to participate in creative activity. The analysis of the survey results is included in our findings below, and a copy of the survey is included in the Appendix.



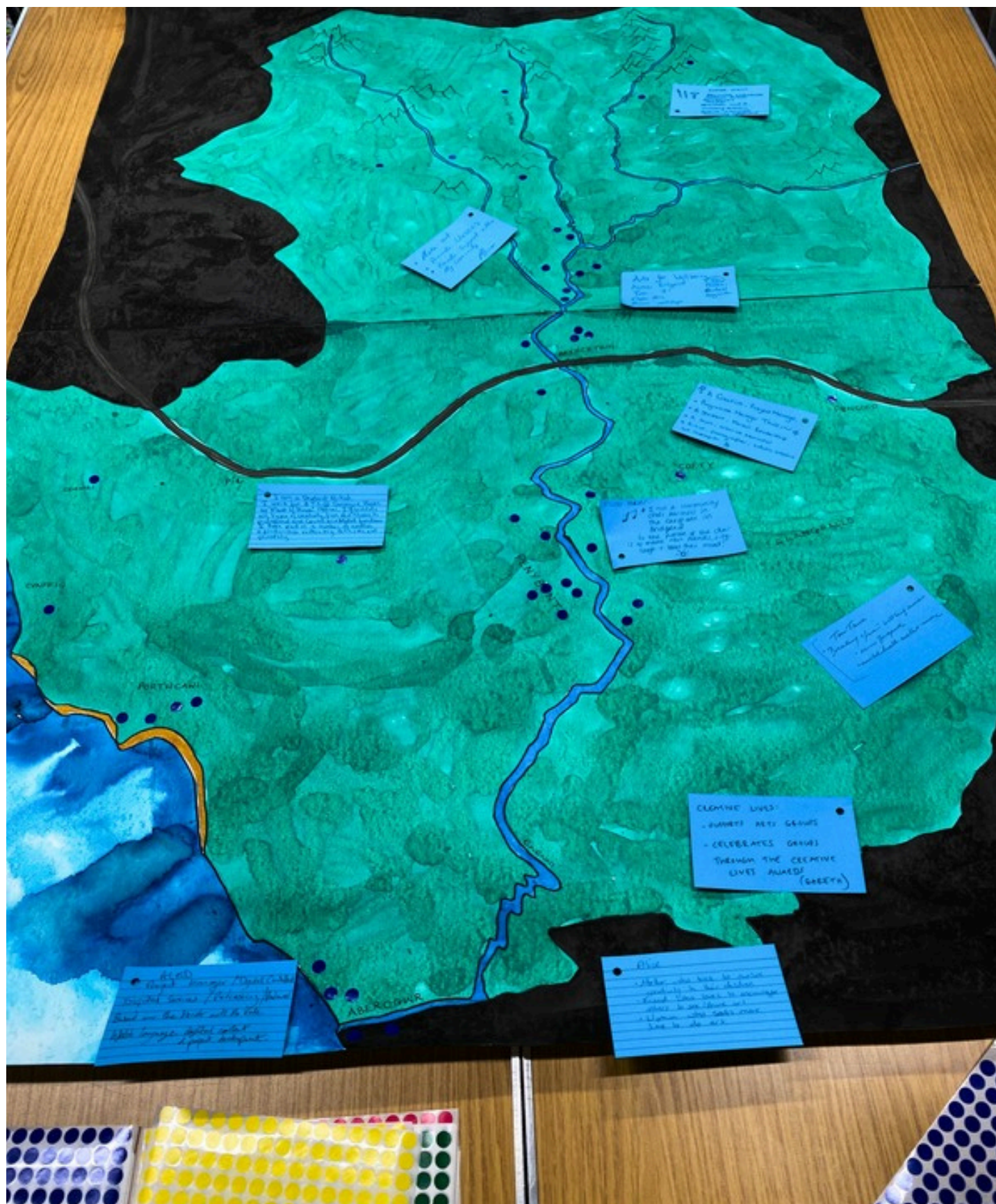
c. Creative conversation events

Following an open recruitment process, Tracy Breathnach was commissioned to take part in the creative mapping project in Bridgend County as a local artist with experience of working with a wide range of communities and arts groups. Her role was primarily to facilitate three creative conversation events across the borough: in Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg.

During the events, Tracy was keen to ensure that people had an opportunity to create new connections and potential opportunities for themselves and their work, as well as being an opportunity to share their ideas for how we could grow the creative sector in the county.

In order to unify the events, Tracy used the metaphor of ‘rivers of creativity’ to map the activity that is currently taking place in the county: where are the streams and tributaries that connect to the main? She commissioned local artist Claire Hiett to create a large hand-painted map of the county, marking the rivers and the major towns.





During the workshops, participants were invited to:

- **Locate themselves and their work on the map**

Where do you live / work in Bridgend? This activity helped us to form connections through a sense of a shared place, and also helped to tell some stories about the journeys people have made to, from and through the county.

- **Describe their current creative ‘offer’ in the county and mark where this offer takes place by placing a blue sticker on the map in the relevant location.**

This could be a direct offer of creative activity, or it could be supporting others in their creativity, e.g. as a parent, within an organisation etc. Responses were shared in pairs and then to the whole group. This enabled us to get a growing sense of where the ‘pools’ of creativity are in the county. Unsurprisingly they formed mainly around the major towns, with a large hub in the centre of the county around Betws (Tanio) and Bryngarw Park.

- **Imagine what other creative activities could be happening across the county if we had a thriving cultural community.**

Working in small groups of 3 or 4, participants had conversations to imagine together how the creative pulse of the county could be in its full vibrancy. These were then shared with the whole group.

- **If they could give one resource to the county to begin to bring these improvements about, what would it be?**

Everyone was encouraged to think specifically rather than being too general, e.g. not simply ‘money’ as a resource but ‘money to pay for xyz’. This was a whole group activity to close the session.

Overall, participants engaged with great enthusiasm, ideas and provocations. The ideas, comments and suggestions from the events inform our findings and recommendations below.

The work was undertaken between January and June 2024.



07. Demographic analysis

Bridgend county is a county borough, governed by Bridgend County Borough Council. The Health Board is Cwm Taf Bro Morgannwg University Health Board. It falls within the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the South Wales Police regions.

Bridgend County Borough includes 20 communities: Brackla, Bridgend, Cefn Cribwr, Coity Higher, Coychurch Higher, Coychurch Lower, Cornelly, Garw Valley, Laleston, Llangynwyd Lower, Llangynwyd Middle, Maesteg, Merthyr Mawr, Newcastle Higher, Ogmore Valley, Pencoed, Porthcawl, Pyle, St Bride's Minor and Ynysawdre. The communities of Brackla, Bridgend and Coychurch Lower make up the town of Bridgend.

New data from the 2021 Census shows how the County Borough is changing:

- Growing – over 6,000 new residents between 2011 and 2021 (4.5% increase compared to 1.4% in Wales as a whole)
- Older – the median age of the population rose from 41 to 43.
- More densely populated – Bridgend was the seventh most densely populated local authority of all 22 across Wales

- Falling unemployment – down from 4.1% in 2011 to 2.5% in 2021
- Lower proportion of Welsh Speakers – down from 9.7% to 9.2% of the population in 2021
- Less likely to identify as ‘Welsh only’ – down from 67.3% in 2011 to 64.8% in 2021
- In 2021, 96.8% of people in Bridgend identified their ethnic group within the “White” category (compared with 97.8% in 2011).
- Healthier – there was a 1.2% rise in respondents stating they were in ‘very good health’

Compared to Wales as a whole, Bridgend is also

- More densely populated – it is the seventh-highest number of residents per football pitch in Wales
- Home to a higher proportion of people who identify as ‘White’ (96.8% compared to the Welsh average of 93.8%)
- Home to a lower proportion of people who can speak Welsh (9.7% compared to the Welsh average of 19.0%)
- Very close to the national average (51.9%) for the proportion of adults (excluding full-time students) who are economically active (52.4%).

- Home to a higher proportion of adults who are economically inactive due to long term sickness or disability (6.8% compared to the Welsh average of 5.9%)
- Home to a higher proportion of home-owners (70.5% of households compared to 66.1% across Wales).
- Comparatively unhealthy – 9.2% of Bridgend residents described their health as ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ compared to the Welsh average of 7.9%
- In the 30th percentile for the least highly qualified Local Authority in England and Wales.



What makes Bridgend different

Data Culture Change processed data from the 2021 Census to allow a comparison with the Welsh average across 25 standard metrics. This gives a snapshot of the characteristics of a place that can be helpful in highlighting areas for deeper investigation.

These are the metrics for Bridgend that vary most from the 50th percentile (n.b. this is the median Output Area rather than the national mean):

Metric	Variation from 50th percentile
Welsh Language skills	-17
Not born in UK	-10
Arrived in the UK 2017 – 2021	-9
Work from home	-6
Social Rented homes	-6

Metric	Variation from 50th percentile
Own home	5
Report Good Health	-5
Report Bad Health	4
L15 FT Students	-4

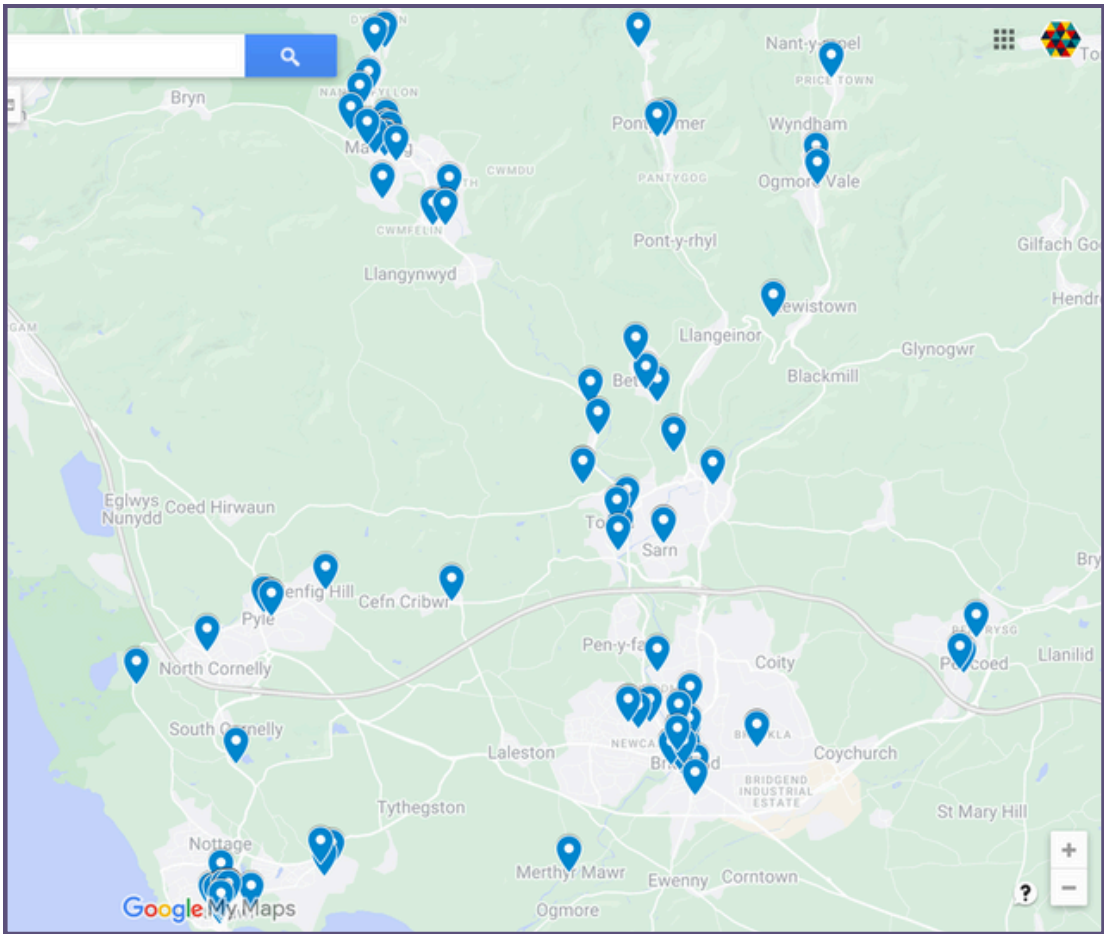
Compared to most places in Wales, a higher proportion of the population in Bridgend report that their health is poor or very poor.

Compared to most places in Wales, a lower proportion of the population in Bridgend have Welsh language skills, were born outside the UK, arrived in the UK recently, work from home, live in social rented accommodation, report that their health is good or very good and are full-time students.

For further demographic analysis, please see Appendix B.

08. Mapping creative opportunities in Bridgend County

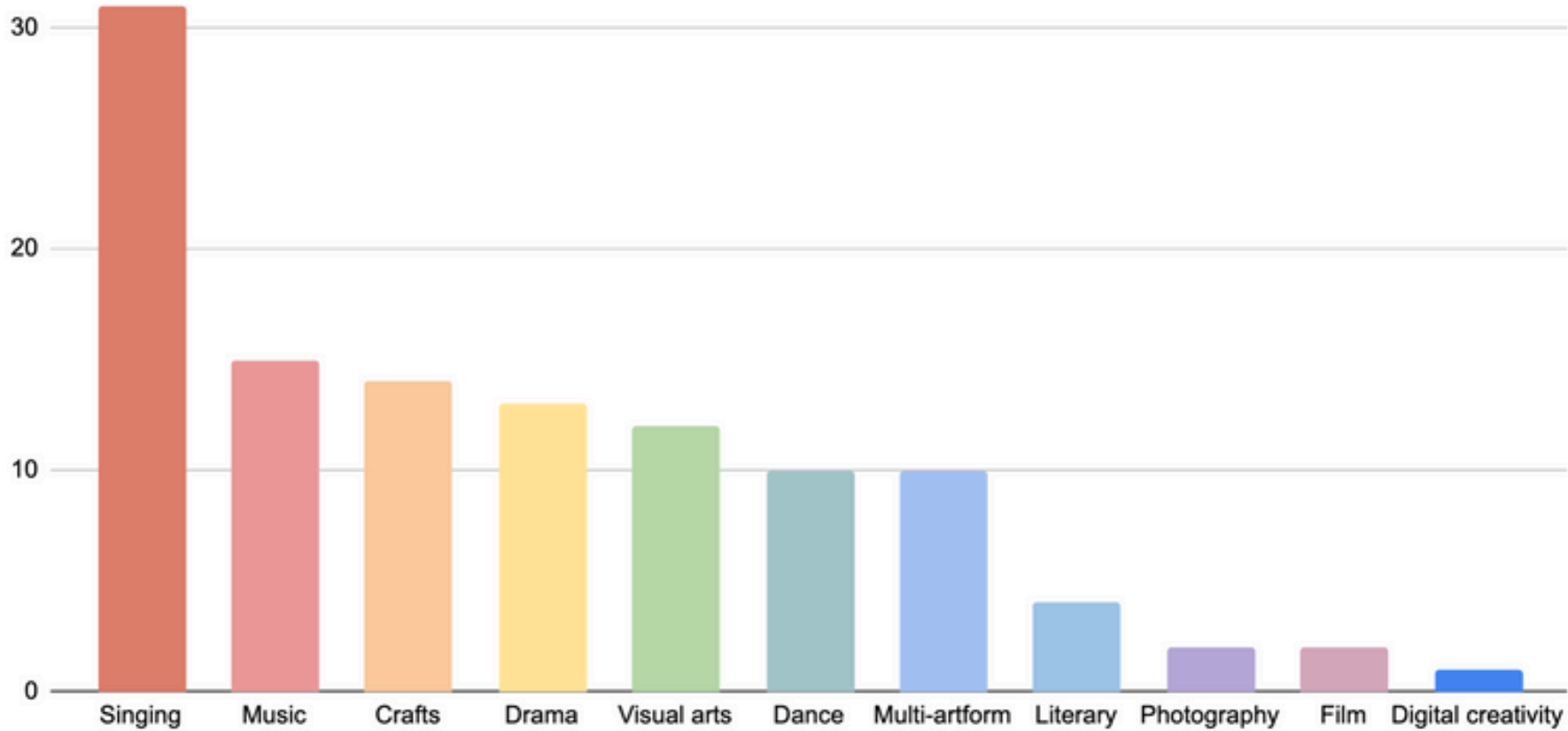
From our research and survey, we identified 107 active creative groups within Bridgend County. The majority of these, where there is publicly-available contact information, are listed in Appendix A. Where the location of the creative activity was available (as a postcode) we mapped this onto a map of the county, to get a sense of the distribution of the creative opportunities. There are 100 activities on this map:



[The interactive map is available to view here](#)

Artforms: A choral county

Our mapping and survey attempted to categorise the different artforms available in the county. Although the numbers may not be absolutely accurate, as there is likely overlap between artforms (e.g. drama groups may offer opportunities for singing and musical performance), the following chart is broadly indicative of the distribution of the artforms in the county:



It is important to note that the above categories indicate artforms of creative groups, not individuals. It is highly likely that many people in Bridgend are avid photographers, but aren't necessarily members of photographic societies. It might suggest, however, that there are fewer opportunities in the county to share and explore photography, film and digital creativity together with like-minded individuals.

Of the 31 opportunities to sing in Bridgend County, there are at least 25 choirs, and this figure doesn't include all the choirs associated with a particular church or chapel. This isn't perhaps surprising, given the history of choral groups, particularly male voice choirs in the 19th Century in Wales, but it is encouraging to see that so many choirs remain.

The preponderance of choirs and other singing groups is also indicative of high levels of participation in the arts, as choirs and singing groups tend to have higher numbers of participants in comparison with, say, crafts clubs or writing groups.

Similarly, the South Wales Valleys have a long-standing tradition of brass bands. The oldest creative group from Bridgend we found in our research, The Ogmore Valley Silver Brass Band, was established in 1893.

The most common organisation type was registered charities: around 37% of the groups we mapped. The remainder were community groups, social enterprises and companies, as well as opportunities provided by freelance individuals.

Welsh and English

Our survey asked which language the creative group predominantly worked in. Although not conclusive, we estimate that 77% of the groups we mapped work mostly in English, with 12% operating bilingually, and 11% working mostly in Welsh. This is broadly in line with the percentage of the population of Bridgend that speaks Welsh: 9.2%, as indicated by our demographic analysis above.

However, we would venture that the high numbers of singing and music groups mean that Welsh usage and appreciation is actually higher than the above figures reveal. Singing is an area where bilingualism and Welsh learning is embraced and supported, and some of the survey respondents indicated that they perform in English and Welsh. Whereas not all members of a choir will be Welsh speaking (sometimes fluent Welsh speakers will be a very small minority), all members learn the meaning and pronunciation of Welsh perfectly to perform Welsh songs. Imagine a Welsh choir that didn't sing 'Calon Lân', 'Myfanwy' or 'Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau'?

Funding for the arts in Bridgend

Bridgend experienced an increase in funding in the recent [Arts Council of Wales Investment Review](#) (for 2024/25), rising from £177,753 to £507,753, an increase of £330,000. This new investment equates to £3.49 per head of population. The organisations in receipt of core funding in Bridgend are [Tanio](#), [Awen Cultural Trust](#) and [It's My Shout](#).

Anecdotally, we heard in our focus groups that applications for open funding programmes to the Arts Council of Wales from groups in Bridgend was disproportionately low, but we haven't been able to confirm this. This might indicate an opportunity to redress this imbalance.



Gaps and unmet needs

“I want to be part of a creative network to collaborate with others in my area.”

Survey respondent

Our survey asked for responses from people who weren't currently involved in creative activity for their views on creative participation in Bridgend county. We had 41 responses from this cohort, and the comments provide a picture of some of the barriers to creative participation.

We asked survey respondents ‘What makes you want to be involved in creative activity?’ Their reasons are summarised below:

1. Wellbeing and relaxation

Survey respondents highlighted the calming and mindful aspects of creativity, promoting peacefulness, and offering enjoyment and relaxation.

2. Self-expression and growth

A number of respondents talked about their desire to express themselves creatively, improve their mental wellbeing and self-esteem, and explore new interests.

3. Community

People wanted to find a community to share their passion, learn from others, and connect with like-minded individuals.

4. Sharing skills and knowledge

Others expressed the desire to teach and share their creative talents to help others.

5. Making social connections

Some respondents stated that they were lonely and wanted to join groups to make new friendships. (This resonates with Creative Lives' other research.)

In response to a question about what sort of creative activity would people like to take part in, the most common responses were:

- Crafts - 78%
- Visual arts - 43%
- Writing - 26%

While this doesn't mean that these artforms are necessarily under-represented in Bridgend County, as some respondents didn't have the time to attend creative groups (see below), they might offer an indication of potential interest. For example, we

frequently heard a desire for more writing groups from our focus groups and interviews.

We asked 'What are the main barriers to you becoming involved in a creative activity?' The main reasons given were:

- Time commitment - 78%
- Lack of information about local activities - 48%
- Costs - 30%
- Shyness / fear of entering an existing group - 26%

A number of survey respondents and people in the focus groups highlighted gaps in creative provision, e.g. more creative groups open outside of normal working hours; more opportunities for teenagers. Relatedly, many respondents expressed a desire for a single place to find out about creative opportunities in the county.

09. Findings and recommendations

Creative expression in all its forms is a fundamental part of being human, but individuals and communities need support, recognition and resources for creativity to flourish. Our main research question throughout this project was: What would help creativity to thrive in Bridgend?

It is clear from the levels of engagement with the project, the survey responses, and our mapping that Bridgend County has a long-standing and rich community of creative groups and individuals who are passionate about sharing their creativity and engaging people across the county.

After the extreme disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the cost of living crisis affecting all aspects of society, it is unsurprising that the creative sector feels unstable and fragile. But there is an array of opportunities and enthusiasm across the county from which to build. This is now more important than ever: with costs so high, taking part in a creative activity in their local community might be the only thing many people can afford to do.



1. Recognise the connections: creativity as an ecosystem within Bridgend

Finding



Bridgend County benefits from a diverse range of artforms and creative opportunities, from long-standing groups and new initiatives; through professional arts organisations and voluntary groups; to entrepreneurial individual artists and creative group leaders. Our events merely scratched the surface of all the existing and potential connections between the disparate parts of the culture of Bridgend, and there is both a desire and a need to surface the connections between all the creative opportunities.

Recommendation



It will be beneficial to adopt an ecological model to understand and appreciate all the creativity throughout the county. A healthy ecosystem relies on diversity, and this means viewing all the creative groups and opportunities in Bridgend county as interdependent and mutually supportive, and valuing all their roles equally. This would help the entire ecosystem to flourish, together.

Seeing culture in Bridgend as an ecology might suggest different ways of how groups and individuals interact with each other, how they develop alongside each other, how they learn from each other, and how they share resources and skills. Crucially, the model highlights the changing, dynamic relationships between groups, and how people move between different opportunities.

2. Improve local awareness of the benefits of creativity

Finding



There is increasing public awareness about the links between arts participation and wellbeing, and this represents an opportunity to expand the offer to those who aren't creatively active. Similarly, the potential contribution of the numerous creative groups throughout the county to various public policy agendas is achieving greater recognition from public bodies. This could be further strengthened.

Recommendation



There are already a number of highly effective arts-in-health programmes, and it would be wrong to medicalise the entire cultural sector. But a greater understanding of the many beneficial reasons to participate in creative

activity would attract more people to the existing groups in Bridgend - and would be an effective preventative measure for local public policy concerns such as addressing loneliness and low-level mental health conditions. The Community Navigator team in BAVO is an important link in this regard.

We have attempted to summarise some of the relevant evidence about the individual and societal benefits of regular participation in creative activity in section 5 above, in the hope that it will be useful for creative groups to articulate their impact, in particular for funding bids.

But crucially, people need to experience the benefits for themselves. With greater visibility (recommendation 3 below) and small amounts of additional funding (recommendation 7 below), creative groups could develop their capacity to welcome new members, through open access sessions, displays and performances, buddying for new group members, or offering new sessions at different times, in new locations or for different demographic groups.

3. Increase visibility and celebrate creative activity

Finding



Many of the people who engaged with the project expressed difficulty in finding out about relevant creative opportunities. Related to this was enthusiasm about the potential to make creative activity more visible throughout the county, and for buildings such as Carnegie House to become thriving, multi-purpose creative spaces.

Recommendation



Creativity in Bridgend would benefit from greater recognition, from the public and from public bodies. Greater participation in local and national festivals (e.g. Gwanwyn, the Creative Lives Awards, and Adult Learners' Week), public art days and awards schemes would help to showcase local talent, bring more awareness of the creative opportunities in the area, and attract more people to take part in creativity in their own communities.

Many people stated that there was a need to create a central platform (e.g. website, newsletter) to showcase creative activities, local artists, and opportunities.

On an ongoing basis, public awareness of local creative activity could be increased through utilising under-used spaces for pop-up events and workshops, and connecting artists and creative groups with existing venues like cafes and pubs to host creative activities and events.

4. Facilitate opportunities for networking and collaboration

Finding



Overwhelmingly, throughout the project we heard about the need for regular networking opportunities, peer support, and more collaboration. There was a hope expressed that this would lead to more artist-led initiatives in the county, and more artist development opportunities on a sustained basis.

Recommendation



Individual creatives in Bridgend would benefit from regular, in-person opportunities to share ideas, offer mutual support and discuss potential collaborative projects. These might be individual practitioners, sole traders and freelancers but also creative group leaders, as often people find that their personal creative practice is redirected into facilitating others' creativity in a group setting. There was also enthusiasm for individual artists to collaborate with local creative groups: a fresh injection of creativity for both parties.

Importantly, we heard a desire that this be an informal, light-touch model, that wouldn't require setting up a new organisation, for example. In practice, this might be addressed by repurposing venues as coworking creative spaces for local artists to work, connect, and share resources. Or this might be realised through establishing a dedicated 'Creative Advocate' role to connect artists and groups, secure funding, and promote the creative sector.

5. Offer guidance and support

Finding



There is a clear need for guidance, advice and peer support for creative individuals and group leaders on how to run a sustainable group, and how to start an artistic career. In practice, many artists adopt 'portfolio' lifestyles, involving delivering workshops, undertaking commissions, teaching, working on their own creative projects, as well as leading regular creative groups - but this is very difficult to do. Many people develop a creative practice alongside paid work, and need support to help decide if it would be viable to transition to a full-time creative role.

Recommendation



This finding may be addressed through mentorship, and facilitating opportunities for peer support. Artist commissions could be awarded to established and early career artists alongside each other, to help develop new talent. Equally, emerging artists could usefully link to national networks, such as **Wales Arts Health and Well-being Network** (WAHWN), as well as artform-specific umbrella bodies. Creative Lives maintains a list of **umbrella bodies on its website**.

6. Strengthen the local cultural infrastructure

Finding



While there is a perennial need for accessible, affordable spaces for creative activity, the feedback from project participants was that existing venues throughout the county could be repurposed, and under-used venues could host more creative activity. We also heard that transport was a problem, and that travelling to other places in the county, including adjacent valleys, was difficult, particularly in the evenings. Clearly, public policy decisions about matters like buildings and transport often have unintended consequences for creative groups.

Recommendation



These findings related to regeneration and transport policy will now inform Creative Lives' national advocacy work with governments, funders and policy-makers to influence policy changes in order to improve the infrastructure and regulatory environment for local creative groups. Decisions on these matters should ensure that they do not adversely impact the ability of people to practise their creativity together. If community-based creativity is to thrive, then groups should be consulted about any changes to the infrastructure that supports local culture.

One potential solution to the transport issue would be for existing groups and activities to expand into new localities - rather than setting up brand new groups. Also, different types of buildings, that may be under-used at certain times of the day, could house creative groups, such as pubs, cafes, rugby clubs, churches and church halls.

7. Provide small grants to expand existing work

Finding



One thing we didn't hear was any call for a large injection of funding as the solution to the question of how to help creativity to flourish in Bridgend. In general, local creative groups are characterised by the voluntary activity of their members, as well as their resilience. However, small amounts of funding can make the difference between a group struggling and thriving.

Also, while there are some gaps in creative provision in the county, and multiple opportunities for new artistic initiatives, many people who engaged with the project felt that these could be addressed by developing and expanding existing activities, rather than creating new projects. Many funding programmes require applications for new projects, but small grants (under £500) for existing work would make a huge difference to the creative groups across the county.

Recommendation



Where funding is available, micro-grants should be offered to creative groups to develop their work, expand their offer in new locations and at new times. Small grants could enable creative groups to develop their capacity to welcome new members, and extend the benefits of participation in creative activities.

The processes for applying for and reporting on such grants should be proportionate to the amount of funding and level of risk involved, i.e. an application for a micro-grant of a couple of hundred pounds should be a very light-touch process.

10. About Creative Lives

Creative Lives is a registered charity that was established in 1991. We champion community and volunteer-led creative activity, and work to improve opportunities for everyone to be creative. In particular, we celebrate and promote people expressing themselves creatively with others, recognising the benefits this can bring. We know that creative expression in all its forms is a fundamental part of being human, but that individuals and communities need opportunities and support for creativity to flourish. We also know that people coming together to create, have fun, share experiences and support each other can have a positive impact on both their physical and emotional wellbeing.

To that end, Creative Lives works with communities, organisations, policy-makers, funders and creative individuals as a voice for positive change, to improve and expand the landscape in which creative participation can take place. We work to address inequalities in access to creative participation, promote inclusivity, connect people and communities, and seek to increase awareness of the links between creativity and wellbeing. We have teams based across the UK and Ireland, and are funded by Arts Council England, the Arts Council of

Ireland and Creative Scotland.

We do this on a local and national level through advocacy, development and celebrating the activities of creative people, groups and places through the [Creative Lives Awards](#), [Creative Lives On Air](#) our [Creative Networks](#) and [Creative Learning](#) sessions and a diverse range of creative projects.

Appendix A - Creative Opportunities in Bridgend

For any questions, corrections or updates, please contact info@creative-lives.org

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Aberkenfig Library	CF32 9PT	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/aberkenfig-library/
Alison Moger	CF32 8YE	Visual Arts	https://www.mogerdesigns.com/
Awel-y-Mor	CF36 5TN	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-wales.com/community-centers/awel-y-mor-community-centre/
Awen Cultural Trust	CF32 8UU	Multi artform	https://www.awen-wales.com/
Bethesda Artworks		Visual arts	https://www.facebook.com/bethesda.artworks?locale=en_GB
Between the Trees Festival	CF32 0LS	Festival	https://betweenthetrees.co.uk/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Betws Library	CF32 8TB	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/betws-library/
Blue Deltas Marching Display Band	CF31 4QQ	Music	https://www.facebook.com/BlueDeltas/?locale=en_GB
Bois Goetre-Hen Male Choir	CF32 9EB	Singing	https://www.boisgoetrehen.com/
Brackla Community Centre & Community Council	CF31 2PQ	Venue	https://www.bracklacomcommunitycouncil.gov.uk/community-centre/
Breathe Creative		Multiple	https://www.breathecreative.co.uk/
Bridgend and District Local History Society	CF31 1EF	Heritage	https://bridgendhistorysociety.wordpress.com/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Bridgend Carers Centre	CF32 0AA	Singing, Music, Visual arts, Crafts	www.bridgendcarers.co.uk
Bridgend Library	CF31 4AH	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/bridgend-library/
Bridgend Male Choir	CF31 3ED	Singing	https://www.bridgendmalechoir.co.uk/
Bridgend Tabernacle Choir	CF31 1LH	Singing	https://www.facebook.com/bridgendtabernaclechoir/ / https://sites.google.com/view/cor-tabernacle-bridgend
Bridgend Town Council	CF31 1EF	Multi artform	https://www.bridgendtowncouncil.gov.uk/community-information/community-art-exhibitions/community-art-projects/
Bridgend U3A	CF31 2PQ	Multi-artform	https://www.u3asites.org.uk/bridgend/welcome

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Bridgend Writers' Circle		Writing	https://www.bridgendwriters.org/
Bridgend Youth Theatre	CF36 5TN	Drama	https://awenboxoffice.com/bridgend-youth-theatre
Caerau Men's Shed	CF34 0TU	Crafts, Drama, Photography, Film	https://caeraumenshed.co.uk/
Carly Lewis - Nature's Printmaker	Various	Visual arts	https://linktr.ee/naturesprintmaker
Y Cefn Gwyrdd		Heritage	https://www.facebook.com/cribwr?locale=en_GB
Choirs For Good Bridgend	CF31 3NG	Singing	https://www.choirsforgood.com/service-page/choirs-for-good-bridgend

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Claire Hiett	CF31 4AH	Visual arts	https://www.facebook.com/hiettart/
Cor Bro Ogwr	CF31 1LH	Singing	https://corbroogwr.com/
Cor Meibion Maesteg	CF34 0NE	Singing	https://www.maestegchoir.com/
Cor Meibion Porthcawl / Porthcawl Male Choir	CF36 3DF	Singing	http://www.porthcawlmaleschoir.co.uk/
Cor Merched Cwm Llynfi		Singing	https://www.facebook.com/CorMerchedCwmLlynfi/
Craft and Chat	CF36 3AG	Visual arts, Crafts	https://www.facebook.com/PorthcawlLibrary/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Curtain Up Youth Theatre	CF34 9UN	Singing, Music, Drama, Dance	https://www.facebook.com/curtainupyouththeatre/?locale=en_GB
Cwm Ogwr Men's Shed	CF32 7AB	Crafts	
Dance to Health - Porthcawl		Dance	https://dancetohealth.org/about-us/where-we-are/
Dawnswyr Gwerin Pen-y-Fai	CF31 4JP	Dance	http://www.dawnswyrpenyfai.co.uk/
Funk Force Dance	CF34 9LR	Dance	https://www.facebook.com/FunkForceDance/?locale=en_GB
Gallery Arts	CF36 5AH	Visual arts	https://galleryarts.co.uk/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Garw Valley Heritage Society	CF32 8HG	Heritage	https://www.garwheritage.co.uk/wordpress/
Goldies Cymru	CF33 6DR	Singing	https://www.goldiescymru.org.uk/bridgend.html
Harmony	CF34 0BG	Singing	https://www.harmonyofwales.co.uk/
Impetus Dance Community Interest Company	CF35 5LZ	Dance	https://www.impetUSDance.co.uk/
It's My Shout	CF10 4GA	Film	http://www.itsmyshout.co.uk/
Kenfig Hill & District Male Voice Choir	CF33 4LH	Singing	https://www.kenfighillmalechoir.wales/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
KPC Youth & Community	CF33 6AB	Community	https://kpcyouth.com/
Llynfi Valley Amateur Dramatic Society	CF34 0BD	Drama	https://www.facebook.com/people/Llynfi-Valley-Amateur-Dramatic-Society/100075943101349/
Llynfi Valley Historical Society	CF34 9BY	Heritage	https://www.facebook.com/maestegvalleys/
Maesteg Children's Choir	CF34 9PD	Singing	http://maestegchildrenschoir.weebly.com/
Maesteg Gleemen Male Voice Choir	CF34 0BU	Singing	https://maesteggleemenwebs.wixsite.com/maesteg-gleemen
Maesteg Library	CF34 9AA	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/maesteg-library/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Maesteg Musical Theatre Society	CF34 9PA	Drama, Music	https://www.facebook.com/MaestegMTS?locale=en_GB
Maesteg U3A	CF34 9PA	Multi-artform	https://u3asites.org.uk/maesteg/home
Maesteg Ukulele Club	CF34 9JL	Singing, Music	https://www.maestegukulele.club/
Monumental Brass Society	CF32 9PY	Heritage	https://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/
My Kinda Choir Bridgend	CF31 1NJ	Singing	https://www.mykindachoir.co.uk/about
Nolton Art Gallery	CF31 3AA	Visual arts	https://www.facebook.com/noltonartgallery/?locale=en_GB

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Noteworthy	CF34 9PB	Singing	https://www.noteworthymixedchoir.com/
Ogmore Vale Library	CF32 7AJ	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/ogmore-vale-library/
Ogmore Valley Male Voice Choir	CF32 8RX	Singing	http://www.philogmore.co.uk/two/NewChoir.html
Ogmore Valley Silver Brass Band	CF32 7AB	Music	https://ogmorevalleysilverbrassband.com/
Out to Learn Willow	CF31 1EF	Crafts	www.outtolearnwillow.co.uk
Pencoed Library	CF35 5RA	Crafts, Digital creativity, Literary	https://www.awen-libraries.com/pencoed-library/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Pencoed Silver Band	CF35 5LY	Music	https://pencoedsilverband.co.uk/
Pontycymer Library	CF32 8ES	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/pontycymer-library/
Porthcawl Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society	CF31 3DA	Drama, Music	https://www.facebook.com/PAODStheatre/
Porthcawl Art Society	CF36 3BA	Visual arts, Crafts	https://porthcawlart.weebly.com/
Porthcawl Community Art		Visual arts	https://www.facebook.com/groups/241747343888682/about?locale=en_GB
Porthcawl Community Orchestra	CF36 5TN	Music	https://www.porthcawlorchestra.co.uk/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Porthcawl Community Singers	CF36 3DT	Singing	http://www.porthcawlchoralsociety.co.uk/
Porthcawl Floral Arrangement Society	CF36 5TN	Crafts	https://www.facebook.com/PorthcawlNAFAS/
Porthcawl Library	CF36 3AG	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/porthcawl-library/
Porthcawl Museum and Historical Society CIO	CF36 3DT	Heritage	https://www.porthcawlmuseum.com/
Porthcawl U3A	Various	Multi-artform	https://porthcawl.u3asite.uk/
Pyle & Porthcawl Photographic Society	CF36 5NR	Photography	https://porthcawlcameraclub.webador.co.uk/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Pyle Library	CF33 6BS	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/pyle-library/
Rock Choir Bridgend		Singing	https://rockchoir.com/choirleaders/steph-todd/
Sarn Library	CF32 9SW	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/sarn-library/
ShedQuarters Maesteg	CF34 9AL	Crafts	https://shedquarters.men/
Sing with Us Bridgend	CF31 1EA	Singing	https://www.facebook.com/SingwithUsBridgend/
Singing for the Brain Bridgend / Music with Ric	CF31 3NH	Singing	https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/support-services/Bridgend%2BLocal%2BServices/Singing%2Bfor%2Bthe%2BBrain%2BBridgend%2B-%2BBridgend/local

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
Sounds Familiar Mixed Choir		Singing	https://www.facebook.com/SoundsFamiliarPorthcawl?locale=en_GB
Stagecoach Bridgend and Cowbridge	CF31 3HT	Drama, Singing, Dance	https://www.stagecoach.co.uk/bridgend
Steer - The Enterprise Academy	CF32 9HF	Multi-artform	http://www.steerwales.org.uk/
Superchoir Bridgend	CF31 4JR	Singing	https://www.wearesuperchoir.com/bridgend
Tanio	CF32 8SU	Multi artform	https://taniocymru.com/
The Ajuda Foundation	CF10 5DP	Visual Arts, Dance, Literary	https://ajudafoundation.org.uk/

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
The Craft Junction	CF31 1JB	Visual arts, Crafts	www.thecraftjunction.org
The Green Room, Sustainable Wales	CF36 3BG	Venue/Literature	https://www.sustainablewales.org.uk/green-room
The House Martins, Shwt	CF32 0EE	Crafts	
The National Children's Choir of Great Britain		Singing	https://www.nccgb.com/
The Performance House	CF36 5AS	Drama	https://www.facebook.com/ThePerformanceHouse/
The Rock Project	CF32 0EB	Singing, Music	https://www.therockproject.com/swansea

Group name	Postcode	Artform	Contact
The Squirrel's Nest	CF32 9BS	Crafts	https://www.facebook.com/SquirrelsNestMS/?locale=en_GB&_rdr
Tondu and District Arts Society	CF32 9PR	Visual arts	https://www.facebook.com/tonduanddistrictartssociety/?locale=en_GB
Tondu Men's Shed	CF32 9HF	Crafts	https://www.facebook.com/Tondushed/
Tracy Breathnach		Dance	https://tracybreathnach.com/
Wales Ukulele Project	CF34 9JL	Music	https://ukuleleproject.co.uk/projects/wales-ukulele-project/
Y Llynfi Library	CF34 9EB	Cultural venue	https://www.awen-libraries.com/y-llynfi-library/

Appendix B - Demographic analysis

Demographic analysis - further information

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government’s official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It identifies areas with the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. WIMD ranks all small areas in Wales from 1 (most deprived) to 1,909 (least deprived). It is a National Statistic produced by statisticians at the Welsh Government. Small areas are Census geographies called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs).

The Bridgend Local Authority contains 88 LSOAs (4.6% of the 1909 total LSOAs in Wales). Of the 10% most deprived LSOAs in Wales within the ‘Overall’ domain, six are within the Bridgend Local Authority which accounts for 6.8% of those in the Local Authority and 0.3% of those in Wales. Of the 10% most deprived LSOAs in Wales within the ‘Health’ domain, 14 are within the Bridgend Local Authority which accounts for 15.9% of those in the Local Authority and 0.7% of those in Wales.

Diversity in Bridgend

Bridgend County Borough is a diverse local authority combining contrasting urban and rural areas, mining valleys, arable lowlands and coastline. The Local Authority is comprised of 28 Wards that vary considerably in geographic size and population density. This data table compares eight key characteristics, with the five Wards that with the greatest predominance of the characteristic highlighted in red.

Ward	Social Rented Accommodation	No qualifications	Bad or very bad self-reported health	3+ dimensions of deprivation	All household over 66	Households with dependent children	Not working or never worked	Welsh language skills
Aberkenfig	7%	20%	5%	3%	22%	50%	7%	8%
Blackmill	21%	32%	11%	10%	22%	48%	12%	6%
Brackla East & Coychurch Lower	7%	13%	6%	2%	21%	51%	6%	8%
Brackla East Central	4%	14%	5%	2%	16%	54%	5%	7%
Brackla West	43%	21%	8%	9%	13%	49%	12%	9%
Brackla West Central	11%	18%	7%	3%	23%	49%	7%	6%
Bridgend Central	22%	23%	8%	6%	26%	49%	10%	6%
Bryntirion, Laleston and Merthyr Mawr	13%	13%	5%	3%	16%	48%	6%	8%
Caerau	13%	35%	11%	10%	22%	47%	15%	6%
Cefn-glas	16%	20%	8%	5%	26%	49%	8%	5%
Coity Higher	7%	14%	5%	2%	18%	48%	8%	8%
Cornelly	24%	23%	8%	6%	22%	47%	10%	7%
Garw Valley	16%	29%	9%	8%	20%	51%	12%	8%
Llangynwyd	10%	21%	7%	4%	28%	45%	7%	11%
Maesteg East	13%	29%	9%	7%	30%	44%	10%	8%
Maesteg West	15%	27%	9%	7%	24%	50%	12%	10%
Nant-y-moel	5%	28%	9%	7%	19%	51%	10%	5%
Newton	0%	17%	6%	3%	39%	42%	7%	6%
Nottage	1%	15%	6%	1%	37%	43%	8%	6%
Ogmore Vale	8%	25%	9%	5%	23%	47%	7%	6%
Oldcastle	13%	17%	7%	3%	25%	46%	8%	8%
Pencoed and Penprysg	11%	21%	6%	4%	27%	45%	7%	8%
Pen-y-fai	1%	13%	5%	1%	29%	42%	6%	9%
Porthcawl East Central	11%	23%	10%	7%	32%	46%	10%	5%
Porthcawl West Central	8%	18%	8%	6%	34%	44%	9%	6%
Pyle, Kenfig Hill and Cefn Cribwr	21%	27%	9%	7%	23%	48%	10%	6%
Rest Bay	2%	14%	6%	2%	43%	37%	5%	7%
St Bride's Minor and Ynysawdre	21%	24%	8%	6%	20%	50%	9%	7%
Total	14%	22%	8%	5%	20%	48%	9%	7%

a) Social rented accommodation

While the average proportion of Bridgend households living in social rented accommodation is lower than the national average, this varies considerably across Wards. Brackla West has the highest proportion (43% of households).

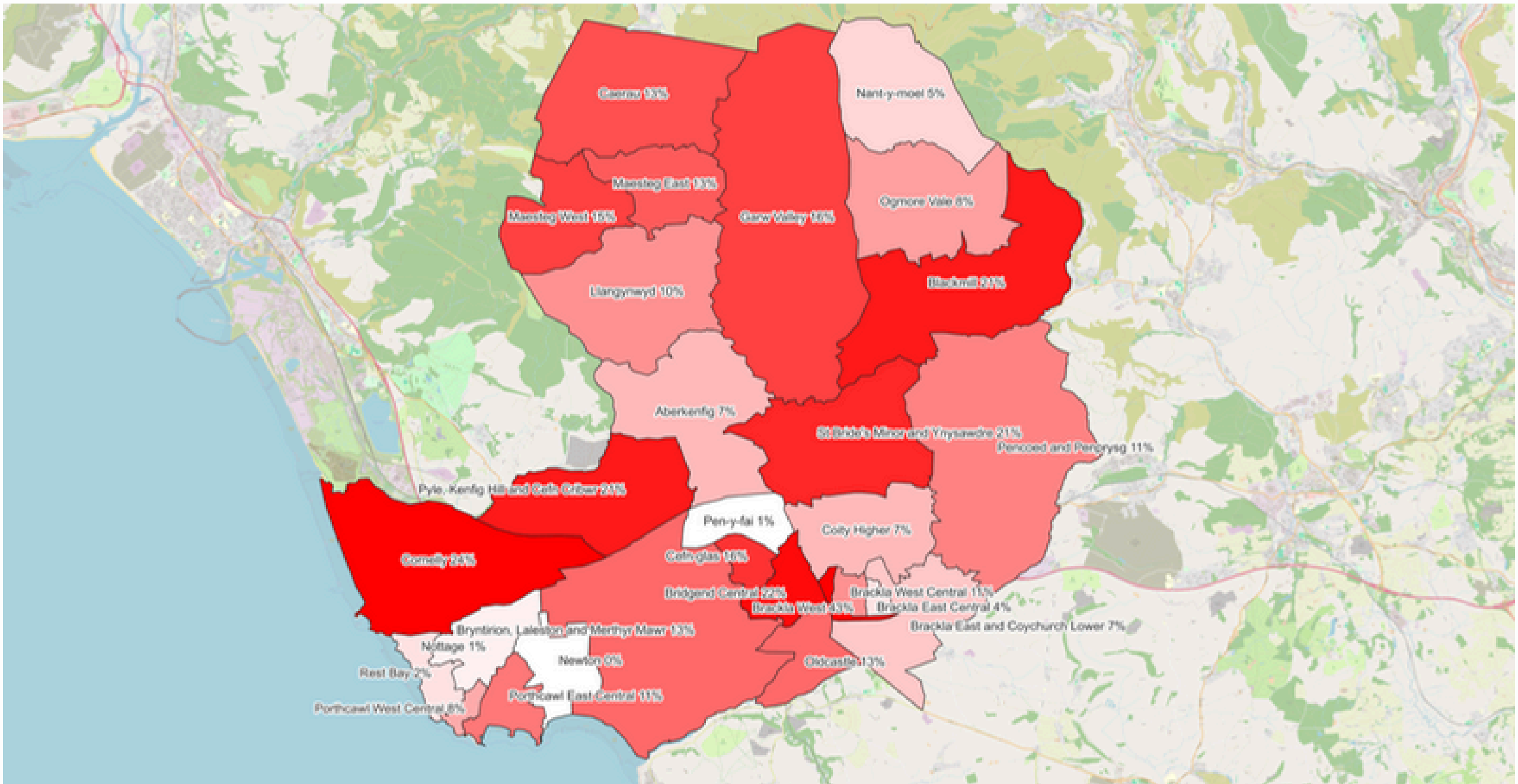


Figure 3.1 Heat map of the proportion of households living in social rented accommodation, ONS Census 2021

b) No qualifications

Caerau (35%) and Blackmill (32%) are the Wards that are home to the highest proportion of adults with no qualifications.

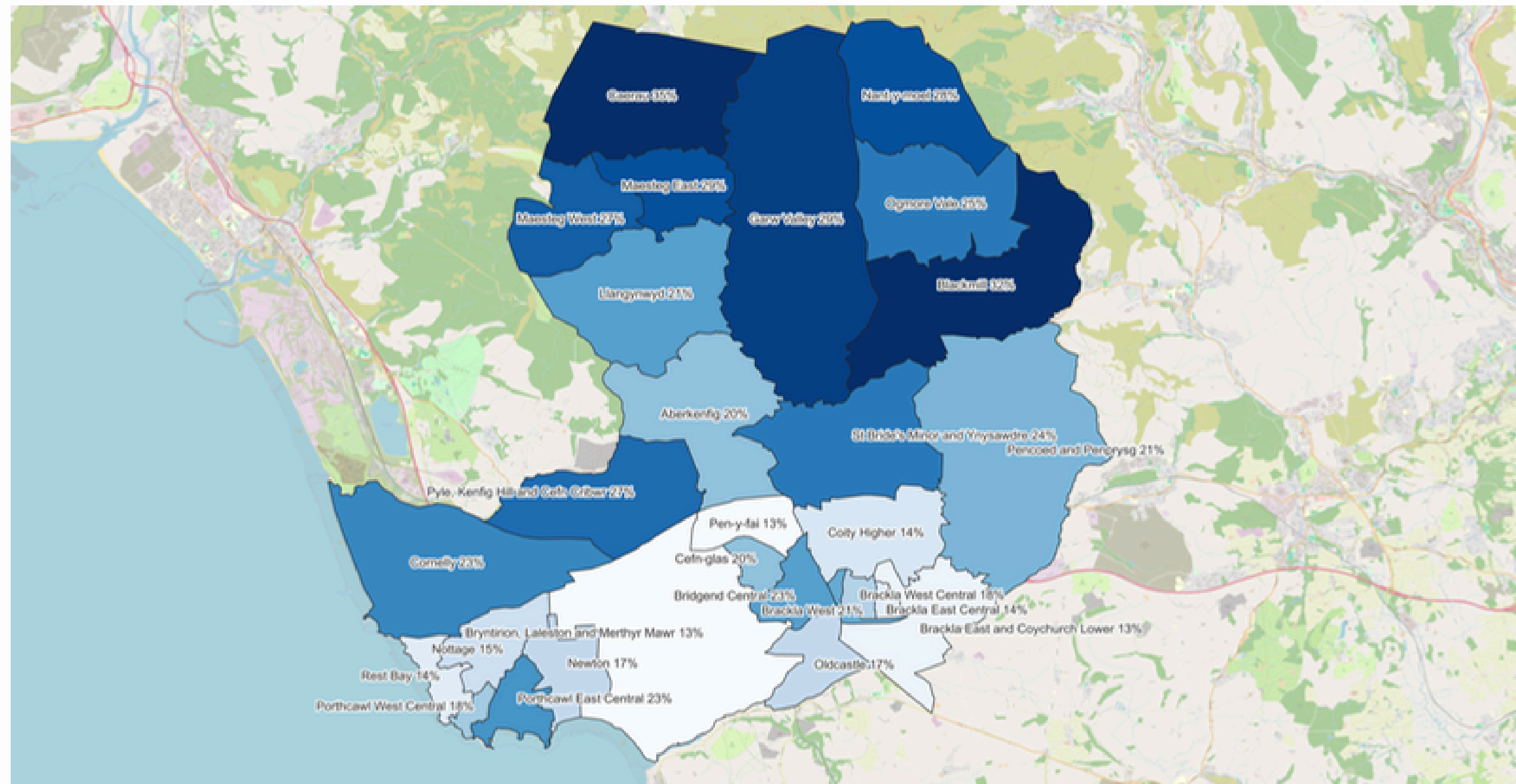


Figure 3.2 Heat map of the proportion of adults with no qualifications, ONS Census 2021

c) Bad or Very Bad self-reported health

Blackmill and Caerau are the Wards that have the highest proportion of the population that report poor health (both 11%).

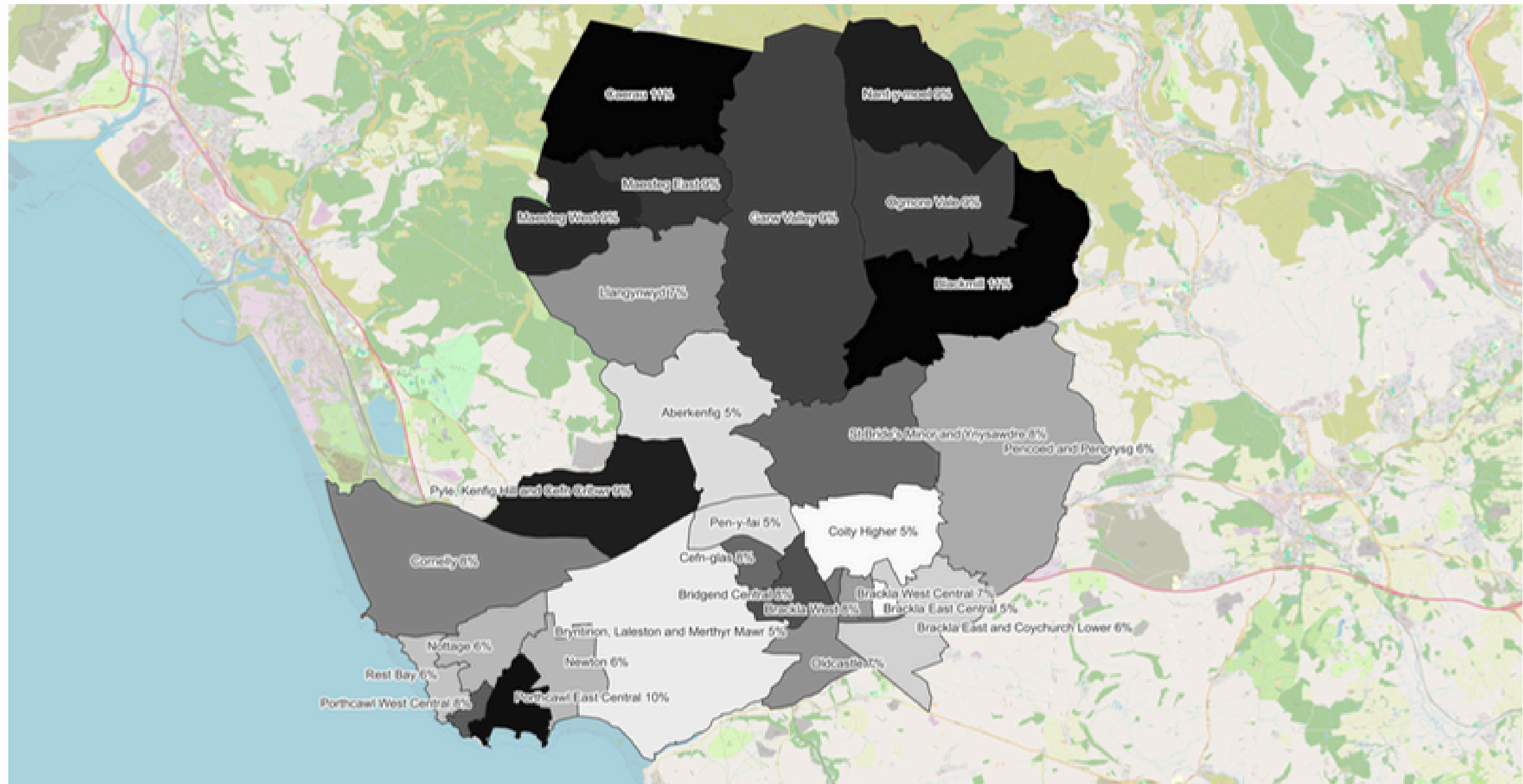


Figure 3.3 Heat map of the proportion of the population who state their health is bad or very bad, ONS Census 2021

d) Households in three or four dimensions of deprivation

The Census provides data on estimated deprivation related to employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding. Blackmill and Caerau are the Wards that have the highest proportion of the household experiencing three or four of these dimensions (both 10%).

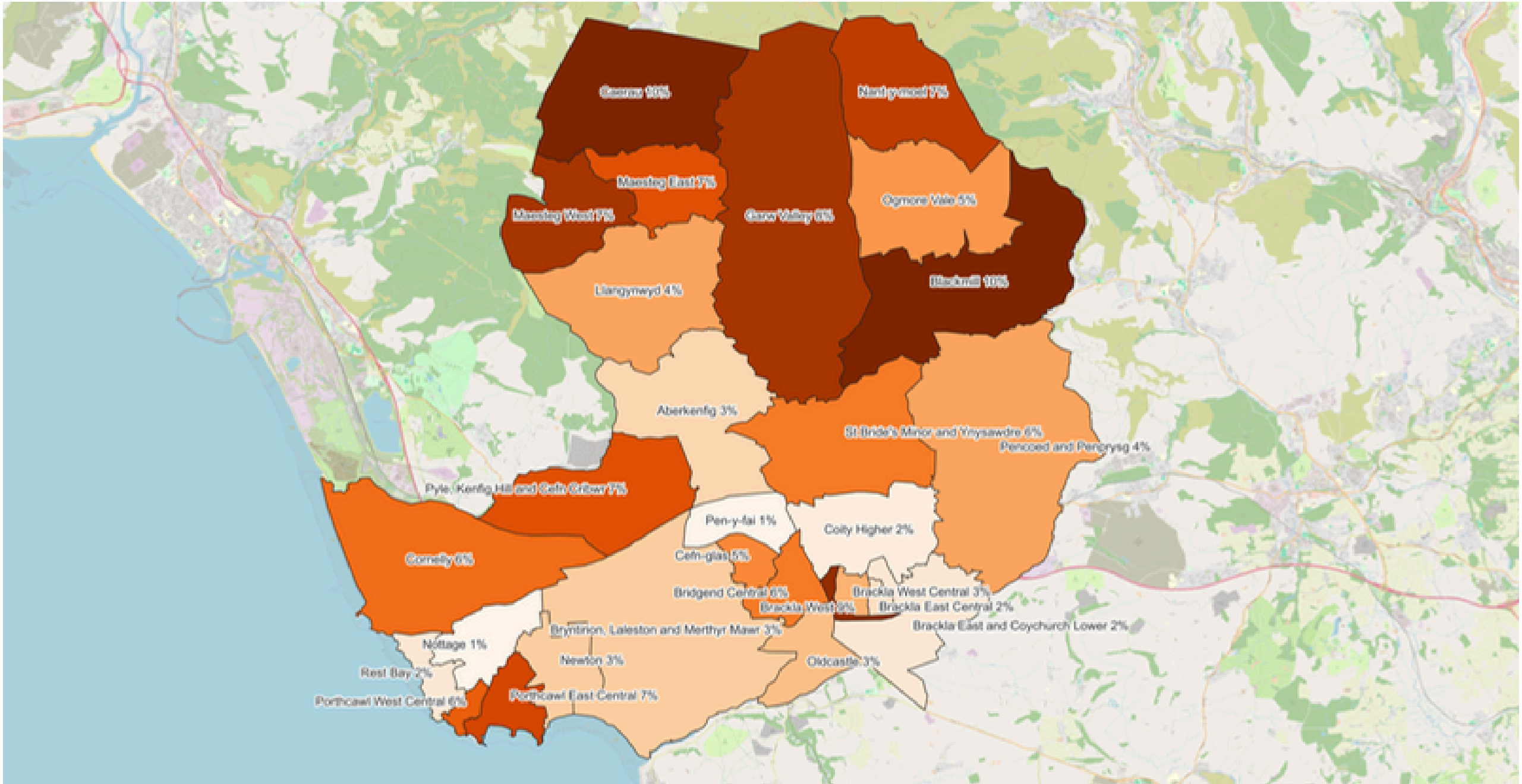


Figure 3.4 Heat map of the proportion of households experiencing three or four dimensions of deprivation, ONS Census 2021

e) All members of household aged 66 or more

43% of households in Rest Bay consist of adults of 66 years and over. As well as other coastal Wards, Maesteg East is also home to over 30% of over 65 households.

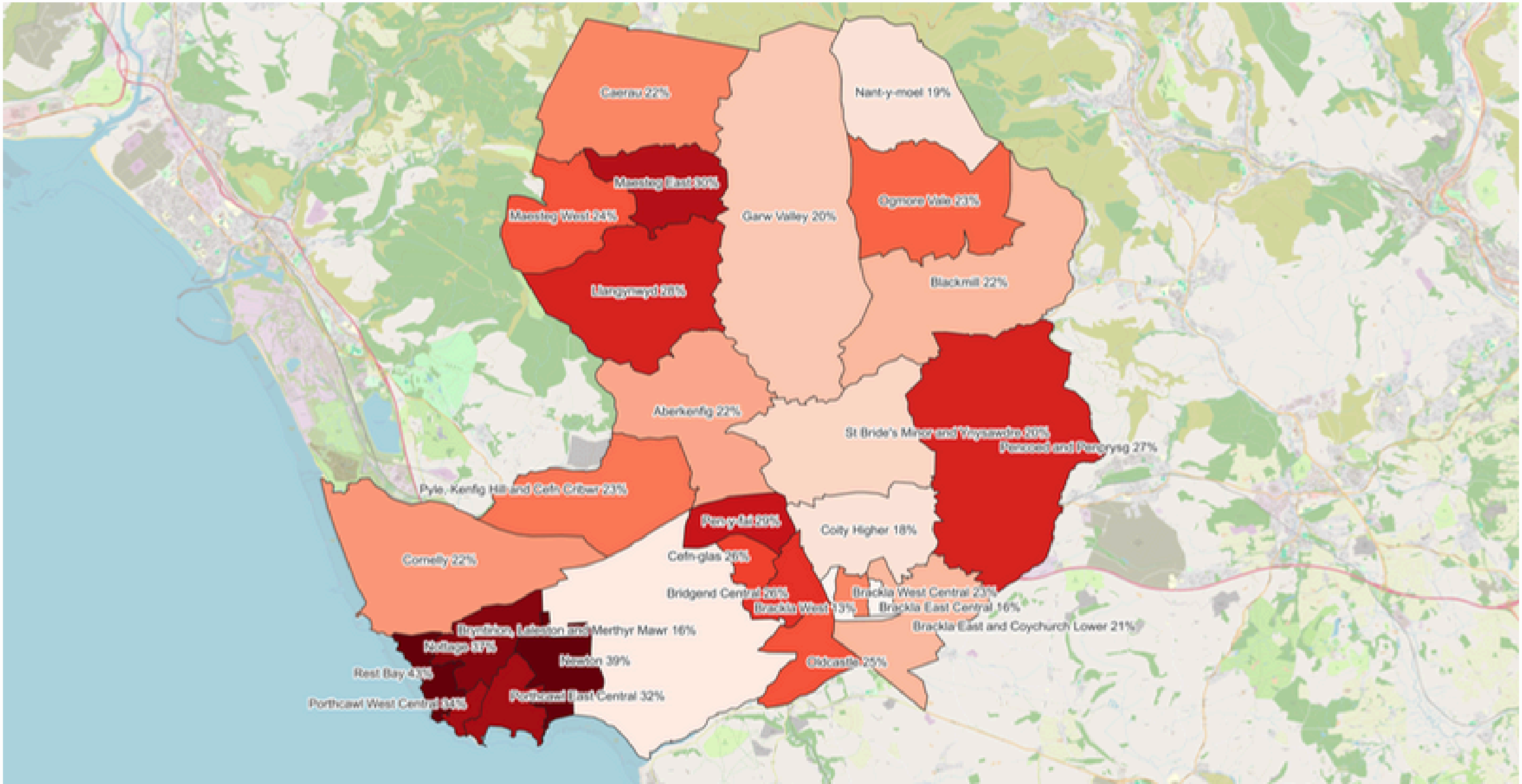


Figure 3.5a Proportion of households where all members at least 66, ONS Census 2021

f) Households with dependent children

There are five Wards where more than half of households include dependent children. Brackla East Central has the highest proportion (54%).

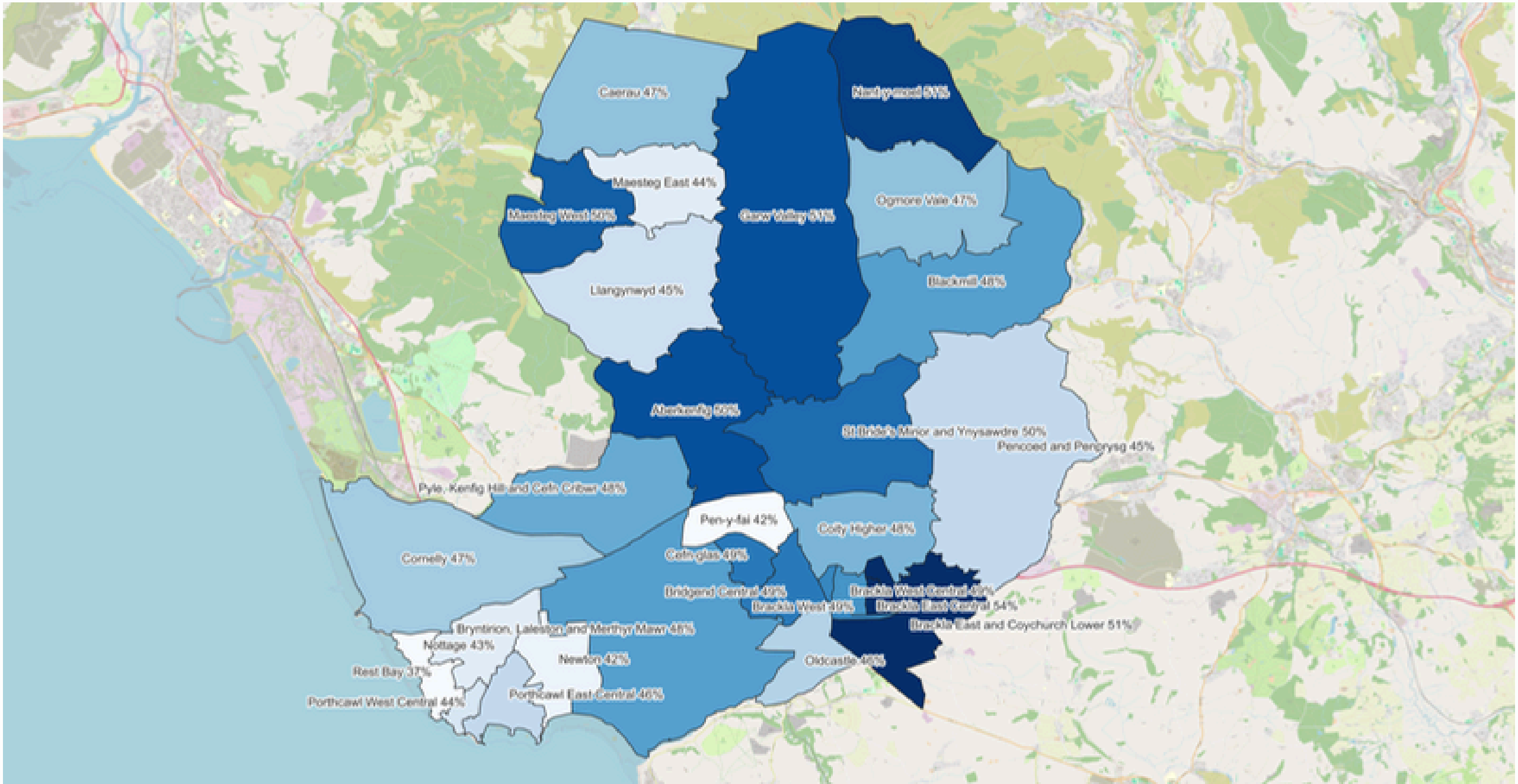


Figure 3.6 Heat map of households with dependent children, ONS Census 2021

g) Not working or never worked

Caerau is the Ward with the highest proportion of working-age adults who are not currently working or have never worked (15%). It is followed by four Wards where 12% of working-age adults who are not currently working or have never worked.

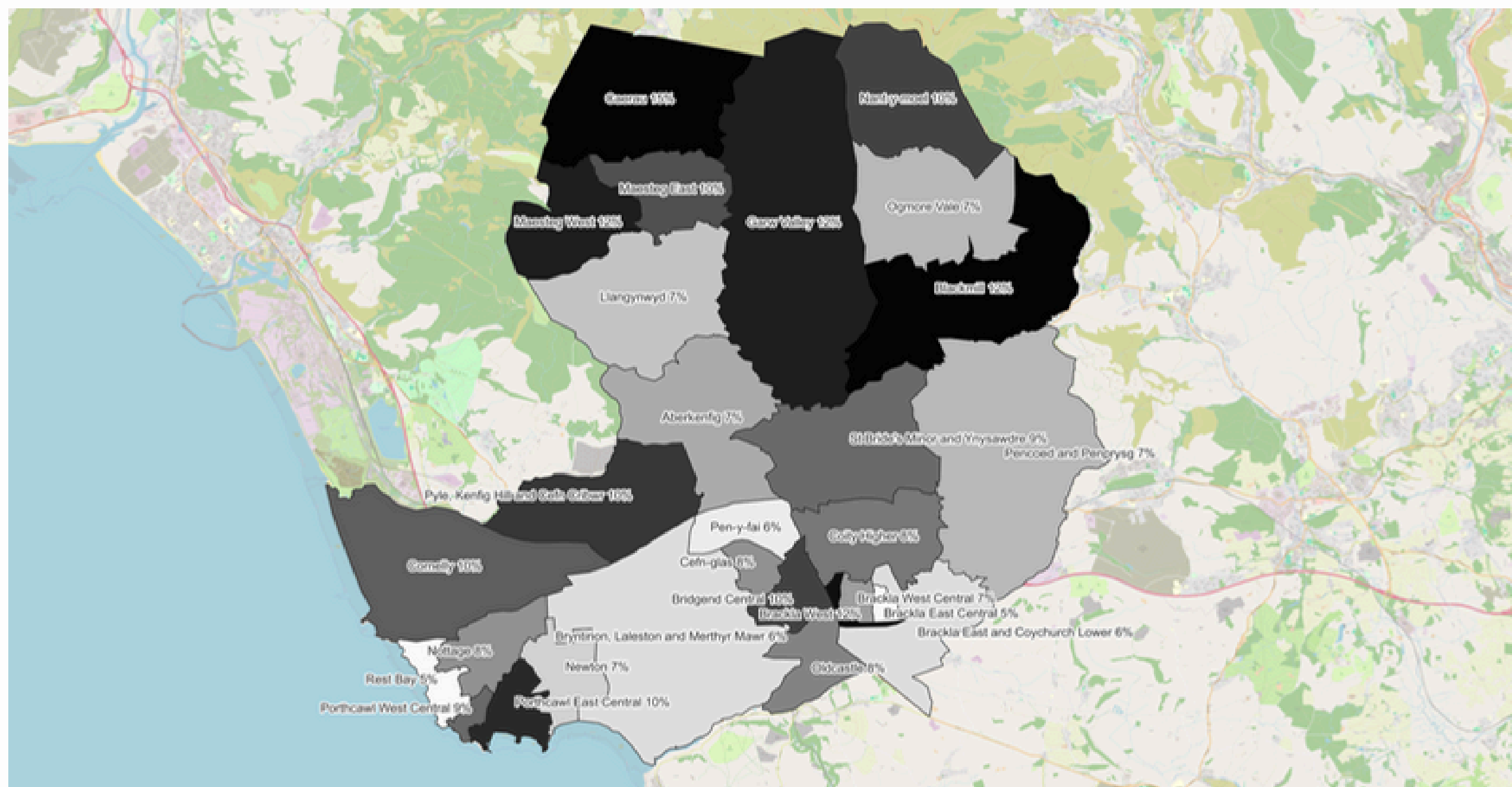


Figure 3.7 Heat map of the proportion of the adults who are currently not working or have never worked, ONS Census 2021

h) Population with Welsh Language Skills

Llangynwyd (11%) and Maesteg West (10%) are home to the proportion of people (over three years old) with Welsh Language skills.

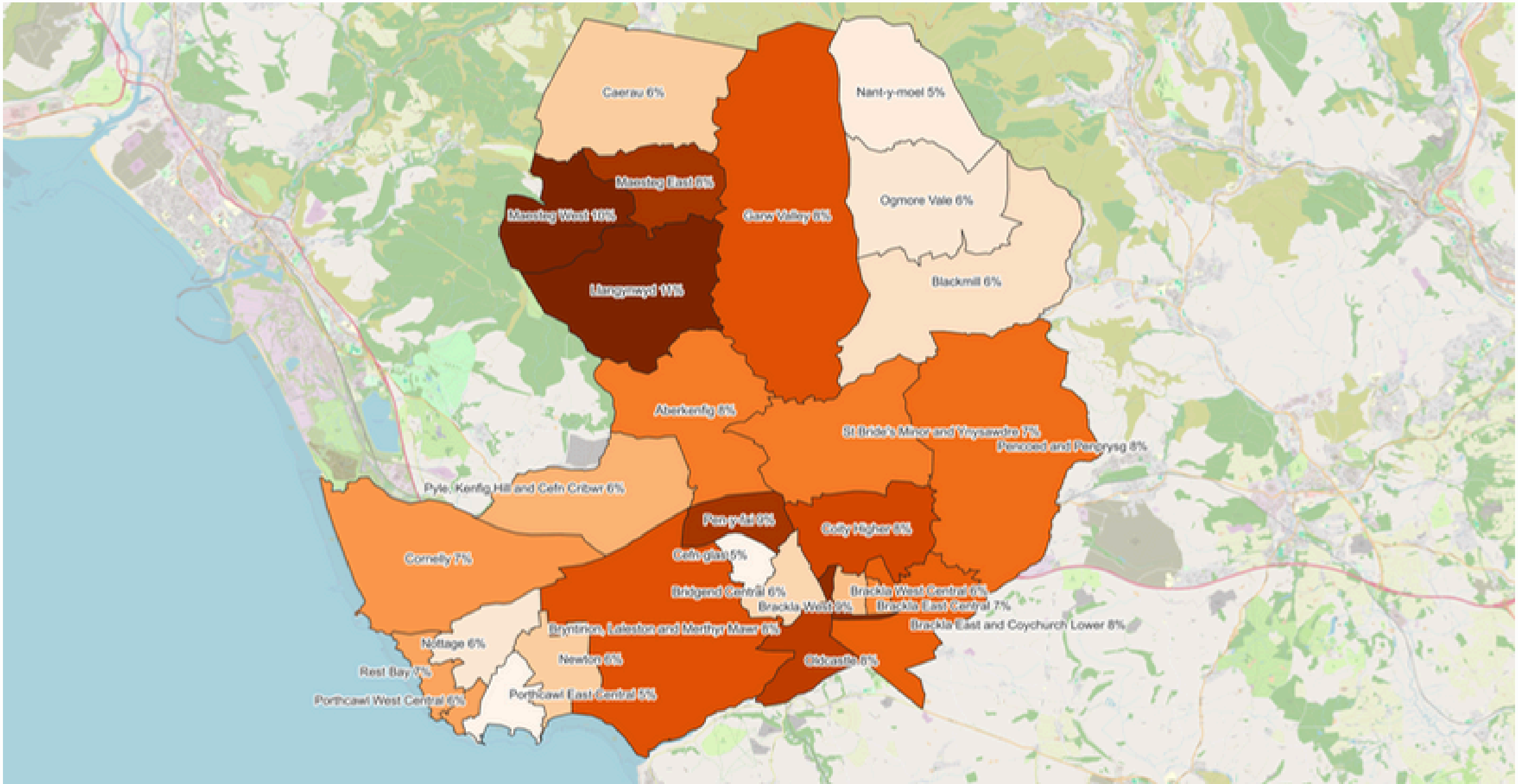


Figure 3.8 Heat map of the proportion of the population with Welsh Language skills, ONS Census 2021

Appendix C - Survey

This is a copy of the survey we used, which closed in June 2024.

Creative Lives is mapping all the opportunities - both formal and informal - for people to experience and take part in creative and cultural activities within Bridgend County.

These activities include music and singing, drama, dance, visual arts and crafts, poetry and creative writing, photography, film, digital creativity - any opportunities for creative expression. We also want to hear from people who would like to take part in creative activities in Bridgend County.

This work is being undertaken as part of the Resilient Communities Project via Bridgend County Borough Council and is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

1. Are you currently involved in a creative group / organisation / activity?

- Yes, I'm a group leader / organiser
- Yes, I take part in a creative group
- No, but I'd like to be

For group leaders / organisers

If you don't know the answer to any question, please feel free to leave it blank.

2. Name of your group, organisation or business

3. What sort of creative activity are you involved in? (please select all that apply)

- Singing
- Music
- Drama
- Visual arts (Painting, drawing, etc)
- Craft (textiles, pottery , etc)
- Photography
- Film
- Digital creativity
- Dance
- Literary (writing, spoken word, etc)
- Multi-artform
- Other (please specify)

4. Please tick how you primarily describe your group / organisation / work

- Informal group or club
- Arts organisation
- Charity
- Social enterprise
- Freelancer / sole trader / individual
- Heritage group or organisation
- Arts venue (e.g. theatre, gallery)
- Museum
- Local Authority
- Health Board
- Commercial organisation
- Other (please specify)

5. Who takes part in your group? (Please tick all that apply.)

- Anyone in the community
- Children
- Young people
- Adults
- Older people
- Disabled people
- Other (please specify)

6. What does it cost to take part (per session)?

- Free
- Under £1
- £1 - £4.99
- £5 - £9.99
- £10 - £20
- More than £20

7. How often do you meet?

- Multiple times per week
- Weekly
- Every two weeks
- Monthly
- Less frequently
- Other (please specify)

8. How long is an average session?

- Less than 1 hour
- Between 1 and 2 hours
- Over 2 hours

9. Location of activity

- Building / house number
- Street
- Town
- Postcode

10. Postcode(s) where you also deliver creative activity (if different from above)

11. In which language do you work?

- English
- Welsh
- Bilingual (Welsh & English)
- Other (please specify)

12. Contact name for group

13. Email address for group

14. Where's the best place to find out more about your group? (e.g. website)

15. Any other contact links? (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram)

16. Any other comments about your group's activities?

For participants

If you don't know the answer to any question, please feel free to leave it blank.

17. Name of group, organisation or business

18. What sort of creative activity are you involved in? (please select all that apply)

- Singing
- Music
- Drama
- Visual arts (Painting, drawing, etc)
- Craft (textiles, pottery , etc)
- Photography
- Film
- Digital creativity
- Dance
- Literary (writing, spoken word, etc)
- Multi-artform
- Other (please specify)

19. What do you enjoy about taking part? (e.g. friendships, improved mood, sense of wellbeing, etc.)

20. What does it cost to take part (per session)?

- Free
- Under £1
- £1 - £4.99
- £5 - £9.99
- £10 - £20
- More than £20

21. How often do you meet?

- Multiple times per week
- Weekly
- Every two weeks
- Monthly
- Less frequently
- Other (please specify)

22. How long is an average session?

- Less than 1 hour
- Between 1 and 2 hours
- Over 2 hours

23. Location of group

- Address
- Postcode (if known)

24. How did you hear about the group?

- Word of mouth
- Social media
- Website
- Poster / flyer
- Other (please specify)

25. Where's the best place to find out more about your group?
(e.g. email address, website, social media)

For people who would like to take part in creative activities

If you don't know the answer to any question, please feel free to leave it blank.

26. What makes you want to be involved in creative activity?

27. What sort of creative activity are you involved in? (please select all that apply)

- Singing
- Music
- Drama
- Visual arts (Painting, drawing, etc)
- Craft (textiles, pottery , etc)
- Photography

- Film
- Digital creativity
- Dance
- Literary (writing, spoken word, etc)
- Multi-artform
- Other (please specify)

28. What are the main barriers to you becoming involved in a creative activity?

- Time commitment
- Lack of information about local activities
- Costs
- Travel
- Accessibility
- Shyness / fear of entering an existing group
- Feeling a lack of creative ability or talent
- Health issues (including mental health)
- Other (please specify)

29. Any other comments about creative opportunities within Bridgend County?



Creative Lives Charity Limited is registered in Scotland as Company No. 139147 and Charity No. SC 020345. Registered office: The Melting Pot, 15 Calton Road, Edinburgh EH8 8DL. Creative Lives acknowledges funding from Arts Council England, the Arts Council of Ireland and Creative Scotland.



**Funded by
UK Government**