



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee
Welsh Parliament
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Dear Chair,

Priorities for the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

Thank you very much for the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's consultation on its priorities for the Seventh Senedd.

In March 2026, I published my [5-year report on the position of the Welsh language](#), which clearly demonstrates that sustainable growth in the number of Welsh speakers and increased use of the language cannot be secured through education policies alone. The position of the Welsh language also depends on the nature and viability of the communities in which people live, work and raise their families. The areas within the Committee's remit—housing, planning and local government, for example—are therefore central to the future of the language. The [recent reports of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities](#) reinforce this point and make several recommendations on how the Welsh language could be supported through reforms to housing, planning and local government policies.

I recently submitted an advice document to the Welsh Ministers outlining the steps that could be taken to strengthen community language planning processes in Wales. This advice paper builds on some of the conclusions and recommendations contained in our 5-year report and the reports of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities. I attach that advice document to this letter. The advice argues that the promotion standards should be amended to create a stronger and more effective statutory framework for coordinating community language planning across Wales. This would be a key step towards ensuring that the promotion strategies of local authorities and national park authorities become powerful vehicles for intensive community language planning at local level, focusing on creating and sustaining a range of spaces in which Welsh can be used.

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Based on the findings of my 5-year report, the reports of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities and the advice paper I have submitted to the Welsh Ministers, I recommend that the Committee give priority to the following three areas:

1. Supporting Welsh-speaking communities and implementing the principal recommendation of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities

One of the Commission's principal recommendations is that the Welsh Government should establish areas of higher density linguistic significance. According to the Commission, establishing such areas would make it easier to adapt public policies in response to local linguistic circumstances. The Committee should scrutinise how the Welsh Government implements this significant recommendation and ensures that local policies sustain and strengthen Welsh as a community language. This should include:

- The Government's commitment to legislate to introduce new safeguards for areas of higher density linguistic significance and to work with local authorities to determine how and where these areas should be designated.
- How local authorities are supported to develop policies that strengthen the community use of Welsh, and the relationship between local policies and the aims of the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy.

2. Town and country planning and housing

As our 5-year report on the position of the Welsh language and the reports of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities make clear, land-use planning, housing development and interventions in the housing market are key factors in sustaining Welsh-speaking communities. The Committee should scrutinise the effectiveness of planning and housing policies in supporting the aims of *Cymraeg 2050* and the sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities throughout Wales. This could include:

- How the Government is implementing the recommendations of the reports of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities in relation to town and country planning and housing.
- How the Government's commitment to legislate for a right to adequate housing in Wales will contribute to the viability of Welsh-speaking communities and enable young Welsh speakers to remain in their communities.
- Scrutiny of the effectiveness of existing interventions relating to second homes and holiday accommodation, including the Dwyfor Pilot, Council Tax premiums and the Article 4 direction.
- How the Government's commitment to provide more social housing will contribute to the sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities.
- How planning policies and processes ensure that due consideration is given to the Welsh language, particularly in the context of local development plans.



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3. Local government and community language planning

As our advice paper to the Welsh Ministers notes, local authorities are key partners in realising the ambitions of the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy and in increasing the community use of Welsh. The Committee should scrutinise how local authorities and other key partners lead community language planning efforts and provide opportunities for people to use Welsh socially. This could include:

- The role of the promotion standards and the Welsh language promotion strategies of local authorities and national park authorities as a framework for local language planning.
- Opportunities to strengthen leadership and strategic coordination at local and regional levels.
- How local authorities work with Mentrau Iaith, the Urdd, community groups and other partners to increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the community.
- The capacity and resources available to local authorities and other partners to provide opportunities for people to use Welsh.
- How the Government is implementing some of the recommendations in the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee's report, *Cymraeg for all?*, which was published towards the end of the Sixth Senedd.

Several of the matters discussed above are likely to be of interest to other Senedd committees, particularly the Culture, Communications, Cymraeg and Sport Committee. We would therefore encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to work with other relevant Senedd committees when considering the impact of local government, housing and planning decisions on the Welsh language and its communities.

I hope that the above comments will be useful as you plan the Committee's future work. I wish you every success in that work and would be pleased to contribute to it.

Yours sincerely,

Efa Gruffudd Jones

Welsh Language Commissioner