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# Citizens in Wales being shielded from COVID19

## Distribution Report

April 2020

## Background

People with certain health conditions or receiving certain treatments (see appendix) have been identified by the Chief Medical Officers of the UK to be at increased risk from the coronavirus that causes COVID19 and have been advised to self-isolate for an extended period (12 weeks).

Each UK National Health Service searched primary, secondary, prescribing and other databases to identify the people in this high-risk group, as far as was possible in the time available, and mailing lists were generated for so called “shielding letters” advising the recipients to take additional precautions.

There were some initial difficulties in England and Wales with the mailing processes due to the urgency to create them, but these have now been corrected. In addition, General Practitioners and some secondary care services can add individual patients to the relevant national database. The data in these maps reflects the original list in Wales, augmented and revised to a point in mid-April.

Individual general practices have a copy of the patients on their list that have been sent a letter and local authority and other organisations have views of relevant parts of the database.

At its meeting at the beginning of April, members of the Digital Inclusion Alliance for Wales expressed concern about those people being shielded who might not be digitally included, as being a higher priority for support. It was felt helpful to know where such people lived and if there were any “hot spots” that could be targeted for action.

I am grateful to NHS Wales Informatics Service (and in particular its Director, Helen Thomas and Mike Hemming, lead Specialist Analyst) for providing these maps to assist members of the Alliance in responding. Local organisations may wish to collaborate with GP surgeries or LA’s in areas of relatively high prevalence to contact individuals to establish their need and wish for digital inclusion assistance. This is highly relevant for those who might benefit from remote monitoring of their health or consultation and advice.

## Maps

The maps are produced at **Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)** level. LSOA’s are co-terminus with local Authority Boundaries. They are built from groups of contiguous Output Areas and have been automatically generated to be as consistent in population size as possible, and typically contain four to six Output Areas. The Minimum LSOA population is 1000 and the mean is 1500. However, to adjust for variation in population size we have provided maps for “rate” as well as maps for the absolute number of shielded people. If the health conditions underpinning shielding were evenly distributed across all the LSOA’s there would be no difference between the 2000+ LSOA’s. As can be seen, this is not the case, providing a focus for potential prioritisation of support activity.

There are three groups of maps: the total distribution of shielded people in Wales and then separately those over 70 years and those under 70 years. It should be noted that age itself is not a reason to be advised to shield and therefore to appear on these maps. However, it is an indicator of increased likelihood of digital exclusion. At the time of running this report, around 94,000 Welsh residents were on the shielded list, of whom 42% were 70 years or older.

Finally, it should be noted that the original database on which these maps were based did not always include a postcode for the person. NWIS therefore have used the NHS number and other databases available to it to locate the person's residence. This was possible in all but around 50 people who have been excluded from this analysis.

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## **Figures**

1	Overall distribution of shielded citizens (absolute number)
2	Overall distribution of shielded citizens (rate in population of LSOA*)
3	Shielded citizens 70 years and older (absolute number)
4	Shielded citizens 70 years and older (rate in population of LSOA*)
5	Shielded citizens under 70 years (absolute number)
6	Shielded citizens under 70 years (rate in population of LSOA*)

\*: LSOA Lower Super Output Area

## **Appendix**

COVID-19 High risk shielded patient list identification methodology in Wales

<https://nwis.nhs.wales/coronavirus/coronavirus-content/coronavirus-documents/covid-19-high-risk-shielded-patient-list-identification-methodology/> [accessed 25 April 2020]

Figure 1

All shielded residents  
by LSOA

67 to 109 (287)
53 to 67 (461)
43 to 53 (502)
32 to 43 (435)
3 to 32 (224)

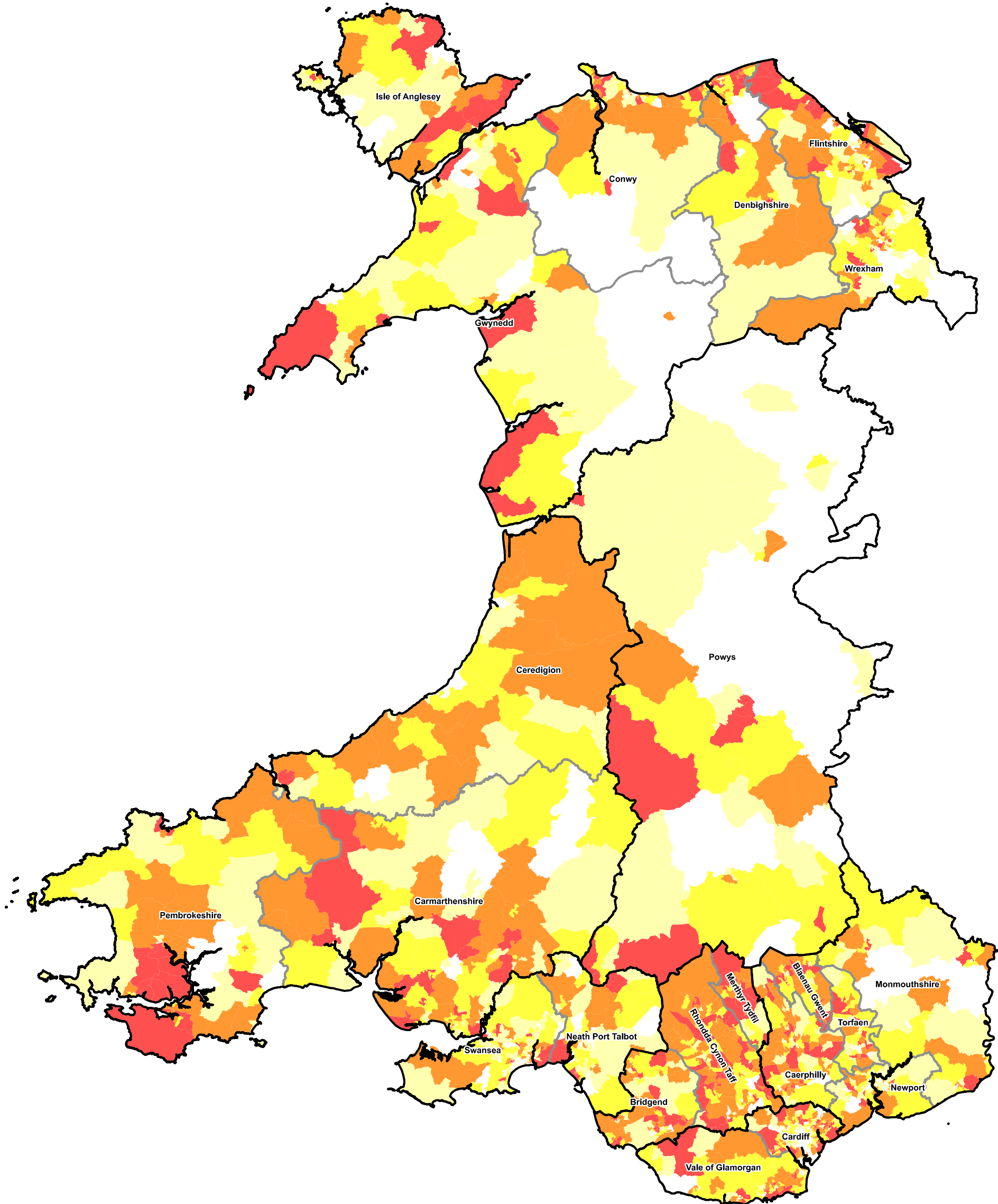
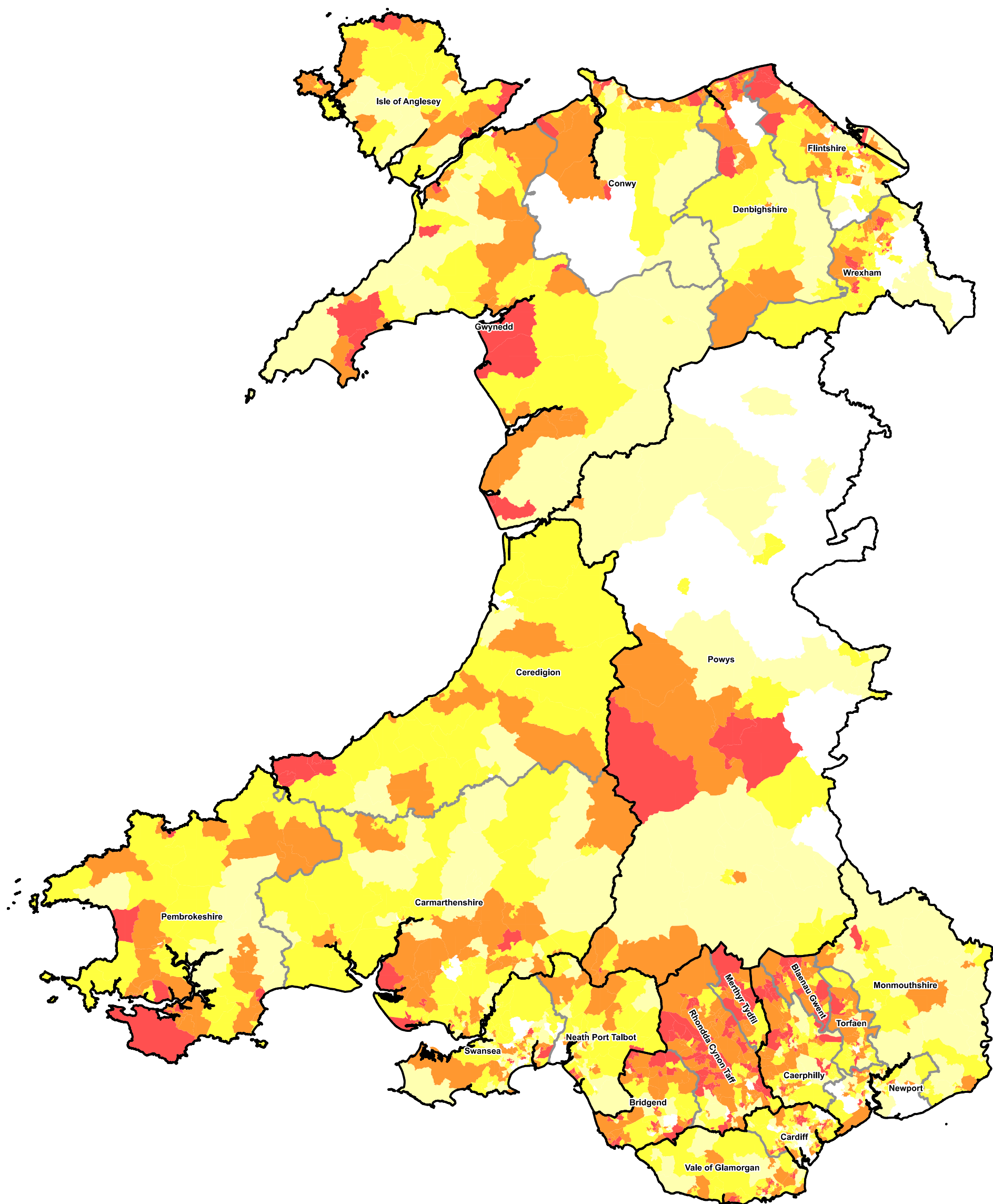




Figure 2

All shielded residents  
by LSOA rate/1000

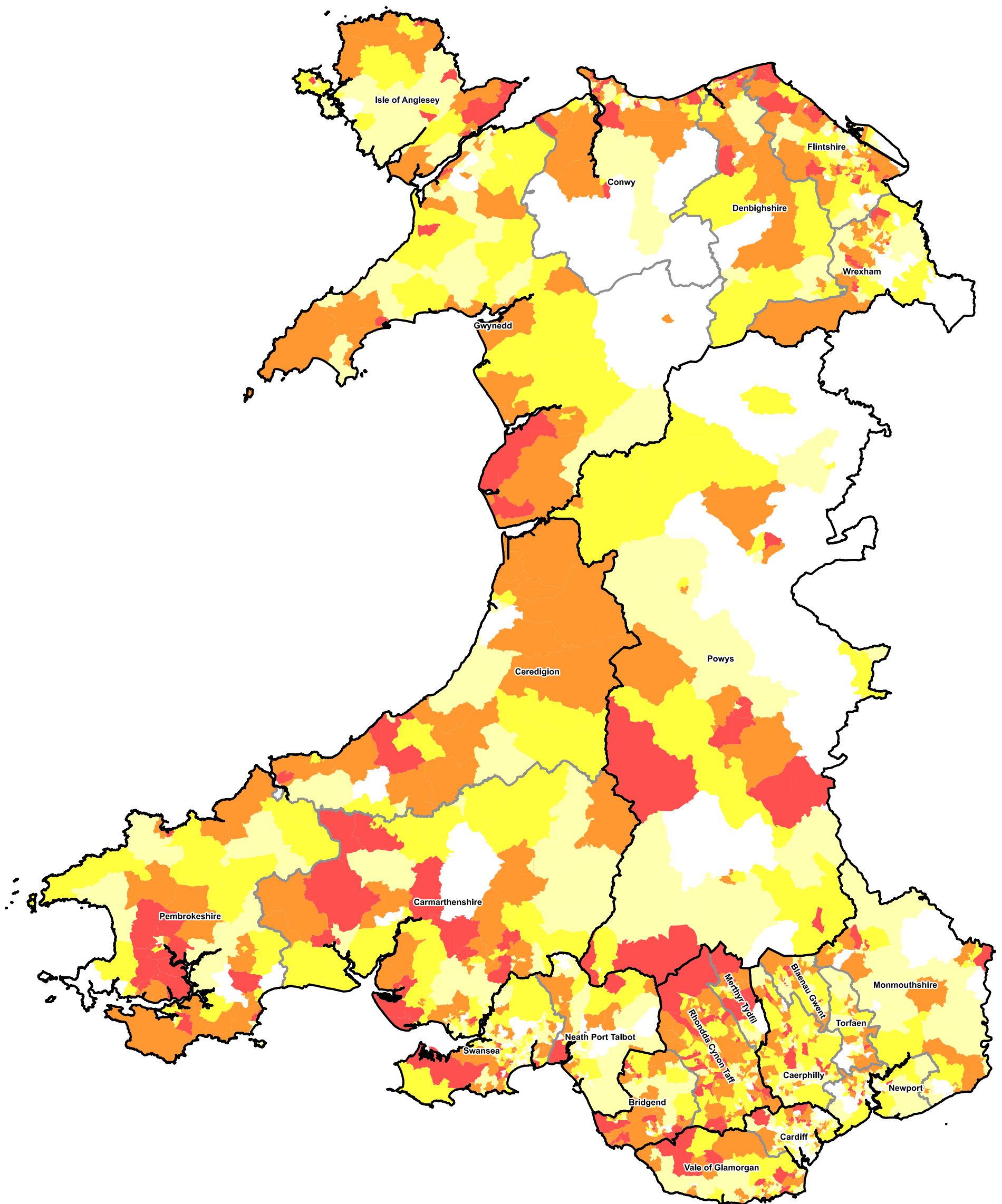
38 to 64 (276)
31 to 38 (522)
25 to 31 (589)
18 to 25 (380)
1 to 18 (142)



Number of Shielded residents 70 and over  
By LSOA

- 32 to 67 (191)
- 24 to 32 (462)
- 18 to 24 (508)
- 12 to 18 (471)
- 0 to 12 (277)

Figure 3



Shielded residents 70 and over  
By LSOA rate/1000

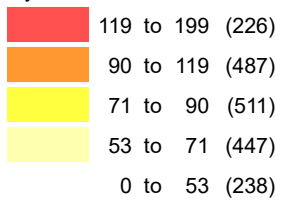
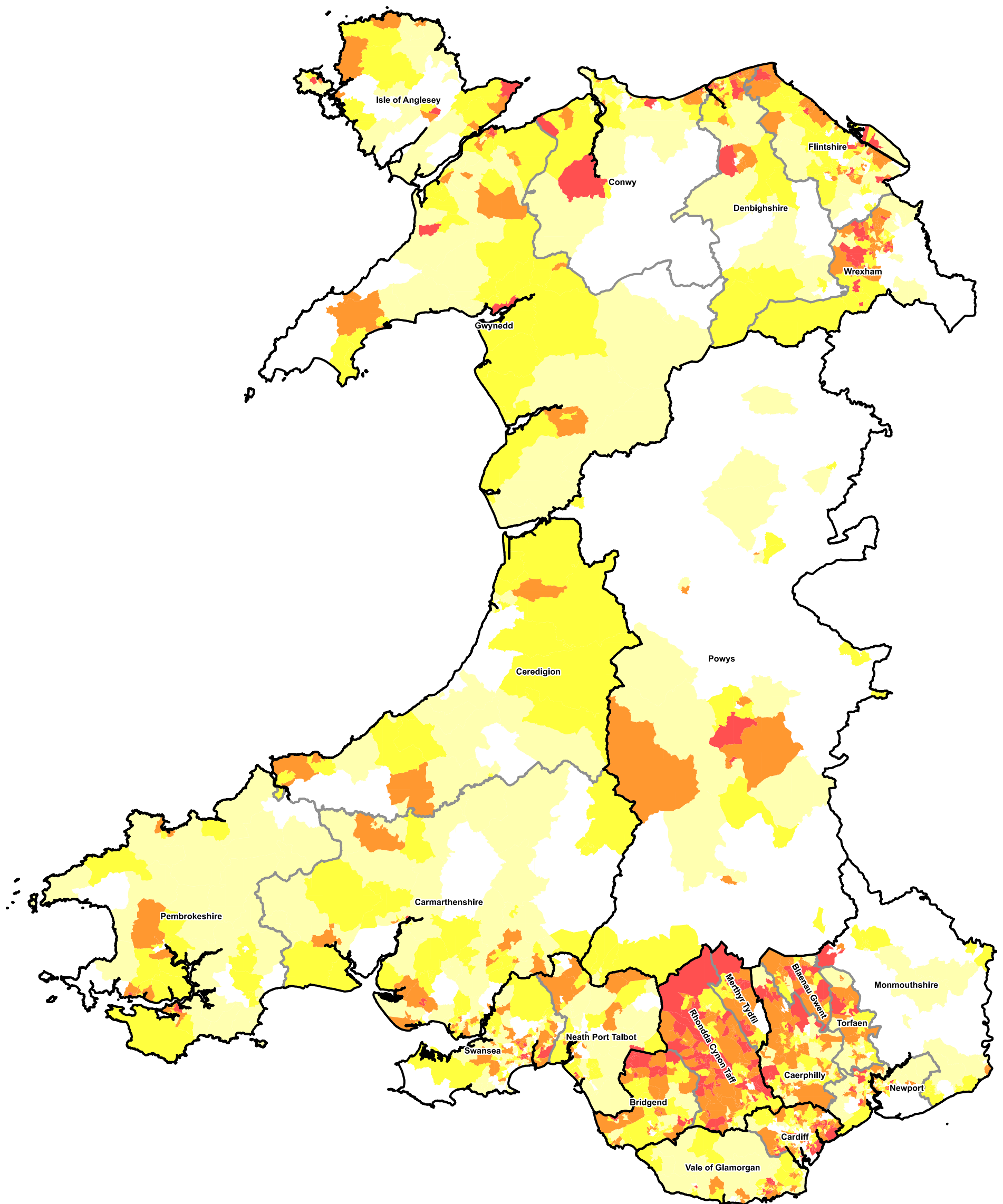


Figure 4



Shielded residents under 70  
by LSOA

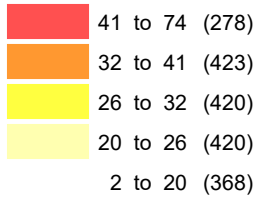
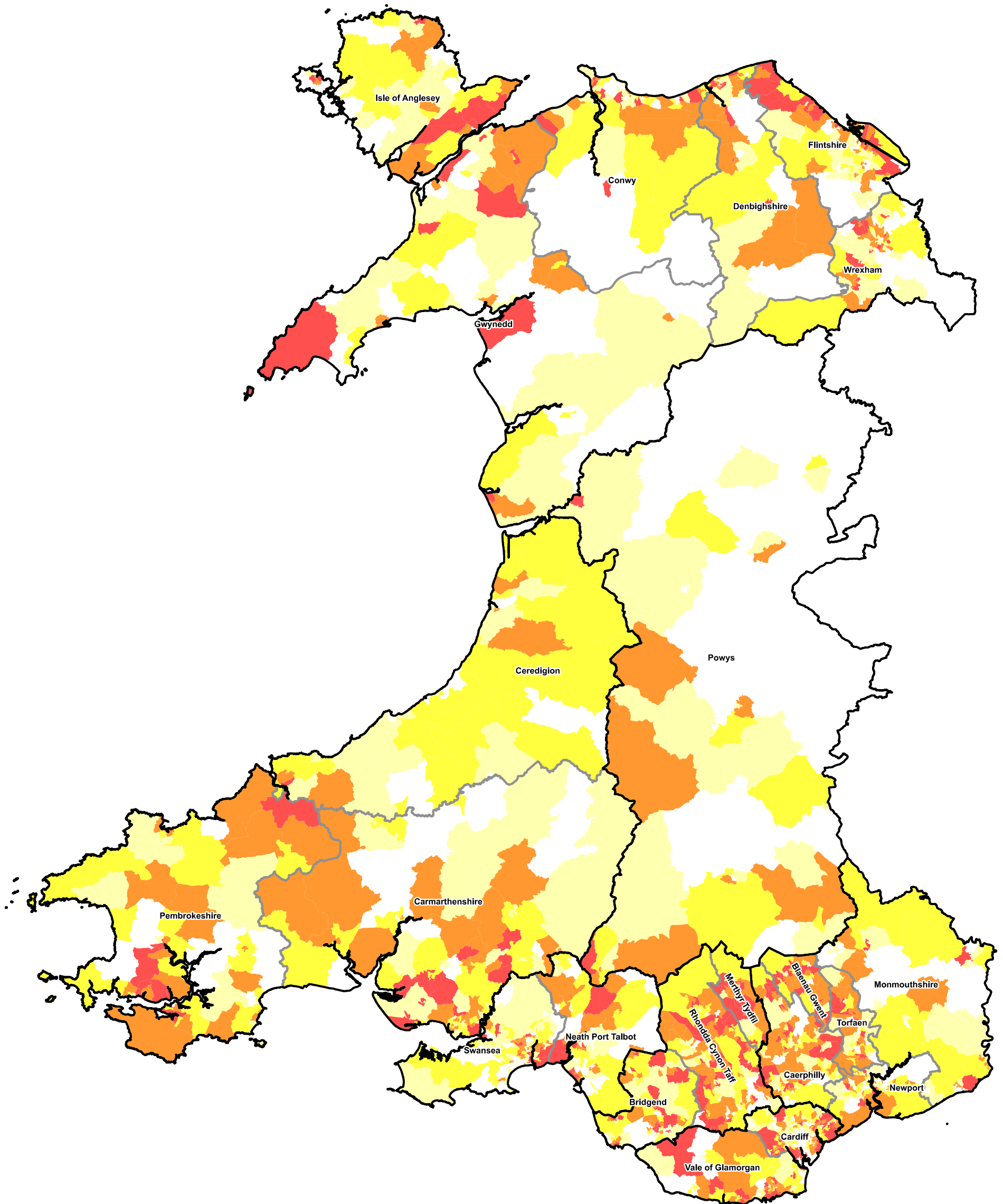


Figure 5





Shielded residents under 70  
by LSOA rate/1000

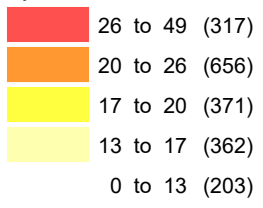


Figure 6

