



**Comisiynydd
Pobl Hŷn
Cymru**
**Older People's
Commissioner
for Wales**

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Report 2024-25

September 2025

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales is an independent voice and champion for older people throughout Wales.

The Commissioner wants Wales to lead the way in empowering older people, tackling inequality and enabling everyone to live and age well.

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Accessible formats

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg // This document is available in Welsh

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Foreword

I am pleased to present my first report as the Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

As a proud Welsh speaker, it is especially important to me that the voices of older people are heard and respected in both Welsh and English. Wales is a bilingual nation, and the Welsh language is a living, vital part of our culture, communities and identity.

I am fully committed to ensuring that the rights of Welsh speakers are upheld, and that older people can access services, support and information in the language of their choice.



We are a truly bilingual organisation, providing an environment that encourages and enables all staff to use the language in their daily work. My fully bilingual Advice and Assistance service ensures that older people are able to receive information and advice in their language of choice.

Complying with the Welsh Language Standards is not only a legal duty, but also a key part of demonstrating my commitment to promoting and strengthening the Welsh language.

As Commissioner, I will ensure that older people can engage with my office in Welsh or English without barriers or compromise, and that the Welsh language is a visible and valued part of our work throughout Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhian Bowen-Davies', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rhian Bowen-Davies

Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Introduction

As an independent organisation funded by public monies, the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales is required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards (the Standards), which set out a number of ways in which the Commissioner must provide and promote services through the Welsh language and facilitate and encourage its use in the workplace.

The Welsh Language Standards that apply to the Commissioner are divided into four different categories:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Record Keeping

The Commissioner has been issued with 145 Standards:

	Compliance Date: 25.01.17	Compliance Date: 25.07.17	Total
Service Delivery	71	0	71
Policy Making	15	0	15
Operational	47	2	49
Record Keeping	9	1	10
Total	142	3	145

The Welsh Language Standards compliance notice and our [Welsh Language Policy can be found on our website here](#).

The Chief Operating Officer is the designated Welsh Language Officer and has responsibility to ensure that the organisation complies with all requirements of the Standards.

This report focuses on activities undertaken in the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Compliance

Specific actions taken for compliance with the Standards are set out below:

Service Delivery Standards (1-82)

- New employees receive information about the Welsh Language Standards in their induction pack and receive training on how to be compliant with the Standards from the Welsh Language Officer.
- All staff know how to respond to correspondence (letter and e-mail), answer the telephone, and arrange and hold meetings.
- All template letters comply with the Standards.
- An automated system for the main telephone number enables callers the option to speak to a member of staff in Welsh.
- All answer machine messages are bilingual, with Welsh first.
- All members of staff answering the main phone line are Welsh speakers.
- All documents produced for public use are bilingual, using the tilt and turn format as standard (longer reports are produced separately in both languages), and are produced in different formats to meet accessibility standards.
- Attendees of meetings (online and in person) are asked for their language of choice. If over 10% state they wish to contribute in Welsh, simultaneous translation is provided.
- All adverts are bilingual.
- The Commissioner's logo is Welsh-led.
- The Commissioner's website is bilingual and meets accessibility standards in both languages.
- All tenders for contracts are published bilingually on the Sell2Wales website.
- Tenders received in Welsh are responded to in Welsh and any interviews will be conducted with the aid of a simultaneous translator if required.

Policy Making Standards (84-93)

- All staff understand the requirements of the Policy Making Standards.
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance has been produced to help staff complete a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Operational Standards (94-148)

- A policy on using Welsh internally for the purpose of promoting and facilitating the use of the language is published on the website.
- All staff are asked whether they wish to receive their contract of employment in Welsh and the results are recorded.
- All staff are asked whether they wish to receive any paper correspondence that relates to his or her employment and which is addressed to him or her personally in Welsh and the results are recorded.
- All staff are asked whether they wish to receive any documents relating to their training needs and their performance objectives in Welsh and the results are recorded.
- All forms relating to annual leave, absences from work and flexible working hours are produced bilingually.
- All policies are published bilingually on the shared access drive.
- All staff are aware that they are able to make complaints in Welsh and have the right to respond to a complaint made about them in Welsh.
- All staff will be offered the opportunity to host any meetings regarding complaints about them in Welsh (with the use of simultaneous translation).
- Any record of decision relating to a complaint against a member of staff will be issued in Welsh.
- All policies are bilingual.
- Computer software has been provided to all members of staff who require it to check spelling and grammar in Welsh (Cysgliad).
- The Welsh language skills of all staff has been assessed through self-assessment (see Welsh Language Skills of Employees section).
- The Commissioner provides opportunities during work hours for all employees to receive Welsh language training.
- Information to raise awareness of the Welsh language is provided to all new staff members as part of their induction.
- Wording and a logo has been provided for staff's e-mail signature to inform people if they are fluent Welsh speakers or learners.

- Welsh language skills for new or vacant posts are assessed (see Recruitment section).
- Posts are advertised bilingually and state language skills required.
- Adverts state that the Commissioner welcomes applications in Welsh and that an application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application submitted in English.
- All information related to recruitment is published bilingually.
- Application forms provide a space for individuals to state if they wish to use Welsh at interview stage and that simultaneous translation will be provided if necessary.

Record Keeping

- The Commissioner keeps a record of the number of complaints she receives relating to our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. No complaints were received in 2024/25.
- The Commissioner keeps a copy of any complaint that she receives in relation to the Standards.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of steps taken to comply with the Policy Making Standards.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of the Welsh language skills of all staff as well as the self-assessments that are completed by staff per year to determine their language proficiency.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of the assessments undertaken to determine the required Welsh language skills of new or vacant posts.
- The Commissioner keeps a record of how all new or vacant posts were categorised in relation to Welsh language skills needed.

Language Complaints

During 2024/25, there have been no complaints received regarding the Commissioner's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

Welsh Language Skills

As at 31 March 2025, the Commissioner employed 16 members of staff. The Welsh Language Survey was conducted during March 2025, which asked staff to self-assess their skills using a matrix of proficiency in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. All members of staff and the Commissioner responded to the survey. The results are detailed in tables 1 and 2 below, showing that 59% of the organisation class themselves as proficient Welsh speakers. This is an increase from 37% last year, and the highest percentage that has ever been recorded.

Table 1 - Welsh language skills of all staff

	Understanding	Reading	Writing	Speaking
0 – No Skills	2	2	4	4
1 – Entry	4	2	2	2
2 – Foundation	-	3	2	1
3 – Intermediate	1	-	2	-
4 – Advanced	2	2	4	3
5 – Fluent	8	8	3	7

Table 2 - Welsh language skills of all staff at Band level

Level	Band						Total
	B	C	D	E	F	Comm	
No Skills	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Entry	1	1	2	-	-	-	4
Foundation	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Intermediate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Advanced	-	2	-	-	1	-	3
Fluent	-	2	3	1	-	1	7

During 2024/25, the Commissioner remained committed to providing opportunities during work hours for all employees to receive Welsh language training, fully funded by the organisation.

All members of staff are able to access online learning and resources from the LearnWelsh website.

One member of staff is undertaking the Advanced Course run by LearnWelsh Cardiff.

Recruitment

When a new or vacant post arises, the Chief Operating Officer completes a Welsh language skills assessment for each role. This assessment will determine the Welsh language skills required for that role based on the requirements of the role e.g being public facing, providing advice and support directly to older people. The assessment will determine whether Welsh language skills are deemed 'essential' or 'desirable' for the post.

During 2024/25, three roles were advertised through external recruitment. Two roles required Welsh language skills as 'essential' (requiring the post holder to be able to engage fluently in Welsh with members of the public) and one role required Welsh language skills as 'desirable'.

Training

No training was delivered through the medium of English or Welsh on topics such as recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints and disciplinary procedures, induction, and dealing with the public.

All mandatory training accessed through our e-learning portal is available in English and Welsh.



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