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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation Document

Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan

Consultation on the proposed
Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan

Date of issue: 23 November 2021
Action required: Responses by 22 February 2022

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan

Overview

This consultation seeks your views on the Welsh Government's proposals on the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan which offers a package of interventions to support Welsh-speaking communities with a high concentration of second homes.

How to respond

Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by **22 February 2022** at the latest.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at gov.wales/consultations

Contact details

For further information:

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General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing. You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
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CF10 3NQ
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The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745 or
0303 123 1113
Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Ministerial Foreword

Large numbers of second homes and short-term holiday accommodation have provoked strong feelings in particular communities in Wales for some years. In these communities, there is often a sense of injustice that people are priced out of their local housing market by those purchasing second homes or homes to let as short term holiday accommodation. We are determined to tackle this issue.

Second homes are often concentrated in and around Welsh-speaking communities, and this can lead to patterns of home occupation which have a detrimental effect on the use of Welsh in communities which are crucial to the long term flourishing of our language. Second homes, alongside a range of wider factors, impact on the affordability and availability of housing for local people and raising prices in the local housing market, sometimes dramatically.

It is not hard to see that a pattern of young Welsh-speaking people in particular leaving their communities in order to find affordable housing elsewhere can pose a threat to the future of the language in those communities.

In March 2021 we welcomed Dr Simon Brooks' report, [‘Second Homes: Developing new policies in Wales’](#)¹. The report, builds on the work undertaken in Gwynedd and Anglesey [‘Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes’](#)² and considers the impact that disproportionate numbers of second homes and short-term holiday accommodation can have on communities, particularly in the context of the Welsh language. The recommendations have been particularly useful in underpinning the actions we will take to tackle these challenges head on.

Ensuring that local people can afford to live in the communities in which they grew up, and the health and vitality of Welsh as a thriving community language, are key strategic goals for the Welsh Government. Our [Programme for Government](#)³ includes a number of commitments in this regard, not least the pledge to build 20,000 low-carbon homes for social rent across Wales and the development of a Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.

On 6 July, the Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS, set out [our ambitious three-pronged approach](#)⁴ which includes a package of interventions. To address issues of affordability, we will be targeting and tailoring our existing housing programmes across tenures. In doing this, we will draw on experiences of rolling out programmes such as Homebuy, and will promote creative solutions we have seen in many parts of Wales. We will consult on changes to the regulatory framework and the system. To address the issues presented by second homes, we aim to provide for better management of additional homes and short-term holiday accommodation. We believe that our national and local taxation systems should be designed so that second home owners make a fair and effective financial contribution to the communities in which they buy.

Alongside this, for those communities in which Welsh is widely spoken, our Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan will play a crucial part in our response. We will develop a package of interventions that will work with our collective approaches in order to

¹ [Second homes: developing new policies | GOV.WALES](#)

² <https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/documents/s27926/Appendix%202.pdf>

³ [Programme for government | GOV.WALES](#)

⁴ [Plenary 06/07/2021 - Welsh Parliament \(assembly.wales\)](#)

support and protect Welsh-speaking communities. *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh-speakers* acknowledges the importance of these communities as places that facilitate the use of the language in every aspect of everyday life. We need, therefore, careful economic, community and language planning to enable Welsh-speaking communities to be economically and linguistically viable. People and especially our young people must be able to afford to live, work and make a valuable contribution within these Welsh-speaking communities.

This is a complex area and there will be a range of views on how the Welsh Government should respond. We therefore encourage everyone in the communities affected and elsewhere in Wales, whether they live, run businesses, own property, or deliver public services here to respond to this consultation and help shape our Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.

Jeremy Miles MS
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

The Context

Affordability, Second Homes and Welsh Language

There has been significant coverage, across Wales, the UK and beyond of the difficulties people – particularly young people – can have in accessing affordable, quality housing, whether to buy or rent. Often, those difficulties are connected to issues in relation to second homes. This also raises questions about the sustainability of our community services and of empty homes that add nothing at all to communities.

Second homes are a contributory and intertwined factor implicit in the affordability challenge, but they cannot be characterised effectively as the whole of the ‘problem’. In seeking to resolve affordability issues, we do not wish inadvertently to create fresh challenges.

We are proposing an approach that seeks to address core issues to affordability in coastal and rural communities, through actions by us in Welsh Government and by local authorities. The primary tools in the plan are as follows:

- **Support:** target and tailor our existing housing programmes, across tenures, as well as developing and trialling new approaches.
- **Regulatory framework and the system:** provide for better management of additional second homes and short-term holiday accommodation, and the standards of existing and additional short-term holiday accommodation, through changes to the regulatory framework and system.
- **A fairer contribution:** seek to ensure the national and local taxation systems ensure second home owners can make a fair and effective contribution to the communities in which they buy.

Further to this, our Programme for Government commits to four key actions that relate to the affordability question:

- Build 20,000 new low-carbon social homes for rent.
- Create a Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.
- Keep the 1% increase in Land Transaction Tax charged on second home purchases.
- Explore and develop effective tax, planning and housing measures – which could include local rates of Land Transaction Tax – to ensure the interests of local people are protected.

In August, we launched a consultation on possible changes to local taxes which might help local authorities manage the impact of second homes and self-catered accommodation. We have also commissioned a piece of work exploring establishing a statutory registration or licensing scheme for holiday accommodation operators in Wales. To strengthen our evidence base, we have commissioned a [desk-based study](#)⁵ of the evidence that currently exists for interventions, and stakeholder interviews relevant to the issues associated with second homes. We are also consulting on proposals to amend the development management system and planning policy in Wales to support local planning authorities manage second homes and short-term holiday accommodation.

⁵ <https://gov.wales/research-develop-evidence-base-second-homes>

We will undertake a pilot to trial a number of interventions outlined in our three-pronged approach and will be working with key stakeholders within and outside the pilot areas to better understand and gain a stronger evidence base on the challenges linked to affordability, second homes and Welsh language.

Affordability challenges exist right across Wales. But much of the debate has focused on the impact on our Welsh-speaking heartlands, in particular in some rural and coastal communities. In these and similar communities, the sustainability of Welsh as a community language is a key point of difference and this is the reason we are developing a Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan which builds on and supplements the approaches outlined above.

Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan

A Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan is one of the Welsh Government's key priorities as set out in our *Programme for Government 2021-2026*. This draft plan considers how the national interventions can be supplemented by other initiatives to work as a balanced package to protect Welsh-speaking communities and to ensure they are sustainable and vibrant communities for future generations, where the living language can thrive.

In his report, commissioned by Academi Hywel Teifi, *Second Homes: Developing new policies in Wales*, Dr Simon Brooks provided a balanced analysis of the possible effects large concentrations of second homes can have on our communities. He also outlined the challenges facing Welsh-speaking communities and the need to sustain those communities.

Dr Brooks also recognises the value of the visitor economy in Wales and we acknowledge the important contribution second home owners and short-term holiday accommodation businesses can make to this and other elements of our local economies. We have a reputation of being a welcoming society. However, we also recognise the impact that higher numbers of second homes and short-term holiday accommodation can have on local housing markets.

Our *Cymraeg 2050*⁶ targets of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and of doubling the daily use of Welsh has a clear narrative about the direction of travel for Welsh language policy. It also gives context to the national wellbeing goal in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015⁷ of *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*. For the strategy to succeed, we need to work together across government – both national and local – to take a holistic approach to tackling policy issues that are of strategic importance to the language, namely:

- The importance of maintaining Welsh as the primary language spoken in communities in the west and north-west.
- More opportunities for children and adults to learn and, for those who are learning or are already speakers, to become habitual users of the language wherever they live in Wales.

Without maintaining linguistically vibrant geographical communities in the west and north-west, there will be fewer opportunities for people to use the language in everyday social situations. That in turn risks weakening the foundations for the task of creating new speakers across Wales. We therefore need to focus on maintaining the social fabric of these Welsh-speaking communities and avoid creating an imbalance leading to an acceleration of community language shift from Welsh to English.

The Minister for Climate Change announced on 23 November that Dwyfor has been chosen as a location for trialling and evaluating a number of interventions and their cumulative impact. We will, though, work beyond the pilot area to develop and share learning from across Wales. Dwyfor is one of our Welsh-speaking heartlands – one where the Welsh language is an integral part of daily life.

⁶ [Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/cymraeg-2050)

⁷ [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

This consultation explores how the collective package of interventions including those we trial in Dwyfor, could be complemented at a community level to support and protect the Welsh language, whilst avoiding unintended consequences. It seeks views on what additional initiatives are needed to ensure people, especially young people, can afford to live and work in our Welsh-speaking communities. Our proposed interventions are framed within the context of social justice. Some of the interventions proposed in this consultation may also benefit from being included in the Dwyfor trial.

The Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan: proposed interventions

Community-led co-operative and social enterprises

In the autumn of 2020 a review of the effects of COVID-19 on Welsh language community groups was commissioned by the Welsh Government in partnership with the Mentrau Iaith. The findings of the survey, published in December 2020, highlighted the new opportunities many groups undertook to ensure that their activities continued. But, it also noted the challenges, associated with the restrictions, faced by some organisations.

Welsh language community groups are vital to support the daily use of the Welsh language, but we recognise that COVID-19 has affected other community-based organisations, businesses and vital services in our rural and coastal communities.

The Welsh Language Communities Sub-group of the Partnership Council responsible for leading the review submitted specific recommendations to Welsh Government. One of the recommendations was to support the establishment of community-based co-operatives and social enterprises.

Co-operatives and social enterprises are already an important part of the social and economic landscape in Wales. There is a strong tradition of communities coming together to safeguard local amenities and local services, as well as benefiting from the natural resources in providing economic benefits to local communities. There are examples of community-based social enterprises: Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog, Partneriaeth Ogwen and Galeri in Caernarfon, for instance, exemplify how social enterprises can support and provide a valuable service to a local area. The Welsh language is fully integrated within their organisations and provides good quality job opportunities, supporting the local economy. We will encourage other communities to follow their example by providing support and guidance to help establish community-based social enterprises and co-operatives. The Welsh language will be an intrinsic part of the social business and this will be done with the view of rolling out beyond those areas. The [Marchnad Lafur Cymraeg](#)⁸ report also made recommendations in relation to the opportunities for community enterprise models.

Co-operative housing is not a new model of housing tenure. There are extensive examples across Europe and America of how varying models of co-operative housing can ensure affordable homes remain for the local community. Nevertheless, the movement in Wales remains on a relatively small scale at present.

⁸ [Recommendations from Marchnad Lafur Cymraeg - Arsyllfa](#)

Co-operative and community-led housing can help communities, Registered Social Landlords and local authorities to develop bespoke solutions that meet their needs. It can create affordable, cohesive and resilient communities through homes that are led and owned by the local community. The co-operative and community-led housing model not only could provide new builds but can also be a means to purchase and develop properties within the current housing stock – particularly empty properties or housing for which there is little demand, and introduce them to a new market. The Welsh Government already provides support for community-led housing groups through the Communities Creating Homes programme and remains committed to supporting co-operative housing, community-led initiatives and community land trusts as set out in our Programme for Government commitment.

We think this offers particular opportunities for Welsh-speaking communities. Our aim is to build on the good work already being delivered in Wales by providing additional resources to help drive this work forward within Welsh-speaking communities where the need for new dwellings might be relatively small and therefore unviable for many developers to consider. We will work with local housing associations to explore co-operative or community-led housing models to meet local need. Whilst the interventions in this consultation are focused on Welsh-speaking communities, some of the interventions particularly in relation to community-led housing may work in wider communities across Wales.

We propose to:

- Develop a package of support to help create community-led social enterprises that can
 - Create job opportunities.
 - Secure services within a community.
 - Explore small community led housing interventions under the co-operative model.

Question 1

Do you think a co-operative or community-led housing model could help local people to access affordable housing?

Question 2

How can Welsh Government encourage further participation in a co-operative or community-led housing model in Wales?

Social businesses: tourism sector

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous ideas have been developed for local communities to benefit from the demand for short-term holiday accommodation. We have examples of community based tourism bunkhouses and short-term holiday accommodation business e.g. Pengwern, Caban Gerlan and Menter y Plu. We will explore ways to support community-based social enterprises to establish and grow short-term holiday accommodation businesses, so that business profits can be re-invested to purchase a further stock to be made available on a social rented basis for local people.

If the operating model is successful, it could be extended to include wider community ownership within the tourism industry.

We propose to:

- Support an existing or newly-established community-based social enterprise to develop a business where a short-term holiday accommodation business can provide sufficient revenue to purchase stock for social rent.

Question 3

What are the challenges to sustaining sufficient local interest and investment in social enterprises?

Question 4

What support or incentives could Welsh Government offer to encourage engagement in such a scheme?

Estate Agents' Steering Group

Estate agents, of course, play a key role in the property market. Many estate agents in rural, coastal and Welsh-speaking areas are long established businesses which have substantial expertise and knowledge and provide a valuable service to the local communities they serve. How properties are described, and detail about the local community, can be influential in providing prospective buyers with useful context – both on the property and the area; before they make a final decision on purchasing a property.

Estate agents have in recent years supported numerous initiatives to raise awareness of the Welsh language and local communities in which properties are listed. For example, estate agents, local authorities and the Mentrau Iaith have been co-operating with the Welsh Government, by distributing local information packs. These provided important and useful information to people wishing to purchase a property in the area.

One key element of such packs is to better inform people about the profile of communities. We will establish an Estate Agents' Steering Group for Welsh-speaking communities – to facilitate potential new projects and research that can be developed in partnership with local estate agents and other key stakeholders.

The steering group will facilitate a range of schemes to strengthen the relationship between communities and estate agencies – and gain an opportunity for better understanding, information and statistics about the housing market, thus adding to a robust evidence base.

We propose to:

- Establish an Estate Agents' Steering Group to explore the potential for creating innovative approaches to local housing sales. The aim would be to develop these in collaboration with all stakeholders, identifying practical steps to support local buyers to gain fair access to local housing.

Question 5

To what extent do you think the Estate Agents' Steering Group is a practical and effective way of helping estate agents to play their part in protecting Welsh language communities?

Question 6

How can estate agents be encouraged or incentivised to engage with the Steering Group?

A 'fair chance' for local buyers and renters

In the current market, we understand concerns that some properties are sold or let before being listed on the market. This has been highlighted in areas where demand for properties are high. Local people can be unaware that potential properties are due to come on the market. We will explore working with estate agents and prospective sellers so that properties are available first and for a limited time to local people. This would allow people from a clearly defined area to have an opportunity to view and arrange the necessary finance to purchase/rent the property. In the same way, if a local co-operative would wish to purchase a property, a few weeks would allow them sufficient time to prepare a financial package. As noted, this would be a voluntary scheme which will need to be carefully planned and piloted.

We propose to:

- Explore with relevant stakeholders, developing a voluntary plan which allows local people to have a first chance to buy or rent a property.

Question 7

Would a short period for local residents to view and make offers on housing help them to access property markets?

Question 8

What else might help offer local buyers a 'fair chance' in the housing market?

Cultural Ambassadors

Wales is a welcoming society and we encourage people who visit or decide to move to Wales to actively engage with our unique language and culture. To further facilitate this, we wish to establish a network of Cultural Ambassadors who will actively promote our culture, heritage and Welsh language. The [ecomuseums LIVE](#)⁹ is an interesting programme which aims to support coastal communities in the Llŷn Peninsula and Iveragh Peninsula, Ireland to promote their natural and cultural assets, creating opportunities for sustainable tourism. We will consider what the ecomuseums will learn from their interventions and draw on their experiences.

We propose to:

- Create a network of community based Cultural Ambassadors that promote and celebrate our language, culture and heritage.

Question 9

How could Cultural Ambassadors engage at a community level to support social cohesion and develop a better understanding of our culture, language and heritage?

A commission on Welsh-speaking communities

Following the publication of the report, *Second Homes: Developing new policies in Wales* (March 2021), we provided a written response to Dr Brooks. In it, we confirmed that we will establish a commission to safeguard the future of the Welsh language as a community language. The commission will lead on a socio-linguistic analysis of the health of the

⁹ [HOME | LIVE Ecomuseums \(ecomuseumlive.eu\)](https://ecomuseumlive.eu)

language in our communities. It will develop a model to provide evidence for local authorities on the vitality of the language in the communities they serve. The commission will consider the challenges facing Welsh-speaking communities and gain a better understanding of the linguistic, socio-economic and social restructuring challenges faced post COVID-19 and Brexit. The commission will make policy recommendations.

Underpinning this, the commission will analyse the 2021 Census results to better understand the language shift over the last decade. In this light, it will consider which interventions are needed today, and ensure that future policy interventions are based on sound evidence. This work links to the development of models that help define areas of linguistic interest and sensitivity. The aim is to make it is clear which interventions and support are needed in these areas to protect the language and how the collective approaches are used from a language perspective to ensure policy goals are met.

Areas of significant interest and sensitivity

The commission will look at empirical evidence which can underlay policy recommendations to address the particular issues that face the Welsh language as a community language. This could inform approaches in the fields of planning, education policy and other interventions, which are tailored or targeted to reflect local linguistic circumstances. Part of this work will include developing a model that will facilitate decision makers at local authority and Welsh Government level to be able to identify areas of particular linguistic sensitivity where it might be appropriate to make such tailored public policy recommendations.

We propose to:

- Create a commission on Welsh language communities which will look at the different factors that affect the ability of the language to be sustained as a community language.

Question 10

What specific factors should the commission consider in relation to sustaining Welsh as a community language?

Question 11

What, in your view, will be the challenges facing the commission?

Question 12

Are there any examples, practices or instances of interest that could inform the commission's understanding of the factors that affect the language?

Housing, Work and Language

Sustaining a strong economy as well as sufficient supply of affordable homes is necessary in providing a sufficient baseline for the Welsh language to thrive. One of the main challenges facing rural, coastal and Welsh-speaking communities is the constant outmigration of young people. Data presented in the Arfor Interim Report noted that a cumulative total of 14,240 young people in the 20-29 age group left the four counties of Anglesey, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd between 2012-16. This is a complex, multifactorial issue and is not because of the lack of job opportunities or affordable homes alone – it includes the social and educational aspiration of people needing to explore and gain new experiences.

We welcome opportunities for our young people to further attain their educational aims, gain valuable skills and work experiences, both within and outside of Wales. We should also support those young people who want to continue living in the communities in which they were brought up; as well as create and support opportunities for people to return.

The Arfor programme has recently trialled some interventions in this space for example the Llwyddo'n Lleol programme that sought to equip young people with the skills and confidence to start businesses in their communities. Business grant schemes in Ceredigion meanwhile, saw a particularly high level of interest from young people who had faced challenges in accessing capital to start their own ventures. These were purely economic interventions that helped local residents remain in their communities, and sustain the daily use of the Welsh language. Though effective schemes in and of themselves, experience of the Arfor programme suggests that the most effective means of supporting people to remain in or return to their communities entails a more 'wrap-around' approach. Economic support is more effective when combined with help to access local housing, educational and social opportunities.

Question 13

What (more), alongside housing support, can be done to support local and particularly young people to remain, live and work in their communities?

Current Welsh Government Interventions

On 18 October, the Minister for the Economy announced a new progressive economic policy [Moving the Welsh Economy Forward: A Team Wales recovery, built by all of us](#)¹⁰. Our aim is to create better jobs, narrowing the skills divide, tackling poverty and strengthening regional economic development. We acknowledge the long-term demographic challenge facing the Welsh economy as the proportion of the population in Wales aged between 16 and 64 has been decreasing year-on-year since the middle of 2008.

The Welsh Government will be geared towards creating an economy where more young people feel confident about planning their future in Wales, thus supporting job creation and more dynamic local economies. We also acknowledge that a greater emphasis on remote working enables us to consider the opportunities of creating Welsh-medium and bilingual work hubs. Thus supporting people to work closer to their homes and creating the right conditions and opportunities for people who wish to return to the areas where they were brought up.

Arfor Programme

We are currently reviewing an independent evaluation of the Arfor pilot programme which was funded by the Welsh Government. Arfor was created to support the local economies of Anglesey, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd. The main focus of the programme was to support economic development as well as creating opportunities to support and benefit the Welsh language. We will look carefully at the findings of the evaluation report and will consider opportunities to scale and spread interventions as we build on the Arfor programme to focus on entrepreneurship, business growth, community resilience and the Welsh language.

¹⁰ [Moving the Welsh Economy Forward: "A Team Wales recovery, built by all of us", Economy Minister | GOV.WALES](#)

Economy and Welsh Language Roundtable

In 2019, the then Minister for International Relations and Welsh Language established an Economy and Welsh Language Roundtable. With representatives from local authorities, economic development policy leads and practitioners and Welsh language planners. The roundtable is chaired by the Minister for Education and Welsh Language. The roundtable has recommended numerous actions which can support the rural economy as well as providing the right conditions for the language to thrive (see Annex 1). Many of these proposals are already being developed or implemented. We will expand the role of the roundtable to include housing. The new Economy, Housing and Welsh Language Roundtable will also be responsible of overseeing the delivery of the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.

We propose to:

- Extend the scope of the Economy and Welsh Language Roundtable to include Housing with a role of overseeing the progress of the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan.

Question 14

Do you have any further comments or suggestions in relation to any of the specific schemes mentioned above?

Place Names

Place names are integral features of the cultural and historic landscape of Wales, both on a local and a national level. They are particularly important to the visual and aural character of Welsh-speaking areas and communities, and we recognise the special need to value and retain the rich legacy of our Welsh place names.

There are many types of names, and the challenges that apply to each are slightly different. The names of settlements (i.e. towns, villages and cities), for example, are standardised by the Welsh Language Commissioner, and these well-established names are rarely subject to change. At the community level, however, there is a rich stock of names of geographical features, land holdings and properties, including farms and houses. Many of these are historical, but they remain more fluid than settlement names.

In our Programme for Government, we have committed to working to protect Welsh place names. The Welsh Government has already established a [List of Historic Place Names of Wales](#), which is the only statutory record of historic place names in the UK. One of its main objectives is to raise awareness of the wealth of historic names in Wales and their importance as part of our cultural heritage. The list was created in 2017, and a task and finish group has been established to review the work to date and to formulate recommendations for the future.

Changes to historic house names are currently a topic of concern. Statutory guidance requires local authorities to take account of the List of Historic Place Names when dealing with formal requests to rename properties. Some formal changes do take place, but often a plaque can be placed on a house without officially altering its name, or a business name can simply be added to an existing address. One of the first actions we need to undertake is a piece of research to establish the exact scale of the problem – there are currently large

gaps in the knowledge we have across Wales. We will then need to be creative and find ways of managing some of these changes.

The starting point in the short term is local action, which is already happening in a number of places. We anticipate that the Cultural Ambassadors will have a role in this regard. In addition, we will explore how the value and importance of Welsh names can be promoted through other means, e.g. welcome / information packs for property buyers, exploring how various local authorities interpret their role in this area of work, how to better market the List of Historic Place Names of Wales, and consider whether the Mentrau Iaith should have an active role to support this work. As this is also a matter of national concern, we will also aim to extend this work nationally.

We propose to:

- Explore how local authorities discharge their roles in this area of work.
- Consider the recent use of covenants to protect house names and explore how these might be used more widely in the future.
- Explore new ways of raising awareness of and promoting the List of Historic Place Names of Wales.

Question 15

What kind of local interventions would you want to see to promote the importance of Welsh place names, encourage their retention and to maintain the Welsh language as a visual part of our communities?

General Questions

Question 16

What else should be considered as part the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan?

Question 17

What changes would you make to the proposals presented in this plan to improve their effectiveness?

Question 18

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Roundtable recommendations / actions

1. *Foundational Economy*

Action Point 1: Adapt the Arfor programme interventions in line with the findings of the evaluation and mainstream them to relevant economic programmes.

Action Point 2: Ensure that the evaluation of projects funded by the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund includes consideration of the impact on the Welsh language.

2. *Social Enterprises*

Action Point 3: Create new jobs in the community by developing new social enterprises modelling the work of Cwmni Bro Ffestiniog and Partneriaeth Ogwen etc.

Action Point 4: Encourage community-based Welsh language organisations to relocate to support our town centres and sign-post to Town Centre First fund. Support them to create local hubs which will:

- Allow people to work nearer to their homes.
- Allow individuals to work together in their local community.
- Provide a space for those who cannot or do not want to work from home

3. *Outward Migration*

Action Point 5: Invest and enhance work related programmes targeted at young people to stay or return to the area (Llwybro, Mônallu, Apprentis, Llwyddo'n Lleol and the similar to Propser project in Ireland).

Action Point 6: Request local authorities, where the percentage of Welsh speakers is more than 30%, to roll out the Careers Wales alumni toolkit within Welsh-medium schools to keep in touch with former pupils and support them by informing them of local job opportunities and possible career paths.

4. *Job Opportunities*

Action Point 7: Encourage young people to use the Personal Learning Accounts to study flexible, part-time courses around their existing work responsibilities to gain the necessary skills and qualifications to maximise their job and income potential.

Action Point 8: Create a youth employment programme for rural Wales in cooperation with Regional Skills Partnerships and local employers to address skill shortages and create intelligent workforce planning.

Action Point 9: Circular economy – create job opportunities by using local products and resources, e.g. a wool processing pilot project in Blaenau Ffestiniog use local sourced wool as insulation and fertiliser products creating a foundation for jobs and local business.

Action Point 10: We will develop a pilot project based in a rural area which will incentivise students who have left Wales to return to help teach Welsh in schools for the final week of school term in the hope that they will be attracted to become teachers in Welsh-medium schools. We will promote the part time online M.A. teaching course to encourage more people to become teachers who work through the medium of Welsh.

Action Point 11: Support the Urdd to create an infrastructure that will create 300 apprenticeships placements over three years.

5. *Mainstreaming the Welsh Language*

Action Point 12: We will mainstream the Welsh language into all economy and employability programmes ensuring that Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken before a policy or programme is implemented. There will be an expectation that performance indicators and targets are set and that progress is monitored on a regular basis.

Action Point 13: Undertake a review of the Welsh Government standard grant award conditions regarding the Welsh language, to ensure that funded organisations can contribute to the aims of *Cymraeg 2050*.

Action Point 14: To support the delivery of the Economic Contract, we will assist WG relationship managers to better reflect the Welsh language in economic interventions.

6. *Procurement*

Action Point 15: Continue to work with relevant Public Service Boards to identify the opportunities to redirect public money back into our communities. Understand the current baselines and set realistic but challenging targets to increase local spending power.

7. *Digital*

Action Point 16: We will work with local authorities and community based organisations to ensure our current digital funding programmes help rural communities to receive fast broadband.

Action Point 17: Following the survey findings of the review of the effects of COVID-19 on Welsh language community groups, we will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that community groups have the necessary skills to make the best of their digital capabilities.

8. *Housing*

Action Point 18: We will work with local authorities to build affordable homes and work with local FE colleges to ensure the necessary local skills to build these properties.

Action Point 19: We will consider the recommendations of Dr Simon Brooks' report, *Second homes: Developing new policies in Wales*. We will work with local authorities and housing associations to look at the possibilities to enable local communities to

buy properties in sensitive linguistic areas. The aim will be for these properties to be rented as short-term holiday accommodation with the profits being used to develop housing to be rented or support community development incentives for local people.

9. Transport

Action Point 20: Implement the specific rural offer interventions in *Llwybr Newydd*, the new transport strategy for Wales.