



Advice document: Guidance on preparing and revising Welsh language schemes

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1 Background

This guidance is an advisory document for organisations implementing Welsh Language Schemes under the Welsh Language Act 1993. It does not replace any relevant legislation or set Welsh Language Standards, but outlines what is expected as a minimum for new or revised Welsh language schemes.

Purpose of the Guide

The guidance is intended to assist organisations through the process of drafting and reviewing Welsh language schemes to:

- Understand the statutory requirements when preparing a new Welsh language scheme or reviewing an existing scheme;
- Ensuring and improving consistency in public services provided in Welsh;
- Formulate clear, practical, and measurable language commitments that reflect the organisation's operational capacity and context;
- To lay a solid foundation for the possible transition to operating under the Welsh Language Standards regime in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 when, and if applicable.

This guide offers practical ideas on how to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 in terms of preparing and implementing Welsh language schemes and promoting the use of Welsh language services. Organisations are encouraged to adopt the good practice discussed in offering and promoting their Welsh language services to the extent that is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable.

This guidance does not replace the [statutory advice on the preparation of Welsh language schemes](#), but outlines what is expected in schemes to ensure that they reflect the nature and current methods of public service delivery today.

The Commissioner's expectations in accepting and approving new and revised language schemes

The Commissioner recognises that organisations implementing Welsh language schemes, and the schemes themselves, vary significantly in their scope and commitments. As part of the drafting and approval process, the Commissioner will have regard to the nature, size and activities of the organisation, its relationship with the public, the commitments made in previous schemes and its capacity to expand its Welsh language provision. This guidance should therefore be considered in the context of the individual circumstances of each organisation and on the basis of what is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable.

However, the Commissioner expects Welsh language schemes to reflect a commitment to continued progress, by identifying realistic and achievable measures to strengthen and increase the provision and use of Welsh over time.

Policy and Legislative Background

When preparing or reviewing a Welsh language scheme, organisations should be aware of the following:

<u>Legal continuity:</u>	Language schemes remain a valid mechanism that imposes a legal requirement on organisations that are not yet subject to the Welsh language standards regime.
<u>Expectation:</u>	The recommendations set out in this guidance represent the commitments expected of organisations in delivering services to the public in Wales when preparing a new Welsh Language Scheme or revising an existing one.
<u>Policy Direction:</u>	There is a clear policy expectation that Welsh language schemes include firm commitments to provide Welsh language public services that are up-to-date and ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in the provision of those services.

Core Principles

All Welsh language schemes should adhere to the following core principles:

Principle	Practical Meaning
Equality	Treat Welsh and English equally – in quality, timing and availability.
Proactive	Not just providing Welsh language services on request – offering confidently, willingly, from the outset.
Clarity	Clear and unambiguous statements and commitments. Ambiguous clauses should be avoided.
Realistic	Reflect operational reality, but without undermining the goal of continuous improvement.
Measurable	Be able to demonstrate progress over time through a clear action plan and monitoring measures.

These principles reflect the wider policy movement towards normalising the use of Welsh in everyday life, and to create a Wales where people can live their lives through the medium of Welsh.

2 Policy impact and introduction of new initiatives

It is essential that the Welsh language is systematically considered when formulating policies and adapting or adopting any new policies. Organisations should integrate linguistic considerations into their normal decision-making processes.

New policies and initiatives should be consistent with the measures contained in the scheme and should promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. When formulating or reviewing policies or initiatives, organisations should consider and assess the potential impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language. Consideration should also be given to how they can be developed in order to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language and how any negative impacts on the opportunities to use the Welsh language can be avoided or mitigated.

Organisations should ensure that staff and consultants involved in policy development are aware of, and give due consideration to their Welsh Language Scheme. These considerations also apply to organisations exercising statutory functions that will influence the activities of other organisations, such as other persons acting as servants or agents to the Crown or other public bodies.

When adopting or reviewing policies, organisations should integrate linguistic considerations into their normal decision-making processes. This would include assessing the potential impacts of a new policy on service users' opportunities to use Welsh.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

It is essential that the impact of policies, strategies, schemes and initiatives on the Welsh language is considered early and systematically as an integral part of the development and decision-making process. The potential impacts on the Welsh language must be given conscientious consideration when formulating, reviewing or adopting new policies and initiatives, ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally.

Organisations should:

- establish a formal arrangement for carrying out Welsh Language Impact Assessments as part of their governance and decision-making arrangements;
 - Provide staff with guidance, training and standardised templates to ensure the consistency and quality of assessments;
 - ensure that the assessment takes into account positive, negative and neutral impacts, as well as actions to mitigate adverse impacts and increase opportunities to promote the Welsh language;
 - establish appropriate processes to scrutinise the assessments and monitor the impacts as policies are implemented;
 - ensure that there is clear responsibility and accountability for the process at a higher level of the organisation;
 - ensure that the findings of assessments are given meaningful consideration and inform the final decision;
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- keep a clear record of the consideration given to the Welsh language and the way in which the findings of the assessment were used in the formulation of the decision.

The Welsh Language Scheme should include:

- a commitment to carry out a Linguistic Impact Assessment for new or reviewed policies, strategies and initiatives;
- a commitment to ensuring that impacts on the Welsh language are considered early in the policy development process and not just at the end of the process;
- a commitment that new policies and initiatives will:
 - promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language;
 - contribute to increasing opportunities to use the Welsh language where appropriate;
 - move the organisation closer to realising the principle of equality between Welsh and English;
- a commitment to ensuring that new policies and initiatives are consistent with and do not undermine the scheme;
- a commitment to ensuring that staff and consultants involved in policy development are aware of the scheme and of the organisation's responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language;
- a commitment to ensuring that the provisions of the Welsh Language Scheme are implemented in the development and delivery of new policies and initiatives;
- a commitment to consult with the Welsh Language Commissioner where proposals are likely to have an impact on the Welsh language or the implementation of the scheme;
- a commitment to publish or make available, where appropriate, a summary of the findings of Welsh Language Impact Assessments in order to promote transparency and accountability.
- a description of the arrangements for implementing, monitoring and reviewing these commitments.

For further guidance on assessing the impact of policy decisions on the Welsh language, organisations should refer to the Commissioner's official guidance on the policy-making standards, available [here](#). Although this guidance relates to the Welsh Language Standards, the same principles are applicable to organisations operating Welsh Language Schemes.

Developing and maintaining Welsh language services

The Scheme should specify how the organisation intends to deliver the particular services for which it is responsible through the medium of Welsh. It should also explain how services will be planned and organised to ensure that the needs of Welsh speakers are taken into consideration.

The expectation is not limited to maintaining existing provision only – organisations are expected to develop their Welsh language services actively and strategically, by:

- Planning Welsh language provision as an integral part of all new or revised services;
 - Ensuring that a Welsh language interface is available from the first launch of any new digital service;
 - Investing in organisational capacity – developing Welsh language skills among staff;
 - Adopting technological systems that support bilingual implementation.
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The principle of treating Welsh and English equally applies not only to the availability of services, but also to their quality, timing and accessibility. A user should be able to have the same experience using a Welsh service as they would in English.

What's unacceptable	What's good
To publish an English version before the Welsh version is ready to be published.	Establish a procedure that ensures materials are ready in both languages prior to publication.
A Welsh language website that is not updated as often as English.	An editorial brief that sets out clear responsibility for the Welsh content.
Replying to a Welsh-language email in English "for convenience"	Responding in Welsh always to Welsh correspondence.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- The organisation's commitment to delivering services of the same standard in Welsh as in English.
- A commitment to make this publicly known, together with a description of where and how this commitment will be communicated.
- A commitment to establish specific standards relating to the use of Welsh in service delivery and in dealings with the public.
- A commitment to monitor those standards, as well as their implementation.
- A commitment to ensure consistency in the standard of Welsh-language services provided by the organisation across different geographical areas and through different methods and platforms of service delivery.

3 Dealing with the Welsh speaking public

A user's initial experience is critical in fostering confidence to use Welsh. Organisations are expected to take a proactive approach to the provision of Welsh-language services, rather than placing the onus on users to ask for them.

Correspondence

Correspondence is an essential element of the way organisations deal with people. There should be no difference between response times for Welsh and English correspondence. Clear arrangements should be ensured for the handling of Welsh correspondence, including specific instructions for relevant staff.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to welcome correspondence in Welsh and English and treat them equally;
- A commitment to ensure that correspondence through the medium of Welsh will not in itself lead to delays.
- A commitment that all correspondence (e.g. letters, e-mails etc) received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh;
- A commitment that correspondence will begin in Welsh after verbal contact in Welsh or where there is a known preference for correspondence in Welsh;
- A commitment to provide Welsh versions of mass correspondence at the same time as English;
- A commitment to treat both languages equally in terms of content, quality, status, format and timing in all correspondence;
- A commitment to declare in correspondence that the organisation welcomes the correspondence in Welsh, that you will reply to correspondence in Welsh and that correspondence in Welsh will not lead to a delay;
- A description of the arrangements established in accordance with the above guidance to ensure the effective implementation of these correspondence commitments. For example:-
 - providing guidance to staff;
 - training staff on the requirements of the Welsh language scheme in relation to correspondence with the public;
 - making translation service arrangements;
 - establish and maintain databases of individuals who wish to deal with the organisation in Welsh.

How to incorporate it into the scheme?

- Define a clear process for recognising language preference;
- To specifically note that correspondence in Welsh does not lead to delays;

Example statement on correspondence to be included in a Welsh Language Scheme:

"You are welcome to correspond with us in Welsh. We will reply in Welsh and ensure that correspondence in Welsh does not lead to any delay."

A proactive approach should also be adopted to welcoming correspondence in Welsh.



Recording and using data on language preference

An organisation's ability to effectively provide Welsh language services depends on its ability to identify and record the language preference of users. Organisations should collect, record and use language preference information in order to provide services in Welsh without users having to repeat their preference on every occasion. Language preference information should be used to facilitate access to services and to contribute to the equal treatment of Welsh and English.

Organisations should:

- provide users with the opportunity to indicate their language preference when contacting the organisation;
- record users' language preference in relevant systems and databases;
- use the information in the provision of services, correspondence and communications;
- ensure that users can easily change their language preference;
- review and update information on language preferences appropriately;
- ensure that arrangements for collecting and storing information comply with data protection requirements;
- use information about language preference to plan and improve Welsh language services.

Organisations can use the data to:

- automatically send correspondence in Welsh to users who have indicated that Welsh is their preferred language;
- ensure that invitations, notices and updates are provided in the preferred language;
- organise meetings, events or consultations;
- inform the planning of services and promotional activities.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to give users the opportunity to indicate their preferred language;
 - A commitment to record and use language preference information in order to provide services in the user's preferred language;
 - A commitment to ensuring that users can easily change their language preference;
 - A commitment to using information about language choice to improve and plan Welsh language services;
 - A description of the arrangements to collect, store, update and use information about language preference.
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Telephone Services

Telephone calls in Welsh should be welcomed proactively. The individual should be greeted in Welsh, and it should be made clear that they are welcome to use Welsh. Offering a clear language choice at the beginning of the call will give reassurance and confidence to the caller.

Organisations should ensure that arrangements are in place to transfer calls to a Welsh speaker, or to provide appropriate support where the person answering the call is unable to speak Welsh. Staff should be trained to use a Welsh-language greeting in order to promote the use of Welsh.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to make it clear that the organisation welcomes calls in Welsh when advertising any contact telephone numbers;
- A commitment to greet telephone calls in Welsh on all main contact numbers;
- A commitment to provide greetings and messages on automatic systems in Welsh;
- A commitment to offer to transfer the call to a Welsh speaker, or to arrange a call back if a Welsh speaker is not available;
- A commitment to treat Welsh and English equally when advertising telephone numbers.
- A description of the arrangements in place by the organisation to be able to deal effectively with Welsh language calls including:
 - providing guidance to staff;
 - training staff on the requirements of the Welsh language scheme in relation to telephone calls;
 - making rota arrangements and scheduling staff to ensure that Welsh speakers are available to receive telephone calls in Welsh;
 - establishing a database of those who wish to deal with the organisation in Welsh.
- Include a timetable for implementation in the scheme if all elements of the commitments are not yet in place.

Situation	Example of a good message
Answering Machine	"You can leave a message in Welsh. We will ensure that this does not lead to any delay."
Automatic greeting	"For a Welsh service, press 1. For English, press 2."
Transferring	"I'm handing you over to a colleague who can deal with your enquiry in Welsh – please stay on the line."
No Welsh speaker available	"There is no Welsh speaker available at the moment – would you like someone to call you back?"

Meeting and public events

Meetings and events provide important opportunities for individuals to engage with organisations through the medium of Welsh. Organisations should ensure that Welsh and English are treated on the basis of equality in the planning and delivery of meetings and events, and that participants are able to use Welsh effectively within those settings.

Meeting with an individual (face-to-face/ virtual)

When an individual is invited to a meeting (face-to-face or virtual) organisations should:

- inform the individual that they are welcome to use Welsh at that meeting;
- give the individual the opportunity to indicate their language preference when arranging the meeting;
- make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a member of staff who is able to conduct the meeting in Welsh is available where the individual wishes to use Welsh;
- ensure that the meeting can be held in Welsh where Welsh is the individual's preferred language;
- ensure that any materials such as invitations, agendas and associated papers make it clear that the use of Welsh is welcome;
- ensure that any correspondence or follow-up materials arising from the meeting are provided in Welsh if Welsh is the individual's preferred language;

If there is no qualified member of staff who can conduct the meeting in Welsh available, the organisation should:

- offer an appropriate alternative arrangement, such as a Welsh speaking member of staff in another location or by phone or video call;
- provide a simultaneous translation service to enable the individual to use Welsh;
- ensure that the arrangements for using Welsh do not place the individual(s) at a disadvantage.

Meetings open to the public

Where an organisation organises a meeting in Wales that is open to the public and allows participation by members of the public, organisations should:

- enable individuals to participate and contribute to the meeting in Welsh;
 - clearly inform attendees that they are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting;
 - ensure that invitations, notices and promotional materials are available in Welsh;
 - consider the likely linguistic needs of the audience when planning and organising the meeting;
 - provide simultaneous translation services where necessary to facilitate the use of the Welsh language and to ensure that attendees can understand contributions made in Welsh;
 - give attendees the opportunity to inform in advance if they wish to contribute in Welsh, to enable appropriate arrangements to be made;
 - ensure that the chairperson makes attendees aware of any language arrangements in place and actively encourages the use of Welsh throughout the meeting;
 - ensure that any materials such as agendas, presentations, minutes and other related papers are available in Welsh;
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- to ensure that any material displayed or distributed at the meeting is available in Welsh and that Welsh is treated equally with English on those materials;
- ensure, where practicable, that members of staff who are able to communicate in Welsh are present at the meeting;
- ensure that the arrangements for the use of Welsh do not hinder or discourage participation by attendees.

The organisation will be expected to consider the following factors when arranging a public meeting:

Factor	Considerations
Location of the event	Is the meeting held in an area where there is a high percentage of Welsh speakers?
The likely audience	Is there any reason to assume that a significant number of Welsh speakers will be present?
The topic being discussed	Is the topic directly relevant to Welsh speakers?
Pre-submitted information	Have any attendees already indicated that they want to use Welsh?

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to inform individuals who are invited to individual meetings that they are able to use Welsh at that meeting.
- A commitment to make appropriate arrangements to enable individuals to use the Welsh language in face-to-face or virtual meetings.
- A commitment to ensure that any materials relating to individual meetings make it clear that the use of Welsh is welcomed.
- A commitment to enable participation in Welsh at meetings and public events held in Wales.
- A commitment to provide appropriate translation services at meetings and public events where necessary to facilitate the use of Welsh.
- A commitment to ensure that invitations, agendas, minutes and related materials are available in Welsh.
- A commitment to ensure that any materials displayed or distributed at meetings and public events are available in Welsh, and that the Welsh language is treated equally with English.
- A commitment to inform attendees of the language arrangements available and to encourage the use of Welsh at meetings and public events.
- A commitment to consider the linguistic needs of the audience when planning and organising meetings and events.
- A description of the arrangements in place to implement these commitments

Reception services

The reception is often the first and most important point of contact between an organisation and the public. It plays a key role in shaping the first impression of service users and in ensuring that they are able to access information, support and services effectively. As a result, organisations should carefully consider how their reception arrangements can enable people to use the Welsh language naturally and confidently from the first moment they contact the organisation. Providing a welcoming and bilingual reception experience contributes to the treatment of Welsh and English on an equal footing and helps to ensure that users do not need to specifically request a Welsh language service before they can receive it.

In ensuring that a reception service is available in Welsh, an organisation should proactively offer a Welsh language service rather than wait for a visitor to request it. The Welsh language service should be available without hindrance, ensuring that there is no need to use English in order to receive the reception service in Welsh.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment that any reception service based in Wales will treat Welsh and English equally;
- A commitment, where there is no Welsh face-to-face reception service available, the organisation will provide a Welsh language reception service over the telephone;
- A commitment to display a sign at the reception indicating clearly that people are welcome to use Welsh;
- A commitment to ensure that Welsh-speaking reception staff are clearly identified (e.g. through a badge or lanyard) in order to promote the use of Welsh.
- A description of the arrangements in place by the organisation to effectively provide a Welsh language reception service including:
 - providing guidance to staff;
 - training staff on the requirements of the scheme in relation to the reception services;
 - making rota arrangements and scheduling staff to ensure that Welsh speakers are available to receive visitors to reception;
- Include a timetable for implementation in the scheme if all elements of the commitments are not yet in place.

Dealing with the public in other ways

Public surveys

When public surveys are conducted, whether to gather information or to gather public opinion, organisations should:

- ensure that all aspects of communication with the public are available in Welsh;
 - ensure that language preference is established in advance for all public surveys;
 - check respondents' language preference before starting the survey;
 - seek views on Welsh language services where relevant and appropriate.
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Other public events (including seminars and training sessions)

Public events provide important opportunities for individuals to engage with organisations through the medium of Welsh. Organisations should ensure that public event arrangements facilitate the use of Welsh and reflect the principle of treating Welsh and English on the basis of equality.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to enable individuals to use the Welsh language at public events held in Wales;
 - A commitment to consider the linguistic preferences and needs of the audience when planning public events;
 - A commitment to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language at public events;
 - A commitment to ensure that promotional materials, registration forms, presentations, event materials and any related resources are available in Welsh;
 - A commitment to provide translation services or appropriate linguistic support where necessary to enable participation in Welsh;
 - A commitment to ensure that the arrangements of the event make it clear that individuals are welcome to use the Welsh language;
 - A commitment to ensure, where practicable, that staff or facilitators who can communicate in Welsh are available at public events;
 - A commitment to ensure that the use of Welsh does not create barriers to participation;
 - A commitment to treating Welsh and English equally in the planning, promotion and conduct of public events;
 - A description of the arrangements in place to implement these commitments, including guidance for staff, appropriate training and Welsh language capacity assurance arrangements.
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4 Public Face

Corporate Identity

Corporate identity encompasses all the ways in which an organisation presents itself to the outside world – from its logo and brand colours, to official stationery, templates, staff uniform, vehicles and digital resources. For an organisation that implements a Welsh language scheme, corporate identity is more than just a matter of visual consistency – it is a powerful means of demonstrating a genuine commitment to the Welsh language.

When the Welsh language is visible and prominent in all aspects of an organisation's public image, it sends an important message to consumers, staff and partners that the Welsh language is a real priority, not a secondary consideration. Every element of corporate identity that includes the Welsh language counts – and every element that neglects it is detrimental to consumer confidence.

This section covers the main areas of corporate identity and what is expected of each:

Area of corporate identity	What is relevant to the Welsh language
Name of organisation	The Welsh name of the organisation is used consistently on all public material in Wales.
Logo and brand	Welsh and English are treated equally in the organisation's logo and brand.
Writing materials	Welsh and English are treated equally on letter headers, business cards, signatures, publications etc.
Official templates	Welsh and English are treated equally on corporate templates including letters, reports, power point presentations etc.
Staff uniform and badges	Welsh and English are treated equally on uniforms, ID cards and staff badges.
Organisation vehicles	Welsh and English are treated equally on all vehicles displaying the organisation's brand.
Buildings and external appearance	Welsh and English are treated equally on the organisation's signs and billboards.
Digital identity	Welsh and English are treated equally on website logo, social media profile images and email footers.

Name and logo of organisation

The name of the organisation is a central element of its identity, and the Welsh language is an integral part of that identity. An organisation operating in Wales should use a public Welsh name consistently across all its communications.

- Where an official Welsh name exists, it will be used consistently on all public materials, correspondence, signage and digital platforms;

- The organisation's logo will either (a) be bilingual, (b) in Welsh only, or (c) with a Welsh version available for use in Wales;
- The Welsh or bilingual logo will have the same status, print quality and visibility as the English version.

Official stationery

Official stationery materials – such as letter headings, business cards, envelopes and greeting slips – are very often the first corporate contact between the organisation and its users. The Welsh language should be as visible and prominent on these materials.

- Letter headings will be bilingual, giving the Welsh name of the organisation the same prominence as the English;
- Business cards will be available in Welsh, including job titles;
- Official envelopes will show the Welsh name of the organisation;
- Greeting slips and other communication materials will be available in Welsh.

Official templates

Official templates are the foundation of the organisation's written communications. The organisation should invest in creating a complete set of bilingual templates that are both convenient and easy to use.

- The organisation's official letter template will be bilingual, including a headline, address, and footnote;
- An email template (including a signature) will be bilingual including a statement welcoming correspondence in Welsh;
- A presentation template (PowerPoint or similar) will include the Welsh/bilingual logo in both languages;
- Report templates, records and key internal documents will be bilingual with the Welsh name and logo style;
- These templates will be readily available on the organisation's intranet to all staff members.

Staff Uniform and Badges



Staff uniforms and badges can contribute to the visibility of the Welsh language and help service users identify members of staff who can communicate in Welsh. It can also support the right of individuals to use the Welsh language and increase confidence to do so.

Organisations should consider how staff uniforms, name badges and other means of identification can be used to demonstrate their commitment to the Welsh language and to proactively promote Welsh language services.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that any text on staff uniform is available in Welsh or bilingually;
- A commitment to ensure that staff name badges are available in Welsh or bilingually;
- A commitment to provide badges, lanyards or other means of identification to staff who are able to provide a service in Welsh;
- A commitment to promote the use of identification methods that enable the public to identify Welsh speakers;
- A description of the arrangements in place to provide and review staff uniform, badges and any other means of identification relating to the Welsh language.

Organisation Vehicles

The organisation's vehicles move around the community and create a continuous visible impression. Vehicles with bilingual logos and details promote the Welsh language and the organisation at the same time.

- The Welsh name of the organisation should appear on all vehicles in the same way as an English name – the same size, the same prominence;
- When logos and details are renewed or redesigned, the Welsh language will be seen as a fundamental part of that process;

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment that the Welsh language will appear on an equal footing with English on all of the organisation's corporate identity materials. The Welsh language will not appear in a smaller font, in a less prominent colour, or in a less visible location than the English;
- A commitment that the Welsh name of the organisation (where one exists) will be used consistently on all material and platforms;
- A commitment that all official templates (letters, emails, reports, presentations) will be Welsh or bilingual from the outset;
- A commitment that the linguistic accuracy of the Welsh language on brand materials will be reviewed by a qualified translator prior to publication.
- A timetable for implementation in the scheme if all elements of the commitments are not yet in place.

Signage

The signs and information seen on buildings and sites make a first impression on users. Bilingual external signs contribute to the organisation's Welsh ethos before anyone steps over the threshold.

- All external signs on the organisation's premises in Wales should be in Welsh or bilingual, with Welsh usually coming first;
- The names of buildings and sites should be Welsh or bilingual;
- Any external billboards, access signs and safety information should be in Welsh or bilingual.
- The Welsh language should appear on signs in a way that treats Welsh and English equally;
- All Welsh language content should be equivalent to the English in terms of content, design and accuracy on every sign;
- Careful consideration should be given to text size, layout and overall design.

What to consider when designing signage?

Elements	Expectation
Text size	Welsh and English of the same size – unless there is a linguistic reason for variation.
Language order	The Welsh usually comes first on signs in Wales.
Overall design	Welsh is visible as English.
Accuracy	Welsh text should be reviewed by a professional qualified translator before printing.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

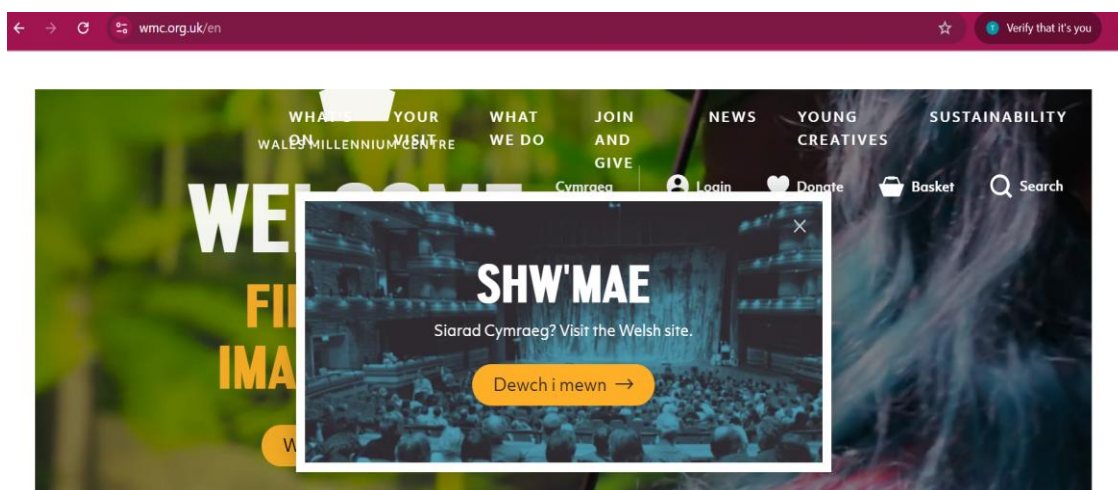
- Commitment to provide information signage in Welsh or fully bilingual signage within the boundaries of the organisation's premises in Wales, including internal areas to which members of the public have access.
- A commitment to ensure that other signs (e.g. highway signs and public information) for which the organisation is responsible, is Welsh or bilingual.
- A commitment that the size, quality, clarity and prominence of texts on signs will respect the principle of equality.
- A commitment that, if provided, separate Welsh and English signs will be equal in form, size, quality, clarity and prominence.
- A description of the steps to be taken to implement these commitments, including timetable for completion.

Websites, Apps and Social Media

Digital services, websites and social media are a core part of the way public bodies communicate and deliver services in the twenty-first century. Although digital services, websites and social media are not explicitly mentioned in the Welsh Language Act 1993, they should be considered key services in the planning and implementation of Welsh language services. In many cases, they are the primary medium used by the public to obtain information or interact with an organisation. Therefore, it is important that the Welsh language is incorporated into these services from the outset, so that users can use the Welsh language with ease and have the same experience as English language users.

Examples of good practice for websites:

- Use a pop-up to offer Welsh on a first visit;



- Set the language to Welsh by default if the user has previously chosen it;
- Offer a direct link to the corresponding Welsh page - not just to the Welsh homepage.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment that Welsh and English will be treated equally on the organisation's websites and digital services;
- A commitment that the homepage and menus of the website will be in Welsh;
- A commitment that the Welsh pages will be easy to browse with a prominent link from the English page to the Welsh version;
- A commitment that Welsh materials will be equal to English in terms of quality, accuracy, and prominence and that Welsh material will be updated at the same time as the corresponding English content;
- A description of the steps to be taken to implement these commitments, including timetable for completion.

Social media

Social media is a fast and influential channel for communication. The use of Welsh on social media is not just about translating content. Organisations should proactively use the medium to promote Welsh language services, encourage the use of Welsh and create a digital environment where the Welsh language is visible and natural.

Organisations are expected to ensure that the Welsh language is used regularly and visibly on these channels by:

- Ensuring that Welsh and English content are treated equally on social media accounts and channels;
- Ensuring that Welsh contents and materials are equal to English in terms of quality, accuracy, and prominence and that Welsh version is updated at the same time as the corresponding English content.
- Ensuring prominent visibility for the Welsh language in information and updates published on social media.

In practice this will mean:

- Publishing messages in Welsh at the same time as in English;
- Responding in Welsh to enquiries or comments made in Welsh;
- Combining messages in both languages on the same feed, or create separate Welsh and English accounts (but ensure consistency between them);
- Including a link from the English account to the corresponding Welsh account.
- Introducing internal guidance on the use of Welsh on social media which sets out when and how the Welsh language will be used, and how the organisation will ensure consistency between the platform in Welsh and English.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that Welsh and English content are treated equally on the organisation's social media accounts and channels;
- A commitment to publish Welsh and English content at the same time, where versions are provided in both languages;
- A commitment to ensuring that Welsh content has the same status, quality, visibility and engagement as English content;
- A commitment to respond in Welsh to comments, enquiries and messages received in Welsh;
- A commitment to ensure that information about Welsh language services and users' rights to use the Welsh language is promoted regularly through social media;
- A commitment to ensure that any multimedia content published on social media, including videos and images, is available in Welsh or bilingually;
- A commitment to ensure that account names, profile descriptions, biographies and organisational information are in Welsh;
- A commitment to consider the Welsh language when planning communication and marketing campaigns on social media;
- A commitment to provide appropriate guidance and support to staff who use social media on behalf of the organisation;
- A description of the arrangements used to plan, publish, monitor and respond to social media content in Welsh.

Apps

Mobile and web apps are an increasingly important part of the way organisations provide services and communicate with the public. In many cases, an app is the main medium that users will use to access services. As a result, organisations should ensure that the Welsh language is taken into account from the outset when planning, developing, acquiring or updating any app.

Welsh and English should be treated equally in terms of function, content, quality, accessibility and user experience. When developing or acquiring apps, organisations should:

- ensure that a full Welsh language interface is available, including menus, buttons, system messages and support content;
 - ensure that the Welsh and English content and texts are treated equally in terms of functionality and quality;
-

- test the app in Welsh before launching and when significant updates are introduced;
- ensure that the Welsh version is updated at the same time as the English version;
- ensure consideration of the needs of Welsh users when planning and designing the user experience;
- ensure that any notices, alerts or messages sent through the app are available in Welsh;
- include Welsh language requirements in any contract or procurement process for third-party apps or services.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that any app provided by, or on behalf of, the organisation treats Welsh and English equally;
- A commitment to ensure that users can use the app in Welsh without having to switch to English to complete a task or access information;
- A commitment to ensure that content, functions and updates are available in Welsh at the same time as in English;
- A commitment to testing apps in Welsh before launching and when introducing significant changes;
- A description of the arrangements in place to ensure that the commitments are taken into account in the development, procurement and management of apps.

New technologies and the use of Artificial Intelligence

Digital services play a central role in the delivery of public services. The technology sector continues to evolve rapidly, particularly through developments in artificial intelligence, and it is inevitable that public services in Wales will wish to take advantage of the new opportunities created by these advancements. The Commissioner recognises that AI presents significant opportunities to improve services and to strengthen the use of the Welsh language. While such developments are welcome, care should be taken when using these technologies. Risks can arise where systems perform well in English but poorly in Welsh, or where they generate Welsh text and content that is inaccurate, unnatural, or of a lower standard. When making decisions about the adoption and use of new technologies, organisations must:

- ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally when AI systems are used.
- assess and test AI tools in Welsh and not assume that they work as well in Welsh as in English.
- be transparent about their use of AI and maintain a high standard of linguistic accuracy.

The Welsh language should be fully integrated into any technical and digital services. Organisations should ensure that Welsh versions of websites and apps:

- contain the same information as the English versions;
 - are easy to navigate and use; and
 - are updated at the same time as the English version.
-

Where new technologies such as chatbots or automated systems (including those powered by AI) are used, organisations should ensure that they are fully capable of operating in Welsh. This includes:

- ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally;
- recognising and maintaining conversations in Welsh without requiring users to switch languages;
- ensuring that responses are natural, accurate, and linguistically correct;
- Testing the system with Welsh-speaking users before it is launched.

For further guidance on the use of Artificial Intelligence in the delivery of public services in Wales, organisations should refer to the Commissioner's [Policy Statement](#) on Artificial Intelligence.

Documents and forms

Public documents and forms are a core part of the way organisations provide services and interact with the public. This is often the primary method of gathering information, making requests, providing guidance or communicating decisions. It should therefore be ensured that users are able to complete, process and access information through the medium of Welsh without any disadvantage compared to English users.

Welsh and English should be treated equally in terms of content, quality, accessibility, form and status. Users should not have to ask for a Welsh version or wait longer to receive it.

When preparing, publishing or updating public documents and forms, organisations should:

- ensure that Welsh and English versions are available at the same time;
 - ensure that English versions of documents and forms include a clear statement stating that the document or form is also available in Welsh;
 - ensure that Welsh and English versions contain the same information and have the same status;
 - ensure that Welsh forms are no less comprehensive or functional than their equivalent English-language forms;
 - ensure that guidance, explanatory notes and supporting documents are available in Welsh;
 - properly review Welsh content prior to publication to ensure the accuracy and naturalness of the language;
 - ensure that digital forms allow full use of Welsh, including in text fields, error messages and confirmation messages;
 - plan for Welsh language requirements in the procurement of form or document management systems.
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Document type	Recommendation
Common forms	Bilingual in one document – enabling the user to complete in either language.
Posters and leaflets	Bilingual with equal prominence for Welsh and English.
Lengthy documents / strategies	Separate versions – but both available at the same time and as accessible.
Staff internal documents	Assess on a case-by-case basis and encourage bilingual drafting.

Good practice with online forms:

- Enabling users to complete the process fully in Welsh without having to change language during the process;
- Show a prominent language button at the top of each page;
- Ensure that error and confirmation messages are also in Welsh.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that all public documents and forms provided by the organisation are available in English and Welsh;
- A commitment to publish both Welsh and English versions at the same time;
- A commitment to ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally in terms of content, quality, format and prominence;
- A commitment to ensure that forms, guidelines and related materials are available in Welsh;
- A commitment to ensure that completing a form or submitting an application in Welsh does not result in any delay;
- A description of the arrangements used to prepare, translate, verify and publish documents and forms in both languages.

Publicity, marketing and multimedia material

Publicity and marketing material plays a central role in communicating with the public, promoting services and increasing awareness of the resources and opportunities provided by an organisation. This includes printed materials, advertisements, marketing campaigns, online content, videos, podcasts, animations and social media material.

The way in which services are promoted directly influences individuals' awareness and use of those services. The provision of Welsh language services alone is not enough. They must be actively promoted to ensure that the public is aware of them and uses them. Without effective promotion, the full value and benefits of Welsh-language provision will not be realised.

Publicity material is often the first impression the public has of an organisation. As a result, the Welsh language should be visible, accessible and of the same standard as English in all material produced or commissioned. Welsh and English should be treated equally in terms of content, status, quality, timing and prominence. Welsh should not be treated as an addition or as a secondary translation produced at the end of the material development process.

As part of any publicity or marketing campaign, content should be planned bilingually from the outset. Relying on translating English materials at the end of the process should be avoided as this can affect the quality, impact and relevance of the Welsh messages. It is important to include Welsh language expertise early in the planning process to ensure that messages are natural, effective and suitable for the target audience.

Organisations should:

- clearly state on all communication channels that services are available in Welsh;
- ensure that the Welsh language is an integral part of all publicity and marketing campaigns;
- plan campaigns bilingually from the outset, rather than translating the content at the end of the process;
- adopt the principles of "[Trio Writing](#)", including relevant officers and translators when planning content;
- ensure that Welsh is presented in a creative, visible and relevant way, rather than simply being linguistically correct;
- test Welsh messaging with users before launching;
- ensure that Welsh and English materials are available at the same time;
- ensure that any material produced by third parties or contractors meets the same language requirements.

When planning and producing publicity material, organisations should:

- consider the Welsh language from the outset of the planning and design process;
- ensure that Welsh and English materials are available at the same time;
- ensure that Welsh and English receive equal prominence in design, location and presentation;
- ensure that any material produced by third parties or contractors meets the same requirements;
- properly review Welsh content prior to publication to ensure the accuracy and naturalness of the language;
- ensure that the Welsh language is an integral part of any new communications or marketing campaign.

Videos and Video Content

Videos are increasingly one of the main ways organisations communicate with the public, particularly through social media. Welsh users should be able to access video content of the same quality and at the same time as English users.

When an organisation produces or commissions videos, it should:

- ensure that a Welsh version of the video is available at the same time as the English version;
- ensure that presenters or contributors are able to use Welsh if they wish to do so;
- provide Welsh subtitles on Welsh videos and, where appropriate, on bilingual content;
- ensure that titles, descriptions and related messages are in Welsh when publishing Welsh content;
- ensure that short video content on social media gives equal prominence to the Welsh language;
- if voice-over is used, ensure that a full Welsh version is available as well as an English version.

Where it is not feasible to produce separate versions, consideration should be given to producing bilingual content from the outset.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that all publicity, marketing and multimedia material will treat Welsh and English equally;
- A commitment to publish materials in both English and Welsh at the same time;
- A commitment to ensure that the Welsh language has the same prominence, status and quality as English in all publicity campaigns and activities;
- A commitment to ensure that Welsh videos and multimedia content are of the same standard and given the same prominence as English content;
- A commitment to ensure that titles, descriptions, subtitles and related material are available in Welsh where appropriate;
- A commitment to consider the requirements of the Welsh language when commissioning marketing agencies, designers, content producers or other external providers;
- A commitment that staff, consultants, designers and printers will receive training and instructions on how to deal with bilingual publications.
- A description of the arrangements in place to ensure that publicity, marketing and multimedia material complies with the Welsh language scheme.

Press Notices and Official Notices

Official notices are an important way of communicating key information, advice, decisions and messages to the public. It can include statutory notices, warnings, consultations, service notices, safety messages and other public information. As notices often relate to issues that directly affect individuals and communities, it is important that Welsh speakers can access them in their own language without any delay or disadvantage.

Organisations should ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in the preparation, publication and distribution of official notices. Welsh notices should be available at the same time as English ones, contain the same information, and have the same prominence, status and accessibility. The Welsh language should not be treated as an addition to the English language or published after the information has already been released in English.

Why is timing important?

If an English-language statement is issued at 9am, but the Welsh version is not available until 11am, Welsh-language journalists are put at a disadvantage, and key messages may be lost.

The requirement to publish at the same time reflects the principle of fundamental equality.

Solution: Coordinate the translation work in advance and publish at the same time each time.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that official notices are published in both Welsh and English at the same time;
- A commitment to ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in terms of content, status, prominence and timing;
- A commitment to ensure that any statutory notices, public consultations, warnings, urgent messages and service notices are available in Welsh;
- A commitment to ensuring that consumers are not put at a disadvantage because they choose to use Welsh;
- A commitment to ensure that notices published on websites, social media, apps or other digital channels are available in Welsh at the same time as the English version;
- A commitment to ensure that any related material, such as response forms, background documents or guidance, is available in Welsh;
- A description of the arrangements in place for the preparation, translation, verification and publication of official notices in both languages.

Public address systems

Public announcements and communication systems often provide the first contact between an organisation and the users of its services. This includes announcements over loudspeakers, customer call systems, reception desks and other electronic communication systems. As a result, the way these systems operate significantly influences users' confidence to use the Welsh language.

The Welsh language should be available from the outset when using any public address or communication system. Welsh and English should be treated equally in terms of quality, accessibility, timing and visibility.

It is also important that staff who operate these systems understand their role in creating an environment where the use of the Welsh language is natural and proactively encouraged.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensuring that public address and communication systems treat Welsh and English equally;
 - Commitment to provide automatic greetings and messages in Welsh;
 - A commitment to ensure that staff responsible for any systems of public address receive appropriate guidance and training in relation to the Welsh language;
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- A description of the arrangements in place to implement and monitor these commitments.

Self-Service Machines

Self-service machines are becoming increasingly common in the provision of services to the public. These can include payment machines, information kiosks, registration systems, self-service terminals, appointment booking machines and other digital devices that enable users to carry out transactions or obtain information without the direct assistance of a member of staff.

As these machines often act as an independent service point, it is essential that users are able to use them through the medium of Welsh as easily as they can use them in English. Welsh users should not face reduced functions, information or support because they choose to use Welsh.

Welsh and English should be treated equally in terms of availability, function, design, quality, timing and user experience. When procuring, developing or updating self-service machines, Welsh language requirements should be considered from the outset.

When providing self-service machines, organisations should:

- ensure that a clear choice of Welsh is available at the start of the process;
- ensure that all screens, instructions, buttons, confirmation messages and error messages are available in Welsh;
- ensuring that Welsh and English provide the same functions and information;
- ensure that updates to the Welsh and English service are delivered at the same time;
- ensure that Welsh language content is accurate, natural and user-friendly;
- include the requirements of the Welsh language in the procurement or commissioning of new machinery and systems.
- ensure that nearby staff are aware of Welsh provision where applicable.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that any self-service machine provided by or on behalf of the organisation can be used in Welsh;
- A commitment to ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally in terms of function, content and quality;
- A commitment to ensure that Welsh language choice is available from the start of the process;
- A commitment to ensure that all messages, instructions and information for users are available in Welsh;
- A commitment to include the requirements of the Welsh language in the procurement, development or updating of self-service machinery;
- A description of the arrangements in place to test, monitor and maintain the Welsh language service.

Promoting Welsh Language Services

The provision of Welsh language services alone is not enough to ensure that they are used. Organisations should take proactive steps to promote Welsh language services and to raise awareness among users of the services available to them in Welsh.

Organisations should:

- promote Welsh language services as part of their normal communications and marketing activity;
- ensure that information about Welsh language services is easy to see and find;
- use a range of communication channels to raise awareness of Welsh language services;
- consider how it can encourage and increase the use of Welsh language services over time;
- take advantage of opportunities to promote their Welsh language services through relevant initiatives and platforms such as the [promotion page](#) for Welsh language services on the Commissioner's website.
- consider Welsh Language Commissioner's advice document on [promoting the use of Welsh language services](#).

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- a commitment to proactively promote the organisation's Welsh language services.

5 Welsh Workforce and Skills

An organisation's ability to provide quality Welsh language services depends on ensuring that it has a workforce that has the skills, capacity and confidence to use Welsh. Linguistic considerations should be incorporated into all aspects of workforce planning, recruitment, staff development and performance management.

Developing a bilingual workforce is not just about recruiting Welsh speakers. It also includes planning for the future needs of the organisation, developing the skills of existing staff, supporting the use of Welsh in the workplace and ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language.

Organisations should:

- ensure that they have enough staff with the necessary Welsh language skills to provide services in Welsh;
- keep an accurate and up-to-date record of the language skills of their workforce;
- regularly monitor the Welsh capacity of the workforce;
- plan for the development and maintenance of Welsh language skills in the short, medium and long term;
- consider the language needs in workforce planning, recruitment, staff development and performance management;
- encourage and facilitate the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Workforce Recruitment and Planning

Recruitment plays a vital role in ensuring that an organisation is able to provide quality Welsh language services and build language capacity for the future.

It should be ensured that the recruitment process does not put individuals who wish to use the Welsh language at a disadvantage. Candidates should be able to use Welsh throughout the recruitment process if they wish to do so.

When assessing new or vacant posts, organisations should determine the appropriate level of Welsh language skills required for the roles.

Category	Meaning
Essential	Welsh language skills are essential to the achievement of the job.
Need to learn	The post holder is expected to develop Welsh language skills after appointment.
Desirable	Welsh language skills are desirable but not required.
Not applicable	You don't need Welsh skills to perform the job.

Organisations should:

- assess the linguistic needs of each new or vacant post;
- clearly state job requirements in advertisements and job descriptions;
- publish advertisements and recruitment information in Welsh and English;
- welcome and accept applications in Welsh;
- invite candidates to indicate their preferred language for the recruitment process;
- ensure that interview arrangements enable the use of Welsh;
- assess Welsh language skills in a fair and consistent manner where necessary;
- ensure that correspondence with the candidate follows the candidate's preferred language;
- use workforce skills data to plan recruitment and workforce development;
- plan for succession in posts where Welsh language skills are essential.

Welsh Language Skills Assessment Framework

To ensure consistency, organisations should adopt a clear framework for assessing Welsh language skills.

Organisations should:

- use a consistent approach to determine the linguistic requirements of jobs;
- use the same approach when assessing candidates;
- ensure that recruitment managers use these arrangements consistently;
- consider using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) when describing skill levels.¹

Developing and Maintaining Welsh Language Skills

Welsh Language Skills Strategy

The provision of quality Welsh language services depends on ensuring that the organisation has a workforce that has the skills, capacity and confidence to use Welsh. Organisations should adopt a Welsh language skills strategy that proactively plans for the development and maintenance of the language skills needed to provide services in Welsh.

Welsh language skills should be treated in the same way as any other professional or vocational skill required by the organisation. The strategy should support workforce planning, recruitment, staff development, succession planning and performance management.

Organisations should:

- adopt a Welsh language skills strategy to plan for the development of Welsh language capacity in the short, medium and long term.
- use workforce skills information to inform recruitment and development decisions;

¹ The Welsh Government will produce a National Code to describe ability in Welsh based on the CEFR framework during 2027.

- identify areas where Welsh language capacity or expertise needs to be strengthened;
- monitor progress against the objectives and priorities of the strategy;
- regularly review the strategy as part of workforce planning arrangements.

Organisations should take active steps to develop and maintain the Welsh language capacity of the workforce.

Organisations should:

- regularly assess the linguistic needs of the workforce;
- monitor the organisation's Welsh language capacity;
- identify any gaps in Welsh skills;
- take action to address skills gaps;
- support staff to learn Welsh or develop their skills further;
- provide Welsh language learning and development opportunities;
- provide appropriate time and resources for staff to develop Welsh language skills;
- include linguistic objectives in development and performance management arrangements where appropriate;
- promote Welsh language development opportunities on a regular basis.

Supporting the Use of Welsh in the Workplace

Creating an environment that encourages the use of Welsh is an important part of developing a bilingual workforce.

This may include:

- providing software and technology that facilitates the use of the Welsh language;
- providing access to dictionaries, terminology databases and language resources;
- maintaining resources and guidance on the intranet;
- promoting initiatives that increase the daily use of the Welsh language;
- encouraging Welsh speaking staff to use Welsh with colleagues and service users;
- use mentoring or support from more experienced staff to support the use of Welsh.

Staff Training and Development

Training is a key element in ensuring that staff understand the organisation's responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language and feel confident in providing Welsh language services.

All members of staff who deal with the public, manage services or make decisions affecting the provision of services should receive appropriate training.

Organisations should:

- include language awareness as part of new staff induction programmes;
 - provide training on the requirements of the Welsh language scheme;
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- ensure that staff dealing with the public know how to offer and deliver Welsh language services proactively;
- provide opportunities for staff to update and develop their knowledge on a regular basis;
- ensure that managers understand their responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language;
- assess the need for vocational training through the medium of Welsh;
- provide or facilitate access to Welsh vocational training where necessary;
- ensure that staff who use Welsh are not put at a disadvantage in accessing professional development opportunities.

Potential Training Areas

Field	Suggested content
Greeting and offering a Welsh language service	How to proactively offer the Welsh language.
Supporting users	Transfer calls or arrange language support.
Language awareness	Principles of the Welsh language scheme and Welsh language services.
Iaith Gwaith (Working Welsh)	Use the brand and resources appropriately.
Practical sessions	Answering phones, receiving visitors and service situations.
Mentoring	To support staff to develop confidence in the use of Welsh.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to regularly assess the linguistic needs of jobs and the workforce;
- A commitment to develop and implement a Welsh language skills strategy to plan and maintain the Welsh language capacity of the workforce;
- A commitment to clearly identify Welsh language requirements in recruitment;
- A commitment to ensure that candidates are able to use Welsh throughout the recruitment process;
- A commitment to use a consistent approach to assessing Welsh language skills;
- A commitment to record and monitor staff language skills;
- A commitment to support staff to learn and use Welsh;
- A commitment to provide access to training, resources and technology that facilitates the use of Welsh;
- A commitment to include language awareness as part of staff induction and development arrangements;
- A commitment to ensure that staff and candidates are not put at a disadvantage because they use Welsh;
- A description of the arrangements in place to recruit, develop, monitor and maintain the Welsh language skills required by the organisation.

6 Implementation and Monitoring the Welsh Language Scheme

Intranet and internal communications

The intranet is an important resource for internal communication, providing information to staff and supporting the organisation's day-to-day work. For many members of staff, the intranet is the main portal for policies, procedures, news, forms and support materials. As a result, it is important that the Welsh language is effectively incorporated into the intranet to enable staff to work and access information through the medium of Welsh.

The intranet also offers an important opportunity to promote the Welsh language in the workplace and provide resources that help staff develop their skills and confidence in using Welsh.

Organisations should:

- ensure that the intranet homepage is available in Welsh;
- ensure that the Welsh content of the homepage is fully operational;
- treat Welsh and English equally on the intranet homepage;
- ensure that new and updated pages are available in Welsh;
- provide easy access to internal information and services in Welsh.

In developing and maintaining the intranet, organisations should:

- ensure that the Welsh language is taken into account when planning and developing new content;
- ensure that Welsh and English pages are updated at the same time;
- ensure that functions, links, forms and services on the intranet work fully in Welsh;
- ensure that the Welsh language has the same prominence and visibility as the English language;
- regularly review Welsh content to maintain quality and accuracy.

Promoting the Welsh Language in the Workplace

The intranet can play an important role in supporting and normalising the use of Welsh in the organisation.

Organisations should:

- maintain a Welsh language resource page or portal on the intranet;
- provide support materials for staff learning or using Welsh;
- share information about training, courses and opportunities to develop Welsh language skills;
- provide links to useful resources such as dictionaries, style guides and terminology services;
- promote initiatives and activities that encourage the use of Welsh in the workplace.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that the intranet homepage is available in Welsh and operates fully through the medium of Welsh;
 - A commitment to treat Welsh and English equally on the intranet in terms of content, function and prominence;
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- A commitment to ensure that new pages and updated content are available in Welsh;
- A commitment to ensure that intranet services, forms and functions are accessible in Welsh;
- A commitment to maintaining resources and information that support staff to use and develop their Welsh language skills;
- A description of the arrangements in place to plan, translate, publish and update Welsh content on the intranet.

Administrative arrangements for the implementation of the scheme

The successful implementation of a Welsh language scheme depends on robust governance arrangements, accountability and support within the organisation. To ensure that the scheme's commitments are implemented consistently and effectively, the Welsh language should be incorporated into the organisation's management, planning and decision-making processes.

Implementing a Welsh language scheme is not just the responsibility of an individual officer or team. It should be a corporate responsibility that is led by senior management, supported by service managers and understood by all members of staff.

Organisations should ensure that clear structures are in place for leading, co-ordinating, monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the scheme, and that those responsible have the necessary authority and resources to carry out that role.

Organisations should:

- Provide full support and authority to implement the scheme across the organisation;
- Appoint a senior manager to be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the scheme;
- Ensure that service managers are responsible for implementing the elements relevant to their areas of work;
- Identify a specific officer or role responsible for co-ordinating, monitoring and developing the scheme to be the point of contact on matters relating to the scheme;
- Publish the scheme so that it is accessible to staff and the public;
- Ensure that staff receive guidance and support on implementing the requirements of the scheme.

Leadership and Accountability

To ensure effective implementation, there should be clear accountability at all levels of the organisation. Organisations should:

- appoint a senior manager with strategic responsibility for the scheme;
 - define the responsibilities of individual managers in relation to the implementation of the scheme;
 - ensure that the requirements of the scheme are taken into account in service planning and decision-making;
 - include information on progress, performance and compliance in relevant monitoring and governance arrangements;
 - ensure that sufficient resources are available to implement the scheme's commitments.
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Communication and Staff Support

It is important that all members of staff understand what the scheme means in practice and how it applies to their daily work. Organisations should:

- ensure that a copy of the scheme is made available to all members of staff;
- publish the scheme on the organisation's website and on the intranet;
- produce practical guidance for staff on the implementation of the scheme;
- include information about the scheme as part of new staff induction programmes;
- hold regular briefings and training sessions to raise awareness and strengthen staff understanding.

Translation Arrangements

Effective translation arrangements are essential to ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally in the provision of services, publication of information and communication with the public. High-quality translation and interpreting services play an important role in ensuring that Welsh-language content is accurate, natural, and fit for purpose, while also maintaining users' confidence in the services delivered.

When planning and delivering translation services, organisations should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to support the production of high-quality Welsh language materials and to enable the use of Welsh at meetings, events and other activities. Translation should also be considered as part of the planning process from the outset, rather than as an activity that takes place at the end of the process.

The increasing use of translation technologies and artificial intelligence can offer advantages in terms of efficiency, but it is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that content published in Welsh is accurate, natural and fit for purpose.

Organisations should:

- use approved suppliers or appropriately qualified providers to deliver translation services for written materials, events and simultaneous translation;
- include translation requirements in relevant contracts and procurement arrangements;
- plan ahead for translation requirements to avoid delays in publishing Welsh language materials.
- consider translation requirements when planning new projects, services and publications;
- maintain a high standard of linguistic accuracy and naturalness in Welsh.

Bilingual Drafting

Where practicable, consideration should be given to developing content bilingually from the outset rather than relying on translation once an English version has been completed.

Bilingual drafting methods can:

- improve the quality and consistency of content in both languages;
- speed up the drafting and publication process;
- reduce the risk of loss of meaning or context when translating;
- facilitate the equal treatment of Welsh and English;
- lead to content that is more natural and relevant to Welsh users.

Organisations should refer to the Commissioner's [guidance](#) on bilingual drafting when developing policies, publications and public materials.

Use of Technology

Where automatic translation tools or other technologies are used to aid the translation process, organisations should:

- ensure that final content is checked by a qualified person prior to publication;
- assess the suitability of the technology for the specific purpose;
- ensure that the use of technology does not lead to a reduction in the quality of Welsh;
- use professional judgement where content is complex, sensitive or public in nature.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure that appropriate translation and interpretation services are available to support the operation of the scheme;
- A commitment to using qualified translators and interpreters in the delivery and provision of translation and interpretation services;
- A commitment to planning translation requirements as part of the development of services, policies and publications;
- A commitment to ensuring that Welsh and English materials are treated equally in terms of quality, timing and status;
- A commitment to maintaining a high standard of linguistic accuracy and naturalness in Welsh;
- A description of the arrangements in place for the commissioning, management and review of translation and interpretation services.

Working in Partnership and Procurement

Public organisations provide services through a variety of arrangements, including partnerships, service contracts, commissioning arrangements, grants and collaboration with other organisations. The use of such arrangements should not result in a reduction in the availability or quality of Welsh language services.

Where an organisation delegates a function or commissions a service to be provided on its behalf, it must ensure that that service is provided in accordance with the scheme's commitments ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally.

Organisations should:

- consider the requirements of the Welsh language when planning partnerships, commissioning arrangements and procurement activity;
 - give due regard to the Welsh Language Commissioner's advice document on [contracting out public service contract](#);
 - include the relevant requirements of the scheme in agreements, contracts and tender documents;
 - ensure that contractors and agents understand their responsibilities in relation to the Welsh language;
 - ensure that services provided on their behalf are available in Welsh;
 - monitor the compliance of contractors and partners with Welsh language requirements;
 - take performance in relation to the Welsh language into account as part of contract management arrangements;
 - ensure that users are able to use the Welsh language when accessing services provided by third parties on behalf of the organisation.
-

Procurement and Tendering

Welsh language requirements should be considered early in the procurement process and not after a contract has been awarded. This may include:

- including language requirements as part of tender specifications;
- identifying specific requirements relating to communications;
- ensuring that providers are able to meet those requirements before awarding a contract;
- including relevant contract clauses that enable the monitoring and enforcement of the language requirements.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- a commitment to ensuring that partnerships, contracting arrangements and subcontracting arrangements do not undermine the commitments set out in the Welsh Language Scheme;
- a commitment to include relevant Welsh language requirements in procurement and contracting arrangements;
- A commitment to ensure that services provided on behalf of the organisation treat Welsh and English equally;
- Commitment to monitor contractors' and partners' compliance with Welsh language requirements;
- A description of the arrangements in place to include, monitor and enforce the Welsh language requirements in partnerships and contracts.

Publicity for the Welsh language scheme

It is important that members of the public and the organisation's staff are aware of the commitments set out in the Welsh Language Scheme and of the Welsh-language services available. The organisation should actively promote the Scheme and communicate clearly that the use of Welsh is welcomed in all interactions with the organisation.

Organisations should:

- publicise its Welsh Language Scheme and the Welsh-language services available through its website and other relevant communication channels;
- ensure that information about the scheme is easily available to the public and staff;
- use appropriate opportunities to promote the Welsh language services provided by the organisation;
- ensure that its website makes it clear that services are available in Welsh and that Welsh is treated equally with English.

Action plan

While the Welsh language scheme sets out the organisation's commitments, the action plan should set out in detail how, when and by whom those commitments will be implemented. An effective action plan ensures that the scheme is a living document that informs continuous improvement, rather than just a policy statement.

It is strongly recommended that all Welsh Language Schemes include a detailed action plan, either as a core component of the Scheme or as a linked appendix. The action plan should function as a management tool and be subject to regular monitoring and review.

The action plan should:

- Identify the areas where the organisation's arrangements or services have not yet reached the desired level of provision;
- Prioritise development activities based on the impact of the service and the risk to Welsh language users;
- Set clear, realistic and achievable actions over the duration of the scheme;
- Confirm responsibilities for carrying out all actions;
- Include clear timetables and time limits;
- Identify resources, funding or support needed to achieve the actions;
- Include monitorable targets and measures of success;
- Set measurable milestones to assess progress;
- Contribute to the gradual movement of the organisation towards provision that reflects the principles and expectations of the Welsh Language Standards.

Priority areas for action plans

When formulating an action plan, organisations should specifically consider the following areas:

- Digital Services and Websites
 - Increasing the availability of Welsh language content on digital websites and systems;
 - Ensuring that new services are developed bilingually from the outset;
 - Improving the quality and accessibility of Welsh language content online;
 - Developing Welsh language apps, forms and self-service services.
 - Social Media and Communications
 - Adopting a clear policy on the use of the Welsh language on social media;
 - Increasing the frequency and visibility of Welsh content;
 - Ensuring that Welsh and English are treated equally in communication and marketing campaigns.
 - Welsh Workforce and Skills
 - Developing a Welsh language skills strategy;
 - Reviewing the language requirements of new and vacant posts;
 - Increasing the number of staff with Welsh language skills in key service areas;
 - Providing Welsh language learning and development opportunities for staff.
 - Service delivery
 - Improving arrangements for dealing with the public in Welsh;
 - Increasing the availability of Welsh language services over the phone, face to face and online;
 - Ensuring that materials, forms and publications are available in Welsh at the same time as English.
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Each action plan should include at least:

Field	Description
Action	What will be done
Expected outcome	What will change as a result
Responsible officer	Who is responsible for carrying out the work
Timeline	When the work will be completed
Measuring success	How progress will be measured
Status	Not Started / In Progress / Completed

A template for an action plan is included in Appendix 1.

Monitoring, Reporting and Reviewing the Welsh Language Scheme

Effective monitoring and review is essential to ensure that the scheme's commitments are consistently implemented and deliver the intended outcomes. Regular monitoring enables organisations to assess progress, identify areas for improvement and ensure that the scheme continues to meet the needs of users of Welsh language services.

Monitoring the scheme should be an integral part of the organisation's governance and performance management arrangements. Monitoring information should be used to inform decisions, plan improvements and ensure accountability at all levels of the organisation.

Organisations should:

- Regularly monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the scheme;
- Report progress to senior management and relevant governance structures;
- Collect and analyse information about the implementation of the scheme;
- Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner in accordance with the agreed arrangements;
- Use monitoring results to plan further improvements and developments.

Monitoring and Review

Organisations should establish clear arrangements for monitoring progress against the scheme's commitments.

Organisations should:

- establish regular monitoring arrangements;
- report on progress against the commitments set in the scheme;
- review the effectiveness of the operational arrangements;
- use feedback, complaints and performance information to inform improvements;
- ensure that monitoring and coordination responsibilities are clearly defined.
- provide regular information and updates to senior management;
- include information about the implementation of the scheme in corporate monitoring arrangements;
- monitor progress against actions and targets within the action plan and the scheme's relevant commitments;
- identify any barriers or risks affecting the operation of the scheme;
- take action to address any areas where progress is not sufficient.

Measuring Impact and Use

In addition to monitoring activities, organisations should evaluate the effectiveness of the arrangements and interventions implemented to increase the use of Welsh.

This may include:

- collecting data on the use of Welsh language services over time;
- comparing levels of use before and after the introduction of new interventions or initiatives;
- testing different approaches to promoting Welsh language services;
- setting ambitious, realistic and measurable targets for increasing the use of Welsh;
- using user feedback to evaluate the impact of activities.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to ensure full corporate support for the implementation of the scheme;
- A commitment to appoint a senior manager with responsibility for the scheme;
- A commitment to allocate clear responsibilities to relevant managers and officers;
- A commitment to appoint an officer or role responsible for coordinating, monitoring and reviewing the plan;
- A commitment to publish the scheme on the organisation's website and to make it available to staff;
- A commitment to provide guidance, briefs and training to staff on the implementation of the scheme;
- A commitment to monitor the implementation of the scheme and take action to address any gaps or problems;
- A description of the governance, accountability and monitoring arrangements used to implement the scheme.

Reporting to the Welsh Language Commissioner

Organisations should work collaboratively with the Welsh Language Commissioner to provide information on the implementation of their Welsh language scheme.

This will include:

- submitting an annual monitoring report to the Welsh Language Commissioner;
- submitting the report in accordance with the agreed timetable;
- providing any additional information requested by the Commissioner;
- responding to requests for relevant information, reviews or self-assessment questionnaires.

Reviewing or amending a Welsh language scheme

The Welsh language scheme should be reviewed within four years to ensure that it remains relevant, up-to-date and reflects the needs of the organisation and its users.

Organisations should:

- carry out a formal review of the scheme within four years of its implementation date;
 - review the scheme earlier if there are significant changes to the organisation's functions, services or structure;
 - use monitoring and performance evidence to inform the review;
 - consult with the Welsh Language Commissioner on any proposed amendments.
-

No changes should be made to the scheme without the approval of the Welsh Language Commissioner.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to regularly monitor the implementation of the scheme;
- A commitment to report progress to senior management and relevant governance structures;
- A commitment to provide monitoring reports and relevant information to the Welsh Language Commissioner;
- A commitment to collect and use data to assess the effectiveness of Welsh language services and initiatives;
- A commitment to setting and reviewing relevant targets where appropriate;
- A commitment to review the scheme at least once every four years;
- A commitment not to amend the scheme without the approval of the Welsh Language Commissioner;
- A description of the monitoring, reporting and review arrangements that will support the implementation of the scheme.

Complaints, Comments and Suggestions

Feedback from service users is an important source of information about the effectiveness of the Welsh language scheme and the quality of the Welsh language services provided by the organisation. The organisation should encourage users to submit complaints, comments and suggestions, and ensure that clear arrangements are in place to deal with them in a timely and constructive manner.

The organisation must adopt an appropriate complaints procedure for dealing with complaints relating to the operation of the scheme or the quality of Welsh language services.

Organisations should:

- Establish a clear procedure for making complaints, comments and suggestions about Welsh language services or the operation of the scheme;
- publish relevant contact details on the organisation's website and in other appropriate places;
- set clear timelines for acknowledging and responding to complaints;
- record and monitor complaints relating to the Welsh language;
- use information gathered from complaints and feedback to improve services.

A Welsh language scheme should include:

- A commitment to establish and adopt a complaints procedure regarding Welsh language services or the implementation of the scheme
 - A commitment to receive and consider complaints, comments and suggestions about the implementation of the scheme;
 - A commitment to properly investigate any complaint received and take action where necessary;
 - A commitment to identify and implement improvements in order to reduce the risk of similar problems arising in the future;
 - A commitment to publish contact details and information about the complaint's procedure;
 - A commitment to using user feedback to inform continuous improvement in Welsh language services;
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- A commitment to provide training and/or guidance to staff on dealing with complaints relating to the Welsh language;
- A description of the monitoring and reporting arrangements used to analyse complaints and feedback.

7 Conclusion

A new or revised Welsh language scheme should be more than a statement of intent. It should be a strategic and practical document that informs decisions, influences service delivery and contributes to creating an environment where people can use the Welsh language naturally and confidently.

When preparing or reviewing a Welsh language scheme, organisations are expected to:

- reflect the principles and expectations set out in this guide;
- ensure that Welsh and English are treated equally;
- adopt commitments that are clear, practical and measurable;
- plan for continuous improvement in Welsh language provision over the duration of the scheme;
- develop an action plan setting out how the commitments will be implemented in practice;
- establish a strong foundation for transitioning to the Welsh Language Standards regime in the future, if and when applicable.

The purpose of this guide is not to impose a uniform model on all organisations. Each scheme should reflect the functions, services, size and operational context of the individual organisation. However, each scheme should demonstrate a clear commitment to strengthening Welsh language provision and moving the organisation closer to the principle of linguistic equality.

The Welsh Language Commissioner encourages organisations to engage early in the development or revision of their Welsh Language Schemes. Collaboration with the Commissioner's officers can help ensure that schemes are realistic, ambitious and tailored to the organisation's operational context.

This support may include:

- discussing proposed commitments and areas of development;
- sharing examples of good practice and model commitments;
- supporting the formulation of action plans and monitoring arrangements;
- discussing methods of developing Welsh provision and planning for the future.

By planning effectively, monitoring progress and acting proactively, organisations can make a meaningful contribution to the goal of ensuring that Welsh is a natural and integral part of service delivery and public life in Wales.

The [resource portal](#) on the Welsh Language Commissioner's website offers a range of useful resources including guidance, case studies and good practice. For further information or advice, please contact the Welsh Language Commissioner's office.

8 Appendix

Appendix 1: Action plan template

Objective	Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Targets

Appendix 2: Checklist

Area	Commitment included in the scheme	✓
Policy Impact and New Initiatives	Carrying out Welsh language impact assessments on new policies and initiatives	☐
	Ensure that new policies are consistent with the scheme	☐
Developing Welsh Language Services	Providing equal services in English and Welsh	☐
	Making this commitment public	☐
Correspondence	Welcome correspondence in Welsh	☐
	Answering Welsh correspondence in Welsh	☐
	Ensure that correspondence in Welsh does not lead to delays	☐
	To provide mass correspondence in Welsh at the same time as English	☐
Language preference	Give users the opportunity to state their preferred language	☐
	Recording and using data on language preference	☐
Telephone Services	Welsh-language greeting for telephone calls	☐
	Welsh-language automated messages	☐
	Arrangements for transferring calls to a Welsh speaker	☐
Meetings and events	Facilitate and encourage the use of Welsh at meetings and events.	☐
	Invitations will clearly indicate that the Welsh language can be used at meetings and events	☐
	Provide meeting materials in Welsh	☐
Reception services	Providing a Welsh reception service	☐
	Display sign welcoming the use of Welsh	☐

Corporate Identity	Consistent use of the Welsh name and logo of the organisation	☐
	Equal treatment of Welsh and English on branding and templates	☐
Signage	Provide Welsh or bilingual signage	☐
	Ensuring parity in size and prominence	☐
Website and Digital Services	Providing a working Welsh language website	☐
	Updating Welsh and English content at the same time	☐
Social media	Publishing Welsh and English content equally	☐
	Responding in Welsh to Welsh enquiries	☐
Apps and self-service machines	Ensuring that apps and self-service systems are available in Welsh	☐
Documents and forms	Publication of documents and forms in Welsh	☐
	English language documents and forms to include a clear statement that Welsh versions are available	☐
Publicity and Marketing	Equal treatment of Welsh and English in promotional materials	☐
	Proactively promoting Welsh language services	☐
Official Notices	Publication of notices in English and Welsh at the same time	☐
Welsh Workforce and Skills	Assessing the Welsh language needs of new and vacant posts.	☐
	Job applications welcome in Welsh	☐
	Assessing and recording Welsh language skills of staff	☐
	Supporting staff to develop their Welsh language skills	☐
Staff Training	Providing training on the requirements of the Welsh language scheme	☐
Intranet and internal communications	Providing Welsh language content on the intranet	☐

Translation Arrangements	Ensure appropriate translation and interpretation services	☐
Partnerships and Procurement	Inclusion of Welsh language requirements in relevant contracts	☐
Publicity for the Scheme	Publish the Welsh language scheme and make it easy to find	☐
Action plan	Include an action plan with responsibilities and timescales	☐
Monitoring and Reporting	Regularly monitor the implementation of the scheme	☐
	Senior manager with responsibility for the scheme.	
	Reporting to the Welsh Language Commissioner as required	☐
Complaints	Procedure for complaints about Welsh language services	☐
	Using feedback to improve services	☐