



# WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Cartrefi Cymunedol Cymru  
Community Housing Cymru

This voluntary scheme has been prepared in accordance  
with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Guidelines  
under the Welsh Language Act 1993



2016

# Community Housing Cymru's Welsh Language Scheme

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# 1. Introduction

Community Housing Cymru (CHC) aims to be the leading voice for the social housing sector in Wales, representing over 70 not-for-profit housing associations and community mutuals.

CHC has adopted the principal that, in the conduct of public business in Wales, the Welsh and English language will be treated on the basis of equality. This scheme sets out how CHC will meet the principals established by the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the measures that CHC proposes to take to achieve the aims of the Act.

This scheme also recognises the provisions contained in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 which is the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and the freedom to use Welsh. It should be noted that this scheme will be replaced by standards under the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and that CHC is committed to implementing the principles of the 2011 Measure.

CHC is committed to providing a bilingual service and to ensure that all members and service users are able to communicate with the organisation in the one or other language, orally or in writing and receive responses in the same language. Any reference in the Scheme to bilingual refers to the ability to communicate in Welsh and English.

## 2. Our Scheme

### a. Correspondence

#### i. Letters and Emails

CHC encourages letters and emails in Welsh. The following are the provisions that CHC have in place for receiving and responding to letters and emails through the medium of Welsh.

- ✂ When someone writes to us in Welsh we will reply with a signed letter in Welsh. Emails in Welsh will also be responded to in Welsh.
- ✂ Our target times for replying to letters and emails in Welsh will be exactly the same as for replying to letters in English.
- ✂ When sending standard letters or emails to several individuals or organisations, the correspondence will be bilingual unless we know that all recipients would prefer to receive it in English or Welsh only.
- ✂ When sending letters or emails to an individual, a group or organisation which we know works mainly in Welsh or prefers correspondence in Welsh, we will use Welsh as the contact language.

All email signatures across CHC will be fully bilingual. Welsh speakers will prioritise the Welsh language in all email signatures so that it is likely to be read first. Welsh speakers must also include the 'Working Welsh' banner in their signature. Welsh speakers will also use bilingual automatic-out-of-office replies.

#### ii. Telephone Calls

We will answer all calls to CHC's general telephone numbers with a bilingual greeting:

“Bore da, Good morning (organisation)”

or

“Prynhawn da, Good afternoon (organisation)”

Guidelines will be issued to staff on the steps to take when answering the telephone.

If the caller wishes to speak Welsh, we will try to connect the call to a Welsh speaker to deal with the enquiry. If no Welsh speaker is available and able to deal with the enquiry, the caller will be given the choice of a Welsh speaker phoning back or continuing the call in English.

Welsh speaking staff with a direct dial telephone number and company mobile phones will leave bilingual automatic answering messages on both.

Answer machine messages to CHC's general telephone numbers will be bilingual.

### iii. Conferences & Public Meetings

Attendees are encouraged to speak Welsh in meetings and conferences organised by CHC. Publicity for public meetings and conferences will make clear that contributions from attendees will be welcomed in both Welsh and English.

When we send Welsh-speaking representatives to public meetings, conferences, exhibitions, etc. they will show that they can speak Welsh by wearing the 'Working Welsh' badge or via other means.

### iv. Training

We will annually establish if there is enough interest by Welsh speakers to run courses in Welsh.

### v. Meetings

CHC holds many small meetings with groups and individuals. Invitees are encouraged to speak Welsh at these meetings.

In advance of holding a meeting with an individual or a group whose language preference is Welsh, we will offer to provide interpretation or to hold the meeting in Welsh.

### vi. Forms

Forms for use by other organisations and any explanations that accompany them will be available in both Welsh and English.

We aim to produce all forms bilingually. When a single document would be too lengthy or difficult to process then separate Welsh and English versions of the form will be issued at the same time and be made equally accessible.

## b. Communications

### i. Publicity

Information will be bilingual on publications, covers and other forms of public display. Printed information on CHC's letter headings, compliment slips, fax covering sheets, staff

business cards and similar items will be bilingual.

## ii. Publications

All new publications that we prepare will be issued in Welsh and English.

The Welsh and English versions will normally be together in a single bilingual publication.

Sometimes, for practical reasons, separate Welsh and English versions will be issued. When separate Welsh and English publications are published separately we will ensure that both versions will be equally accessible to the public.

When we charge for a bilingual publication, we will not charge more than the price of a single-language version of that publication. When we issue separate Welsh and English versions, they will have the same price.

When using CHC's brand names, these will be translated into Welsh within the text of all Welsh language literature.

Wherever possible when issuing joint publications we will publish the Welsh language version at the same time as the English version, either as a single bilingual document (first preference) or in separate versions.

## iii. Press Releases & Conferences

We will prepare press releases in Welsh and English for the media.

Whenever possible and practical a Welsh speaking spokesperson will be included in a press release.

## iv. Publicity Campaigns & Exhibitions

All publicity campaigns will communicate messages in both Welsh and English. The extent of usage of one or another language in individual campaigns will depend on considerations of advertising effectiveness and value for money.

In some UK-wide campaigns we will run extra and dual-language advertising in local Welsh and English language media.

Our exhibitions and displays for the public will be bilingual with both languages equal in terms of size, font, quality and legibility. Any new signage or displays will display Welsh in a way where it is likely to be read first.

Telephone response lines and other ways of responding to campaigns in Wales will be bilingual or will include a separate Welsh response service.

## v. Social Media

When someone contacts us in Welsh we will reply in Welsh with a target time that does not differ from our response time to English language correspondence.

Welsh speakers are encouraged to use their individual social media accounts in Welsh and are also encouraged to contribute to CHC's general social media accounts.

## c. Internal Operations

### i. Signage

All external and internal signs in view of the public and visitors will be bilingual with both languages equal in terms of size, font, quality and legibility. Any new signage will display Welsh in a way where it is likely to be read first.

### ii. Recruitment

We encourage applications from Welsh speakers for all advertised job vacancies. In order to encourage Welsh speakers to apply for advertised posts, recruitment advertising in Wales-based media will be bilingual unless this is clearly not appropriate or practicable. For posts where Welsh speaking is essential we will advertise in Welsh only with a brief explanation in English.

Where practicable we will place additional job recruitment advertising in Welsh language media, even when the job is not one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential.

Advertisements in major UK newspapers will normally be in English only.

### iii. Governance

We will encourage an equitable mix on CHC's governance bodies of Welsh and English speakers by including language in the annual audit of Members' skills.

CHC's governance bodies may decide to prioritise Welsh speakers within the recruitment and co-option of new Members.

Any cabinet or committee papers available to the public are provided bilingually.

## 3. Implementation

### a. Staffing

In order for this Scheme to be successful, CHC must have enough appropriately skilled staff able to speak Welsh. It is the responsibility of each person in a managerial role to keep under review posts where a Welsh speaker is essential or beneficial in order to provide services in line with this Scheme. When appropriate the ability to speak Welsh will be considered as one of several abilities in filling vacancies which arise in accordance with The Group's Equal Opportunities Policy.

### b. Language Training

Language training will play an important part in increasing the number of staff able to work confidently in Welsh, and CHC will encourage staff to attend appropriate courses. A strategy will be prepared to meet future Welsh language training needs.

The following priorities for training have been identified:

- ✎ encouraging all staff who wish to do so to learn Welsh to enable them to handle straightforward enquiries from members of the public;
- ✎ assisting and supporting staff who have the necessary level of commitment to undertake language training to learn Welsh or to improve their Welsh.

### c. Technology

#### i. Websites

CHC's website ([www.chcymru.org.uk](http://www.chcymru.org.uk)) will be bilingual.

We will ensure that the text of each page of our website is available in Welsh, that Welsh language content is fully functional and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

When redeveloping websites or any other Information technology services we will consider the Welsh Language Commissioner's bilingual guidelines and software standards.

#### ii. Software

We will ensure that any new computing software purchases by CHC will be compatible with delivering the commitments in this Scheme.

In order to help staff work through the medium of Welsh, IT software such as Cysgliad (provided by Bangor University) will be available on computers. Welsh language versions of Microsoft Windows and Office will also be available to staff who wish to use them (language packs are available for free directly from Windows).

## 4. Monitoring

CHC will monitor the performance and the commitments made in this Scheme. Each year a report will be submitted to CHC's governing bodies and the reports will be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner. Should any Scheme commitments not be met the report will explain why and will outline the proposed action. A summary of the report will be published in CHC's published Annual Report.

Complaints, both written and oral, from members of the public resulting from a failure to comply with the Scheme will be included in the monitoring process.

Other elements in the monitoring system will include:

- ⌘ The extent to which new administrative systems and supporting documentation have been made available bilingually;
- ⌘ The proportions of English language and Welsh language correspondence answered within the target deadline;
- ⌘ The use of interpretation at public and other meetings;
- ⌘ The proportion of publications and forms produced bilingually and the reasons for others not being bilingual;
- ⌘ The reasons for any delay in producing Welsh language versions of The Group's publications;
- ⌘ The proportion of press notices issued bilingually;
- ⌘ The number and distribution of Welsh speakers in The Group;
- ⌘ The number of members of staff taking Welsh language courses;
- ⌘ The extent to which CHC's face is fully bilingual e.g. signs, letterheads.

The monitoring report will measure the implementation of the scheme against a set of agreed targets.

## 5. Complaints

CHC will be monitoring closely how well it is meeting the commitments in this Scheme. If it

falls short of these commitments, we hope that members of the public will tell us. Any complaint about CHC's services in Welsh should be addressed to:

The Chief Executive <b>Community Housing Cymru</b>	029 2067 4800 <a href="mailto:enquiries@chcymru.org.uk">enquiries@chcymru.org.uk</a>	2 Ocean Way, Cardiff, CF24 5TG
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We also encourage suggestions for improvements to the services we provide through the medium of Welsh. Any such suggestions should be made to the above address where they will be considered as part of our continuing review of the way we deliver our services through the medium of Welsh.

The Welsh language version of this Scheme is available here -  
Mae'r fersiwn Cymraeg o'r Cynllun hwn ar gael yma:  
[Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg](#)

**Community Housing Cymru will not seek to amend this Welsh Language Scheme without first consulting with the Welsh Language Commissioner.**