

Appendix 1:

Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report

2023-2024

**Statws Dim Drafft
No Status Draft**

**This document will shortly be available in Welsh
Bydd y ddogfen hon yn bod ar gael yn Gymraeg yn fuan**

Welsh Language Standards Monitoring Report 2023-2024

Contents

Introduction	3
Background: Regulatory framework and legal context	4
- Complaints	5
- Recruitment	7
- Welsh language skills	8
- Welsh language training	12
- Welsh language courses	12
Compliance and achievements	16
Conclusion: Next steps	34
Contact us	34

Introduction

The Council is committed to the provision of an excellent service to Welsh speakers in the area and strives year on year to improve on its provision.

During 2015 we were issued with a legal [Compliance Notice](#) by the Welsh Commissioner specifying which Standards apply to the Council.

To achieve the 174 standards within the notice, the Council developed an [Action Plan](#) which is published on our website.

The standards are grouped into 5 categories:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

The Welsh Language Standards require us to:

- Produce and publish on our website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in our area. (Standards 145,146).
- Produce an annual report, in relation to each financial year, which deals with how we have complied with the standards and publish on our website. (Standards 158, 164, 170).

We also published a 5-year Promotion Strategy for 2022-27 as part of the compliance process. This is available on our [website](#). Details of progress are included in Appendix 2.

Background – regulatory framework and legal context

This annual monitoring report demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to providing bilingual services to the public and staff members.

The Council collects and reports information on all measures that are national statutory measures and sets targets for them. We have adopted a limited number of local indicators which assist in measuring progress against this scheme. This information is publicly available via the Council's Improvement Plan and service plans, which are published annually and is available on the Council's website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or www.bromorgannwg.gov.uk

In addition to this, the Council publishes this report on the Equalities section of the Council website along with other data on language matters.

We report on indicators in the following four areas as requested by the Welsh Language Commissioner:

- Complaints
- Recruitment
- Welsh Language Skills
- Welsh Language Training

We also report on other activity relating to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards as well as our achievements under our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

Complaints

Standard 158 (2) 164 (2) 170 (2d)

We must keep a record of the number of complaints received which relate to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

For the period April 2023 to March 2024, we received six complaints that relate to the Welsh language.

Complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner	3
Complaints made directly to the Welsh Language Officer	2
Complaints made directly to the Council's corporate complaints system	1

Complaints made via the Welsh Language Commissioner's office

We have received three complaints via the Welsh Language Commissioner's office. One of these is not an official investigation but a suggestion to consider further. They are taking no further action on the second, and the third is still in progress.

Date received	Nature of complaint	Actions taken
27/06/2023	The complaint related to the public toilets at the Western Shelter, Barry Island. The mens' toilets were out of order and men were instructed to use the upstairs ladies' toilets instead. The 'wo' of 'Womens' was masked out so it read 'mens'. No Welsh language version of 'Mens' was provided and the Welsh language 'Menywod' (womens) was left on the sign.	The Operational Manager of Neighbourhood Services directly responded to the Welsh Language Commissioner who confirmed there would be no further action as non-compliance had been acknowledged, the issue remedied, and confirmed future actions such as procuring reusable temporary

		signage and Welsh language awareness training.
08/02/2024	The complaint related to a lack of reference to the Welsh language in the 2024/25 budget consultation.	This investigation is ongoing.
28/02/2024	This was not an official notification of a complaint or investigation but a representative of the Welsh Language Commissioner's office about English-only 'what3words' on Wales Coast Path signs. The Welsh Language Commissioner had received an enquiry about them and have been dealing with Natural Resources Wales, but the signs are Local Authority responsibility.	The Operational Manager for Regeneration and Planning has responded to the Welsh Language Commissioner's office.

Complaints made directly to the Council

We have received three complaints from members of the public. One complaint was made via the Council's corporate complaint mechanism and two complaints were emailed directly to the Welsh Language Officer.

Date received	Nature of complaint	Actions taken
15/05/2023	The complaint related to a parking officer who allegedly mocked the member of the public and claimed they did not need to speak Welsh.	The Enforcement Manager looked into the matter as a Stage 1 complaint.
08/02/2024	The complaint related to the Welsh language version of the	The Operational Manager of Leisure Services held a

	leisure centre website and communications with Legacy Leisure.	meeting with Legacy Leisure/Parkwood representatives who provided a Welsh language improvement action plan. Progress on the actions has been shared and improvements have been noted.
06/01/2024	This complaint was made to via the corporate complaints system and relates to an English-only school sign.	The sign has been removed and remedied.

We continue to make progress on recommended actions from other investigations.

Recruitment

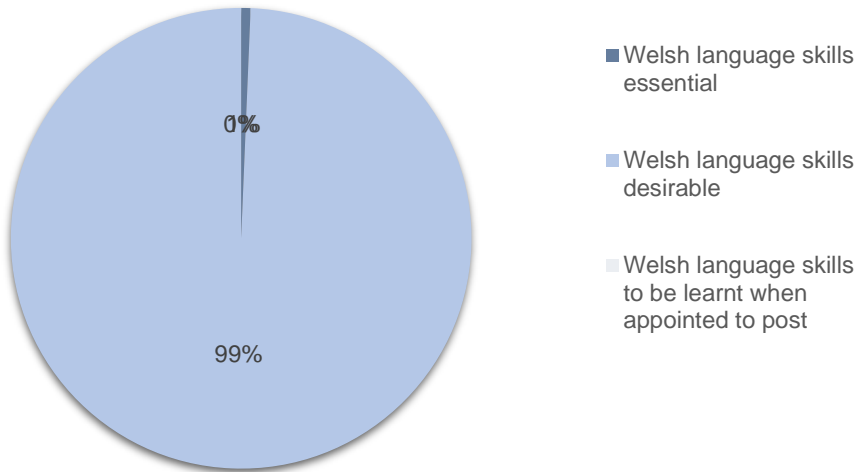
Standards 154,170 (ch)

We must report the number of new and vacant posts which were categorised as Welsh essential and desirable.

Our job application process is accessible in Welsh in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and all job vacancies are advertised bilingually. We have also looked to advertise for Welsh speakers on specific Welsh language websites as well as working with our partners at Learn Welsh the Vale and Menter Bro Morgannwg to share our job vacancies.

As part of the recruitment process, and a requirement of Standard 136, every vacant post must be assessed for the need of Welsh language skills. We aim to classify each new vacant post as being Welsh language desirable as a minimum.

Total number of adverts logged	3,806	99.3%
Welsh language skills essential	25	0.7%
Welsh language skills desirable	3,781	99.3%
Welsh language skills to be learnt when appointed to post	0	0.0%



Most Welsh language roles are for Welsh teacher posts or other roles within Welsh schools.

The Welsh Language Commissioner delivered a seminar on the recruitment standards on 5 July 2023 which was attended by the Welsh Language Officer and Equalities staff. A briefing report on the seminar has been given to the strategic leadership team. This explained the relevant standards, listed practices that lead to successful recruitment, and made suggestions for where we could improve our recruitment mechanisms. We continue to work with Human Resources staff to ensure our recruitment processes align with the relevant standards.

Welsh Language Skills

Standard 170 (2a)

We must monitor and report the number of staff with Welsh skills in the Council.

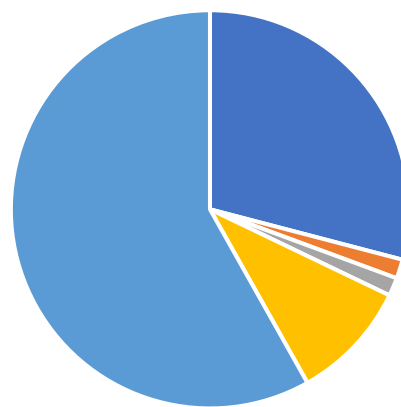
This indicator has been measured by filtering staff data from Fusion, the new human resources platform. Staff can self-assess their Welsh language skills and update this

information in their personal details on Fusion. The Fusion employee portal captures, and records on the language skills of staff. This has removed the need for an organisation-wide survey. Human Resources have communicated via email and Staffnet the need to update personal information.

We keep the records of staff with Welsh language skills under Standard 151.

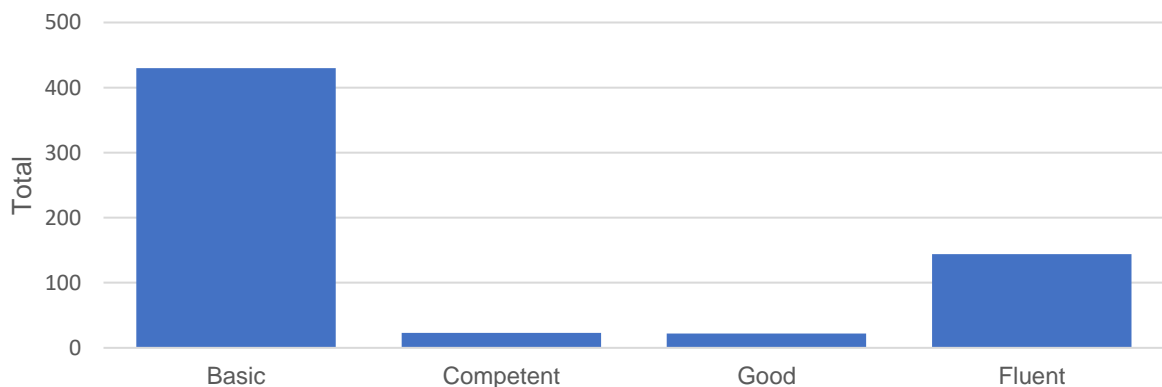
Staff skills across all four categories (Reading, Writing, Understanding, Speaking)

This shows the total number of staff in the six directorates with Basic, Competent, Good, Fluent, None or Not Recorded in all four categories (i.e. 'basic' for reading, writing, understanding, and speaking).



■ Basic ■ Competent ■ Good ■ Fluent ■ None

Totals across all directorates for those with recorded Welsh skills declaring the same level for reading, writing, understanding, and speaking



Staff skills - Reading

	Basic	Competent	Good	Fluent	None	Not recorded	Total
Learning & Skills – Schools	186	31	25	67	151	2467	2927
Learning & Skills	60	5	5	23	102	169	364
Social Services	135	11	7	26	298	351	828
Environment and Housing	108	7	5	20	328	360	828
Resources	76	6	7	17	155	125	386
Place	19	1	3	7	51	29	110
Total	584	61	52	160	1805	3501	5443

Staff skills – Writing

	Basic	Competent	Good	Fluent	None	Not recorded	Total
Learning & Skills – Schools	174	30	17	63	173	2470	2927
Learning & Skills	52	4	7	21	110	170	364
Social Services	104	7	8	24	331	354	828
Environment and Housing	85	5	3	17	356	362	828
Resources	54	6	6	14	179	127	386
Place	14	1	2	7	57	29	110
Total	483	53	43	146	1206	3512	5443

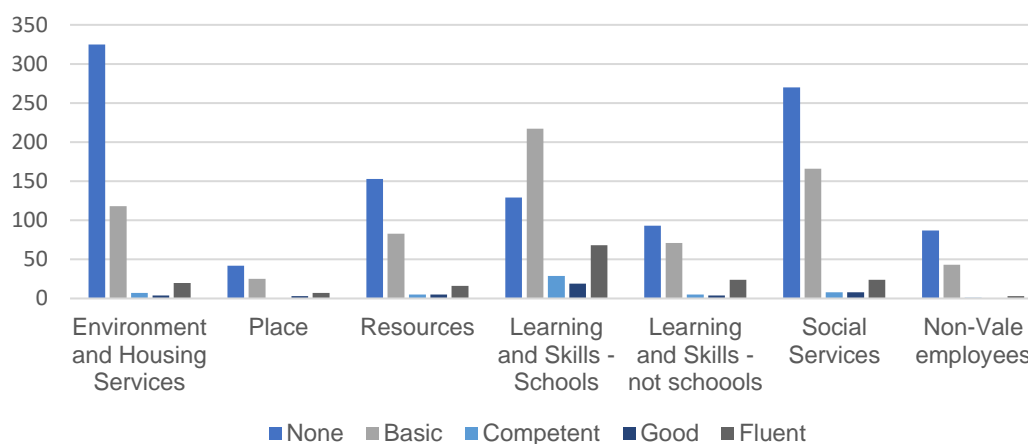
Staff skills – Speaking

	Basic	Competent	Good	Fluent	None	Not recorded	Total
Learning & Skills – Schools	217	29	19	68	129	2465	2927
Learning & Skills	71	5	4	24	93	167	364
Social Services	167	8	8	24	270	351	828
Environment and Housing	117	6	4	20	324	357	828
Resources	83	5	5	16	153	124	386
Place	25	0	3	7	46	29	110
Total	680	53	43	159	1015	3493	5443

Staff skills – Understanding

	Basic	Competent	Good	Fluent	None	Not recorded	Total
Learning & Skills – Schools	232	31	22	72	120	2450	2927
Learning & Skills	82	7	4	24	81	166	364
Social Services	186	7	10	29	253	343	828
Environment and Housing	151	6	6	21	305	339	828
Resources	103	6	6	21	126	124	386
Place	30	1	2	8	41	28	110
Total	784	58	50	175	926	3450	5443

Ability to speak Welsh by directorate



All these figures are reliant on staff members self-assessing their Welsh language skills within their Fusion account and therefore may not be complete. We are working with HR to remind all staff to update their personal details and Welsh language skills in their Fusion accounts. We will issue a reminder with an upcoming Welsh language promotion campaign and are working with the Work Welsh Coordinator to ensure staff on Welsh language courses update their skills to the appropriate level.

Overall, 12.9% of the Council workforce has reported Welsh language skills ranging from basic to fluent. Of the workforce who have responded to the self-assessment, 35.4% of the workforce reported competent, good or fluent Welsh language speaking skills. This is higher than the percentage reported in the Census 2021 of residents in the Vale of Glamorgan able to speak Welsh, which was 11.5%.

Welsh Language Training

Standard 170 (2b)

We must report on the number of staff undertaking training and to what level or degree of proficiency.

Under Standard 128, the authority is mandated to offer training programmes through the medium of Welsh on the following courses if they are also offered in English:

- Health and safety for managers
- Corporate induction
- Performance management
- Corporate management induction

Of the courses offered in Welsh, none were requested in Welsh by members of staff across the Organisation Development and Learning; Manual Handling' or Social Service departments. As such, attendance was 0% for staff completing these courses through the medium of Welsh.

Work Welsh

The Work Welsh Coordinator started in September 2022 and continues to provide classes at all levels throughout the week, as well as short taster sessions, social events, and weekly coffee mornings on Zoom. The Work Welsh Coordinator launched a Staffnet page, Yr Hwb, where news, events, tips, and course details are shared and updated regularly.

The Work Welsh Coordinator shares news from the Learn Welsh the Vale centre in every class as well as on the Yr Hwb page. There have been a number of social events this year including curry nights and quizzes, attended by learners across the council at all levels.

In 2023/24, the Work Welsh Coordinator joined with officers from Communications, Operational Development & Learning, and the Welsh Language Officer to work on a Council-wide campaign to promote the Welsh language, courses, and standards amongst staff.

As of March 2024, there are 48 members of staff on a Work Welsh course:

Level	Number of staff
Mynediad/Entry	19
Sylfaen/Foundation	17
Canolradd/Intermediate	4
Uwch/Higher	4
Glowyi/Proficiency	4

Learners who completed a course or examination in 2023/24 were invited to presentations in September and December in the Leader’s Office to receive certificates and enjoy a reception with the Leader and Chief Executive.



Learner testimonials:

“Living and working in Wales, I felt it was important to learn Welsh especially when working in local government.”

“Learning Welsh alongside your full-time job is possible with the Cymraeg Gwaith courses, as the online sessions makes the course easily accessible.”

“My dad’s family are Welsh speakers, which is what first inspired me to start the Cymraeg Gwaith courses three years ago. I can now hold my own in conversations with my fluent speaking family.”

“I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my Cymraeg Gwaith sessions over the past year.”

“I’ve also bonded with my course mates, forming friendships with people who work across different service areas who I wouldn’t normally cross paths within my day-to-day work.”

Some members of staff continued to learn Welsh in the community with Learn Welsh the Vale. These courses are still fully funded, and staff can still attend during work time. Some staff chose to stay in community classes due to a slower pace of study, for the familiarity of their existing class and classmates, or due to work commitments. There are currently 12 members of staff learning Welsh in the community with Learn Welsh the Vale:

Level	Number of staff
Mynediad/Entry	3
Sylfaen/Foundation	3
Canolradd/Intermediate	3
Uwch/Higher	2
Glowyi/Proficiency	1

A number of staff have also attended the Sadwrn Siarad sessions at Palmerston Learning Centre to practice their conversational Welsh, meet other Welsh learners and speakers, and attend revision sessions for exams.

Learn Welsh the Vale – community learners

There has been an increase in enrolments in 2023/24 at Learn Welsh the Vale.

The number of learners at each level has also increased. This suggests that learners are progressing to higher levels, as well as new learners joining courses at levels appropriate to their existing Welsh language ability.

This table shows the percentage of learners at each level:

Level	Percentage increase
Mynediad/Entry	29%
Sylfaen/Foundation	41%
Canolradd/Intermediate	No change
Uwch/Higher	19%
Glowyi/Proficiency	57%

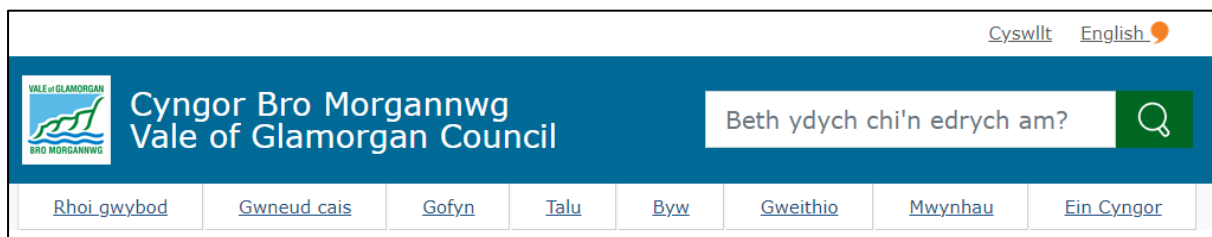
The number of learners undertaking exams has also increased. Of note is a 74% increase in the number of learners doing the Mynediad/Entry level examination in June 2023 from the previous year.

Compliance and Achievements

Website

The website editor prompts to a Welsh translation before English pages can be updated, ensuring the website is fully bilingual.

The web editor continues to carry out checks to ensure each page, menu and form is fully functional and accurately translated.

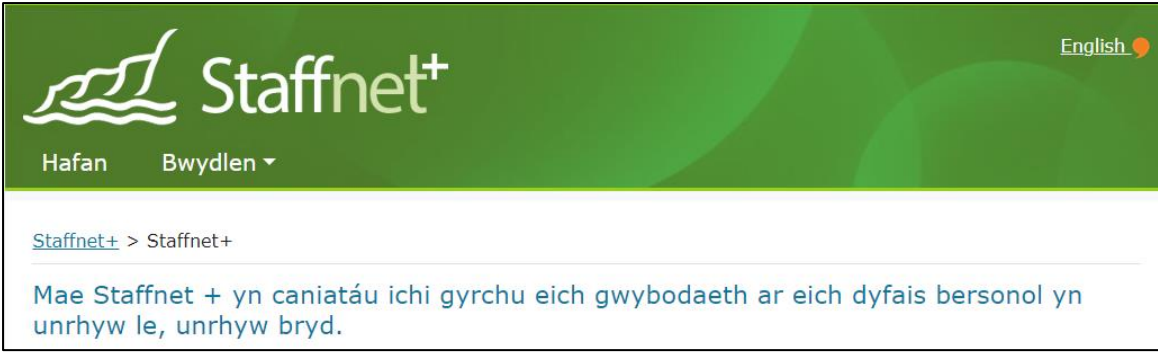


Internal communications

Staffnet+ is bilingual and is available to all staff on personal devices as well as corporate devices. It allows access to information on internal news items, payslips, internal job vacancies, and some policies.

The Chief Executive sends all staff a weekly message and round-up of news at the end of every week. This is sent in both Welsh and English.

The Communications Team sends regular emails to all Vale of Glamorgan staff with alerts and news. These are sent in both Welsh and English.



Social Media accounts

The Council's main social media accounts, as well as other Council Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts, are operated separately in Welsh and English.

The [Cyngor Bro Morgannwg](#) account on Facebook has 141 followers.



The [Cyngor Bro Morgannwg](#) account on X (Formerly Twitter) has 651 followers.

Contact Centre and Customer Service

The Council continues to offer all callers an option to undertake their enquiries through the medium of Welsh. The total number of callers to the contact centre who used this option during 2023/24 was 716, which is a decrease from 2022/23 (1749). Calls in Welsh during 2023/24 represent approximately 0.5% of the total calls made (134,354).

The number of bilingual staff at the contact centre has fluctuated between 2 and 5 throughout the year, which is approximately 11% of all customer service representatives. Recruitment and retention of bilingual staff has been difficult, and we are exploring new recruitment routes and opportunities such as sharing staff with other authorities. The recruitment of bilingual staff is a priority for 2024/25.

On average, callers using the Welsh language option in 2022/23 waited for 293 seconds, an increase from 257 seconds in 2022/23. This is lower than the overall average of 342 seconds across the call centre, which has also gone up from 327 seconds in 2022/23.

The main reception is staffed daily by Welsh speaking customer service representatives.

Policy Making Standards

The Welsh Language Commissioner provided further guidance and resources about the Policy Making Standards, following a seminar delivered in January 2023.

We have subsequently produced our own guidance notes on the Policy Making Standards which is available to all staff, managers, and leaders.

The main principle of the Policy Making Standards is to show conscientious effort has been made to assess the impact of policy decisions on the Welsh language. To support our compliance, we have added a new section to our consultation and engagement proforma as well as Welsh language impact assessment questions to our Equality Impact Assessment form.

Example:

The Planning department recently consulted on the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy. The consultation was held for a 10-week period between December 2023 and February 2024. As part of the evidence base for the Deposit RLDP, which is the next stage in the process, a Welsh Language background paper will be prepared.

The consultation was available bilingually, but all 3,188 representations were made in English.

As part of the consultation, respondents were asked what impact the proposals would have on the Welsh language. This was a mandatory question online and optional for those completing a paper form. A total of 1,044 representations included some kind of response. Of these, 84% either responded with no comment, that there was no impact or that they did not consider the question to be applicable. A further 8% of responses stated that they were unsure if there would be any impact. Only 8% of respondents considered that there would be an impact – all of which expressing that this would be a negative impact. The concerns expressed have been categorised into four key themes, which are listed below:

- Population increases could mean immigration of non-Welsh speakers, diluting village identity.
- Lack of Welsh Schools accommodate development in the area.
- Limited community and retail to support the Welsh language.
- Development will impact negatively on heritage and the environment, which would have subsequent impact on the Welsh Language.

The Welsh Language background paper will consider and respond to the Welsh language concerns.

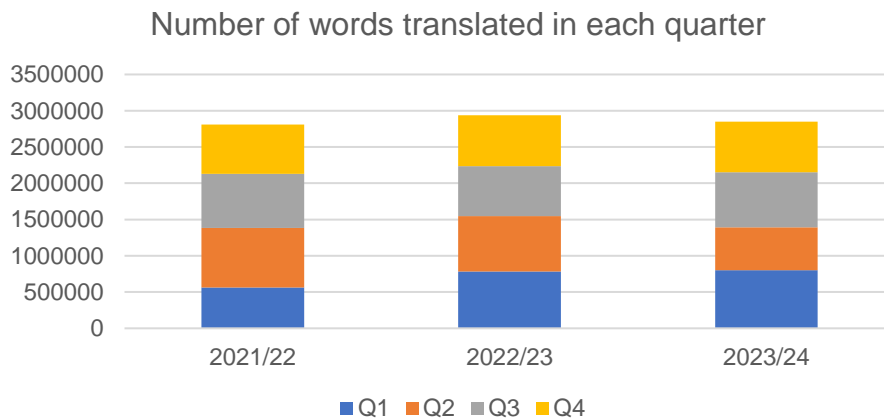
Recruitment Standards

The Welsh Language Commissioner delivered another advice seminar in July 2023 on the Recruitment Standards. We have produced our own guidance notes on the Recruitment Standards and have shared these with colleagues in Human Resources to ensure Vale of Glamorgan recruitment practices align with the relevant standards. The guidance explains the relevant standards, lists practices that lead to successful recruitment, and makes suggestions for where we could improve our recruitment mechanisms.

Welsh Translation

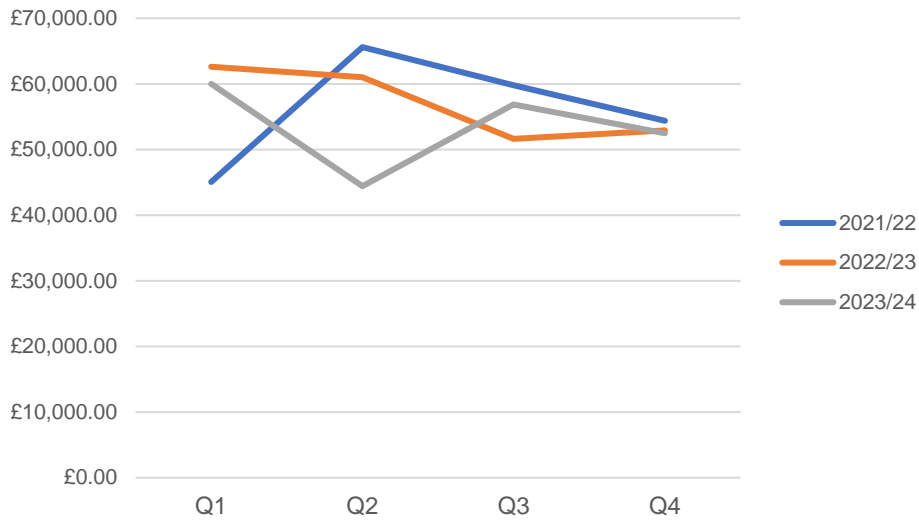
The Council has a contract with Cardiff Council for all Welsh translation work through their Bilingual Cardiff team. Vale staff utilise a portal on Staffnet to send documents for translation and request simultaneous translation.

From April 2023 to March 2024, 3632 documents were translated for the Vale of Glamorgan Council which is 89 fewer than the previous year. A total of 2,850,081 words were translated during this period which is a decrease of 1% on the previous year.



The cost of Welsh translated documents for 2023/24 was £213,758.26. This is £14,438.97 less than 2022/23.

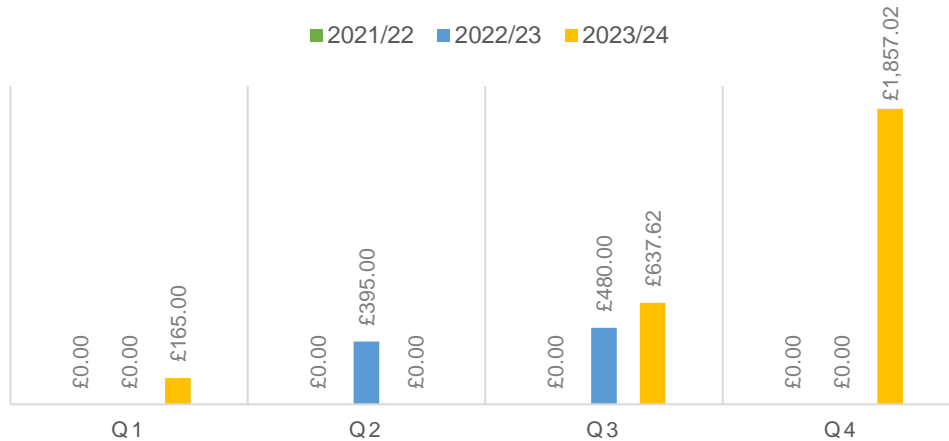
Charge per quarter for Welsh translated documents



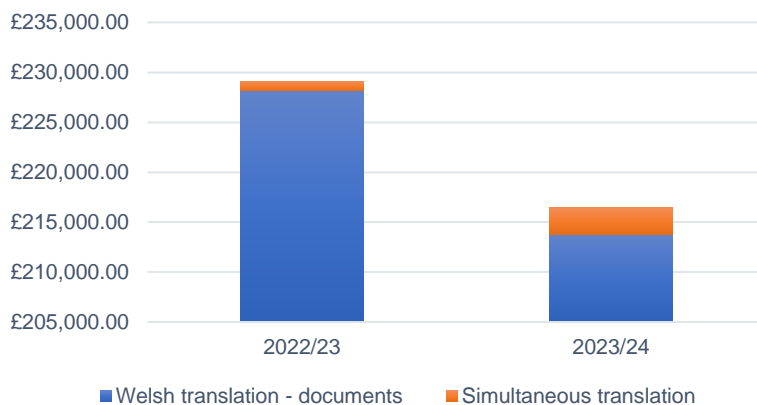
We have a duty across the Council to reduce costs, and unfortunately, the Welsh translation budget is a significant cost. There has been a reduction this year which suggests that staff are being more conscientious when sending items for translation or even utilising their own Welsh skills. We are confident that we are meeting the relevant Welsh Language Standards in terms of translation.

An area that has increased is simultaneous translation. The cost for this in 2023/24 has increased to £2659.64 from £875 in 2022/23. This is a percentage increase of 67.1%. Simultaneous translation now represents over 1% of translation costs. Whilst it is positive to see more Welsh being used at meetings, this is an area we will continue to monitor to ensure savings in the translation budget are not lost. We need to ensure staff and members of the public can access meetings in Welsh if they desire to ensure we continue to meet the Welsh Language Standards, whilst considering financial savings.

This chart shows how simultaneous translation costs have increased from zero in all quarters in 2021/22.



The total charge for Welsh translation including documents and simultaneous translation has still decreased from 2022/23 to 2023/24, but the proportion of simultaneous translation has increased:



Welsh speaking spellchecker and email footers

All Council staff have received a copy of 'Cysgair' on their computers. The latest version of this software has been installed on all council computers enabling staff to communicate more easily in Welsh and to feel confident about their grammar. This was promoted again during St David's Day and Welsh Language Rights Day.

We have arranged for all Council staff to have bilingual footers with their job titles and to have bilingual out-of-office messages. A prominent logo has also been added to the names of those who speak Welsh fluently and a separate logo to indicate members of staff who are learning Welsh. In addition, Welsh speaking staff and learners can wear lanyards or pin badges to indicate their skills when in the office.

Facilities

The Facilities team have carried out a review of signage across Council buildings and car parks. They want to ensure that all bilingual signage is accurate.

The team has checked and updated signage in the Civic Offices, Docks Offices, and Alps Depot. They have reviewed external signs in car parks and created new temporary signs for when the Estyn inspection took place.

Cultural awareness

We marked St David's Day with daffodils and Welsh conversation in the Civic Offices reception. We shared Welsh recipes and details of Work Welsh courses. Barry Town Council held an event for St Davids Day in King's Square, Barry.

To mark Welsh Language Rights Day in December, we shared the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Defnyddia dy Gymraeg' scheme, which encourages people to use their Welsh.



Mwy Na Geiriau/More than just words

Welsh Government produced a five-year Mwy na Geiriau action plan in 2022. We have used this as a basis for our own action plan. This has been considered and discussed by colleagues from Equalities and Social Services throughout 2023/24.

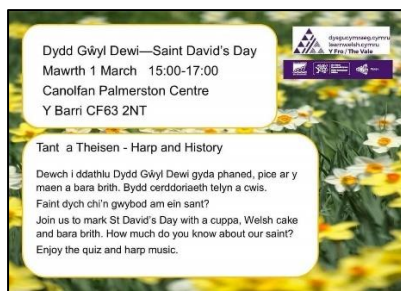
We aim to complete a number of actions from the Mwy na Geiriau action plan through the Welsh promotion campaign this year, including raising awareness of the Welsh Language Standards, encouraging more staff to undertake a Work Welsh course or short online course, and ensuring staff update their Welsh language skills on Fusion. Social Services staff are also promoting a Welsh Awareness training module produced by Welsh Government and sharing Welsh information and courses via a sector newsletter.

Learn Welsh the Vale

Learn Welsh the Vale deliver activities on behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and are listed prominently in the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy action plan. Learn Welsh the Vale have held a variety of events and activities for Welsh speakers, families, and learners in the Vale of Glamorgan in 2023/24. These take place throughout the year to mark St David's Day, St Dwynwen's Day, Easter, Christmas, and summer. Some events are held online via Zoom, and some are in-person at the Palmerston Centre in Barry or other venues in the Vale.

Events and activities are advertised on social media and promoted by the Work Welsh Coordinator for Council staff.

Here are a range of events from this year:



Dydd Gŵyl Dewi—Saint David's Day
Mawrth 1 March 15:00-17:00
Canolfan Palmerston Centre
Y Barri CF63 2NT

Tant a Theisen - Harp and History

Dewch i ddathtu Dydd Gŵyl Dewi gyda phaned, pice ar y maen a bara brith. Bydd cerddoriaeth telyn a cwis. Faint dych chi'n gwybod am ein sant? Join us to mark St David's Day with a cuppa, Welsh cake and bara brith. How much do you know about our saint? Enjoy the quiz and harp music.



Bore Coffi Santes Dwynwen

Ymunwch gyda ni ar ddydd Santes Dwynwen 25 Ionawr am 10yb.

Allison Roberts, Dywyer y Flwyddyn 2023, yn i'r gwestal. Byddwn ni'n lundio gstadfaeith Dywyer y Flwyddyn Eisteddfod Rhondda Cynon Taf 2024. Croeso cynnes i ddysgwyr ar bob lefel.

Join us to celebrate St Dwynwen's Day on 25 January at 10am with the 2023 Welsh Learner of the Year, Allison Roberts.

This virtual event is suitable for learners at all levels.



GWENER Cwrtthgareddau Activities For Welsh Learners

DATHLIAD NADOLIG CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
DYDD GWENER RHAGFYR 16 DECEMBER FRIDAY
13.00-15.00
(Sŵia Cwrs A-B i'r rhwyfwr gyda'r plant)

- Cŵl a chreffl Tymbhorol - Seasonal Art and crafts
- Canu Carolau - Welsh Carol Singing
- Ymarfer Sgwrsio - Chat to practise your Welsh

Canolfan Palmerston Centre
Cedric Crescent,
Y Barri
CF63 2NT

01448 720482



Ffair Nadolig Rithiol Virtual Christmas Fair

Nos Lun, 23 Tachwedd am 8.00pm
Monday evening, 23 November at 8.00pm

Edrych am anrhegion Nadolig i blant?
Cyfie i glywed am lyfrau ac anrhegion Cymraeg hyfryd.

Looking for presents for children?
Find out about some great Welsh books and gifts.

Sesiwn Cymraeg, ond cyfieithu ar y pryd ar gael.
Welsh language session, with simultaneous translation provided.



Y Cwis Mawr
Rownd Bro Morgannwg

Mwynhaur Gynroeg

26 /06 / 2023
Anex 5, Yr Hen Goleg
Y Bontfoen
1145

Cyfie i'r tim buddugol fynd i'r rownd derfynol yn yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol ar 5 Awst (tocyn diwrnod am ddim!)

i gymryd rhan ac am fwy o wybodaeth cysyllto â
bethan@menterbromorgannwg.cymru

Learn Welsh the Vale also provide support and assistance to staff undertaking Work Welsh courses. This includes administrative support for self-study, revision classes, and practice exams. Work Welsh learners have access to the same facilities and provision as learners in the community and the opportunities to meet other Welsh speakers and learners is invaluable.

Menter Bro Morgannwg

Menter Bro Morgannwg are a valued partner of the Vale of Glamorgan Council in delivering Welsh language activities and services for people across the county. The Council provides funding for Menter Bro Morgannwg to offer opportunities for Welsh speakers and learners in the Vale of Glamorgan. They have responsibility for a number of actions in our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy action plan and we are grateful for all they do to meet these targets under tight financial restraints. More details can be found in the 2023/24 update of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy action plan.

Summary of output and attendance:

Output	Number of activities	Number attending
Gwyl Fach y Fro	1	8,500
Activities for children	114	2,020
Activities for young people (age 11-25)	5	323
Activities for families	86	2,203 (1,261 children 942 adults)
Activities for adults	32	970

Families and children

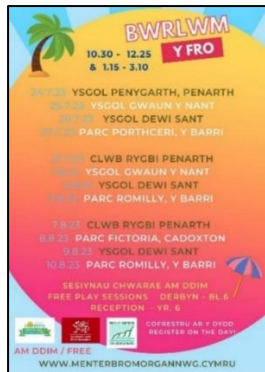


A key element of the engagement program with pre-school families is the Amser Stori / Story Time sessions in libraries across the county. Menter have also arranged for headteachers of local Welsh medium primary schools to come to sessions to start introducing the idea of Welsh education.

Other activities include Bygi Heini, Easter egg hunt at Cosmeston, winter play activities at Cosmeston, summer 'parti yn y parc' in Cowbridge, and Christmas parties in collaboration with Learn Welsh the Vale and Family Information Service.



For primary age children, the Bwrlwm open play scheme has continued to run during school holidays in various locations across the county. Over 830 children benefited from Bwrlwm sessions in 2023/24.



Menter collaborate with the Urdd on sports activities for primary school children, running six clubs with over 1,300 participants.



Menter also ran a series of activities leading up to Gwyl Fach y Fro including graffiti workshops and dance sessions. Again, these gave children the opportunity to use Welsh in a social context and meet children from other schools.

Young people

In the context of financial constraints, the Council has been unable to increase funding and the costs of activities have increased. As a result, provision for young people has been less comprehensive than previous years. In response, Menter has



collaborated with other organisations to maximise what can be achieved for young people.

Menter have collaborated with other partners such as the Youth Service and Urdd to run some activities at the Barry Youth Club.

Gwyl Fach y Fro provided volunteering and employment opportunities for Year 12/13 pupils from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, as well as a platform for youth performers.

Regional Mentrau Iaith collaborated to promote a series of youth gigs at Clwb Ifor Bach in Cardiff. A band from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg was on the line-up.

Menter have worked with Ysgol Bro Morgannwg on taster days and careers fairs to promote Welsh language careers and the value of Welsh in the workplace.

Adults

As well as the main community event, Gwyl Fach y Fro, five Welsh artist gigs were held in various locations across the Vale of Glamorgan, attracting over 700 people. Due to support from Barry Town Council, free tickets were offered to Welsh learners.

Menter have successfully connected with the organisers of Glastonbarry to ensure Welsh language music will feature at the 2024 event.



Due to collaboration with Menter Caerdydd and Learn Welsh the Vale, Menter has been able to continue to provide a range of classes and activities for adults in the Vale of Glamorgan. These include visits and excursions, online classes, virtual and in-person coffee mornings, and monthly talks (Sgwrws y Mis). Some of these activities are funded from National Lottery grants.

Menter also worked with the Round Table in Cowbridge to organise the Mari Lwyd celebrations, attended by over 100 people.

Schools

English medium schools in the Vale of Glamorgan continue to contribute to the promotion and use of Welsh amongst children and young people. There is a strong level of engagement with the Siarter Iaith scheme, which is very positive considering it is not mandatory. All schools in the Vale are engaged with either Siarter Iaith or Cymraeg Campus schemes. The Vale of Glamorgan has the highest number of schools who have received Gold and Silver awards in the south-east Wales region.

English medium schools

- Seven primary schools have Bronze or Silver.
- Two secondary schools have Bronze, one has Silver, and one has Gold.



Welsh medium schools

- One school has Bronze, five have Silver, one has Gold.

Three Welsh medium schools (Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, Ysgol Sant Baruc and Ysgol Pen-y-Garth) and one of our English medium primary schools, Cadoxton, competed in the 2023 Urdd Eisteddfod in Llandovery.

Cadoxton Primary School competing at the Urdd Eisteddfod in May 2023:



One of the choirs from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg competing at the Urdd Eisteddfod:



Ysgol Sant Baruc moved into their new build school on Barry Waterfront in April 2023. The new build school for Ysgol Bro Morgannwg has been approved. Both allow for expansion of Welsh medium provision, including nursery age.



Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) Update

There has been a Welsh Language Officer in position from September 2023 who leads on the WESP and coordinates the relationship between the Council and the Welsh medium schools.

You can view the WESP on the Vale of Glamorgan website here:

[Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/welsh-in-education-strategic-plan)

Key actions from 2023/24 include:

- Secured funding and tender for the immersion unit at Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg in Cowbridge.
- Recruiting a LSA for the Immersion Centre at Ysgol Gwaun y Nant to support the Leader of the centre.

As of February 2024:

- 15.8% of reception children are being taught through Welsh.
- At nursery level, 17.8% of children are being taught through Welsh.
- There are 330 reception places available at 7 Welsh medium primary schools in the Vale with 225 children currently in attendance. There is therefore 31.8% surplus capacity.
- Across English and Welsh medium schools, 11.9% of pupils aged 5 or over are fluent in Welsh, lower than the Wales average of 14.6%
- In 2023/24, 95% of learners in Welsh medium primary school at the end of Year 6 transitioned to Welsh medium secondary school.

The WESP is closely aligned to the updated Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. We have worked to synergise similar actions relating to Welsh-medium education.

Estyn carried out an inspection and report on education services and Learning and Skills in February 2024, which included Welsh medium education. This is an excerpt from the report about the WESP and Welsh medium education:

It has identified suitable actions to improve provision for Welsh-medium education and is gradually increasing the availability of placements at Welsh-medium nursery education settings. The authority has increased Welsh-medium provision for pupils and introduced a Welsh language centre for education that has improved provision for primary aged children. The local authority's progress around addressing challenges in improving Welsh provision across its schools is at an early stage.

Regional Welsh Language Champion

We continue to be part of the Regional Welsh Language Education Champion group. In addition, the Vale's Welsh Education Officer sits on the governance board. We attend quarterly meetings and participate in the Champion's action plan. We have contributed information for the Vale of Glamorgan section on the Champion's website, [Cymraeg i Bawb](#), and provided feedback on the logo and design.



We provided detailed of the Vale’s Welsh medium schools to receive free banners to promote Welsh medium education.

Fforwm y Fro

A significant achievement this year has been the creation of a new Welsh language forum, Fforwm y Fro. We surveyed invited members in December 2023 and received overwhelmingly positive responses. Invites for the first meeting were sent in March 2024, with the first meeting taking place immediately after the Easter school holidays in April 2024.

The Fforwm replaces Fforwm Iaith which had ceased to meet. Membership comprises Council staff including the Welsh Language Officer, Welsh Education Officer, and Work Welsh Coordinator; schools including all Welsh medium schools, Cardiff and Vale College, and the Welsh immersion centre; as well as representatives from other relevant organisations with an interest in promoting the Welsh language including Menter Bro Morgannwg, Learn Welsh the Vale, Urdd, Merched y Wawr, and the Cymraeg i Bawb regional champion.

Other groups

We are a member of Grwp Deddf. This is a regional group of Welsh language officers from the south-eastern Welsh local authorities along with representatives from Welsh Government and other public bodies.



The group provides the opportunity to share experiences and good practice, and forge links across the councils. The group has held seminars and conferences with

presentations from Welsh Government and Welsh Language Commissioner. Meetings are held monthly, via Teams and in person.

We are also a member of Rhwydiaith. This is a national group of Welsh language officers from all Welsh local authorities, representatives from Welsh Government, and other public organisations. Meetings are less frequent than Grwp Deddf.

Welsh Language Commissioner Review

The Welsh Language Commissioner carries out a review of our compliance with Welsh Language Standards every year. This takes the form of a 'mystery shopper' approach whereby an officer from the Commissioner's office tests our Welsh language services in a variety of ways: sending Welsh language emails, making Welsh language phone calls, accessing Welsh language forms online, recruitment pages, and checking a range of Welsh language webpages. They also check our social media output, advertising and marketing, and corporate identity.

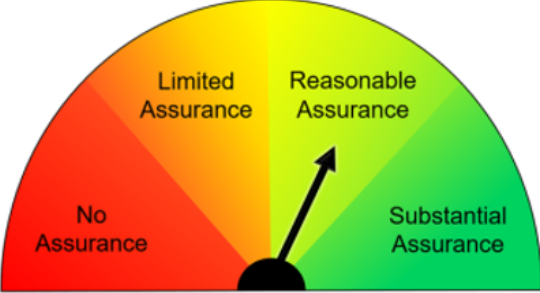
Upon our request, the Welsh Language Commissioner provided a written summary of their findings as well as a face-to-face meeting to discuss the review. Overall, we did very well but there were a couple of areas identified for improvement, mostly within recruitment posts. There were two minor issues with webpages that were promptly rectified.

We have a positive relationship with our client manager at the Welsh Language Commissioner's office, and in line with the Welsh Language Commissioner's new co-regulatory approach, we fully participate in these reviews and value the findings.

Internal Audit: Welsh Language Standards

In line with the 2023/24 Audit Plan, there was an audit of compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. The purpose of the audit was to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control, governance, and risk management arrangements in respect of Welsh Language Standards. The overall objective was to provide assurance that the Council is compliant with Welsh

Language standards. The audit looked at provision of information for staff, policies and procedures for staff, translation compliance, and record keeping of language preferences across directorates.

AUDIT OPINION	RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY	
	High Priority	0
	Medium Priority	5
	Low Priority	3
	Total	8
<p style="text-align: center;">REASONABLE ASSURANCE</p> <p>There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.</p>		

The audit identified some key strengths and good practice around translation and controls, which is positive to hear and aligns with findings from the Welsh Language Commissioner review.

There were some issues identified, including:

- Some minor errors with external webpages.
- The Welsh version of some compulsory internal documents had not been updated.
- 50% of front-facing staff surveyed do not record language preference.

As a result of the audit, some specific recommendations have been made. We addressed some of these immediately and are working towards others, ensuring that regular implementation reports and checks are completed.

Next steps

Going forward for 2024/205, we will focus on some key areas:

- Increasing the number of staff learning Welsh and participating in work Welsh classes, to improve the Welsh language skills of staff.
- Promoting the use of Welsh language across the Council through a thorough and dynamic campaign.
- Raising awareness of our obligations and responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards through a user-friendly guide and revised web pages.
- Reviewing our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy action plan, in line with action 2.13 to align with the updated Corporate Plan, Strategic Equality Plan., and wider concerns such as financial situation, Project Zero, and wellbeing.
- Continue to work closely with Learning and Skills colleagues in terms of the Welsh Education Strategic Plan and the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.
- Engaging with the Welsh Language Commissioner as they revise their regulatory approach.
- Further developing Fforwm y Fro, forging network and links across all parties and organisations with an interest in promoting the Welsh language.

Contact Us

Visit our website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Email c1v@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Call 01446 700111