



Comisiynydd
Pobl Hŷn
Cymru
Older People's
Commissioner
for Wales

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Report 2025-26

September 2026

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.

How to contact the Commissioner:

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff
CF10 5FL

Phone: 03442 640 670

Email: ask@olderpeople.wales

Twitter: [@talkolderpeople](https://twitter.com/talkolderpeople)

Website: www.olderpeople.wales

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 the Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for 2025-26.

As a bilingual nation, the Welsh language remains a vital part of our culture, communities and identity. It is essential that older people across Wales are able to use Welsh and English equally in their everyday lives, including when accessing services and support.

Over the past year, my office has continued to prioritise the rights of Welsh speakers and to ensure that older people can engage with us in the language of their choice. We remain committed to being a fully bilingual organisation, where Welsh is visible, valued and actively used in our work.

We have embedded the Welsh Language Standards across our services, policies and day-to-day operations. Our Advice and Assistance service continues to offer support in both Welsh and English, ensuring that older people can access information and guidance without barriers. We have also maintained a strong focus on supporting our staff to develop their Welsh language skills and confidence to use Welsh in the workplace.

Complying with the Welsh Language Standards is not only a legal requirement, but a fundamental part of delivering services that respect people's rights and dignity. During this reporting period, we have continued to monitor our performance, respond to feedback and take action where improvements are needed. Where issues have arisen, we have taken steps to learn and strengthen our approach.

Looking ahead, I am committed to building on this progress. We will continue to promote the Welsh language across all areas of our work, support staff development, and ensure that older people can access high-quality, bilingual services across Wales.



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 2025 to 31 March 2026.

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.
- 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. One complaint was received in 2025/26.
- 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 2025/26, one complaint was received regarding the Commissioner's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The Complaints Manager carried out a thorough investigation and determined to uphold the complaint. Learning from the review has been taken forward.

Welsh Language Skills

As at 31 March 2026, the Commissioner employed 17 members of staff. The Welsh Language Survey was conducted during March 2026, 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 56% of the organisation class themselves as proficient Welsh speakers.

Table 1 - Welsh language skills of all staff

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

During 2025/26, 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 completed Uwch 2 with DysguCymraeg in June 2025.

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 2025/26, two roles were advertised externally. Welsh language skills were identified as desirable for both roles, and the successful candidate appointed to one of the posts is a fluent Welsh speaker.

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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