

‘Reduce and Equalise’ and the Governance of Wales



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May 2010

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Executive Summary

The paper analyses the effect that the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition's proposals to cut the number of MPs in Westminster would have in Wales, and in particular on the National Assembly.

However, with the prospect of increased devolution coupled with the over-representation of Wales in Westminster, the issues raised in the paper will remain relevant in Wales over the coming years. Electoral Reform Society Wales believes that an informed discussion of the options available in the event of such changes is vital for the future health of Welsh democracy at all governmental levels, be they at the Westminster, devolved, or local level.

As the law stands, a reduction in the number of Welsh constituencies and MPs in Westminster would lead to the reduction in the number of Assembly Members in Cardiff Bay. This is particularly so if this would also involve resolving Wales's current over-representation at Westminster, which would bring the number of constituencies down to 30. This would mean an Assembly of 45 members.

- Such a reduction would threaten the ability of the Assembly to govern effectively.

The paper analyses this possible crisis, and offers constructive options in response to the policy of 'reduce and equalise'.

Any change in the number of Westminster constituencies would require new legislation establishing how the Assembly is elected in future.

Such legislation would mean either:

- linking Assembly and Westminster constituencies in a different way (using a different voting system in Assembly elections);
- linking the Assembly constituencies to Local Authority constituencies;
- decoupling the constituencies of the three levels of governance from each other entirely.

Cutting the number of Westminster constituencies would also necessarily involve re-examining the National Assembly's electoral system. The paper looks at the possible options for change, and assesses their strengths and weaknesses.

These options include:

- Altering the current Multi Member Proportional system (also known as the Additional Member System) so that 50% of the Assembly are elected through the regional list. This would mean 30 constituency AMs and 30 regional list AMs.
- Altering the current MMP system as above, but with a national list to elect the additional AMs.
- 60 Assembly Members elected through 2-member Assembly constituencies using the Single Transferable Vote system, using single Westminster constituencies.
- 60 Assembly Members elected through 4-member using the STV system, using pairings of Westminster constituencies.
- 68 Assembly Members, based on current Local Authorities, elected by varied multi-member constituencies using the STV system.

The Electoral Reform Society recommends the use of the multi-member STV model based on Local Authority constituencies as the means that best balances the needs of proportionality and broader representation and best facilitates stable governance and effective coalition-building.

We hope that this paper will be a contribution to an informed discussion of these issues.



Introduction: the threat to the Welsh Assembly

At first glance, the number of Welsh MPs at Westminster might not seem to have much to do with the electoral system used to elect Assembly Members to represent the people of Wales at Cardiff Bay. But the issues are in fact inextricably linked.

Although it has not so far featured much in public discussions in Wales (and still less at the United Kingdom level where the implications seem not to have been thought through) it is quite possible that the number of constituencies in Wales will fall significantly. Unless there is new primary legislation establishing how the Assembly is to be elected in future, the viability of the Assembly is threatened.

The need for new primary legislation to go through Westminster is an opportunity for re-examining the principles and functioning of the electoral system for Wales. This should be driven by the priorities that arise from the ground up in Wales, rather than imposed from above by Westminster.

While this paper is primarily in response to the policy of the Conservative Party, which is to be implemented by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, it is also necessary to highlight its wider relevance in current Welsh debates.

If the Welsh Assembly were to gain more powers, the precedent of Scotland in 1999

(albeit with more powers than those proposed in Wales) would strengthen the case for reducing the number of Welsh MPs. This would raise the same issues as those raised here.

There have been calls for local government reorganisation in Wales. In any such reorganisation, making Local Authority constituencies and those of the Assembly coterminous should be examined as a means of making the link between the two levels of governance more effective, efficient and transparent to the electorate, as well as reflecting the systemic link between the different levels of governance.

This paper is intended to contribute to an informed discussion of these issues in Wales and London.

Why might Wales have fewer MPs?

1. *A cut in the number of UK constituencies*

UK Conservative Party policy is to reduce the number of MPs at Westminster from the 650 constituencies that exist from the general election of 2010 to 585, a 10 per cent reduction.

The party also proposes to change the rules for drawing constituency boundaries. At present there are separate calculations of seats for each of the four component nations of the UK, and while the Boundary Commissions have a guideline of allowing 10 per cent variation on either side of the ideal size of a seat and not breaching county boundaries, the numbers can be loosened further in cases where there are special geographical circumstances (as in Gwynedd). The Conservative proposal is that there will be the same 'quota' (ideal size of constituency) across the UK, a rigid rule of 3.5 per cent maximum variation, and no allowance for geography.

Because Wales's constituencies are smaller than average, the 'equalisation' part of the policy would make the impact particularly severe. The number of Welsh constituencies would fall from 40 to 30 (perhaps, depending on rounding, as low as 29).

2. *The Holyrood scenario*

If primary legislative powers are transferred to the Welsh Assembly, a precedent has been set for a corresponding reduction of Welsh representation at Westminster by what happened in Scotland. Scotland's over-representation was corrected in 2005 when the number of MPs it sent to Westminster was reduced from 72 to 59. The method used was to use the English quota to set the desirable size of Scottish constituencies.

If this were to be applied to Wales, this would reduce the number of Welsh Westminster constituencies in a UK House of Commons of

640 or so seats to probably around 33, or 34 allowing for the geography of the north west of Wales.

3. *The Stormont scenario*

One option discussed at UK level, but not currently policy of any party, is to reduce the number of Westminster MPs from areas with full legislative devolution to below the English average. This is by analogy with the position in Northern Ireland when it was a devolved part of the UK between 1922 and 1972 (its number of seats was raised in the 1976-83 redistribution to reflect the change to direct rule). If the 'reduce and equalise' policy were to be introduced in the UK, and Wales had legislative devolution, the number of Welsh constituencies could theoretically fall as low as 20.

The implications for the Assembly

41. Assembly constituencies have the same boundaries as the parliamentary constituencies for which Members of the UK Parliament are returned. Therefore, at the passing of this Act, there are 40 Assembly constituencies. If the parliamentary constituencies change (by Her Majesty making an Order in Council under the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, following a report of the Electoral Commission), the Assembly constituencies will also change accordingly.

Explanatory notes to Government of Wales Act 2006
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/en/06en32-a.htm>

It is clear that under existing legislation a fall in the number of Welsh Westminster constituencies would lead directly to a fall in the number of Welsh Assembly constituencies.

The number of regional members in the Assembly is tied to the number of constituency members under the Government of Wales Act 2006 – the relevant Schedule to the Act is cited below. Rule 3 establishes a fixed relationship between the number of Assembly constituencies (i.e. under the current legislation Westminster constituencies) and the number of regional seats. The number of regional seats must be

half the number of constituency seats, rounded up if necessary.

A reduction in the number of Welsh MPs to 34 would therefore lead automatically to a reduction in the size of the Assembly to **51 members** from the current 60. A reduction to 30 Welsh MPs would lead to a fall in the size of the Assembly to **45 members**.

9 (1) The rules are –

1 Each Assembly constituency must be wholly included in one Assembly electoral region.

2 The regional electorate for an Assembly electoral region must be as near the regional electorate for each other Assembly electoral region as is reasonably practicable, having regard (where appropriate) to special geographical considerations.

3 The total number of seats for the Assembly electoral regions must be –

(a) one half of the total number of the Assembly constituencies, or

(b) (if that total number is not exactly divisible by two) one half of the number produced by adding one to that total number.

4 The number of seats for an Assembly electoral region must be –

(a) one fifth of the total number of seats for the Assembly electoral regions, or

(b) (if that total number is not exactly divisible by five) either one fifth of the highest number which is less than that total number and exactly divisible by five, or the number produced by adding one to one fifth of that highest number, as provided by sub-paragraphs (2) to (6).

(2) If the total number of seats for the Assembly electoral regions is not exactly

divisible by five, there is to be calculated the difference between –

(a) the total number of seats for the Assembly electoral regions, and

(b) the highest number which is less than that total number and exactly divisible by five.

(3) That difference is the number of residual seats.

(4) No more than one residual seat may be allocated to an Assembly electoral region.

(5) The regional electorate for each Assembly electoral region is to be divided by the aggregate of –

(a) the number of Assembly constituencies in the Assembly electoral region, and

(b) one fifth of the highest number which is less than the total number of seats for the Assembly electoral regions and exactly divisible by five.

(6) In allocating the residual seat or seats to an Assembly electoral region or regions, regard must be had to the desirability of allocating the residual seat or seats to the Assembly electoral region or regions for which the calculation in sub-paragraph (5) produces the highest number or numbers.

Schedule 1, Government of Wales Act 2006

Could the Assembly function with fewer members?

Without amending legislation, the Welsh Assembly would be significantly reduced in size – and the Richard Commission report in 2004 recommended that if powers were transferred, then its size should increase rather than decrease. Even if a referendum does not result in a transfer of further powers, running the existing system with an Assembly of 44 members would probably be impossible.

It would be an ironic and perverse consequence of the devolution of more powers to the Assembly if that caused there to be a fall in the number of people who would be responsible for using and scrutinising powers exercised in Wales – were that to be 51 or 45 members. As the Richard Commission noted in 2004, full legislative scrutiny is not a light responsibility. With 10-14 members of the government, the task of scrutinising the range of Welsh domestic legislation and governance would fall on 31-41 opposition and backbench AMs.

38. If the powers of the Assembly are increased, scrutiny will have to be given much greater priority in the work of the Assembly, particularly of committees. This would be an onerous responsibility since there would be no revising chamber and no reference back to Westminster...

41. This means that primary powers would require an increase in the size of the elected Assembly. This should be kept to the minimum required by the additional work. We believe that an increase of one third, from 60 to 80, combined with increased flexibility on working arrangements, would be necessitated by the additional scrutiny workload.

Recommendations of the Report of the Richard Commission 2004, p258-259
<http://www.richardcommission.gov.uk/content/finalreport/report-e.pdf>

A 45-seat Assembly would mean that a majority Assembly Government could have as few as 23 seats, and a minority government perhaps as few as 20. The current government has 10 Cabinet members and 4 Deputy Ministers, and even if this were reduced (a dubious prospect if there are further powers) it would be unhealthy to have so few government backbenchers, as this would make it difficult to replace ministers mid-term and make it difficult for the government party or parties to participate fully in Assembly committee work.

While Richard's recommendation of an 80-seat Assembly was carefully considered, in recessionary times there may be limited public appetite to increase the Assembly's size by a third, and there is therefore a case for retaining it at 60 or increasing it by a smaller amount. However, consideration should not be given to the idea of an Assembly any smaller than 60, particularly if it is to exercise powers of legislative scrutiny as well as its functions of scrutinising government.

Is there a way around that avoids new Westminster legislation?

It appears not. New primary legislation at Westminster seems to be necessary if one is to retain anything like the current representative arrangements for the Assembly in the long term.

There is a short-term fix that might work for one Assembly term (indeed, between 2007 and 2010 Assembly and Westminster boundaries have been different), but it is not sustainable.

Current legislation (quoted below) permits the Commencement Orders for Welsh Assembly and Westminster constituencies to be laid at different times, which permitted the current situation where there are differences between the boundaries. But this can only be temporary. In theory it would be possible to keep the boundaries distinct by a future UK government laying the Order for the Westminster election but postpone the Assembly boundaries indefinitely.

**Government of Wales Act 2006,
Schedule 1**

Orders in Council giving effect to
Commission reports

10 (1) An Order in Council under the
1986 [Parliamentary Constituencies] Act
for giving effect to the recommendations
contained in a report of the Commission
may specify different dates for its
coming into force –

(a) for the purposes of elections to the
House of Commons, and

(b) for the purposes of the return of
Assembly members.

(2) The coming into force of an Order in
Council under the 1986 Act does not
affect the operation of section 10 or 11,
or the constitution of the Assembly, at
any time before the next general election.

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2006/uk_pga_20060032_en_13

This might work for one election, but there is no method established in UK law for altering Assembly boundaries themselves. No body has the legal responsibility for drawing the boundaries of Welsh Assembly constituencies – these arise automatically from the Westminster boundaries. Unfortunately, the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 and Orders made under it apply only to Westminster constituencies, and cannot be made to specify different arrangements for an institution that did not exist in 1986.

Varying the dates of Commencement Orders as such can have one of two results:

- 1 To leave the post-2007 Assembly boundaries permanently frozen in place (which is absurd); or
- 2 At some point in the future an Order would have to be made which would bring the number of Assembly constituencies down to the number of Westminster constituencies, and the problem has merely been postponed.

The same problems applied to Scotland, whose Parliament's primary legislative powers were accompanied by a reduction in its representation at Westminster. In the Scottish case, amending legislation was needed to de-couple Holyrood and Westminster boundaries, namely the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004, because the Scotland Act 1998 linked the constituencies for the two bodies and without amending legislation the number of Holyrood constituencies would have also shrunk (to 60, given the special language about Orkney and Shetland), with consequences either for the overall size of the body or the balance between constituency and regional MSPs.¹

¹ Although the wording in the Scotland Act 1998 appears much more explicit, and is different, de facto the Welsh legislation creates the same sort of problem if the number of Westminster seats is altered.

What legislation would be needed?

There would be several alternative legislative routes at Westminster to solving the problem for the Assembly and replacing the parts of the Government of Wales Act 2006 that specify the electoral system.

- 1 **A Welsh Assembly (Constituencies) Act.** When the number of Scottish Westminster constituencies was reduced, a stand-alone piece of legislation, the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004, was passed. This de-coupled Holyrood and Westminster constituencies. It gave the Boundary Commission for Scotland² the powers and set rules for drawing Scottish Parliament constituencies. The same approach could easily be used to de-couple Assembly and Westminster constituencies to allow the current configuration of 40 constituency and 20 regional AMs to continue (or indeed to implement any other option).
- 2 Rather than a stand-alone measure, the change could be introduced as a clause in a new UK **Boundary Commissions Act** (or alternative title) dealing with the rules for distributing parliamentary constituencies; or
- 3 Electoral provisions for a new model Assembly could be made part of a new Government of Wales Act specifying the powers of a more devolved government structure. However, if this route were chosen there would need to be fall-back provisions for changing the electoral law if the whole package were to be defeated in a referendum.

- 4 Revision of Schedule 3 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. This procedure would keep the link between Assembly and Westminster constituencies but rewrite the legislation that deals with the number of regional AMs elected to the Assembly. It would be relatively simple to specify an Assembly size (60 for instance) and require that the number of regional AMs should be the difference between the number of Westminster/ Assembly constituencies (which remain identical to each other) and the Assembly size. Reduction to 34 MPs would lead to a Welsh Assembly of 34 constituency and 26 regional AMs; reduction to 30 would produce an Assembly balanced 30/30 between regional and constituency members.

Whichever route is chosen, the UK Parliament will have to consider the legal arrangements for electing the Welsh Assembly at some point in the near future.

Primary legislation means that a reassessment of the fundamental basis of the system is possible – at the very least the size of the Assembly, the electoral regions and their boundaries and the balance between regional and constituency AMs. There is no reason why more radical changes should not be considered, particularly those outlined by the Richard Commission.

² The Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004 and the Government of Wales Act 2006 envisaged the Boundary Commissions coming under the aegis of the Electoral Commission, but this will not now happen.

What possibilities are there for the Welsh Assembly electoral system?

The following analysis looks at several alternative ways of operating the Welsh Assembly electoral system if the number of Westminster constituencies in Wales falls.

There are three broad bases for an Assembly constituency map:

- 1 Retaining Westminster constituencies as the basic unit
- 2 Devising (as in Scotland) a unique set of boundaries for Assembly elections
- 3 Using local government boundaries as the basis for Assembly elections.

There are broadly two electoral systems worthy of consideration for the Assembly – the Single Transferable Vote (STV) and a continuation of the current system Mixed Member Proportional (MMP, also known as AMS).

The following analysis considers each of the options, how it would work and the political implications. Before going further, it would be advantageous to consider what the map of Welsh Westminster constituencies would look like if the number of seats were reduced to 30 and their size were to be rigidly regulated, as in the Conservative proposal.

What will the new Westminster constituencies look like?

The following analysis is based on a model set of boundaries for a 30-constituency Wales. It takes the electoral quota (standard size of a seat) to be 77,000. When drawn up in November 2009 the Conservative proposal allowed no more than 5 per cent variation either side of the quota, but in their February 2010 proposed amendment to the Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill the permitted variation was lowered to 3.5 per cent. The tighter limit would cause more local electoral divisions to be split, more local authority boundaries to be crossed, and more frequent revisions.

With a 5 per cent margin, the permitted variation in size of a UK constituency would be between 73,150 and 80,850 electors. This is compatible with 29 or 30 Westminster seats in Wales – 30 has been chosen here as making the arithmetic tidier, but the overall picture is not that different if it went to 29. Further details of the method used and the model results are given in Appendix 1. While the result of a Boundary Commission study and any subsequent public inquiry would be likely to differ, the following is advanced as a scheme that complies with the requirements, and the geography of Wales only permits a limited number of permutations that fit the rules.

The following summarises the new model constituencies, arranged by electoral region. The boundaries of the regions would need to be adjusted, as they were in 2007, to reflect the new constituencies.

New seat	Main predecessor	Other principal areas of new seat
MID AND WEST WALES		
Brecon & Montgomery	Brecon & Radnorshire	Montgomeryshire (main part)
Carmarthen	Carmarthen East & Dinefwr	Half of Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South
Ceredigion & Rhaedr	Ceredigion	Western Powys, Northern Pembrokeshire
Gwynedd & Machynlleth	Dwyfor Meirionnydd	Arfon (Caernarfon area), Montgomeryshire (Machynlleth area)
Llanelli	Llanelli	Gower (Pontarddulais area) Carmarthen E & Dinefwr (Ammanford area)
Pembroke	Preseli Pembroke	Half of Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South
NORTH WALES		
Conwy & Abergelae	Clwyd West	Aberconwy (Conwy area)
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	Clwyd South	Clwyd West (Ruthin area) Vale of Clwyd (Denbigh area)
Flint & Rhyl	Vale of Clwyd	Delyn (Flint area)
Mold & Shotton	Alyn & Deeside	Delyn (Mold area)
Wrexham	Wrexham	Clwyd South (Broughton area)
Ynys Mon & Bangor	Ynys Mon	Arfon (Bangor area)
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL		
Barry & Penarth	Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff South & Penarth (Penarth)
Cardiff Central	Cardiff Central	Cardiff South & Penarth (Bute Town and Splott) Cardiff North (Gabalfa area)
Cardiff North East	Cardiff North	Cardiff South & Penarth (Llanrumney area) Cardiff Central (Cyncoed area)
Cardiff West	Cardiff West	Cardiff North (Whitchurch area) Cardiff Central (Grangetown)
Pontypridd & Aberdare	Cynon Valley	Pontypridd (Pontypridd town area)
Vale of Ely	Pontypridd	Cardiff West (Ely area) Vale of Glamorgan (Cowbridge area)
SOUTH WALES EAST		
Blaenau Gwent & Tredegar	Blaenau Gwent	Islwyn (Tredegar area) Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney (Rhymney area)
Caerphilly	Caerphilly	Islwyn (Risca area)
Newport	Newport West	Newport East (urban core)
Merthyr Tydfil & Ystrad Mynach	Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney	Caerphilly (Ystrad Mynach area)
Monmouth	Monmouth	Newport East (Llanwern and Caldicot)
Torfaen	Torfaen	Newport West (Caerleon and Malpas)
SOUTH WALES WEST		
Bridgend	Bridgend	Ogmore (Aberkenfig and north)
Rhondda & Ogmore	Rhondda	Ogmore (Ogmore Vale area) Pontypridd (Tonyrefail)
Neath & Aberavon	Aberavon	Neath (Neath town) Ogmore (Maesteg)
Swansea East & Vale of Neath	Neath	Swansea East (St Thomas area) Brecon & Radnorshire (Ystradgynlais area)
Swansea North & Loughor	Swansea East	Gower (Loughor area) Swansea West (Cockett)
Swansea West & Gower	Swansea West	Gower (Gower peninsula)

This table summarises the relationship between the existing 40 constituencies and the constituencies in the 30-seat model.

Current Seat	Successor	
Aberavon	Neath & Aberavon	
Aberconwy	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Conwy & Abergelē
Alyn & Deeside	Mold & Shotton	
Arfon	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Gwynedd & Machynlleth
Blaenau Gwent	Blaenau Gwent & Tredegar	
Brecon & Radnorshire	Brecon & Montgomery	Radical alterations
Bridgend	Bridgend	
Caerphilly	Caerphilly	
Cardiff Central	Cardiff Central	
Cardiff North	Cardiff North East	
Cardiff South & Penarth	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Cardiff North East
Cardiff West	Cardiff West	
Carmarthen East & Dinefwr	Carmarthen	
Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South	ABOLISHED	Split evenly between Carmarthen & Pembroke
Ceredigion	Ceredigion & Rhaedr	
Clwyd South	Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	Radical alterations
Clwyd West	Conwy & Abergelē	Radical alterations
Cynon Valley	Pontypridd & Aberdare	
Delyn	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Flint & Rhyl
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	Gwynedd & Machynlleth	
Gower	ABOLISHED	Split evenly between Swansea North & Loughor and Swansea West & Gower
Islwyn	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Caerphilly
Llanelli	Llanelli	
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney	Merthyr Tydfil & Ystrad Mynach	
Monmouth	Monmouth	
Montgomeryshire	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Brecon & Montgomery
Neath	Swansea East & Vale of Neath	Radical alterations
Newport East	ABOLISHED	Largest section to Newport
Newport West	Newport	
Ogmore	ABOLISHED	Dispersed to Rhondda & Ogmore, Bridgend, Neath & Aberavon
Preseli Pembrokeshire	Pembroke	
Pontypridd	Vale of Ely	Radical alterations
Rhondda	Rhondda & Ogmore	
Swansea East	Swansea North & Loughor	Radical alterations
Swansea West	Swansea West & Gower	
Torfaen	Torfaen	
Vale of Clwyd	Flint & Rhyl	
Vale of Glamorgan	Barry & Penarth	
Wrexham	Wrexham	
Ynys Mon	Ynys Mon and Bangor	

The following table estimates the partisan complexion of the new seats in the constituency vote of the 2007 Assembly elections.

New seat	2007 'Winner'	
MID AND WEST WALES		
Brecon & Montgomery	Liberal Democrat	
Carmarthen	Plaid Cymru	
Ceredigion & Rhaedr	Plaid Cymru	Lib Dem in 2010
Gwynedd & Machynlleth	Plaid Cymru	
Llanelli	Plaid Cymru	Labour in 2010
Pembroke	Conservative	
NORTH WALES		
Conwy & Abergelhe	Plaid Cymru	Three-way marginal with Conservatives and Labour; Conservative in 2010
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	Plaid Cymru	
Flint & Rhyl	Conservative	
Mold & Shotton	Labour	
Wrexham	Labour	
Ynys Mon & Bangor	Plaid Cymru	Labour in 2010
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL		
Barry & Penarth	Labour	Conservative close second
Cardiff Central	Liberal Democrat	
Cardiff North East	Conservative	
Cardiff West	Labour	
Pontypridd & Aberdare	Labour	
Vale of Ely	Labour	
SOUTH WALES EAST		
Blaenau Gwent & Tredegar	Independent	
Caerphilly	Labour	
Newport	Labour	
Merthyr Tydfil & Ystrad Mynach	Labour	
Monmouth	Conservative	
Torfaen	Labour	
SOUTH WALES WEST		
Bridgend	Labour	Safer after changes
Rhondda & Ogmore	Labour	
Neath & Aberavon	Labour	
Swansea East & Vale of Neath	Labour	
Swansea North & Loughor	Labour	
Swansea West & Gower	Labour	

The overall party impact of the changes as modelled is given in the following table.

	2005 Westminster		2007 Assembly Constituency	
	Actual	Model	Actual	Model
Conservative	3	3	5	4
Labour	29 (30)*	20	24	16
Lib Dem	4	3	3	2
Plaid Cymru	3 (2)*	3	7	7
Independent	1	1	1	1

*Figures in brackets indicate model result based on the 2007 Assembly/ 2010 Westminster boundaries.

Assembly electoral system: the options

1. *Westminster template*

One group of options for the future electoral arrangements for the Welsh Assembly would maintain a link with the Westminster constituencies after a future boundary review cuts the numbers. For the following calculations we assume that the number of Welsh constituencies will be reduced to 30 at some point – the detailed arrangements would be different if the reduction were more modest or more extreme.

In brief, the options within this grouping are as follows.

- a) 2 member STV using single Westminster constituencies.
- b) 4 member STV using pairings of Westminster constituencies (with variation as necessary to make the numbers and/or geography work).
- c) MMP using single Westminster constituencies for the constituency seats with a top-up of regional proportional seats for an Assembly size of 60. Regions need not be the same as those used in 2007.
- d) MMP using single Westminster constituencies for the constituency seats with a top-up of national proportional seats subject to a threshold, for an Assembly size of 60.

1a) *2 member STV using single Westminster constituencies*

This was an option sometimes considered in the early stages of devolution as being a route to an 80-member Assembly. This is in some ways the simplest possibility. If the number of Westminster constituencies falls to 30, it translates easily into maintaining a 60-member body. If the fall is less, it is a natural way to accommodate some growth in the Assembly, to perhaps 70 members, to reflect enlarged powers.

Voters would vote by ranking candidates in order of preference.

This electoral system would be broadly similar

in terms of overall result to the current one, although it would have some different properties.

In most cases a party would put up a single candidate, although in a very few constituencies where a party is strongly supported it might be worth aiming for both seats (Plaid Cymru in Gwynedd & Machynlleth, Carmarthen; Lib Dems in Cardiff Central; Labour in Pontypridd & Aberdare, Neath & Aberavon, Rhondda & Ogmore and the Gwent valleys seats if there were no strong Independents).

In the vast majority of seats in Wales, Labour is a fairly strong presence, capable of qualifying for a seat under 2-member STV. The quota for a seat is 33.3 per cent. Labour managed this in 21 seats out of 40 in 2007, and 29 out of 40 in 2003. Labour could expect to clear this threshold even under pessimistic assumptions about transfers in many more seats than this. In the 2007 election there were only four constituencies which could be described as no-hopers for electing a Labour candidate under 2-member STV (Brecon & Radnorshire, Ceredigion, Dwyfor Meirionnydd and Montgomeryshire).

The 30-seat model is necessarily less precise, but there are not many seats where Labour are out of the running – effectively the three seats which inherit the existing no-hope areas (Brecon & Montgomery, Ceredigion & Rhaedr, Gwynedd & Machynlleth). A maximal Labour performance, hitting all these targets plus five cases where Labour gets both seats in strong areas, would give Labour a bare majority of 31 seats out of 60. This would be possible only if there was a strong tide in Labour's favour across Wales plus nothing going wrong in local politics in any of the valleys seats – a tall order. The projection of the 2003 results under 2-member STV gives Labour 30 out of 60, as in the actual 2003 election.

However, Labour would be unlikely to be reduced below 20 under any circumstances, even with a significant fall in Labour voting from 2007 levels.

The definition of marginality would change

under this system. Seats that would be hard-fought marginals under FPTP Westminster rules (such as Barry & Penarth, or Brecon & Montgomery) would in effect have a safe seat for each of the two main parties locally (respectively Lab & Con and LD & Con). Three-way marginals would be the key seats, as would seats where a party could aspire to winning both seats.

Two-member electoral systems are fairly unusual, the principal example being Chile.

The fact that in most constituencies each party would put up only a single candidate would rather restrict the benefits of choice and competition that STV generally gives. It would also make it difficult for parties to take measures to safeguard Wales's positive track record in achieving gender balance because systems (like Westminster FPTP) that involve only selecting single candidates do not promote diversity without difficult special measures like twinning or all-women shortlists. Larger STV seats would enable most parties to put forward more than one candidate.

	Estimated 2007 seat 1	Estimated 2007 seat 2
SOUTH WALES EAST		
Monmouth	Con	Lab
Torfaen	Lab	Con
Newport	Lab	LD
Caerphilly	Lab	PC
Blaenau Gwent and Tredegar	Ind	Lab
Merthyr Tydfil and Ystrad Mynach	Lab	Ind
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL		
Cardiff North East	Con	Lab
Cardiff Central	LD	Lab
Cardiff West	Lab	Con
Vale of Ely	Lab	Con
Barry and Penarth	Lab	Con
Pontypridd and Aberdare	Lab	PC
SOUTH WALES WEST		
Rhondda and Ogmore	Lab	PC
Bridgend	Lab	Con
Neath and Aberavon	Lab	PC
Swansea East and Vale of Neath	Lab	PC
Swansea North and Loughor	Lab	PC
Swansea West and Gower	Lab	LD
MID & WEST WALES		
Llanelli	PC	Lab
Carmarthen	PC	Lab
Pembroke	Con	Lab
Ceredigion and Rhaedr	PC	LD
Brecon and Montgomery	LD	Con
Gwynedd and Machynlleth	PC	PC
NORTH WALES		
Ynys Mon and Bangor	PC	Lab
Conwy and Abergele	PC	Con
Flint and Rhyl	Con	Lab
Wrexham	Lab	Ind
Mold and Shotton	Lab	Con
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	PC	Con

2007	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
South Wales East	2	6	1	1	2
South Wales Central	4	6	1	1	0
South Wales West	1	6	1	4	0
Mid & West Wales	2	3	2	5	0
North Wales	4	4	0	3	1
WALES	13	25	5	14	3
	+1	-1	-1	-1	+2

2003	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
South Wales East	3	8	0	1	0
South Wales Central	4	6	1	1	0
South Wales West	1	7	2	2	0
Mid & West Wales	2	3	2	5	0
North Wales	2	6	0	3	1
WALES	12	30	5	12	1
	+1	-	-1	-	-

1b) 4-member STV using pairings of Westminster constituencies

It would be possible to pair up neighbouring Westminster seats to form larger units and enable more choice and competition at a local level for seats. Unlike most of the two-member STV seats, there would be several parties in contention for the last, or last two, seats out of four. The larger size of seats would enable parties to stand more than one candidate in more areas, and therefore make it more possible to pursue policies towards gender balance.

However, there are some risks in cobbling

together pairs of Westminster seats to use for other purposes. Westminster seats are likely to have jagged boundaries (i.e. that include small elements of one geographical community in a seat based mainly on another constituency) and these larger units may replicate these problems. The larger urban areas (Cardiff, Newport, Swansea) are all carved up between seats, and rural seats cover large areas. The boundaries will also change frequently when Westminster boundaries are altered.

A rough estimate of how 4-member STV would have worked in Wales in 2007 is given below.

		Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
MID AND WEST WALES						
Carmarthenshire	Carmarthen, Llanelli	1	1	0	2	0
Mid Wales	Brecon & Montgomeryshire, Gwynedd & Machynlleth	1	0	1	2	0
West Wales	Ceredigion, Pembroke	1	1	1	1	0
NORTH WALES						
Flintshire	Flint & Rhyl, Mold & Shotton	1	2	1	0	0
Menai Strait	Ynys Mon & Bangor, Conwy & Abergelae	1	1	0	2	0
Wrexham, Denbigh & Vale of Conwy	Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy, Wrexham	2	1	0	1	0
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL						
Cardiff East	Cardiff Central, Cardiff NE	1	1	2	0	0
Taff Vale	Cardiff W, Pontypridd & Aberdare	0	2	1	1	0
Vale of Glamorgan	Barry & Penarth, Vale of Ely	1	2	0	1	0
SOUTH WALES EAST						
Gwent Valleys	Blaenau G & Tredegar, Merthyr T & YM	0	2	0	0	2
Monmouth & Torfaen	Monmouth, Torfaen	2	2	0	0	0
Newport & Caerphilly	Caerphilly, Newport	1	2	1	0	0
SOUTH WALES WEST						
Bridgend & Rhondda	Bridgend, Rhondda & Ogmore	0	3	0	1	0
Neath & Aberavon	Neath & Aberavon, Swansea E & V/N	0	3	0	1	0
Swansea	Swansea N & Loughor, Swansea W & Gower	1	1	1	1	0

2007	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
South Wales East	3	6	1	0	2
South Wales Central	2	5	3	2	0
South Wales West	1	7	1	3	0
Mid & West Wales	3	2	2	5	0
North Wales	4	4	1	3	0
WALES	13	24	8	13	2
	+1	-2	+2	-2	+1

1c) Westminster seats with regional list members

This model would elect 30 AMs from the Westminster constituencies. The remaining seats in the Assembly would be filled, as at present, with AMs elected from regional lists on a compensating basis. The level of proportionality

would be rather higher than it would be at present.

Regional boundaries would need adjustment to fit the groupings of new Westminster constituencies, but this should not pose much of a problem (the boundaries were adjusted in 2007) and a 30-seat model would permit five equal-sized electoral regions to be created.

	Estimated 2007 seat		Regional members
SOUTH WALES EAST			
Monmouth	Con	1	PC
Torfaen	Lab	2	LD
Newport	Lab	3	Con
Caerphilly	Lab	4	Lab
Blaenau Gwent & Tredegar	Ind	5	PC
Merthyr T & Ystrad Mynach	Lab	6	Con
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL			
Cardiff North East	Con	1	PC
Cardiff Central	LD	2	Con
Cardiff West	Lab	3	Con
Vale of Ely	Lab	4	LD
Barry and Penarth	Lab	5	PC
Pontypridd and Aberdare	Lab	6	Lab
SOUTH WALES WEST			
Rhondda and Ogmore	Lab	1	PC
Bridgend	Lab	2	Con
Neath and Aberavon	Lab	3	LD
Swansea E & Vale/ Neath	Lab	4	PC
Swansea North & Loughor	Lab	5	Con
Swansea West and Gower	Lab	6	PC
MID & WEST WALES			
Llanelli	PC	1	Lab
Carmarthen	PC	2	Con
Pembroke	Con	3	Lab
Ceredigion and Rhaedr	PC	4	Con
Brecon and Montgomery	LD	5	LD
Gwynedd and Machynlleth	PC	6	Lab
NORTH WALES			
Ynys Mon and Bangor	PC	1	Con
Conwy & Abergelae	PC	2	Lab
Flint and Rhyl	Con	3	Con
Wrexham	Lab	4	LD
Mold and Shotton	Lab	5	Lab
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	PC	6	Con

Allocations of last list seat in Mid & West and North are affected by the – fairly sketchy – modelled effect of areas transferred across regional boundaries (i.e. parts of Arfon from North to Mid & West, parts of Gower from South Wales West to Mid & West). It is quite

possible that Plaid Cymru would win the sixth list seat in either region at the expense of Labour in Mid & West and Conservative in North. The rather larger transfer of most of Rhondda from South Central to South West makes less difference.

	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
South Wales East	3	5	1	2	1
South Wales Central	3	5	2	2	0
South Wales West	2	6	1	3	0
Mid & West Wales	3	3	2	4	0
North Wales	4	4	1	3	0
WALES	15	23	7	14	1
	+3	-3	+1	-1	-

	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
Constituency AMs	4	16	2	7	1
	-1	-8	-1	-	-
List AMs	11	7	5	7	0
	+4	+5	+2	-1	-

This 30/30 division between list and constituency produces a rather more proportional result, as might be expected, than the current 40/20 split. It seems to reduce the winner's bonus Labour gets from the current system, but not widen the range of parties represented in the Assembly (although Green, UKIP and BNP are all only 2-4,000 votes in one or other region short of being represented on the basis of their votes in 2007).

The 30/30 split gives accurate strong major party proportionality, so Labour would fall significantly short of an overall majority in an election such as 2003, with 26 rather than 30.

The reason is that there are fewer 'overhang' seats in Labour's stronger regions like South Wales West and Central than under a 40/20 split. However, the increased number of list seats would mean that even in elections like 2003 when Labour wins the bulk of constituency seats, it will also receive list seats in most regions.

The equal balance between list and constituency members, and the more even representation of the parties in each category, may have an effect on the culture of the Assembly. It might make for more genuinely equal status – or might exacerbate existing tensions and complaints about differing workloads.

2003	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
South Wales East	3	7	1	1	0
South Wales Central	3	5	2	2	0
South Wales West	2	6	1	3	0
Mid & West Wales	2	4	2	4	0
North Wales	3	4	1	3	1
WALES	13	26	7	13	1
	+2	-4	+1	+1	-

2003	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind
Constituency AMs	1	21	2	5	1
	-	-9	-1	-	-
List AMs	12	5	5	8	-
	+2	+5	+2	+1	-

1d) Westminster seats with a national list

One possibility which has been suggested is the abolition of the regions and the substitution of List AMs elected from an all-Wales list.

Without a threshold, the barrier to entry with a national list of 30 members and an Assembly size of 60 will be very low – 1.7 per cent. This would enable a significant number of smaller parties to enter the Assembly. For example, if one aggregates the list votes in 2007 and allocates them nationally, the Assembly result would look rather different.

Using the regional votes cast in 2007 and adding them together nationally, then allocating 20 top-up seats using the same method of divisors as is currently used in the regional lists (D'Hondt), would give the following list seats:

- 7 Conservative
- 5 Plaid Cymru
- 3 Liberal Democrat
- 2 BNP
- 2 UKIP
- 1 Green

The total number of seats for each party in the Assembly would therefore be:

- 24 Labour
- 12 Conservative
- 12 Plaid Cymru
- 6 Liberal Democrat
- 2 BNP
- 2 UKIP
- 1 Green
- 1 People's Voice

This would make coalition formation significantly more difficult, as neither Labour/ Lib Dem, nor the Rainbow option, would have an outright majority in this scenario.

If a straightforward 5 per cent threshold were to be applied to qualify for list seats, the smaller parties would be disqualified and the list seats allocated only to the main four parties, thus:

■ Labour:		
24 constituency seats and 0 list seats:	24	
■ Conservative		
5 constituency seats and 9 list seats:	14	
■ Plaid Cymru		
7 constituency seats and 7 list seats:	14	
■ Lib Dem		
3 constituency seats and 4 list seats:	7	
■ People's Voice		
1 constituency seat	1	

National lists will tend to work against Labour compared to regional lists. The reason is that Labour's strength in the South Wales regions in the constituency election will mean that the party needs to be getting an unrealistically high level of support to qualify for any top-up seats across the nation. However, breaking Wales into regions means that Labour's dominance in South Wales West does not affect its entitlement in Mid & West Wales. No other party has comparable dominance in any region.

It would be perfectly possible to have a national list to fill 30 seats and Westminster constituencies to fill the other 30, but it would probably require setting a threshold. It would also weaken the accountability of the national list members. With larger constituencies for the locally elected AMs, there would be a risk that Welsh Assembly members and government could become remote from their constituents.

The national list option appears unattractive.

2. Unique template

This would mean de-coupling the Assembly and Westminster constituencies, requiring a piece of legislation along the lines of the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004. It is possible that it could be folded into a bigger piece of legislation, either to transfer further powers or to rewrite the rules for the Westminster Boundary Commissions.

The main problem with all unique template solutions is that of non-coterminosity: the resulting Assembly constituencies would match up neither with the Westminster seats nor with local authority boundaries. In Scotland, there is a patchwork of criss-crossing boundaries for three levels of government, none of which matches up. It causes a complex situation for party organisation, although it seems to be considered a sustainable position in Scotland.

2a) Unique template with MMP

A unique template for Assembly constituencies would permit retention of the current electoral system, on the model of the electoral arrangements for the Scottish Parliament. One could retain 40 (or so) constituencies and 20 (or more) regional members as at present, and establish a separate boundary review procedure for Assembly constituencies and regions from that operating at Westminster. Such a review is currently taking place for the Scottish Parliament's electoral areas. It would be possible to tailor-make Assembly constituencies and, within the MMP system, permit larger variations around the average size than allowed for Westminster to cope with geographical and social factors, particularly in West and North Wales. The top-up regional seats compensate for unequal constituency sizes, particularly if more of them are created (an Assembly of 45 constituencies and 25 list seats, for instance).

While a 'least change' option, superficially, this would cause long-term boundary issues because

there would be three different cross-cutting sets of electoral boundaries – local government, Westminster and Assembly. Assembly seats would often be split between different Westminster constituencies and there would be cases where regions did not correspond either to local government or Westminster boundaries. This may, as in Scotland, be regarded as tolerable, particularly if there is a clearer division of responsibility between Westminster and Assembly.

2b) Unique template with STV

It would be possible rather than drawing a map of single member constituencies and regions for Assembly use only, to draw multi-member STV districts that need not correspond with Westminster constituencies (either solely or grouped). As with a unique template and MMP, the number of Assembly members could be adjusted to accommodate growth of the institution (either gradually or in one go as recommended in the report of the Richard Commission).

STV is flexible with regard to constituency size, so districts could be drawn with regard to physical and social geography. The level of cross-cutting of other levels of administrative geography can also be reduced.

However, a convenient option exists with the current local government map and STV – to use whole local authorities as the basis of forming STV constituencies, which would then have ready-made social and administrative logic.

3. Local government template

Another solution to the Assembly boundaries problem would be to use the local government map, rather than Westminster or a specially-drawn set of boundaries.

The local government map has the advantage over Westminster boundaries that it reflects established community identities, while Westminster constituencies will be increasingly drawn (and frequently redrawn) to correspond to an arbitrary ideal number of electors. Local government is likely to be stable, or at least subject to fewer and less drastic changes than Westminster constituencies.

It is of course possible that local government reform may follow in a future period of Assembly government, and produce larger units as was recently done with the reorganisation of the NHS in Wales.

These larger units (like Cardiff in the current configuration) would remain the basis of constituencies but would probably need to be divided in order to create units which had a manageable community identity. This problem is more remote than the one looming with Westminster constituencies, and once changed the new local government map will settle down and be unchanged for some time.

Using current local authorities would allow an identifiable area to have its AMs, all of them of equal status, elected by STV.

A smaller factor, currently, is that the Assembly franchise is the same as the franchise for local government, while that for Westminster does not include citizens of other EU states to vote. This affects comparatively few areas in Wales at present (in inner London the gap between Westminster and local government electorate is large), but there is capacity for this to grow over time.

For some reason, the arithmetic for STV in local government units works particularly well with an Assembly size of 68 and the current numbers, but with adaptation it could work for other sizes

of Assembly. There would be 2-5 AMs per local authority area, with the exception of Cardiff whose entitlement to 7 AMs would mean that it could either be a whole 7-member seat or more plausibly divided into a 3 and a 4 member seat. Merthyr Tydfil's entitlement is too small to have a multi-member seat. There are

essentially two options for forming an Assembly constituency – either have it as a single-member AV seat, or else combine it with Caerphilly council in a relatively large (5-member) seat. Monmouthshire and Torfaen would work either as two 2-member seats, or a combined 4-member seat.

	Local government electorate 12/08	Entitlement to seats	Model seats	Proportion of ideal votes/ seats ratio
Blaenau Gwent	53,234	1.59	2	0.79
Bridgend	104,367	3.11	3	1.04
Caerphilly	129,814	3.87	5*	1.03*
Cardiff	245,955	7.34	7	1.05
Carmarthenshire	131,856	3.93	4	0.98
Ceredigion	56,275	1.68	2	0.84
Conwy	89,894	2.68	3	0.89
Denbighshire	74,219	2.21	2	1.11
Flintshire	115,538	3.45	3	1.15
Gwynedd	86,067	2.57	3	0.86
Isle of Anglesey	51,031	1.52	2	0.76
Merthyr Tydfil	43,348	1.29	*with Caerphilly	
Monmouthshire	68,846	2.05	4**	1.04**
Neath Port Talbot	110,594	3.30	3	1.10
Newport	102,934	3.07	3	1.02
Pembrokeshire	93,758	2.80	3	0.93
Powys	103,227	3.08	3	1.03
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	172,604	5.15	5	1.03
Swansea	183,920	5.49	5	1.10
Torfaen	70,014	2.09	**with Monmouthshire	
Vale of Glamorgan	92,274	2.75	3	0.92
Wrexham	100,010	2.98	3	0.99
WALES			68	

The last column is an indication of how far the seat would depart from the ideal number of electors per AM (33,526 electors). Most seats come fairly close to the ideal size (for a

68-member Assembly – the arithmetic does not work as well for 60 members) with a few outliers (Blaenau Gwent, Anglesey, Ceredigion) falling outside a 20 per cent variation.

2007	Total	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Other
Blaenau Gwent	2		1			1
Bridgend	3	1	2			
Caerphilly & Merthyr Tydfil	5		2		1	2
Cardiff East	3	1	1	1		
Cardiff West	4	1	2	1		
Carmarthenshire	4	1	1		2	
Ceredigion	2			1	1	
Conwy	3	1	1		1	
Denbighshire	2	1	1			
Flintshire	3	1	2			
Gwynedd	3		1		2	
Isle of Anglesey	2				1	1
Monmouthshire & Torfaen	4	1	2	1		
Neath Port Talbot	3		2		1	
Newport	3	1	1	1		
Pembrokeshire	3	1	1		1	
Powys	3	1		2		
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	5		3	1	1	
Swansea	5	1	2	1	1	
Vale of Glamorgan	3	1	1		1	
Wrexham	3	1	1		1	
WALES	68	14	27	9	14	4
	+8	+2	+1	+3	-1	+3

The results show that 2-5 member STV using local authority boundaries is, like 40/20 MMP, broadly proportional (although note that the constituency, rather than regional list, vote is the basis of STV modelling which causes some apparent discrepancies). The main difference is that STV elects several Independents in the Gwent Valleys rather than just one; under MMP they have neither the wide support across a region to gain a regional seat nor, outside Blaenau Gwent, enough local concentration to win a constituency. But they have sufficient strength across Caerphilly and Merthyr, and

probably enough support from transfers from Conservative, Lib Dem and Plaid voters to win two seats.

Plaid Cymru seems to fare poorly under this form of STV, although this is probably not inevitable. It fell not far short of three more seats in the 2007 model. Although the Conservatives seem better treated by the model results in 2003 and 2007, they are probably towards the top of their realistic range, while Plaid have further room for growth.

2003	Total	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Other
Blaenau Gwent	2		2			
Bridgend	3	1	2			
Caerphilly & Merthyr Tydfil	5		4		1	
Cardiff East	3	1	1	1		
Cardiff West	4	1	2	1		
Carmarthenshire	4		2		2	
Ceredigion	2			1	1	
Conwy	3	1	1		1	
Denbighshire	2	1	1			
Flintshire	3	1	1	1		
Gwynedd	3		1		2	
Isle of Anglesey	2	1			1	
Monmouthshire & Torfaen	4	2	2			
Neath Port Talbot	3		2		1	
Newport	3	1	2			
Pembrokeshire	3	1	1		1	
Powys	3	1		2		
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	5		4		1	
Swansea	5	1	2	1	1	
Vale of Glamorgan	3	1	2			
Wrexham	3	1	1			1
WALES	68	15	33	7	12	1
	+8	+4	+3	+1	-	-

An assessment

The alternative result for each of the models for 2007 is given in the table below. As one can see, the overall level of proportionality is quite similar, with the Conservatives between 12 and 15, Labour between 23 and 26 (27 in a larger Assembly), Lib Dems between 5 and 8 (9 in a larger Assembly) and Plaid Cymru between 12 and 15.

2007	Con	Lab	LD	PC	Ind/Other
Actual result	12	26	6	15	1
2-member STV in Westminster constituencies	13	25	5	14	3
4-member STV in Westminster pairs	13	24	8	13	2
30/30 Westminster seats & regional list	15	23	7	14	1
40/20 Westminster seats & national list no threshold	12	24	6	12	6
40/20 Westminster seats & national list 5% threshold	14	24	7	14	1
2-5 member STV in local authorities (68 seats total)	14	27	9	14	4

The criteria for assessing systems against each other would seem to be:

Proportionality

There is not a great deal to choose in terms of the proportionality of the systems, based on the model results for 2007 outlined here. A national list without a threshold is the most proportional option, and 40/20 regional MMP, the current system, probably least so. However, all these systems seem to be acceptably proportional and far superior to First Past the Post or the Alternative Vote for this context.

Contribution to stable government

Most variants analysed here have little to choose between them, with the exception of national list MMP with no threshold. This would make coalition formation appreciably more difficult and tend to fragment the composition of the Assembly. Under all the variants, given the political configuration of modern Wales, outright majorities would be a rare occurrence.

Accountability to constituents

STV scores higher on accountability than systems with a closed list component, because all AMs have faced the electorate as equals. MMP with a national list is the least accountable of these systems, because all-Wales members will be subject to but the weakest accountability except to their party selectorates.

Coterminosity of boundaries with other sorts of election

Simple boundaries are to be preferred on the grounds that electors will identify more closely with their political representatives across several tiers. Political parties will also find it difficult to organise when the relevant area will differ at different levels – one could imagine a party meeting at which members would 'hokey-cokey' in and out of full voting rights depending on whether the matters discussed were local government, Welsh or UK concerns. In this respect, following Westminster boundaries or local government units would be preferable to keeping a unique template for Assembly elections on the Scottish pattern.

Stability of boundaries over time

Constantly changing boundaries are a problem for electors and political organisations in sustaining the relationship between the representative and the area for which they speak. The coalition's plan for Westminster boundaries means that these will alter very frequently – some will probably change every parliament as constituencies grow or shrink beyond the permitted 3.5 per cent margin of tolerance. Adopting Westminster constituencies as a basis means that Assembly electoral arrangements, including regional boundaries if there is a regional element of the system, will also change frequently. There might well be a revision of some sort every time there is a general election for the Assembly. Using a unique template would, as at present, mean that there would be boundary changes every three (sometimes two) terms of the Assembly. Using local authorities as the basis for STV is more stable, with boundaries changing only once every local government reform (1974, 1995 and possibly some time in the next few years). Population change can be accommodated by adding extra AMs to (or taking them away from) existing multi-member seats.

Correspondence of boundaries to community identity

Westminster constituencies will correspond relatively poorly to community identity, as illustrated in the model constituencies (although these are a relatively good fit to communities, given the arithmetic constraints). Local authorities, one can presume, are drawn with community identity in mind and once they have existed for a long time acquire community characteristics in their own right (as the borough councils have done in London since their creation in 1964). Communities vary in size, and the multi-member constituencies under STV, and single-member seats under MMP if there is a unique template, accommodate this fact.

Recommendation

2-5 member STV based on local authorities appears to be a very robust candidate for a future electoral system for Wales.

The results of 2-member STV based on Westminster constituencies are perhaps surprisingly good in terms of proportionality for 2007 and 2003, although it might cause problems in the longer term because of the instability of the Westminster boundaries and their lack of concordance with communities.

There would of course need to be a further examination of the position in the event of local government reform.

Appendix 1: Wales in thirty constituencies

It is Conservative Party policy to redistribute Westminster constituencies so that there will be a 10 per cent cut in the size of the UK House of Commons and seats will vary by a maximum of 5 per cent (November 2009 – 3.5 per cent being the policy from February 2010) either side of the ideal quota. If implemented by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, this means that the average constituency size will be around 77,000 electors.

With the 30-seat solution adopted here, there are a number of seats in the North and West in particular which are close to the lower limit, and fluctuations may mean there are insufficient numbers of electors in these areas to make the model work as a whole. In this case, the solution would probably be to draw further electors from northern Powys and Ceredigion to bulk out the North Wales seats and take a few more out of Swansea and possibly the Vale of Neath.

Electorate figures used are those for local government areas in councils' returns to the Local Government Boundary Commission review of electoral divisions in Wales. There are some anomalies and discrepancies in this data, and overall totals per council are not necessarily the same as the sum of their parts. This (and the small distinction between local government electorate and Westminster franchise) causes a degree of artificial precision to creep into this exercise. Another element is that if and when such a redistribution of Westminster seats takes place, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales will have presumably finished its work and redrawn the electoral division boundaries, and there will be a new template from which to work. This should require relatively minor adjustments to this scheme, although more major reconsideration would be required if any of these draft constituencies were made unviable. The 3.5 per cent threshold would also require revision to the pattern we have outlined here.

We have attempted to use a similar methodology to that used by the Boundary Commission, and

avoided consideration of the partisan impact while drawing the constituencies. Assessment of their partisan complexion has been made afterwards, not as a part of their creation. We have tried not to divide council electoral divisions between constituencies, but it has occasionally proved sensible or necessary and would be permitted by a change in the Commission rules if the policy were introduced.

If a 30-seat Westminster redistribution were to take place, it would probably look different in detail, but this gives an idea of the size of the constituencies and their likely make-up.

South Wales East region

That area covered by the local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.

Monmouth constituency (78,292)

From the existing Newport East constituency:

Llanwern, Langstone electoral divisions of Newport council.

Caldicot Castle, Dewstone, Green Lane, Mill, Rogiet, Severn, The Elms, West End electoral divisions of Monmouthshire council.

From the existing Monmouth constituency:

Monmouthshire council (electoral divisions other than those currently in Newport East)

Two electoral divisions of Torfaen council (Llanyrafon South, Llanyravon North)

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Monmouth	59,384	75.8
Newport East	18,908	24.2

Torfaen constituency (78,434)

From the existing Monmouth constituency:

Croesyceiliog North, Croesyceiliog South electoral divisions of Torfaen council

From the existing Torfaen constituency:

Torfaen borough (less Llanyrafon and Croesyceiliog)

From the existing Newport West constituency:

Newport electoral divisions of Caerleon, Malpas.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Torfaen	61,704	78.7
Newport West	12,446	15.9
Monmouth	4,284	5.5

Newport constituency (75,491)

Newport electoral divisions:

Alway, Beechwood, Liswerry, Ringland, St Julian's, Victoria from the current Newport East.

Allt-yr-yn, Bettws, Gaer, Pillgwenlly, Rogerstone, Shaftesbury, Stow Hill, Tredegar Park from the current Newport West.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Newport West	39,955	52.9
Newport East	35,536	47.1

Blaenau Gwent and Tredegar constituency (78,027)

From the current Blaenau Gwent constituency:

Blaenau Gwent council

From the current Islwyn constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Argoed, Crumlin, Newbridge, Penmaen.

From the current Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Moriah, New Tredegar, Pontlottyn, Twyn Carno.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Blaenau Gwent	53,051	68.0
Islwyn	14,970	19.2
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney	10,006	12.8

Merthyr Tydfil and Ystrad Mynach constituency (78,860 approx)

From the current Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney constituency:

Merthyr Tydfil council.

Caerphilly council electoral division of Darran Valley.

From the current Caerphilly constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Bargoed, Gilfach, Hengoed, Nelson, St Cattwg, Ystrad Mynach and all of the Llanbradach electoral division excluding a small section bordering Caerphilly town.

From the current Islwyn constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Aberbargoed, Cefn Forest, Pengam.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney	45,024	57.1
Caerphilly	25,623	32.5
Islwyn	8,213	10.4

Caerphilly constituency (78,773 approx)

From the current Caerphilly constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Aber Valley, Bedwas etc, Morgan Jones, Penyrheol, St James, St Martin's, and a small part of the Llanbradach electoral division adjoining Caerphilly town

From the current Islwyn constituency:

Caerphilly council electoral divisions of Abercarn, Blackwood, Crosskeys, Maesycwmmmer, Pontllanfraith, Risca East, Risca West, Ynysddu.

From the current Newport West constituency:

Newport council electoral divisions of Marshland, Graig.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Caerphilly	37,276	47.3
Islwyn	32,412	41.1
Newport West	9,085	11.5

South Wales Central and West

That area covered by the local authorities of Cardiff, Rhondda-Cynon-Taf and Vale of Glamorgan; Bridgend, Neath-Port Talbot and Swansea.

If 6-constituency regions are to be created for Assembly purposes, the boundary will need to cut across the local authority boundaries of Bridgend and Rhondda-Cynon-Taf (as indeed the current regional boundaries do).

South Wales Central

Cardiff North East constituency (75,345)

Cardiff electoral divisions:

Llanrumney, Rumney and Trowbridge from current Cardiff S & Penarth.

Lisvane, Llanishen, Pontprennau/ Old St Mellons, Rhiwbina from current Cardiff North.

Cyncoed, Pentwyn from current Cardiff Central.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Cardiff North	31,423	41.7
Cardiff South and Penarth	24,959	33.1
Cardiff Central	18,963	25.2

Cardiff West constituency (74,061 approx)

Cardiff electoral divisions:

Grangetown from current Cardiff S & Penarth.

Canton, Fairwater, Llandaff, Radyr, Riverside from current Cardiff West.

Llandaff North, Whitchurch & Tongwynlais and around 3,000 electors from Heath from current Cardiff North.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Cardiff West	40,730	55.0
Cardiff North	21,279	28.7
Cardiff South and Penarth	12,052	16.3

Cardiff Central constituency (74,574 approx)

Cardiff electoral divisions:

Butetown, Splott from current Cardiff S & Penarth.

Adamsdown, Cathays, Penylan, Plasnewydd from current Cardiff Central.

Gabalfa and around 6,708 electors from Heath from the current Cardiff North.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Cardiff Central	45,105	60.5
Cardiff South and Penarth	15,956	21.4
Cardiff North	13,513	18.1

Vale of Ely constituency (73,196 approx*)

Cardiff electoral divisions: Caerau, Creigiau/St Fagans, Ely, Pentyrch from current Cardiff West.

Vale of Glamorgan electoral divisions: Cowbridge, Llandow/Ewenny, Peterston-super-Ely, St Bride's Major, Wenvoe and around 3,000 electors from the St Donat's and northern Rhoose areas of the Llantwit Major and Rhoose electoral divisions from the current Vale of Glamorgan constituency.

Rhondda-Cynon-Taf electoral divisions:

Llanharan, Llanharry from current Ogmore constituency.

Beddau, Church Village, Llantrisant Town, Llantwit Fardre, Pont-y-Clun, Talbot Green, Ton-teg, Tyn-y-nant from current Pontypridd constituency.

*Vale of Glamorgan electorate figures by electoral division in 2008 undercount electorate by around 4,000. Total 2009 electorate of seat likely to be towards 75,000.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Pontypridd	29,054	38.9
Cardiff West	23,169	31.0
Vale of Glamorgan	17,395	23.3
Ogmore	5,078	6.8

Barry and Penarth constituency (73,652 approx*)

Vale of Glamorgan electoral divisions:

Cornerswell, Llandough, Plymouth, St Augustine's, Stanwell, Sully from current Cardiff South & Penarth.

Baruc, Buttrills, Cadoc, Castleland, Court, Dinas Powys, Dyfan, Gibbonsdown, Illtyd, St Athan and most electors from Rhoose and Llantwit Major from current Vale of Glamorgan constituency.

*Vale of Glamorgan electorate figures by electoral division in 2008 undercount electorate by around 4,000. Total 2009 electorate of seat likely to be towards 75,000.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Vale of Glamorgan	54,276	71.3
Cardiff South & Penarth	21,876	28.7

Pontypridd and Aberdare constituency (76,594)

Rhondda-Cynon-Taf electoral divisions:

Graig, Hawthorn, Pontypridd Town, Rhondda, Rhydfelen Central/Ilan, Taff's Well, Trallwng, Treforest, Tyn-y-nant from current Pontypridd constituency.

Aberaman North, Aberaman South, Abercynon, Aberdare East, Aberdare West/ Llwydcoed, Cilfynydd, Cwmbach, Glyncoch, Hirwaun, Mountain Ash East, Mountain Ash West, Penrhiwceiber, Pen-y-Waun, Rhigos, Ynysybwl comprising the entire current Cynon Valley constituency.
Cymmer from the current Rhondda constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Cynon Valley	50,984	64.4
Pontypridd	24,068	30.4
Rhondda	4,120	5.2

South Wales West

Rhondda and Ogmore constituency (75,838)

Rhondda-Cynon-Taf electoral divisions:

Cwm Clydach, Ferndale, Llwyn-y-Pia, Maerdy, Pentre, Pen-y-Graig, Porth, Tonypany, Trealaw, Treherbert, Treorchy, Tylorstown, Ynyshir, Ystrad, comprising all but the Cymmer electoral division of the current Rhondda constituency.

Tonyrefail East, Tonyrefail West from the current Pontypridd constituency.

Brynna, Gilfach Goch from the current Ogmore constituency.

Bridgend electoral divisions:

Blackmill, Nant-y-Moel, Ogmore Vale, Felindre, Hendre, Penprysg from the current Ogmore constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Rhondda	48,048	63.4
Ogmore	19,113	25.2
Pontypridd	8,677	11.4

Bridgend constituency (75,991)

Bridgend electoral divisions:

Aberkenfig, Bettws, Blaengarw, Bryncethin, Bryncoch, Cefn Cribwr, Llangeinor, Llangynwyd, Pontycymmer, Sarn, Ynysawdre from the current Ogmore constituency.

The entire current constituency of Bridgend.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Bridgend	58,399	76.8
Ogmore	17,592	23.2

Neath and Aberavon constituency (74,811)

Neath-Port Talbot electoral divisions:

Cimla, Neath East, Neath North, Neath South, Pelenna from the current Neath constituency.
Aberavon, Baglan, Briton Ferry East, Briton Ferry West, Bryn & Cwmavon, Cymmer, Glyncorwg, Gwynfi, Margam, Port Talbot, Sandfields East, Sandfields West, Tai-bach from the current Aberavon constituency.

Bridgend electoral divisions of Caerau, Maesteg East, Maesteg West from the current Ogmore constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Aberavon	45,256	60.5
Neath	16,300	21.8
Ogmore	13,255	17.7

Swansea East and Vale of Neath (approx 77,901)

Swansea electoral divisions:

Bonymaen, Llansamlet, St Thomas from the current Swansea East.

A small part of Clydach from the current Gower (approx 464 electors).

Neath-Port Talbot electoral divisions:

Coedffranc Central, Coedffranc North, Coedffranc West from the current Aberavon constituency.
Aberdulais, Allt-wen, Blaengwrach, Bryn-coch North, Bryn-coch South, Cadoxton, Crynant, Cwmllynfell, Dyffryn, Glynneath, Godre'r graig, Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Lower Brynamman, Onllwyn, Pontardawe, Resolven, Rhos, Seven Sisters, Tonna, Trebanos, Ystalyfera from the current Neath constituency.

Powys electoral divisions of Aber-craf, Cwm-Twrch, Ynyscedwyn, Ystradgynlais (together comprising Ystradgynlais) plus Tawe-Uchaf from the current Brecon & Radnorshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Neath	42,410	53.8
Swansea East	20,519	26.0
Brecon & Radnorshire	8,513	10.8
Aberavon	6,948	8.8
Gower	464	0.6

Swansea North and Loughor (approx 74,988)

Swansea electoral divisions:

Cwmbwrla, Landore, Morrision, Mynyddbach, Penderry from current Swansea East.

Cockett from current Swansea West.

Gorseinon, Gowerton, Kingsbridge, Lower Loughor, Penyrheol, Upper Loughor, and most of the electoral divisions of Clydach (western section, 5,487 approx), Llangyfelach (eastern section, 1,884 approx) and Mawr (eastern section, 913 approx) from current Gower.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Swansea East	39,392	51.7
Gower	26,269	34.5
Swansea West	10,574	13.9

Swansea West and Gower (77,775)

Swansea electoral divisions:

Castle, Dunvant, Killay North, Killay South, Mayals, Sketty, Townhill, Uplands from current Swansea West.

Bishopston, Fairwood, Gower, Newton, Oystermouth, Penclawydd, Pennard, West Cross from current Gower.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Swansea West	52,310	67.3
Gower	25,465	32.7

*Mid and West Wales***Llanelli (approx 75,776)**

Carmarthenshire electoral divisions:

Ammanford, Betws, Garnant, Glanamman, Llandybie, Penygroes, Pontamman, Quarter Bach, Saron and that part of the Llangydeyrn electoral division lying south of the line of Gwendraeth Fach (approx 1,832 electors) from the current Carmarthen East & Dinefwr constituency;

Bigyn, Bynea, Dafen, Elli, Felinfoel, Glanymor, Glyn, Hendy, Hengoed, Llangennech, Llannon, Lliedi, Llwynhendy, Pontyberem, Swiss Valley, Tycroes and Tyisha from the current constituency of Llanelli

Swansea electoral divisions:

Penllaergaer, Pontardulais, 2,000 electors approx of Llangyfelach and 600 electors approx of Mawr from the current Gower constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Llanelli	45,975	60.7
Carmarthen East & Dinefwr	20,460	27.0
Gower	9,341	12.3

Carmarthen (approx 75,798)

Carmarthenshire electoral divisions:

Abergwili, Cenarth, Cilycwm, Cynwyl Gaeo, Gorslas, Llanddarog, Llandeilo, Llandovery, Llanegwad, Llanfihangel Aberbythych, Llanfihangel-ar-Arth, Llangadog, Llangeler, Llangunnor, Llanbydder, Manordeilo and Salem, St Ishmael and that part of Llangydeyrn lying north of the line of Gwendraeth Fach (approx 500 electors) from the current Carmarthen East & Dinefwr constituency; Carmarthen Town North, Carmarthen Town South, Carmarthen Town West, Cynwyl Elfed, Laugharne Township, Llanboidy, Llansteffan, St Clears, Trelech, Whitland from the current Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South constituency.

Burry Port, Kidwelly, Pembrey and Trimsaran from the current Llanelli constituency.

Pembrokeshire electoral divisions:

Amroth, Lampeter Velfrey, Narberth, Narberth Rural from the current Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South constituency;

Maenclochog from the current Preseli Pembrokeshire constituency.

The Powys electoral divisions of Llanwrtyd Wells and Maescar/ Llywel from the current Brecon & Radnorshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Carmarthen East & Dinefwr	32,490	42.4
Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South	28,210	36.8
Llanelli	10,686	13.9
Brecon & Radnorshire	2,892	3.8
Preseli Pembrokeshire	2,369	3.1

Pembroke (75,339)

Pembrokeshire:

Carew, East Williamston, Hundleton, Kilgetty/ Begelly, Lamphey, Manorbier, Martletwy, Pembroke Dock (Central, Llanion, Market, Pennar), Pembroke (Monkton, St Mary North, St Mary South, St Michael), Penally, Saundersfoot, Tenby North, Tenby South from the current Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South constituency.

Burton, Camrose, Fishguard (North East, North West), Goodwick, Haverfordwest (Castle, Garth, Portfield, Prendergast, Priory), Johnston, Letterston, Llangwm, Llanrhian, Maenclochog, Merlin's Bridge, Milford (Central, East, Hakin, North, West), Neyland (East, West), Rudbaxton, St David's, St Dogmael's, St Ishmael's, Solva, The Havens, Wiston from the current Preseli Pembrokeshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Preseli Pembrokeshire	45,453	60.3
Carmarthen West & Pembrokeshire South	29,886	39.7

Ceredigion and Rhaeadr (74,042)

The local authority of Ceredigion, coterminous with the current constituency.

The Powys electoral divisions of Blaen Hafren, Llandinam, Llanfair Caereinion, Llanidloes, Rhiwcyon from the current Montgomeryshire constituency.

The Powys electoral divisions of Llanyre, Nantmel, Rhaeadr Gwy and the northern half of the electoral division of Llanafanfawr from the current Brecon & Radnorshire constituency.

The Pembrokeshire electoral divisions of Cilgerran, Clydau, Crymych, Dinas Cross, Newport, Scleddau from the current Preseli Pembrokeshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Ceredigion	56,234	73.0
Montgomeryshire	8,177	10.6
Preseli Pembrokeshire	8,058	10.5
Brecon & Radnorshire	4,519	5.9

Brecon and Montgomery (73,630)

Powys electoral divisions:

Beguildy, Bronllys, Builth, Bwlch, Crickhowell, Disserth & Trecoed, Felin-fach, Glasbury, Gwernyfed, Hay, Knighton, Llanbadarn Fawr, Llandrindod (East/West, North, South), Llanelwedd, Llangattock, Llangors, Llangunllo, Llangynidr, Old Radnor, Presteigne, St David Within, St John, St Mary, Talgarth, Talybont-on-Usk, Yscir and the southern half of Llanafanfawr from the current Brecon & Radnorshire constituency.

Banwy, Berriew, Churchstoke, Dolforwyn, Forden, Guilsfield, Kerry, Llandrinio, Llandysilio, Llanfihangel, Llanfyllin, Llanrhaedr-ym-Mochnant/ Llansilin, Llantsantffraid, Llanwddyn, Meifod, Montgomery, Newtown (Central, East, Llanllwchaiarn North and West, South), Trewern, Welshpool (Castle, Gungrog, Llanerchydol) from the current Montgomeryshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Brecon & Radnorshire	39,113	53.1
Montgomeryshire	34,517	46.9

Gwynedd and Machynlleth (75,318)

Gwynedd electoral divisions:

The entire constituency of Dwyfor Meirionnydd.

The electoral divisions of Bethel, Bontnewydd, Cadnant, Cwm-y-Glo, Deinolen, Groeslon, Llanberis, Llanllyfni, Llanrug, Llanwnda, Menai (Caernarfon), Peblig (Caernarfon), Penisarwaun, Penygroes, Seiont, Talysarn, Tregarth & Mynydd Llandygai, Waunfawr, Y Felinheli from the current Arfon constituency.

Powys electoral divisions of Caersws, Glantwymyn, Llanbrynmair, Machynlleth from the current Montgomeryshire constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	43,798	58.2
Arfon	25,550	33.9
Montgomeryshire	5,970	8.0

North Wales

Ynys Mon and Bangor (74,167)

The entire local authority of Isle of Anglesey, coterminous with the Ynys Mon constituency

Gwynedd electoral divisions:

The electoral divisions of Arllechwedd, Bethel, Bethesda (comprising Gerlan, Ogwen), Bangor (comprising Deinol, Dewi, Garth, Glyder, Hendre, Hirael, Marchog, Menai (Bangor)), Pentir, Tregarth a Mynydd Llandegai from the current Arfon constituency

Conwy electoral divisions:

Bryn, Capelulo, Pandy, Penmaenan from the current Aberconwy constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Ynys Mon	50,876	68.6
Arfon	17,134	23.1
Aberconwy	6,157	8.3

Conwy and Abergele (74,374)

Conwy electoral divisions:

Caerhun, Conwy, Craig-y-Don, Deganwy, Gogarth, Llansanffraid, Marl, Mostyn, Penrhyn, Pensam, Tudno from the current Aberconwy constituency.

Abergele Pensam, Betws yn Rhos, Colwyn, Eirias, Gele, Glyn, Kinmel Bay, Llanddulas, Llandrillo yn Rhos, Llysfaen, Mochdre, Pentre Mawr, Rhiw, Towyn from the current Clwyd West constituency.

The Denbighshire electoral division of Bodelwyddan from the current Vale of Clwyd constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Clwyd West	41,577	55.9
Aberconwy	31,176	41.9
Vale of Clwyd	1,651	2.2

Flint and Rhyl (73,720)

The Flintshire electoral divisions of Bagillt (East, West), Brynford, Ffynnongroyw, Flint (Castle, Coleshill, Oakenholt, Trelawny), Greenfield, Gronant, Holywell (Central, East, West), Mostyn, Trelawnyd & Gwaenysgor, Whitford from the current Delyn constituency.

The Denbighshire electoral divisions of Prestatyn (Meliden, Central, East, North, South West), Rhyl (East, South, South East, South West, West), Dyserth, Rhuddlan, St Asaph East, St Asaph West, Trefnant, Tremeirchion from the current Vale of Clwyd constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Vale of Clwyd	45,229	60.0
Delyn	30,108	40.0

Mold and Shotton (75,949)

The Flintshire electoral divisions of:

Aston, Broughton (North East, South,) Buckley (Bistre East, Bistre West, Mountain, Pentrobin), Caergwrle, Connah's Quay (Central, Golftyn, South, Wepre), Ewloe, Hawarden, Higher Kinnerton, Hope, Mancot, Penyffordd, Queensferry, Saltney (Mold Junction, Stonebridge), Sealand, Shotton (East, Higher, West) from the current Alyn & Deeside constituency.

Argoed, Leeswood, Mold (Broncoed, East, South, West), New Brighton, Northop, Northop Hall from the current Delyn constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Alyn & Deeside	58,468	77.0
Delyn	17,481	23.0

Wrexham (74,020)

Wrexham electoral divisions comprising:

The entire current constituency of Wrexham.

Bronington, Brymbo, Bryn Cefn, Coedpoeth, Esclusham, Gwenfro, Marchwiell, New Broughton, Minera, Overton, from the current Clwyd South constituency.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Wrexham	51,898	70.1
Clwyd South	22,122	29.9

Denbigh, Llangollen and Vale of Conwy (74,357)

Conwy electoral divisions:

Betws-y-Coed, Crwst, Eglwysbach, Gower, Trefriw, Uwch Conwy from the current Aberconwy constituency.

Llangernyw, Llansannan, Uwchaled from the current Clwyd West constituency.

Flintshire electoral divisions:

Caerwys, Cilcain, Gwernaffield, Gwernymynydd, Halkyn from the current Delyn constituency.

Llanfynydd, Treuddyn from the current Alyn & Deeside constituency.

Denbighshire electoral divisions:

Corwen, Llandrillo, Llangollen from the current Clwyd South constituency.

Denbigh (Central, Lower, Upper/ Henllan), Llandyrnog from the current Vale of Clwyd constituency.

Efechechtyd, Llanarmon-yn-Ial/ Llandegla, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd/ Llangynhafal, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/ Gwyddelwern, Llanrhaedr-yng-Nghinmeirch, Ruthin from the current Clwyd West constituency.

The Wrexham electoral divisions of Cefn, Ceiriog Valley, Chirk North, Chirk South, Johnstown, Llangollen Rural, Pant, Penycae, Penycae a Ruabon, Plas Madoc, Ponciau, Ruabon from the current constituency of Clwyd South.

Composition (old seats)	Electors	% share
Clwyd South	31,342	42.2
Clwyd West	15,877	21.4
Vale of Clwyd	9,146	12.3
Delyn	8,214	11.0
Aberconwy	6,964	9.4
Alyn & Deeside	2,814	3.8

Appendix 2: Estimates for 2003 in more detail

Two member STV in new Westminster constituencies – detailed estimates for 2003.

	Estimated 2003 seat 1	Estimated 2003 seat 2
SOUTH WALES EAST		
Monmouth	Con	Lab
Torfaen	Lab	Con
Newport	Lab	Con
Caerphilly	Lab	PC
Blaenau Gwent and Tredegar	Lab	Lab
Merthyr Tydfil and Ystrad Mynach	Lab	Lab
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL		
Cardiff North East	Lab	Con
Cardiff Central	LD	Lab
Cardiff West	Lab	Con
Vale of Ely	Lab	Con
Barry and Penarth	Lab	Con
Pontypridd and Aberdare	Lab	PC
SOUTH WALES WEST		
Rhondda and Ogmore	Lab	Lab
Bridgend	Lab	Con
Neath and Aberavon	Lab	PC
Swansea East and Vale of Neath	Lab	LD
Swansea North and Loughor	Lab	LD
Swansea West and Gower	Lab	PC
MID & WEST WALES		
Llanelli	Lab	PC
Carmarthen	PC	Lab
Pembroke	Lab	Con
Ceredigion and Rhaedr	PC	LD
Brecon and Montgomery	LD	Con
Gwynedd and Machynlleth	PC	PC
NORTH WALES		
Ynys Mon and Bangor	PC	Lab
Conwy and Abergel	Lab	PC
Flint and Rhyl	Lab	Con
Wrexham	Ind	Lab
Mold and Shotton	Lab	Con
Denbigh	PC	Lab

Result in Pontypridd & Aberdare might well have been 2 Lab rather than 1 Lab, 1 PC, in which case Con and Lab would be both +1 on the real 2003 result, LD and PC both -1.

Detailed estimates for MMP with 30 constituencies and 30 regional list members, 2003.

	Estimated 2003 seat		Regional members
SOUTH WALES EAST			
Monmouth	Con	1	PC
Torfaen	Lab	2	LD
Newport	Lab	3	Con
Caerphilly	Lab	4	Lab
Blaenau Gwent and Tredegar	Lab	5	Con
Merthyr Tydfil & Ystrad Mynach	Lab	6	Lab
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL			
Cardiff North East	Lab	1	Con
Cardiff Central	LD	2	PC
Cardiff West	Lab	3	Con
Vale of Ely	Lab	4	LD
Barry and Penarth	Lab	5	PC
Pontypridd and Aberdare	Lab	6	Con
SOUTH WALES WEST			
Rhondda and Ogmore	Lab	1	PC
Bridgend	Lab	2	Con
Neath and Aberavon	Lab	3	LD
Swansea East & Vale of Neath	Lab	4	PC
Swansea North and Loughor	Lab	5	Con
Swansea West and Gower	Lab	6	PC
MID & WEST WALES			
Llanelli	Lab	1	Con
Carmarthen	PC	2	Con
Pembroke	Lab	3	Lab
Ceredigion and Rhaedr	PC	4	LD
Brecon and Montgomery	LD	5	PC
Gwynedd and Machynlleth	PC	6	Lab
NORTH WALES			
Ynys Mon and Bangor	PC	1	Con
Conwy and Abergelē	Lab	2	Con
Flint and Rhyl	Lab	3	LD
Wrexham	Ind	4	Lab
Mold and Shotton	Lab	5	PC
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	PC	6	Con

Appendix 3: Estimated 2010 general election results in new model constituencies

The following table estimates the partisan complexion of the new seats in the 2010 UK General Election.

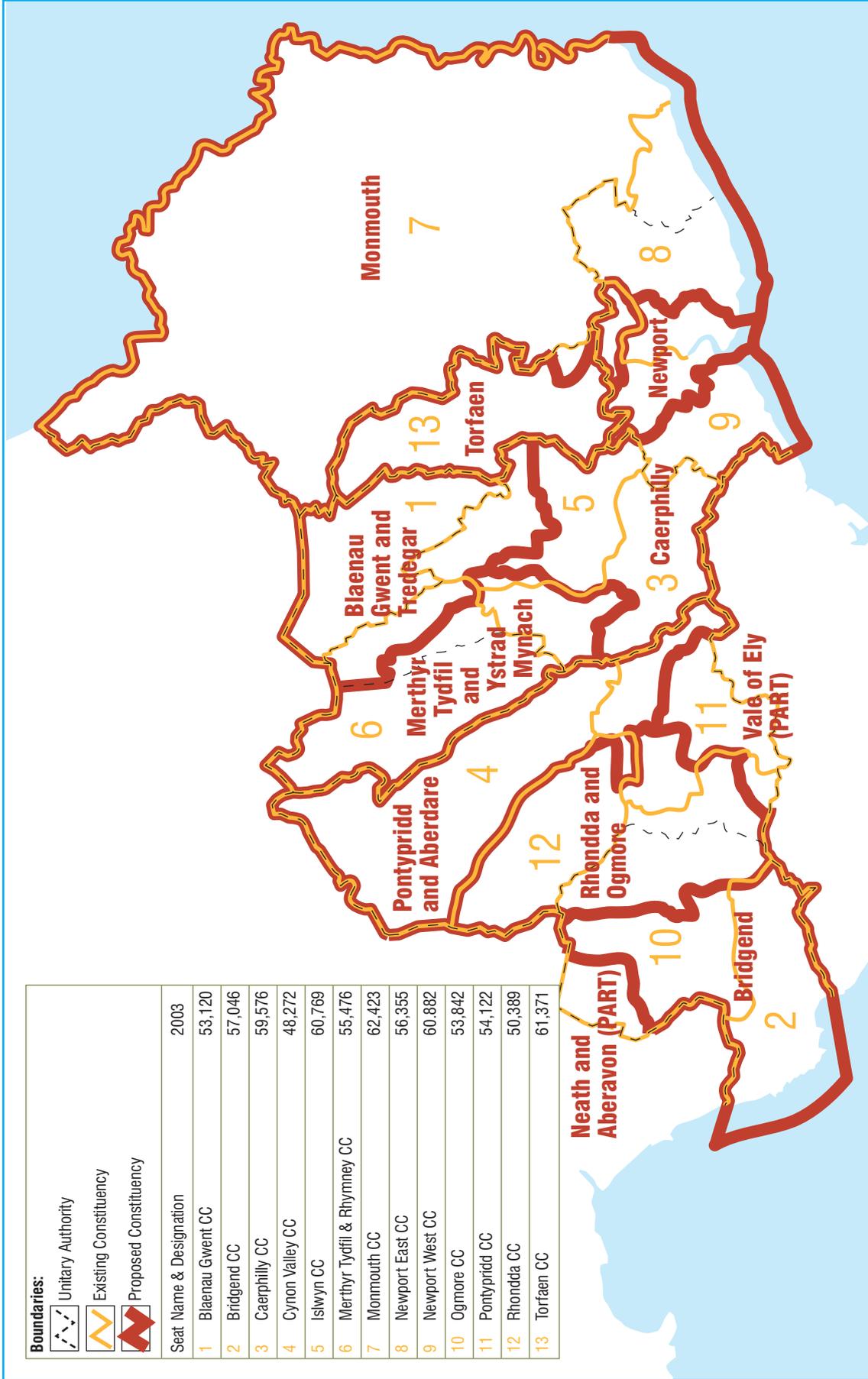
MID AND WEST WALES		
Brecon & Montgomery	Liberal Democrat	Conservatives fairly close second
Carmarthen	Plaid Cymru	
Ceredigion & Rhaedr	Liberal Democrat	
Gwynedd & Machynlleth	Plaid Cymru	
Llanelli	Labour	Plaid Cymru closer in revised constituency
Pembroke	Conservative	
NORTH WALES		
Conwy & Abergelle	Conservative	
Denbigh, Llangollen & Vale of Conwy	Conservative	Labour close second
Flint & Rhyl	Labour	
Mold & Shotton	Labour	
Wrexham	Labour	
Ynys Mon & Bangor	Labour	
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL		
Barry & Penarth	Conservative	Labour close second
Cardiff Central	Liberal Democrat	
Cardiff North East	Labour	Conservatives close second
Cardiff West	Labour	
Pontypridd & Aberdare	Labour	
Vale of Ely	Conservative	
SOUTH WALES EAST		
Blaenau Gwent & Tredegar	Labour	
Caerphilly	Labour	
Newport	Labour	
Merthyr Tydfil & Ystrad Mynach	Labour	
Monmouth	Conservative	
Torfaen	Labour	
SOUTH WALES WEST		
Bridgend	Labour	
Rhondda & Ogmore	Labour	
Neath & Aberavon	Labour	
Swansea East & Vale of Neath	Labour	
Swansea North & Loughor	Labour	
Swansea West & Gower	Labour	Fairly close 3-way marginal with Conservatives and Liberal Democrats

The overall impact of the changes as modelled is given in the following table.

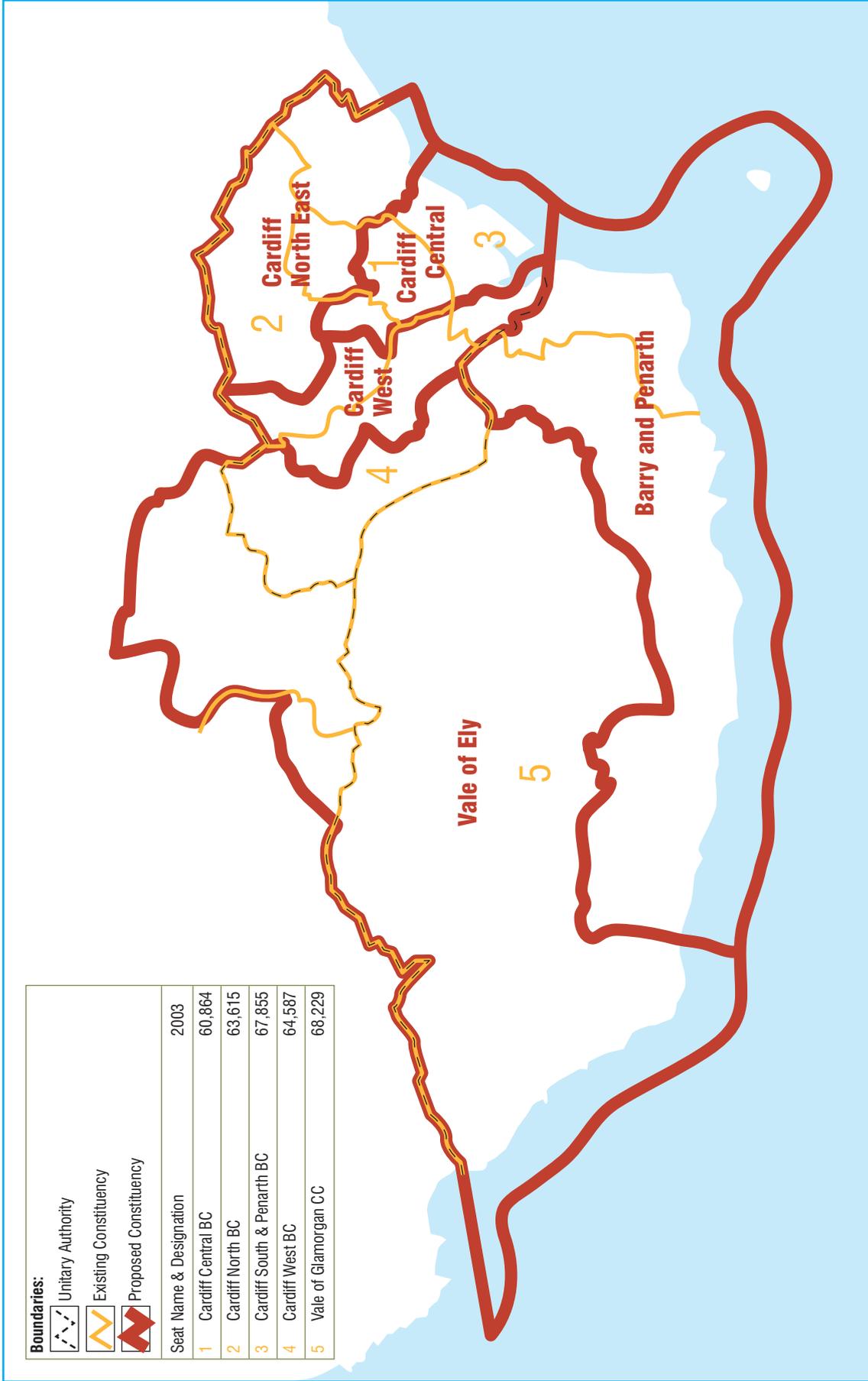
2010 Westminster	Actual	Model
Conservative	8	6 (-2)
Labour	26	19 (-7)
Lib Dem	3	3 (-)
Plaid Cymru	3	2 (-1)

Appendix 4: Maps of proposed new constituencies

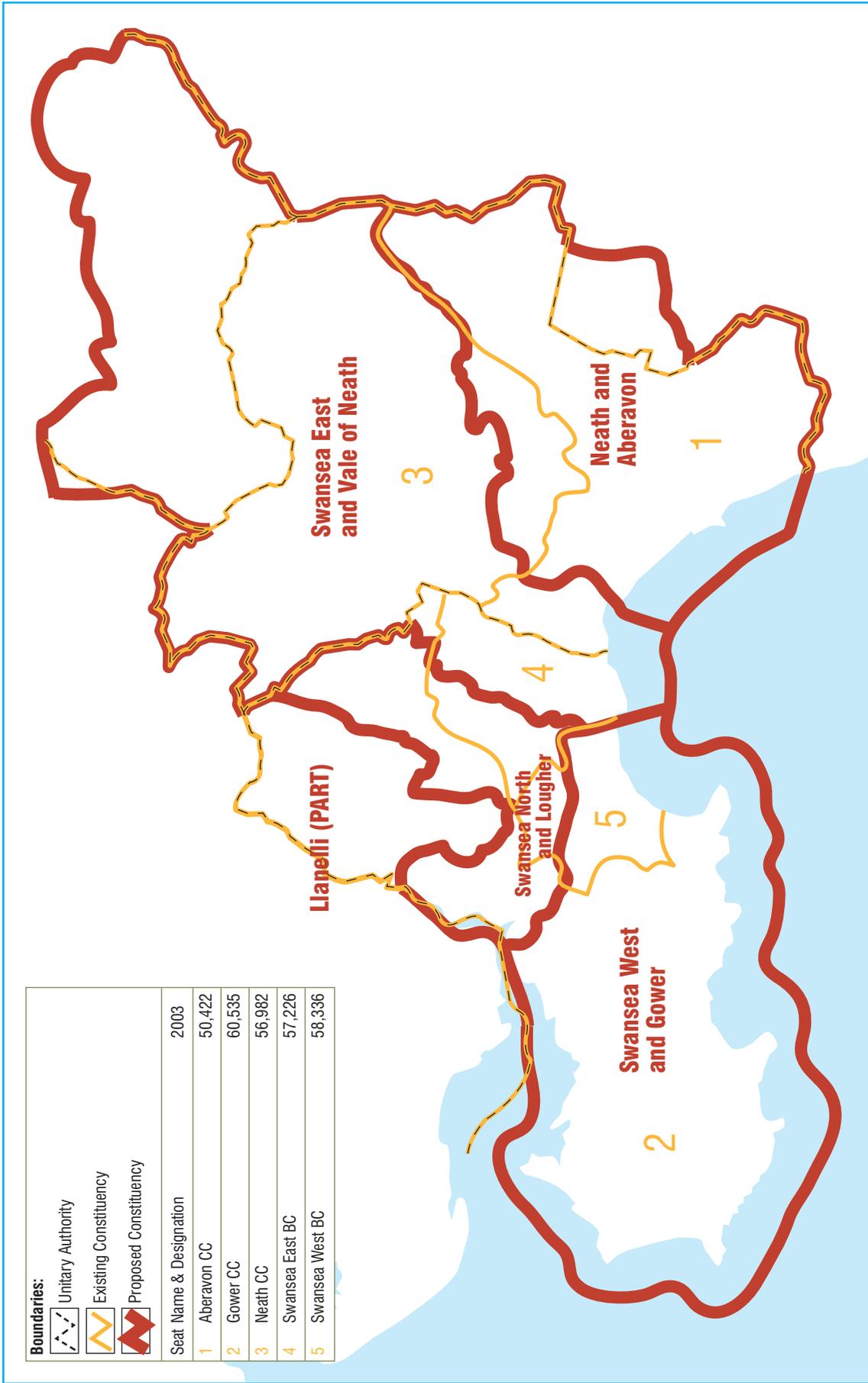
Provisional Recommendations for Gwent and Mid Glamorgan



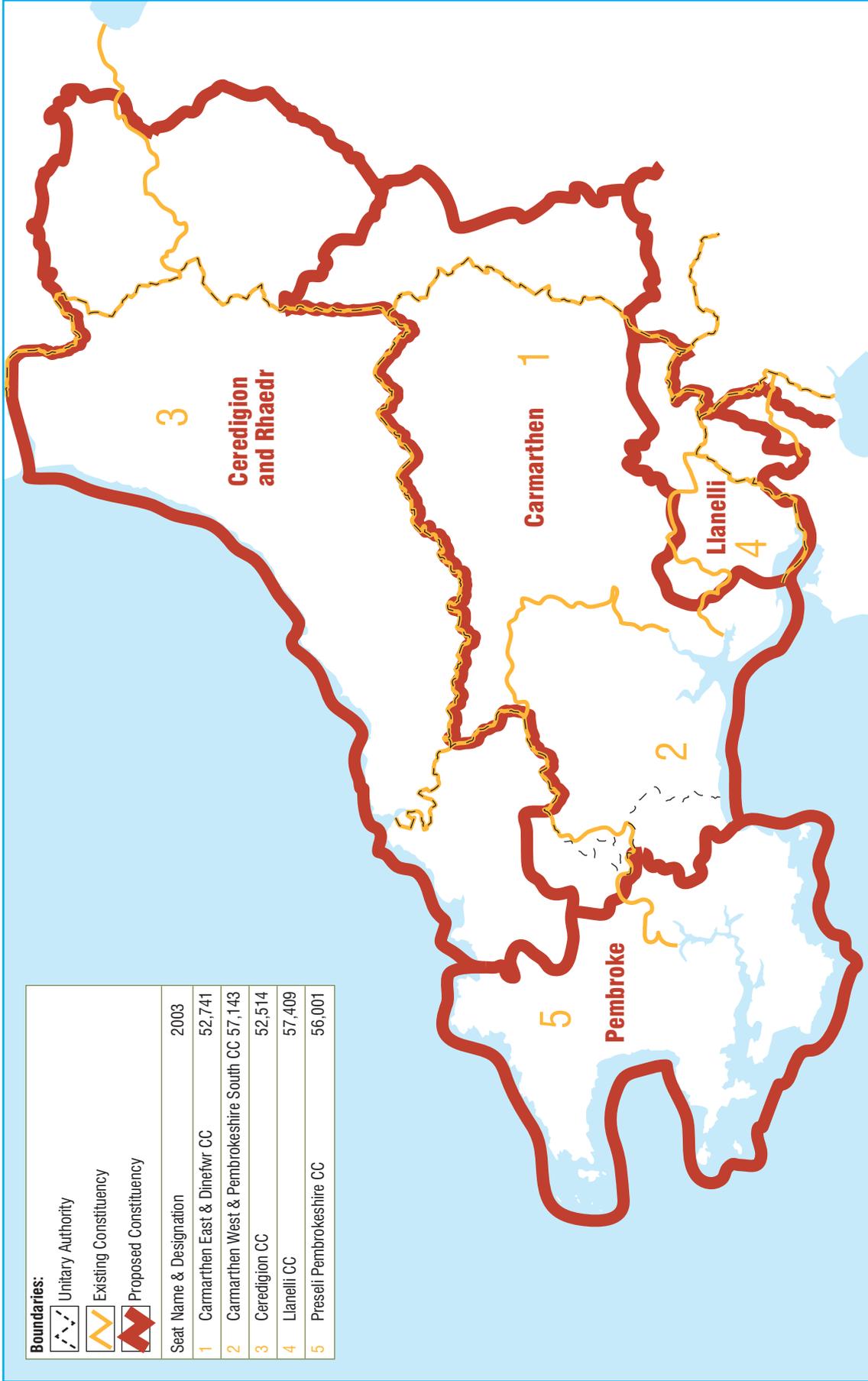
Provisional Recommendations for South Glamorgan



Provisional Recommendations for West Glamorgan

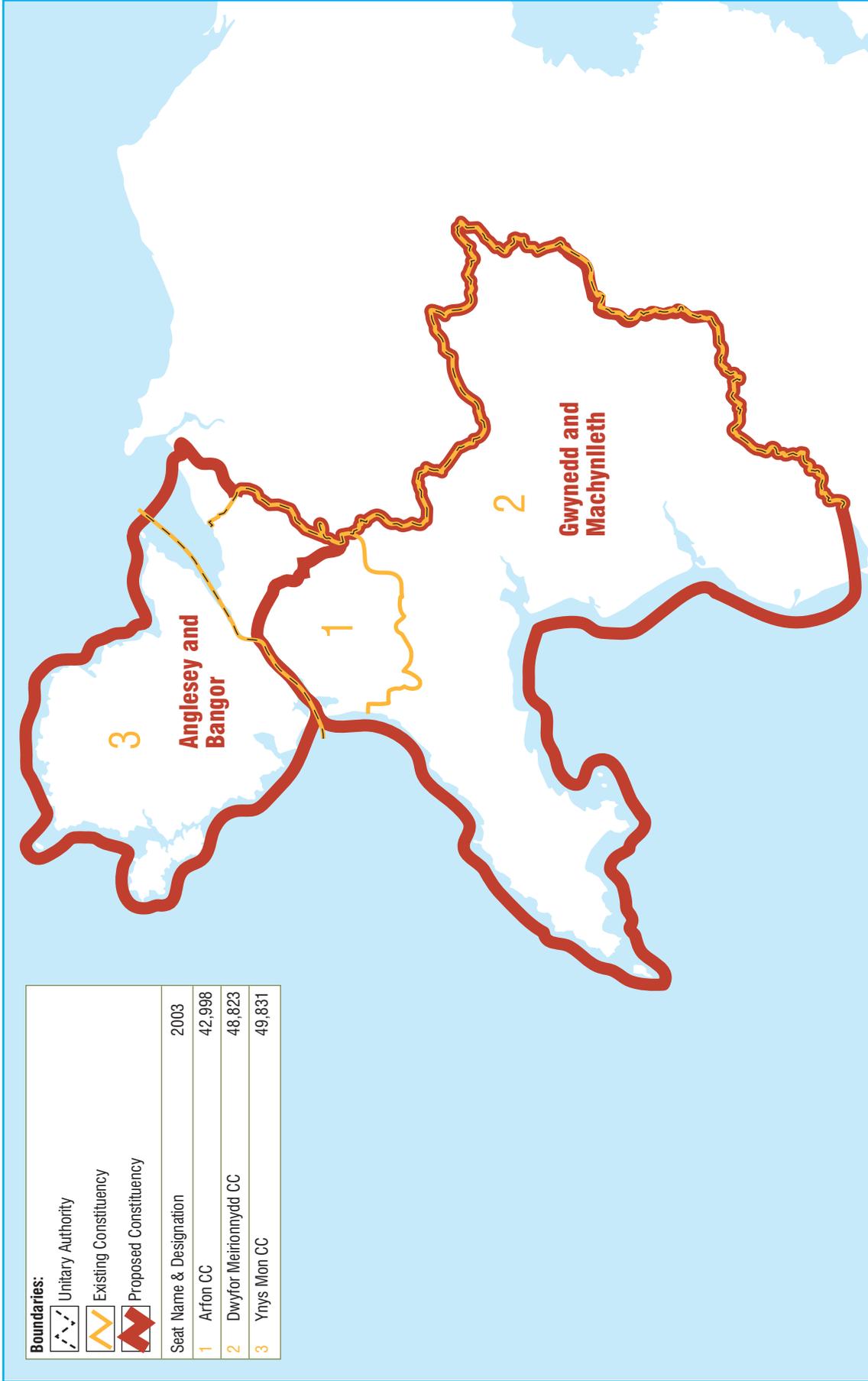


Provisional Recommendations for Dyfed

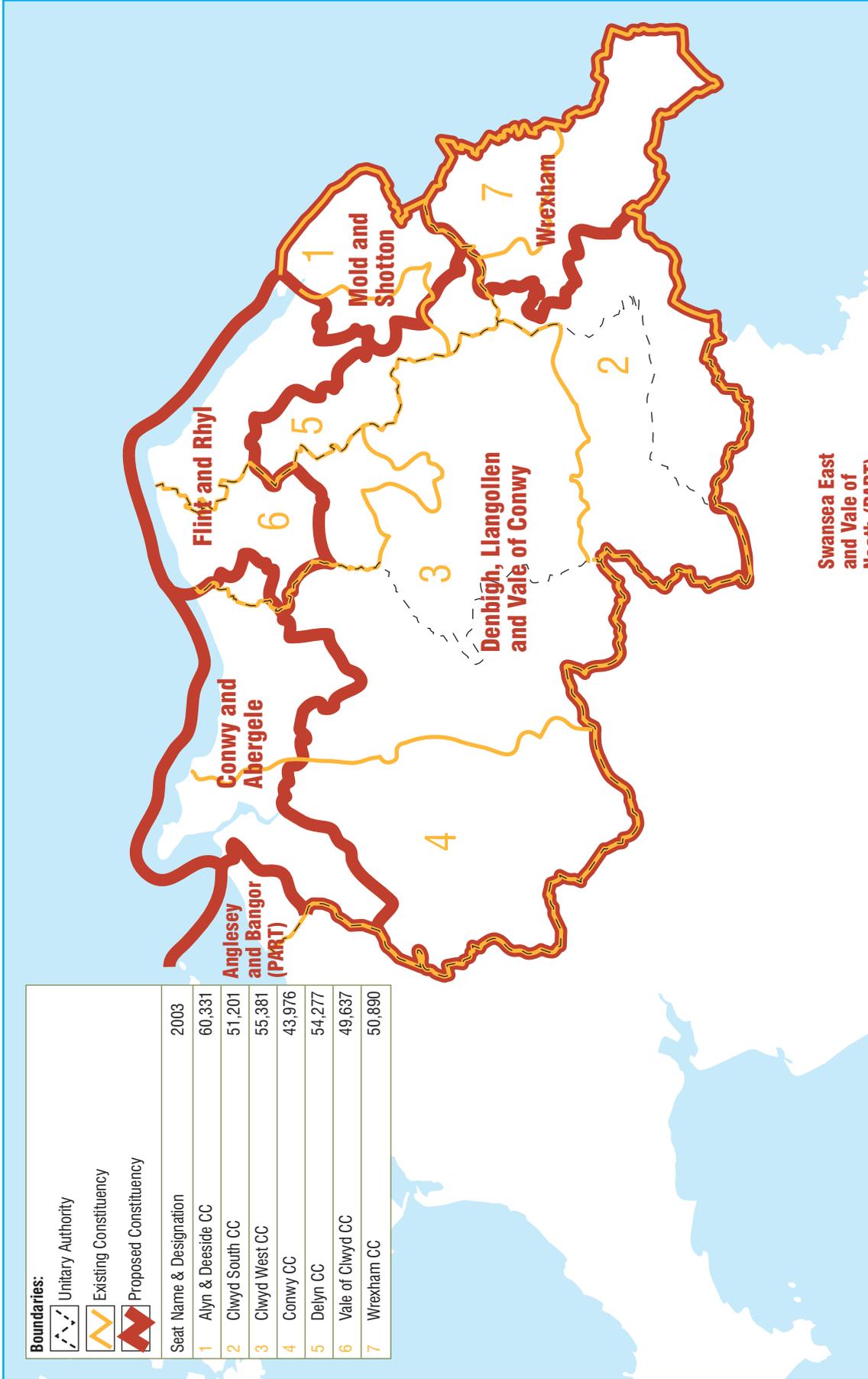


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Provisional Recommendations for Gwynedd



Provisional Recommendations for Clwyd



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Provisional Recommendations for Powys

