

CYMRÆG

2050



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers

Annual report 2023-24

# Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, Annual report 2023–24

## Audience

Welsh Government departments; public bodies in Wales; third sector organisations in Wales; private sector companies in Wales; education institutions in Wales; organisations working to increase the use of Welsh; organisations working with families, children and young people, and communities; and other interested parties.

## Overview

In order to fulfil the requirements of the Government of Wales Act 2006, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* was launched in July 2017, when the previous strategy came to an end.

The Government of Wales Act 2006 requires an annual report to be published to monitor progress against the Welsh Language Strategy.

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## Additional copies

This document is available on the Welsh Government website at [www.gov.wales/welsh-language](http://www.gov.wales/welsh-language)

## Related documents

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011; *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* (2017); *Cymraeg 2050: Work programme 2021 to 2026* (2021); *Technical report: Projection and trajectory for the number of Welsh speakers aged three and over, 2011 to 2050* (2017)

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## Cabinet Secretary's Foreword

We present our annual report on our Welsh language strategy, [Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers](#), for the 2023-24 financial year. This report looks back at our progress during the year in implementing *Cymraeg 2050* in the context of our *2021-26 Work Programme*, our *Programme for Government*, the *Co-operation Agreement* with Plaid Cymru and our commitments in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Here are some of the year's highlights:

- Completing the consultation on the Welsh Language and Education Bill and publishing a report summarising the responses to that consultation.
- Each local authority submitting its first annual review report on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (which came into operation in September 2022).
- Continuing to invest in late immersion provision.
- The number of people learning Welsh with the National Centre for Learning Welsh continuing to increase.
- Adnodd company launched to lead on developing bilingual resources for the Curriculum for Wales.
- Publishing a new Framework for the Welsh Language Charter.
- Welsh language standards for water companies coming into force.
- Publishing the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities Position Paper.
- Launching the Cultural Ambassadors scheme.
- Publishing the *Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy*.
- Publishing a final report on our *Welsh Language Technology Action Plan*.
- Continuing to support communities with a high density of Welsh speakers through the Perthyn programme.
- Through the British-Irish Council, publishing a collection of poems in all indigenous, minority and lesser-used languages to mark a quarter of a century since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.
- Continuing to implement our joint work plan with the Office for National Statistics to try to better understand the differences between data sources relating to the Welsh language.

This report reflects the progress that has been made across the three themes of *Cymraeg 2050*, namely increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions for the language to flourish.

I am proud of the progress that has been made in Welsh schools, and that our late immersion provision is going from strength to strength across Wales. The Welsh Language Charter continues to develop in our schools, and the increase we are seeing in the number of adults learning Welsh with the National Centre for Learning Welsh is encouraging.

We must thank all our partners for their tireless work throughout the year – the mentrau iaith (Welsh language initiatives) hosting festivals, large and small, and all the other Welsh-medium community activities organised. We must give special mention to the successful Llŷn and Eifionydd Eisteddfod and the Urdd Eisteddfod in Carmarthenshire.

We continue to lead in language technology and are laying foundations with our linguistic infrastructure policy. The collaboration in relation to the economy, through ARFOR, the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*, and the work of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities is vital as we implement *Cymraeg 2050*. The *More than just words* scheme also reminds us of the importance of developing Welsh language skills in our workplaces, particularly in the health sector.

In closing, I must emphasise that the Welsh language belongs to everyone in Wales – the people who are able to speak it confidently, those who are learning the language, and those who speak only a few words. Together, we can place the Welsh language on a strong footing for the future, and I look forward to continuing to work alongside our partners in Wales and beyond on this important task.

**28 NOVEMBER 2024**

**Mark Drakeford MS  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language**

## Context – Cymraeg 2050

*Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* is our Welsh language strategy. It has two main targets:

- The number of Welsh speakers to reach 1 million by 2050.
- The percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, to increase from 10% (in 2013-15) to at least 20% by 2050.

At the end of each financial year, Welsh Ministers (under Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006) must publish a report outlining progress on our language strategy during the financial year.

This document reports on the 2023-24 financial year, and includes details of our progress under the three themes of the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy:

1. Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
2. Increasing the use of Welsh
3. Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

The second *Cymraeg 2050* 5-year Work Programme (for 2021-26) was introduced at the start of this government. This report outlines our progress against that programme, along with our commitments in the *Programme for Government* and in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

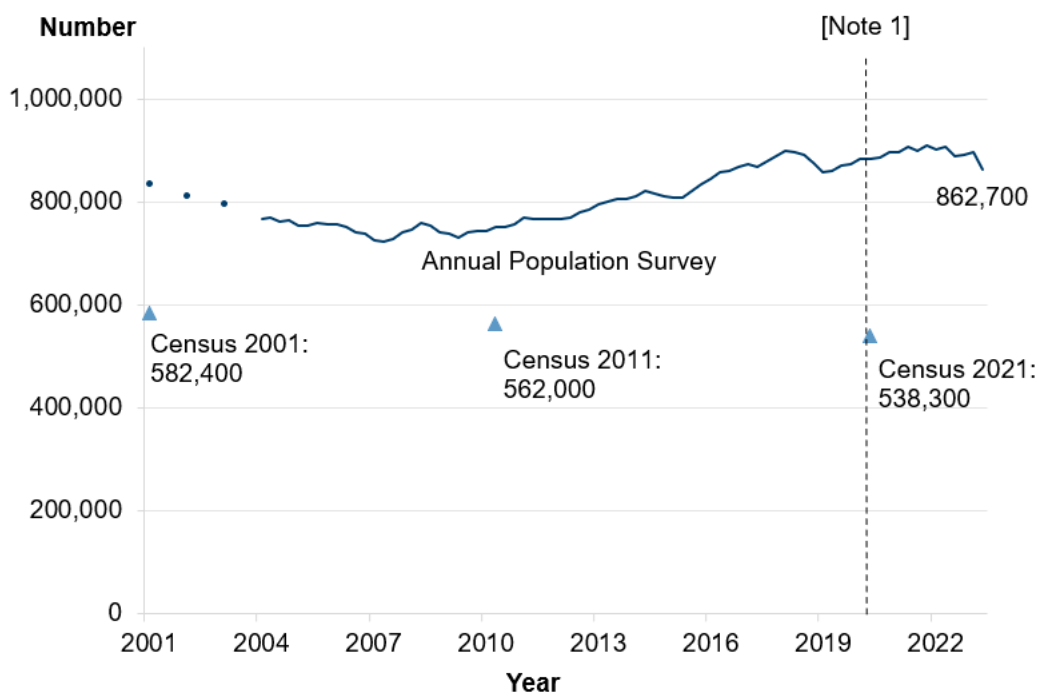
## Theme 1: Increasing the number of Welsh speakers

### The current situation – how many people can speak Welsh?

The census is the key source used to measure the number of Welsh speakers in Wales. The 2021 Census stated that 538,300 people, or 17.8% of the population aged three years or older were able to speak Welsh in Wales.

However, the Annual Population Survey provides results more often, every quarter, and is therefore a useful source for looking at trends in the ability of the population in relation to the Welsh language between censuses.

**Chart 1: Number of people aged three years or older who are able to speak Welsh, 2001 to March 2024**



Source: Annual Population Survey and population census

[Note 1] Changed to phone interviews only.

According to the Annual Population Survey, 862,700 people, or 28.0% of the population aged three years or older, were able to speak Welsh in the year ending 31 March 2024.

Annual Population Survey figures vary slightly from year to year and tend to be much higher than census figures. Recent findings of the survey indicate a decline and it is difficult to know for certain what lies behind the data. This reduction should be interpreted with caution as there has been a change in the way in which the

survey is conducted recently, and also as the Office for Statistics Regulation has agreed that the accredited official status of the statistics should be temporarily withheld as a result of the increasing uncertainty about estimates derived from the source.

In April 2023, we published a [joint work plan](#) with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), detailing further work we will undertake in order to improve our understanding of the differences between data sources relating to the Welsh language.

A key part of this work was linking 2021 Census data to the Labour Force Survey data, which forms the basis of the Annual Population Survey, through the Integrated Data Service. The [findings](#) of this innovative data linking project, the first project to use the Integrated Data Service, were published in October 2023.

To summarise some of the key findings:

- Around two in five (39.9%) of the people who recorded that they could speak Welsh in the Labour Force Survey or in the 2021 Census recorded that they could not do so in the other source.
- More people said they were able to speak Welsh in the Labour Force Survey and that they were unable to speak Welsh in the 2021 Census than vice versa.
- Of the people who said they were able to speak Welsh in the Labour Force Survey or the 2021 Census, it was the following groups that tended to agree across both sources most often: those 65 years old or over; those living in North-west Wales; those born in Wales; and those with a Welsh national identity.
- Of the people who said they were able to speak Welsh in the Labour Force Survey or the 2021 Census, it was the following groups that tended to disagree across both sources most often: those younger than 25 years old; those living in South-east and North-east Wales; those born elsewhere in the UK; and those without a Welsh national identity.
- Of the people who agreed they were able to speak Welsh in both sources, more than two-thirds (68.6%) reported speaking Welsh every day. Of the people who said they were able to speak Welsh in the Labour Force Survey, but not in the 2021 Census, only around a quarter (24.8%) said they spoke Welsh every day.

The work plan also outlines how we will try to understand not only how these data sources differ, but why. This includes investigating why the differences between the data sources change over time by considering in more detail aspects of survey methods and survey design. We will continue to work closely with colleagues at the Office for National Statistics on these projects over the coming months.



## 1. Language transmission in the family

*Cymraeg 2050* notes our vision to “see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child...”

We have continued to implement our [National Policy on Welsh Language Transmission and Use in Families](#), published in January 2021. The policy focuses on:

- Inspiring children and young people to speak Welsh with their children in the future.
- Rekindling people’s Welsh language skills who may not have used their Welsh since leaving school, or who are lacking in confidence, to speak Welsh with their own children.
- Supporting and encouraging use of Welsh within families where not everybody speaks Welsh.
- Supporting Welsh-speaking families to speak Welsh with their children.

This year, our work has mainly focused on looking at what interventions could drive or increase the use of Welsh among parents who have Welsh language skills, but do not necessarily use those skills with their children. This work is based on the behavioural sciences, and includes:

- Examining the documentation sent to prospective and new parents to see if it can be a means of incentivising them to use Welsh with their children.
- Looking at whether toys can initially support parents or increase the use of Welsh with their children.
- How to access suitable Welsh language music for parents to sing with their children, and considering whether this would incentivise further use of Welsh between them.

We fund a national Cymraeg for Kids scheme to support parents to use Welsh with their children, and to choose Welsh-medium childcare and education. The scheme is seen as an important step on the journey towards Welsh-medium education, with a number of local authorities recognising the programme’s contribution in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).

Through a series of free sessions for parents and their children, a network of Cymraeg for Kids officers therefore continue to support families to introduce and use Welsh at home, pass the Welsh language on to their children, and support children’s linguistic, social and educational development. During 2023-24, 3,503 virtual and in-person sessions were held, with 26,945 parents and 27,312 children supported.

Language transmission data was discussed in last year’s annual report. However, in May 2024, we published a subsequent [statistical headline](#) that includes further analysis of Welsh transmission rates by gender of partner or parent from the 2021 Census. The Welsh transmission rate for couple households where only one partner could speak Welsh was higher where the Welsh-speaking partner was female (45%) rather than male (34%). This is consistent with the pattern observed

in the 2011 Census. However, there was no difference between the rate of Welsh transmission for single mother households and single father households where the parent was the only adult who could speak Welsh (53% for both).

We will continue to analyse language transmission data, including data collected through the National Survey for Wales. Welsh speakers aged 16 or over with children were asked several relevant new questions as part of National Survey for Wales 2022-23. Following a pause in the survey work in 2023-24, these questions will be asked again in 2024-25.

This data will support us as we continue to implement our *National Policy on Welsh Language Transmission and Use in Families*.

## **2. The early years**

### **Expanding and Supporting Provision**

Our programme to expand the early years provision, Set up and Succeed (SaS), is a response to the *Cymraeg 2050* objective to expand provision through the medium of Welsh in the early years as an entry point into Welsh-medium education. The programme is administered by Mudiad Meithrin and 2023-24 was the sixth year of the programme.

During 2023/24, 21 provisions were supported through the SaS programme – of which 13 are new provisions and 8 are provisions that have received support for expansion.

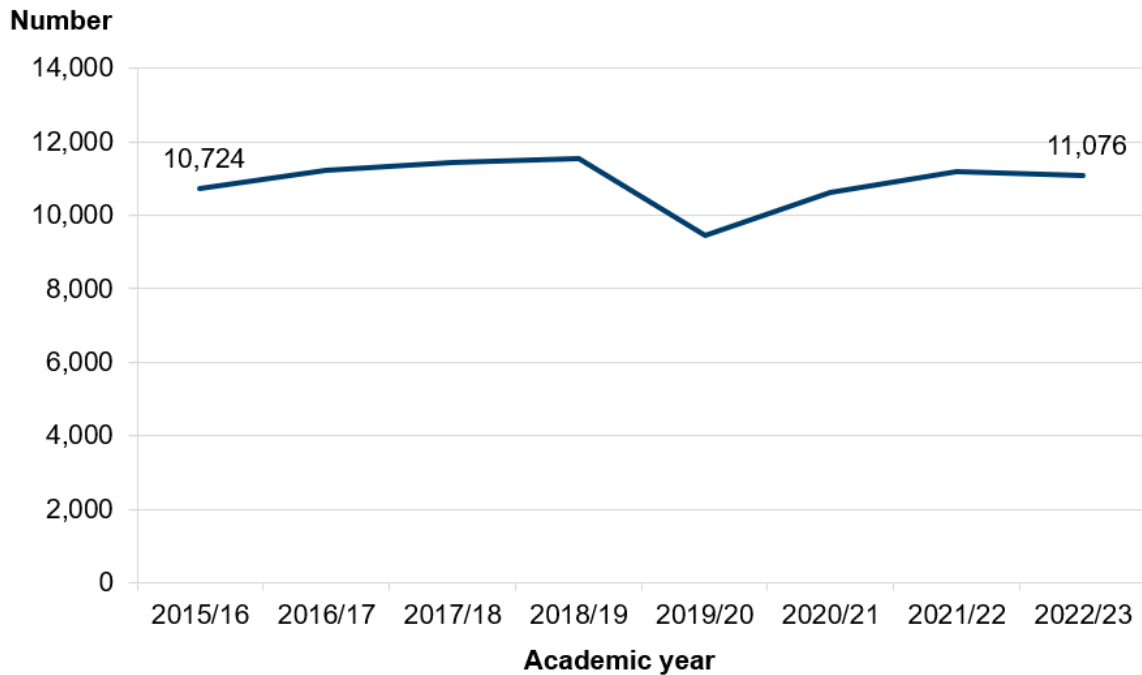
The programme also contributes to the local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plan targets and has contributed to a commitment made in the *Co-operation Agreement* to expand the Flying Start programme. In terms of expanding Flying Start, 14 of the 21 provisions supported through SaS offered Flying Start. Data from the expansion programme shows that over 1,000 children have taken advantage of Flying Start Welsh-medium childcare provision to date.

Chart 2 below shows a slight decrease in the number of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin (nursery groups) from 11,198 in 2021/22 to 11,076 in 2022/23. This decrease should be interpreted within the wider context of the general decrease in the number of 0 to 4 year olds in Wales over recent years. The total sum of weekly care hours provided by Cylchoedd Meithrin has seen an annual increase over the past 8 years, with 8,554 care hours provided during 2022/23 compared to 8,331 in 2021/22. This increase over the years reflects the fact that more Cylchoedd are providing full day care rather than sessional care.

The percentage of children transferring to Welsh-medium education has remained relatively stable, at 87% for 2022/23, and we are hopeful that the trend of progress seen before the COVID-19 period will be seen again in due course.

2023/24 data will be available by the end of 2024, and we will include a further update in the next *Cymraeg 2050* annual report.

## Chart 2: Number of children who have attended a Cylch Meithrin



Source: Mudiad Meithrin data

[Note 1] Cylchoedd Meithrin were closed between March and September 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During 2023-24, work has continued to support childcare providers to strengthen and expand their Welsh-medium services. Through our work with Mudiad Meithrin, we have:

- Continued to work towards the target of supporting 60 new provisions in areas of need across Wales during the term of the current Senedd through the provision extension programme, Set up and Succeed.
- Offered training to practitioners and volunteers from Cylchoedd Meithrin across Wales through the Continuous Professional Development programme, Academi.
- Continued to offer training opportunities to increase the number of Welsh-medium childcare practitioners through Mudiad Meithrin's Cam wrth Gam and Cam wrth Gam Ysgolion (schools) Training Scheme.
- Continued to support parents and their young children through the Cymraeg for Kids programme.
- Continued to strengthen the link between Mudiad Meithrin and local authorities in light of the new requirements of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and the expansion of the Flying Start programme.
- Continued to work with other providers and partners to increase the proportion of children moving on from early years provision to Welsh-medium schools.

- Extended the reach of the 'Croesi'r Bont' training programme, which focuses on language acquisition and immersion and equipping practitioners with specialist skills for use with children from non-Welsh-speaking homes.

We continued to work with the Cwlwm childcare consortium to take forward our key *Programme for Government* commitments including the expansion of Welsh-medium activities. Cwlwm received £1,890,000 from Welsh Government during 2023-24, of which £190,000 was provided specifically to support work to increase Welsh-medium childcare provision in line with *Cymraeg 2050* requirements.

In addition to this, further Welsh Government funding of £1,706,000 was allocated to Cwlwm to support the delivery of the commitments in the *Programme for Government* and the former *Co-operation Agreement* as they related to the expansion of Welsh-medium activities. This included funding to support the provision of additional recruits to undertake level 3 and level 5 Welsh-medium childcare qualifications. Funding has already been secured to continue this activity up to 2026 and discussions are ongoing to come up with a longer-term funding model. Discussions are also taking place to continue to fund the other activities in support of expanding Welsh-medium provision.

The results of the research into the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSA) and suggestions for their future development were published in March 2024. The recommendations from the research are currently being considered. We will focus on information that addresses the alignment between the CSAs and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs), and consider what more can be done to ensure that these reports complement and support each other.

In December 2023, approximately 11,800 children used the Childcare Offer for Wales. Around 15% of these did so in a Welsh-medium setting. Care Inspectorate Wales data from 2023 suggests that of approximately 1,900 providers registered to deliver the Offer, 18% use Welsh as their main language of operation.

## **Workforce**

We have undertaken a review of childminding in Wales in order to better understand the needs of this part of the sector, and we have commissioned a wider mapping exercise of the childcare and play workforce. The mapping work began during 2022-23 and the [Phase 1 and 2 reports](#) have now been published. We will consider the findings of the exercise to inform our future programmes to extend provision.

In terms of training, during 2023-24, 2,311 practitioners and volunteers from Cylchoedd Meithrin across Wales received training in 177 sessions through the Continuous Professional Development programme, Academi.

In addition, during the reporting year, 107 Level 3 learners and 29 Level 5 learners began their course through Mudiad Meithrin's Cam wrth Gam Training Scheme. Also, 90 pupils from 15 secondary schools followed a Cam wrth Gam Ysgolion (schools) course.

Working with the Cwlwm consortium over the past year, childcare practitioners received opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills for use at work, through the National Centre for Learning Welsh's Camau programme. Over 500 practitioners have therefore received training specifically tailored to the needs of the childcare and early years education sector.

### **3. Statutory education**

Our schools are key to creating the Welsh speakers of the future, and the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill sets out a clear aspiration to close the gap between learning outcomes across the different language categories – so that every child, no matter which school they attend, becomes an independent and confident speaker.

We report on our progress against the education targets, indicators and commitments of *Cymraeg 2050* in this section.

#### **The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill**

A consultation on a White Paper outlining our policy proposals for the Bill was held between 27 March and 16 June 2023.

On 21 February 2024, a [report](#) was published, summarising the responses to that consultation, together with the individual responses. The report showed that there was general support for the ambition and objectives outlined in the White Paper. Based on that support, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced his intention to proceed with introducing a Bill.

The focus of the work at the end of this reporting period was gathering further information on the costs and impacts of our proposals. This element is a crucial part of the scrutiny of the Bill.

The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill was laid before the Senedd on 15 July 2024 and is now at Stage 1 of the Senedd scrutiny process. The main aim of the Bill is to ensure, by 2050, that all pupils are independent and confident Welsh language users, at least, by the time they reach the end of compulsory school age. In particular, that all pupils develop oral skills, equivalent to level B2 at least, of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

#### **Welsh within the curriculum**

Welsh is a part of Curriculum for Wales' Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience. The language will continue to be a mandatory subject for all 3-16 year old learners, with flexibility for schools to decide the best way of ensuring the progression of learners in Welsh.

Progression in each Area of Learning and Experience is based on the concept of a learning continuum. In terms of Welsh, this means that each pupil develops from having little or no language, to making progress to become a learner that uses the language confidently and successfully.

Welsh language learning and teaching is supported in English-medium schools and settings through a Welsh Language Framework. It underlines how the language is an integral part of the Curriculum for Wales and sets out the statutory requirements for the Welsh language, as well as identifying the experiences, knowledge, and skills that make up the curriculum. The new framework was developed by teachers for teachers. It is designed to help schools develop their understanding of what should be learned, as well as their understanding of progress in Welsh language learning. Schools can use it as they design their curriculum and assessment to help identify the knowledge, skills and experiences that will be central to it all.

Projects such as the Welsh Government-funded Ein Llais Ni, developed jointly by GwE and Bangor University, and delivered across North Wales in Welsh-medium schools, have contributed to the promotion of oracy skills in Welsh. The project has now been shared across Wales and adapted for English-medium schools.

To ensure Wales' qualifications are not only suitable to meet the evolving needs of learners and employers, but also appropriately reflect the Curriculum for Wales, Qualifications Wales have been reviewing and reforming the General Qualifications available to learners aged 14-16. We continue to work closely with Qualifications Wales as they progress this reform programme.

### **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs)**

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans have been in operation since September 2022, and outline how local authorities intend to improve the planning of Welsh in education in their areas over the next 10 years, based on a target aligned with *Cymraeg 2050*.

Each local authority submitted its first annual review report to the Welsh Government in July 2023. The reports showed that there was an increase in the percentage of Year 1 learners studying primarily through Welsh in eleven local authorities, a decrease in ten counties, with one county having maintained its percentage since 2022-23.

We see that, during 2023-24, local authorities have focussed on strengthening their internal and external operating and accountability structures to ensure the effective implementation of their WESPs. This includes reviewing the county education forums, establishing thematic sub-groups, which encompass early years, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and the workforce, as well as agreeing new arrangements for the monitoring and reporting of progress against their WESP targets and commitments.

The areas prioritised by the majority of local authorities during 2023-24 were the expansion of Welsh-medium childcare settings, specifically Flying Start settings; making progress on capital plans, including ensuring alignment between the 9-year capital programme and their WESPs; and undertaking reviews of their Welsh-medium provisions for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), as required under section 63 of the ALN Act.

Progress has been made in three important areas within the WESPs, namely school categorisation, provision for latecomers and the capital programme. Further information on these areas is provided below.

There are commitments in the WESPs to increase Welsh-medium provision and change the school category of over forty schools across Wales during the WESPs' lifetime. During 2023-24, a consultation process to change the language category of 6 schools in Ceredigion and Powys has been underway.

Late immersion provision is a central part of the WESP, and more information about the programme can be found below.

There are commitments in the WESPs to open 23 new Welsh schools and expand 25 that already exist.

### **School categorisation**

By working in partnership with local authorities, we have managed to assign a language category for all relevant schools in Wales, of which there are 1,415. This will set important infrastructure for the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill in the future.

Changes to the PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) arrangements to include the new categories were completed in the autumn term of 2023. PLASC 2024 was completed by schools between January and March 2024, and information on the new school categories has been available since the end of the summer term this year.

We have established a national strategic group with eight local authorities that prioritise the categorisation policy in order to build on the work that has taken place since the new guidance was published in 2021. The group shares good practice, experiences and challenges, and receives continuous further support and guidance on practical issues relating to the categorisation policy.

A workshop was held during the reporting period with the remaining local authorities who currently have Welsh or English-medium only schools in their areas. We discussed how to introduce more Welsh during the school day, particularly in the English-medium schools and settings, to support them to start planning growth.

### **Provision for latecomers**

The [\*Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme for 2021-2026\*](#) and the *Programme for Government* include our commitment to expand the late immersion programme, to ensure that every newcomer to the language has access to a Welsh-medium education when they need it and wherever they are on their learning journey.

We continue to offer funding to support late immersion provision in all local authorities in Wales. The funding will continue to support provisions already

established (centres or units) or will lead to establishing new late immersion provisions, in order to enable more learners to become bilingual speakers. This is a great opportunity for all local authorities and their partners to expand their Welsh-medium late immersion provision in their schools and immersion centres. The late immersion grant continues to support over 60 specialist staff across Wales.

As a result of our investment in this area, over 890 learners received late immersion support during 2023-24. Indeed, since the grant was established in 2021, over 1,700 latecomers have benefited from the provision and an additional 1,200 learners have received intensive refresher support.

A new Language Centre was opened at Ysgol Gymraeg Gilfach Fargoed, Caerphilly, known as Canolfan Gwenllian, in September 2023. We have also seen an increase in the number of learners attending the language centres in the Swansea, Blaenau Gwent and Vale of Glamorgan areas, with some counties such as Wrexham further expanding their provision.

As part of our commitment in the *Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme for 2021-26*, we have established a network to support immersion education through the medium of Welsh. The sessions are going from strength to strength, and two meetings were held during the year, with over 40 late immersion practitioners and local authority officers from across Wales in attendance, to share best practice.

### **Capital funding**

Since establishing the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant in 2018, we have invested over £128m in Welsh-medium capital projects across Wales. The funding supports local authorities to fulfil their commitments in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans by investing to improve provision, expand or establish new Welsh-medium schools. The capital projects we will fund will make a significant contribution to Welsh-medium education across Wales whilst also promoting the Welsh language locally.

Since the beginning of the 10-year WESPs, Band B investment and the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant have supported 39 projects to increase Welsh-medium provision across Wales. 14 new schools have opened or have been relocated to increase their capacity to accept more learners. 25 projects to expand Welsh-medium provision have also been completed, including some childcare projects, e.g. two childcare units in Ynys Môn and two Cylchoedd Meithrin on the sites of Welsh-medium schools in Conwy.

During 2023-24, two new primary schools were opened:

- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Treges, NPT
- Ysgol Gynradd Groes-wen Primary School, Cardiff.

New expended buildings were provided:

- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg y Trallwng, Powys



- Ysgol Cwm Gwyddon, Caerphilly
- Ysgol Sant Baruc, Vale of Glamorgan.

A new seedling school was established:

- Ysgol y Gyrnos, Merthyr Tydfil.

New extensions were completed:

- Ysgol Gynradd Chwilog, Gwynedd
- Ysgol Pennant, Powys
- Ysgol Gynradd Aberteifi, Ceredigion
- Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi, Ceredigion
- Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Derwen, Caerphilly
- Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta, Caerphilly
- Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Rhydywaun, RhCT.

The delivery of the next phase of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme is designed to go hand in hand with the delivery of the 10-year Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, and to ensure that the local authorities' draft plans for the 9-year Rolling Programme reflect the WESP requirements and targets. Each local authority has submitted a revised capital investment plan for the next 9 years.

### **Proportion of learners in Welsh-medium education**

One of the key aims of *Cymraeg 2050* is to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh.

Originally, we used teacher assessments to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the data. However, the National Data Collection for 2020 was cancelled due to the pandemic. Recognising that this impacts the annual data flow, in this report we have therefore used the percentage of learners who learn Welsh as a first language, based on the Pupil Level Annual School Census, in order to develop a broad picture of the situation in the absence of the usual data. Chart 3 below includes both sources in order to show consistency in the data, and to show our progress against this target.

The most recent PLASC data (2024), published in July this year, shows a small decrease in reception class learners studying through the medium of Welsh, from 23.8% in 2022/23 to 23.6% in 2023/24. It is important to note, however, that the data is incomplete for learners in reception classes as it is not a statutory requirement for schools to report on the language medium of education in relation to learners younger than five years old at the start of the academic year.

The data shows a small increase in Year 1 learners studying through the medium of Welsh, from 23.4% in 2022/23 to 24.3% in 2023/24. In *the Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme for 2021-26*, we have committed to increasing the percentage of Year 1 learners taught in Welsh to 26% by 2026.

Table 1 below shows that in 2011/12, there were 7,300 Year 2 learners (aged seven) learning Welsh as a first language, and 7,660 learners by 2023/24. The 360 additional children correspond to 12 new classes of 30 children. The percentage of Year 2 learners studying Welsh as a first language has also increased from 22.2% in 2011/12 to 23.2% in 2023/24.

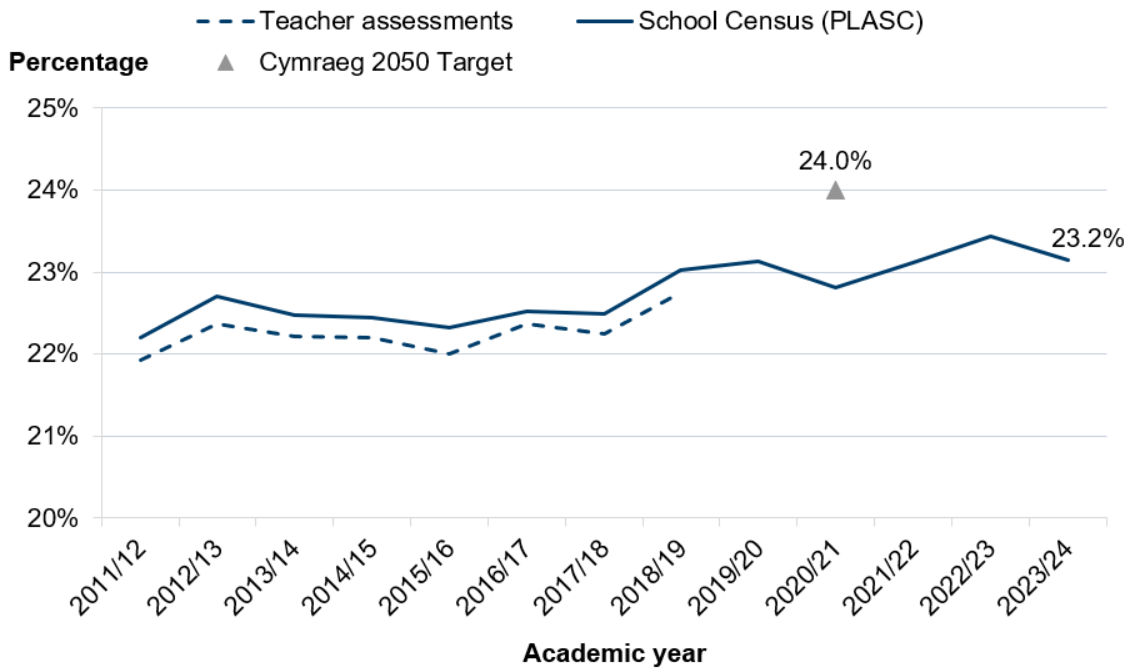
**Table 1: Number and percentage of pupils studying Welsh as a first language in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (2012-2024)**

	Nursery		Reception Class		Year 1		Year 2	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2011/12	7,510	21.1%	8,160	23.8%	7,670	23.1%	7,300	22.2%
2012/13	7,010	20.1%	8,290	23.3%	7,830	23.0%	7,550	22.7%
2013/14	7,460	20.6%	7,980	23.0%	8,100	22.8%	7,650	22.5%
2014/15	7,540	20.6%	8,250	23.3%	7,860	22.7%	7,990	22.4%
2015/16	7,630	20.9%	8,290	23.0%	8,110	23.0%	7,760	22.3%
2016/17	7,650	21.4%	8,330	23.5%	8,120	22.6%	7,950	22.5%
2017/18	7,630	21.6%	7,970	23.2%	8,300	23.3%	8,100	22.5%
2018/19	7,720	22.0%	7,790	23.1%	8,060	23.4%	8,190	23.0%
2019/20	7,880	22.9%	7,900	23.5%	7,850	23.3%	7,970	23.1%
2020/21	8,580	23.0%	7,900	23.8%	7,900	23.4%	7,700	22.8%
2021/22	7,560	22.5%	7,540	23.3%	8,010	23.9%	7,840	23.1%
2022/23	7,200	22.4%	7,630	23.8%	7,690	23.4%	7,960	23.4%
2023/24	7,050	22.9%	7,280	23.6%	7,900	24.3%	7,660	23.2%

Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

[Note 1] Schools do not have to report on the number of pupils studying Welsh under the age of five

### Chart 3: Percentage of Year 2 pupils (7 years old) assessed in Welsh as a first language or who learn Welsh as a first language

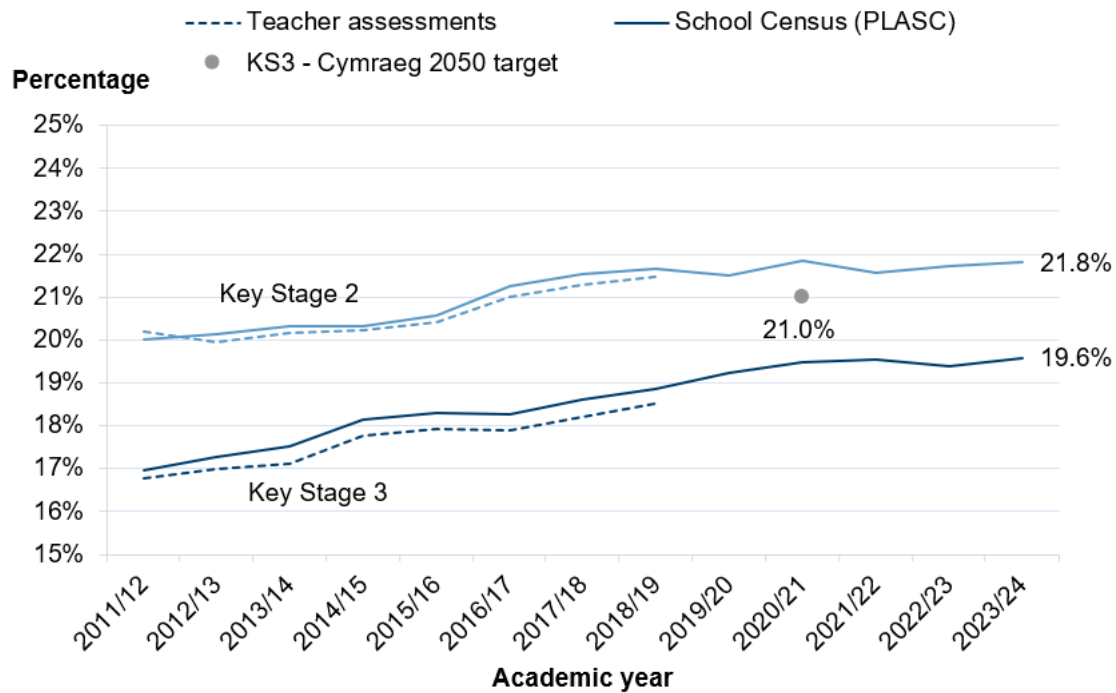


Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) and National Data Collection of teacher assessments

We have also seen an increase in the percentage of Year 7 learners studying through the medium of Welsh from 19.3% in 2022/23 to 19.8% in 2023/24, equating to around 130 more learners.

We also monitor the proportion of Year 9 learners (usually aged 14) assessed in Welsh (first language). This proportion has increased over time from 17.0% in 2011/12 to 19.6% by 2023/24 – see Chart 4 below. Again, as teacher assessments have not been available for the end of Key Stage 2 (end of primary school) or for the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9 of secondary school) in a consistent manner, we are using the percentage of learners studying Welsh as a first language, using Pupil Level Annual School Census data. As with Chart 3 above, Chart 4 below also includes both sources side by side in order to show the overall consistency of the data.

## Chart 4: Percentage of learners at end of Key Stages 2 and 3 assessed in Welsh as a first language or who learn Welsh as a first language

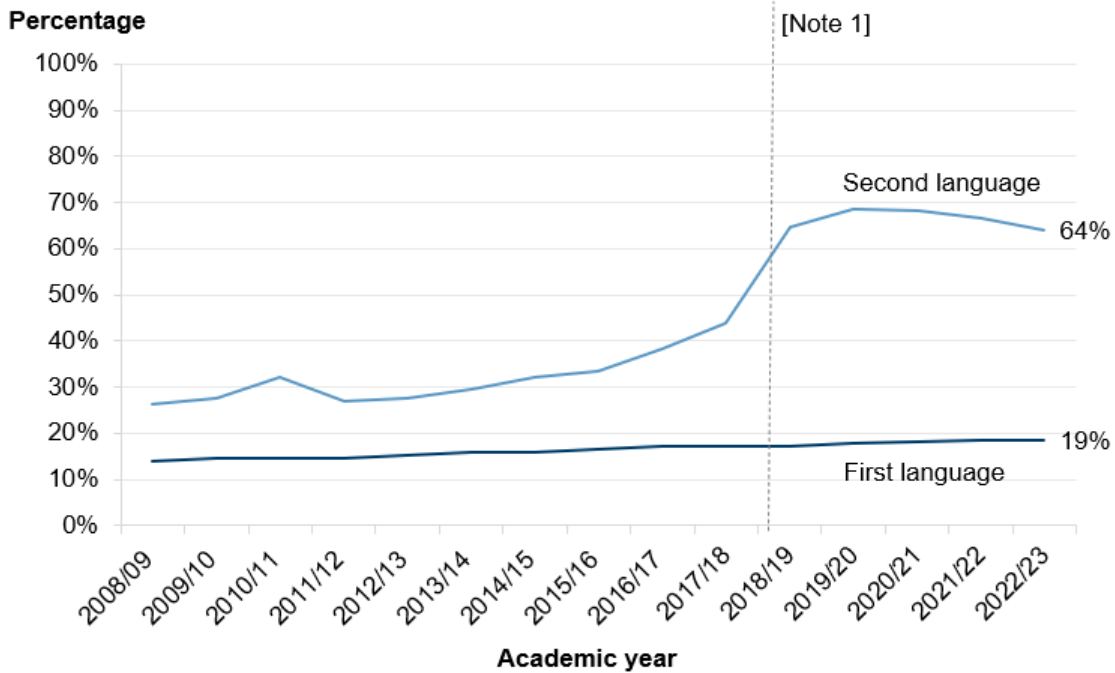


Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) and National Data Collection of teacher assessments

Chart 4 above shows that, according to the 2023/24 academic year school census, 21.8% of learners at the end of primary school and 19.6% of Year 9 learners in secondary schools learn Welsh as a first language. These percentages have increased slightly since 2011/12. However, the percentage learning Welsh as a first language in Key Stage 3 continues to be lower than the percentage in Key Stage 2 three years previously (for example, comparing Key Stage 2 in 2020/21 with Key Stage 3 in 2023/24).

However, local authorities are expected to continue to improve linguistic progression between the primary and secondary sector to ensure that our learners continue to develop their language skills on transition to secondary education, and that the number of learners switching to follow the Welsh second language route at Key Stage 3 is reduced. The authorities' WESPs is required to set out how they will ensure that learners taught through the medium of Welsh continue to be taught as such when transitioning from one year group to another year group, and to plan accordingly if continuity is of concern. We will monitor the progress of local authorities on the implementation of their WESPs on an annual basis.

**Chart 5: Percentage of Year 11 learners registered for GCSE Welsh (first language and second language)**



Source: Welsh Examinations Database (WED) and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

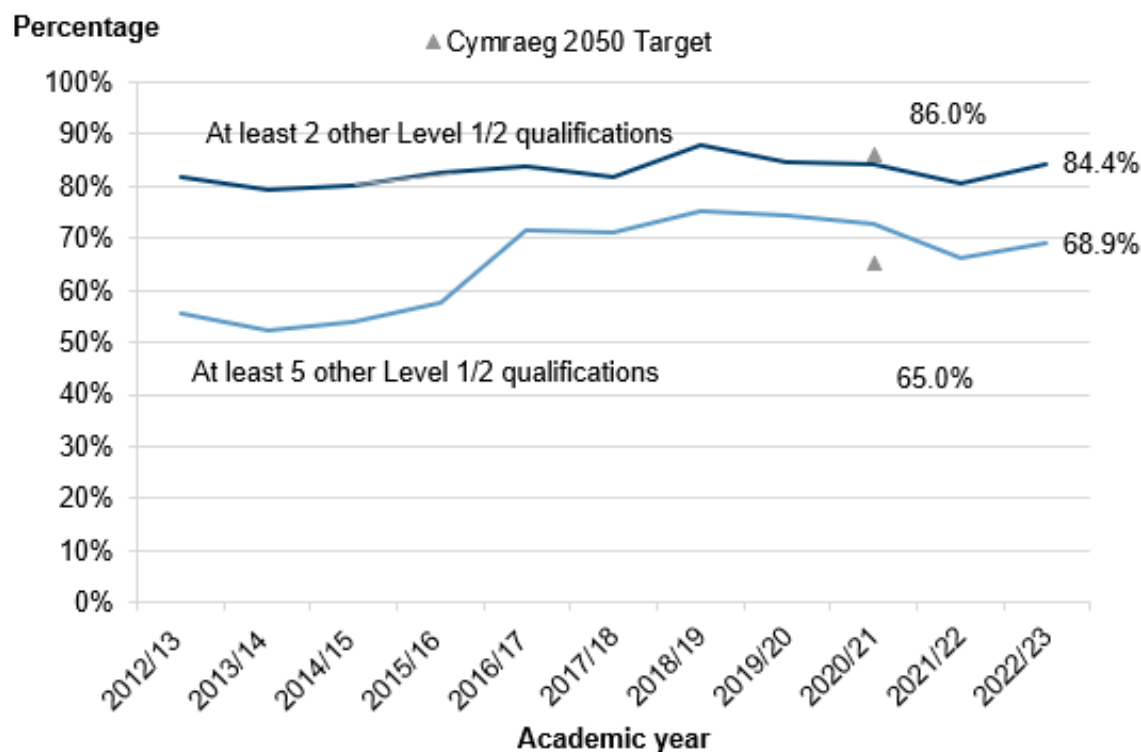
[Note 1] GCSE Welsh Second Language was revised and first taught in its new form in September 2017, replacing the full and short GCSE courses that existed, explaining some of the increase in Welsh second language seen in the data.

[Note 2] From 2015/16, the cohort is based on pupils in Year 11. Up to 2014/15, the cohort is based on pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year.

According to the 2021 Census, 33% of 16-17 year olds were able to speak Welsh.

There has been an increase in the percentage of learners enrolling to sit the Welsh first language and second language (full course) GCSE since 2008/09, as shown in Chart 5 above. Chart 5 also shows that 82% of Year 11 learners had enrolled to sit a GCSE in Welsh as a first or second language in 2022/23 (19% Welsh first language, and 64% Welsh second language). This has increased over the past decade from 70% in 2008/09 (14% Welsh first language, and 56% Welsh second language) – note that this percentage includes learners who had signed up for a short second language course.

**Chart 6: Percentage of pupils registered for the Welsh first language GCSE who are registered for at least two or five other Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh**



Source: Welsh Examinations Database (WED) and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

[Note 1] Following the cancellation of public examinations, all qualifications (which would normally have been taken as examinations) were awarded in the 2020/21 summer term on the basis of an assessed grades model set by individual centres. That is, pupils' grades and qualifications were determined by schools and colleges. They were awarded based on assessments of learners' work, using a range of evidence such as non-exam assessments, mock examinations and classroom work.

[Note 2] Pupils awarded a qualification before the 2019/20 summer exam series will have grades achieved through a written exam, not a grade awarded to them by a centre.

[Note 3] The 2021/22 examination period was a transitional year, where relevant qualifications sat by Welsh pupils returned to written examination. This was not a complete return to pre-pandemic examinations. To compensate for any disruption to the school timetable, pupils who sat exams in 2021/22 were given a wider choice of questions from the syllabus, with Qualifications Wales setting results broadly midway between 2018/19 (the last time examinations were sat) and 2020/21 outcomes.

Chart 6 above shows that 84.4% of learners enrolled for the Welsh first language GCSE in 2022/23 were also enrolled for at least two other qualifications through the medium of Welsh. 68.9% of learners enrolled for the Welsh first language GCSE in 2022/23 were also enrolled for at least five other qualifications through the medium of Welsh. This figure has increased substantially since 2015/16 and has long since reached the target of 65% by 2021. The 2023/24 academic year

data will become available by next year, and we will include a further update in our next *Cymraeg 2050* annual report.

## **e-sgol**

Since its launch in 2018, the e-sgol<sup>1</sup> project has been expanding year on year. During the 2023/24 academic year, 56 courses (GCSE, AS and A-level) were offered across 42 schools to 584 pupils.

Although participation in the project is voluntary, e-sgol has now expanded to all parts of Wales. A significant number of local authorities continue to refer to e-sgol in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, and promotion of the project continues.

In terms of measuring the success of the courses delivered through e-sgol, in August 2023, 15.2% of pupils who studied through e-sgol received an A\* in their A-level exams compared to 13% across Wales.

In March 2021, the Carlam fast-track courses were introduced under e-sgol. The courses are a series of free virtual revision sessions through the medium of Welsh and English to support pupils in years 11, 12 and 13 across Wales. Carlam fast-track revision sessions continue to be offered and the scheme has produced a total of 965 videos of the sessions. The videos are available on the e-sgol website and, to date, have been viewed over 70,000 times.

During 2023-24, e-sgol has expanded provision to the primary sector. During the pilot phase, 74 schools signed up for the first live sessions of Cewri Cymru, with 145 teachers accessing the resources. In addition, 27 schools, including 5 special schools, registered for the online E-steddfodau.

## **Promoting Welsh-medium education**

Promoting Welsh-medium education is included as an objective in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

We have continued to award funding to Menter Caerffili to employ a Champion for the Promotion of Welsh-Medium Education in the South-east to work with local authorities and other partners to raise the profile and promote the provision of Welsh-medium education across the region. A Champion was appointed in May 2023, and the main focus has been on establishing a baseline of knowledge about the current situation, and establishing and building effective collaboration networks with local authorities, mentrau iaith and other partners in order to raise the profile and promote the provision of Welsh-medium education across the region.

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<sup>1</sup> The e-sgol project is based on the Scottish e-sgoil. It is a blended learning initiative that provides online teaching and learning opportunities using direct, real-time and interactive approaches. Using the range of equipment and services available through Hwb, it has allowed students from different schools to access digital teaching opportunities by qualified and experienced teachers.

The first annual conference of this scheme was held in March this year, with a particular focus on celebrating the region's achievements in promoting Welsh-medium education. The day was organised according to the seven WESP outcomes, with an opportunity to hear about good practice across the region in different areas in promoting Welsh-medium education, including upskilling staff, late immersion, Additional Learning Needs, attracting families from minority communities, and collaboration across different sectors including health.

We have continued to share marketing resources with partners and local authorities across Wales to facilitate the promotion of Welsh-medium education and ensure consistency in our messages.

#### **4. Post-compulsory education**

Education and training are at the heart of our vision to develop and sustain the Welsh language. Therefore, ensuring linguistic continuity from statutory education to all elements of post-16 education and training is vitally important.

We are focusing on creating more opportunities for young people to learn and train through the medium of Welsh. We also want to continue to develop an effective system that will be a strong foundation for adults and young people to learn Welsh.

We want to see more students with higher language skills, so they can continue to study Welsh at university to create the next generation of academics, Welsh teachers and a workforce where high level language skills are needed

Chart 5 above shows an increase from 70% to 82% of Year 11 learners that have enrolled to take a GCSE in Welsh since 2008/09. These percentages include pupils enrolling for first language and second language Welsh courses. The increase in the percentage who have enrolled to take a GCSE in Welsh is not transferring to the number taking Welsh at A-level. Chart 7 below shows that there has been a decrease of 107 A-level Welsh first language and Welsh second language enrolments from 451 in 2021/22 to 344 in 2022/23<sup>2</sup>.

This is monitored by looking at how many learners have enrolled to take Welsh at A-level as a percentage of those enrolled to take Welsh at GCSE level two years previously. The 2023/24 data will be available in due course and we will include a further update in the next annual report. Chart 7 below is based on data up to 2022/23.

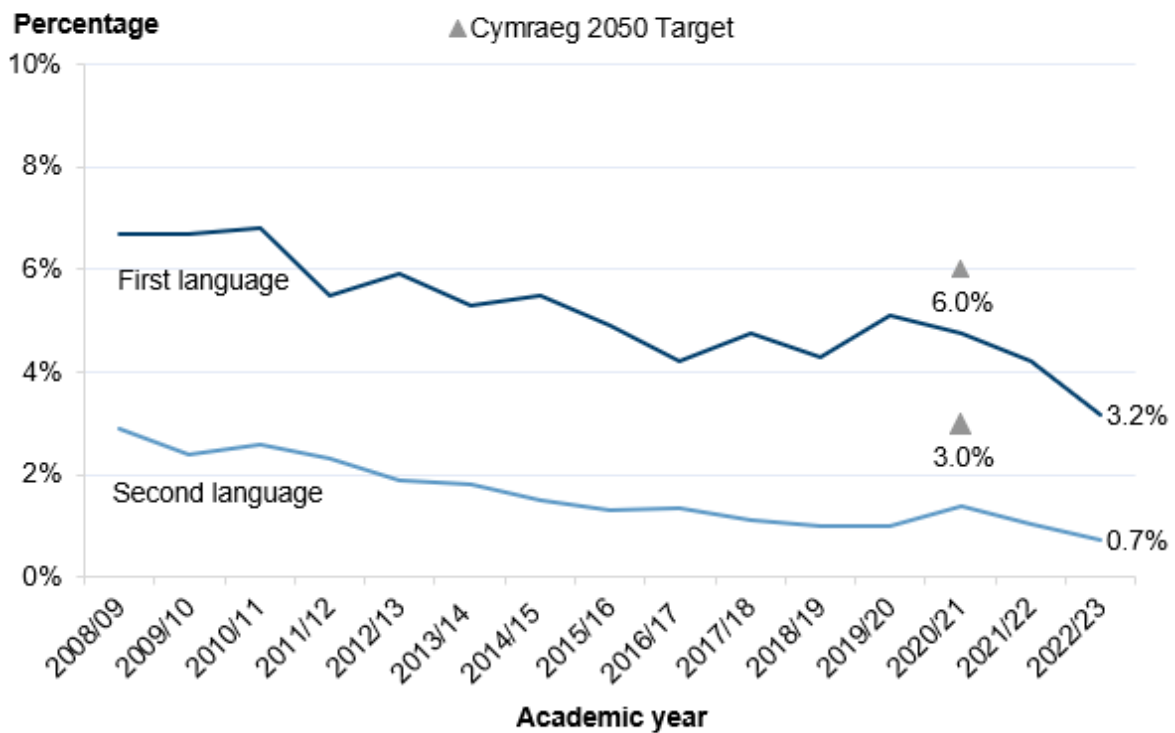
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<sup>2</sup> The data includes the advanced level course enrolments of all pupils including:

- Learners not in maintained schools (pupils in colleges or not in formal education).
- Learners who joined the school after the census was conducted.



**Chart 7: A-level Welsh course enrolments as a percentage of GCSE Welsh course enrolments two years previously – first and second language**



Source: Welsh Examinations Database (WED) and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

[Note 1] Following the cancellation of public examinations, all qualifications (which would normally have been taken as examinations) were awarded in the 2020/21 summer term on the basis of an assessed grades model set by individual centres. That is, pupils' grades and qualifications were determined by schools and colleges. They were awarded based on assessments of learners' work, using a range of evidence such as non-exam assessments, mock examinations and classroom work.

[Note 2] Pupils awarded a qualification before the 2020 summer exam series will have grades achieved through a written exam, not a grade awarded to them by a centre.

[Note 3] The 2021/22 examination period was a transitional year, where relevant qualifications sat by Welsh pupils returned to written examination. This was not a complete return to pre-pandemic examinations. To compensate for any disruption to the school timetable, pupils who sat exams in 2021/22 were given a wider choice of questions from the syllabus, with Qualifications Wales setting results broadly midway between 2018/19 (the last time examinations were sat) and 2020/21 outcomes.

Chart 7 above shows the progression of learners moving from GCSE to A-level. By the 2022/23 academic year, 3.2% of learners who had enrolled to take Welsh first language GCSE two years previously were enrolled to take Welsh first language A-level. It also shows that 0.7% of learners who had enrolled to take Welsh second language GCSE two years previously were enrolled to take Welsh second language A-level.

The percentage of those who enrolled to take Welsh at GCSE, who also enrol to study Welsh at A-level (both as a first and second language) continues to fall. The

numbers studying English and modern foreign languages at A-level have also fallen significantly – it is not unique to Welsh. The 82% of Year 11 learners referred to in Chart 5 above (enrolled to sit GCSE Welsh first or second language in 2022/23) have not yet finished studying their A-levels. We will have to wait for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 data to show the true current position in the numbers moving on from GCSE to A-level. However, further work is needed to ensure that pupils follow the most suitable GCSE route for them.

One of the outcomes of the WESPs is that local authorities plan to increase the number studying Welsh at A-level. In many areas, the numbers studying Welsh in schools are low, and based on that, schools sometimes cease to offer the subject. e-sgol can often be a solution in such cases as it allows schools to create local clusters to enable more pupils to continue to study Welsh as an A-level subject. As part of the WESPs, we will continue to monitor the situation carefully to ensure the subject is available across Wales.

We continue to fund the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to develop assets and a brand for running an ongoing campaign to promote Welsh as an A-level subject and to support schools with a low number of learners to maintain the subject.

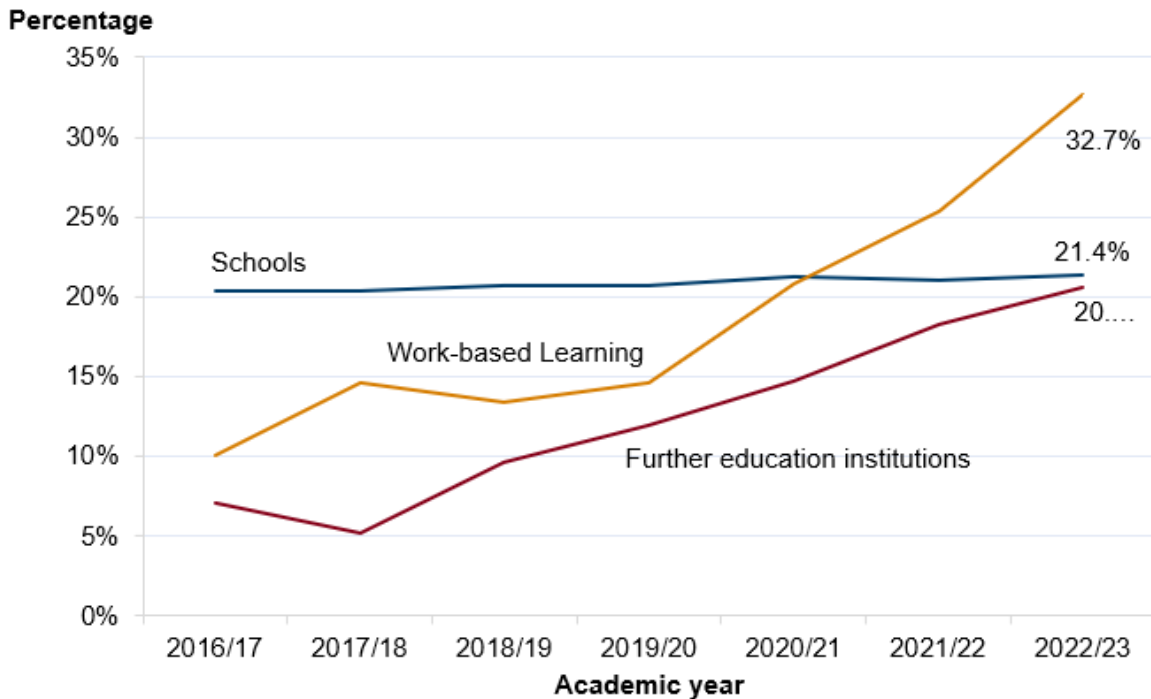
### **Further education and apprenticeships**

During the reporting year, as a result of the *Co-operation Agreement*, we continued to invest additional funding to ensure that the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol increased the proportion of apprenticeships and Welsh-medium further education available. Additional funding was also allocated to the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide free Welsh lessons to 16 to 25-year-olds and to the education workforce.

An additional £2.825m was provided to the Coleg during 2023-24. This funding was used to support a programme of development grants for further education colleges and apprenticeship providers to develop capacity within Welsh-medium education in priority areas, including childcare, health and social care, sport and leisure, and land-based studies. The funding also supported two Initial Teacher Education projects, including a project to attract undergraduates back to Wales to train to teach through the medium of Welsh.

We are eager to see an increase in Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in the post-16 sector. Chart 8 below shows the progress made according to provider type.

**Chart 8: Percentage of educational activities undertaken by learners aged 19 or under held in Welsh or bilingually according to type of provider at 31 August in the academic year**



Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR); Post-16 Collection

[Note 1] Counts exclude Welsh language qualifications e.g. Welsh GCSE, Welsh A level, Welsh for Adults.

[Note 2] Counts exclude Higher Education level learning aims.

[Note 3] For work based learning, the type of provider is determined based on the lead provider delivering the learning. This differs to the consortium member basis used in statistics published elsewhere.

[Note 4] Work based learning includes Apprenticeships and Traineeships. Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+) provision is excluded. JGW+ statistics are reported on a financial year basis, separately from other types of provision collected via the Lifelong Learning Wales Record. Traineeships were discontinued on 31 March 2022 with JGW+ coming into operation for new starts on 1 April 2022.

As seen in Chart 8 above, the percentage of learning activities held in Welsh or bilingually in further education institutions and in the work-based learning sector has significantly increased since 2017/18. This increase has been driven primarily by an increase in the number of bilingual activities provided in these sectors, and it is likely that this includes some activities that develop and maintain learners' Welsh language skills. There has also been a gradual increase in the number of activities taking place in schools over the same period.

Since publishing the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's *Welsh-Medium Further Education and Apprenticeship Action Plan* (December 2018), the Coleg has supported a number of strategic projects, with 71 grants awarded to colleges and 33 grants awarded to apprenticeship providers during the 2023/24 academic year. These projects focused on the priority areas of health and care, childcare, public

services, sports and land-based studies, to establish a robust infrastructure for the provision and to increase the number of learners studying through the medium of Welsh and bilingually.

As a result, 102 members of staff at further education colleges and working with apprenticeship providers were funded during the 2023/24 academic year to support Welsh and bilingual provision at their institutions.

The Learner Ambassador scheme for the post-16 sector is also going from strength to strength. During the 2023/24 academic year, 49 ambassadors promoted Welsh language opportunities among their peers across Wales, supporting providers to build learners' confidence in their Welsh language skills, and to provide opportunities to chat and understand the importance of speaking the language, particularly in the workplace. Training for tutors/practitioners is key in expanding provision. During the 2023/24 academic year, over 400 were trained in the post-16 sector. During the same period, 38 members of staff were supported to become more confident in Welsh, and be able to use their Welsh in their everyday work through a National Mentoring Programme for the post-16 sector.

In August 2021, the Gwreiddio Scheme for post-16 staff was launched with the aim of fostering a community of staff to increase the level of Welsh-medium provision. By the end of 2023/24, 425 members of staff had enrolled on the scheme.

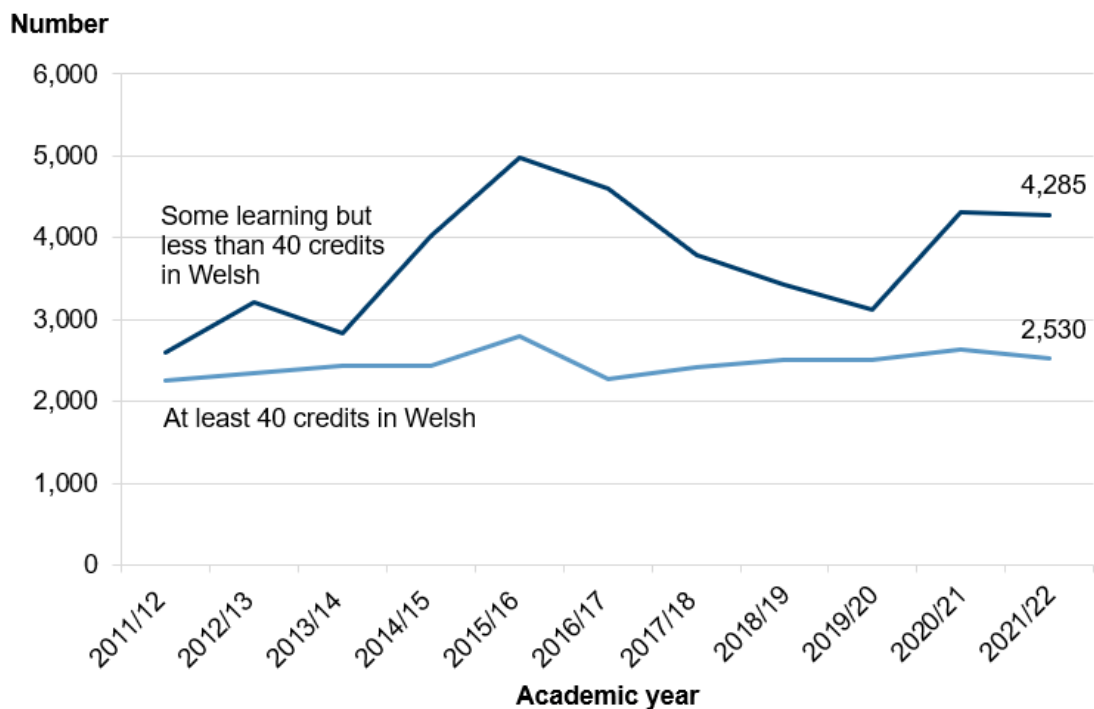
### **Higher education**

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol supports universities to develop Welsh and bilingual modules and courses through grants in conjunction with the institutions, rather than funding lecturer posts, thereby embedding the provision as an integral part of the offer. Welsh-medium provision is now available across 25 subject areas.

In 2023/24, 54 subject grants and 4 incentive grants were awarded to support provision through the medium of Welsh. 10 new research scholarships were awarded in 2023/24 in a range of academic subjects, with 27 research scholarships continuing under the sponsorship of the Coleg.

When the Coleg was established in 2011, 710 members of staff at universities were able to teach through the medium of Welsh. By 2021/22, the figure had risen to 1,065. The lecturers are supported through a monthly academic staff training programme which includes face to face training, distance learning and workshops.

## Chart 9: Student enrolments in higher education institutions in Wales with teaching through the medium of Welsh



Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record

[Note 1] Numbers exclude students registered at further education institutions.

[Note 2] Students in Wales includes students enrolled at the Welsh national centre of the Open University.

Data on enrolments of students at Welsh universities who used some Welsh in their education for 2022/23 onwards is not available at the time of publishing this report. We will include a further update in the next annual report.

Medr, the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research, is now responsible for funding and overseeing post-16 education and research. The new Commission will have a vital role in expanding the Welsh-medium and bilingual offer in tertiary education. In particular, the Commission will be expected to:

- Plan strategically to promote and increase Welsh-medium tertiary education.
- Encourage providers to deliver, develop and increase their Welsh-medium tertiary education.
- Encourage providers to plan progression routes so that Welsh speakers can continue their learning post-16 and develop their Welsh language skills, and to offer opportunities to use the Welsh language in order to create a bilingual workforce.
- Monitor the availability and uptake of Welsh-medium learning opportunities and any subjects where the demand for Welsh-medium learning cannot be met at the moment.

- Work effectively and strategically with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to achieve the above.

In establishing the Commission, we bring together responsibility for the strategy, planning and oversight of tertiary education within a single body. This will strengthen the framework for planning and funding post-16 provision, ensuring a more coherent approach to developing and maintaining Welsh-medium provision. The aim is for the Commission to increase the demand for Welsh tertiary education and to encourage individuals to participate in Welsh-medium education.

In June 2023, the Coleg was appointed to advise the Commission on its duties relating to the Welsh language. During 2024-25, the Coleg and Commission will work together to establish a strong partnership and framework for offering and receiving advice. The Commission will be expected to consider the Coleg's advice when preparing its first strategic plan.

## **Learning Welsh**

The National Centre for Learning Welsh was established in 2015 to co-ordinate provision and provide direction to the Welsh learning domain. Its aim is to create new Welsh speakers, confident in using their new skills, and therefore contributing to achieving our ambition of a million Welsh speakers by 2050, as well as doubling daily use of the language.

[Data](#) from the 2022/23 academic year shows that the Centre had 16,905 unique learners during that year. The data also shows that:

- The Centre provided 29,485 learning activities during 2022/23.
- 60% of learners were at Entry level (this is the introductory level for beginners).
- 16% were at Foundation level and 24% at Intermediate levels and Advanced (including Proficiency level).
- 72% of learners were between the ages of 25 and 64, 15% were older than 65, and 13% were between the ages of 16 and 24.

Since September 2022, the Centre has been implementing the Onwards With Welsh scheme, which offers free Welsh lessons to 16-25 year olds. The courses are tailored to the ability of individuals, from taster courses or Entry up to Advanced and Proficiency levels. Free lessons are also being offered to the education workforce – be they headteachers, teachers or teaching assistants, to support our efforts to increase the workforce able to teach through the medium of Welsh. During 2023-24, 1,633 16-25 year olds undertook free Welsh lessons, and 500 of the education sector workforce received free training.

The Centre is also leading on a project to encourage young Welsh speakers to return from universities to help to teach Welsh in schools. The second course of its kind was held in July 2023 for 12 undergraduates, to give them a taste of being a Learn Welsh tutor or teacher. A further update will be shared in the next annual report.

The Centre's Work Welsh programme provides Learn Welsh courses for the workplace, including online self-study taster courses, tutor courses and intensive residential courses. Further information is provided in section 6 on the Workplace below.

## 5. The education workforce, resources and qualifications

Increasing the number of teachers who can teach Welsh or can teach through the medium of Welsh is one of the transformational changes set out in the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy. To see a growth in the number of learners in Welsh-medium education, it is necessary to ensure an adequate workforce to educate them, and this can be challenging.

In *Cymraeg 2050*, we have set the following goals by 2031:

- 3,900 primary teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh.
- 4,100 secondary teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh.

The latest data from the Pupil Level Annual School Census for the 2023/24 academic year shows that: 2,792 primary teachers are able to teach through the medium of Welsh and 2,549 secondary teachers are able to teach through the medium of Welsh. These figures show a slight decline from 2022/23 – see Chart 10 below.

Attracting a sufficient number of teachers to teach Welsh or through the medium of Welsh remains a challenge. During the reporting year, a number of the steps set out in the [Welsh in education workforce plan](#) continued to be implemented, as follows:

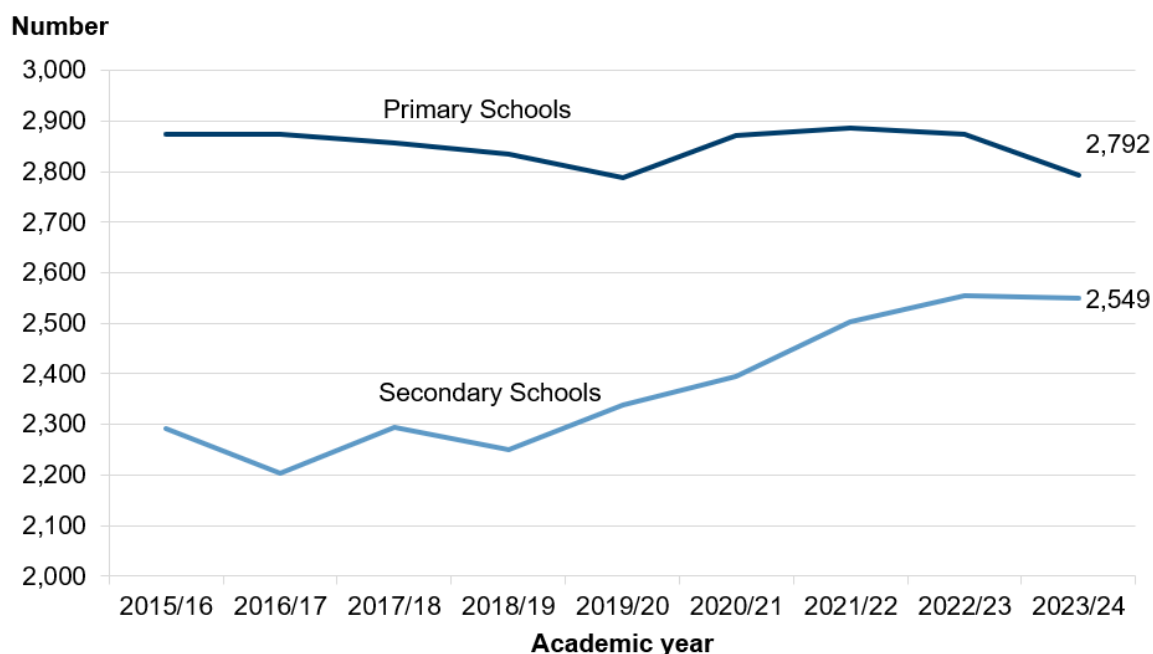
- 16 places have been funded for primary teachers who want to switch to secondary teaching through the Conversion Programme.
- 26 projects were awarded funding through the grant for the development of Welsh-medium workforce capacity for schools, worth over £950,000. This helps schools develop innovative ways of solving some of their recruitment challenges.
- The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol established Cadw Cyswllt which promotes opportunities for students in England to return to Wales to prepare to teach, and a project to mentor undergraduates to consider moving on to become teachers.
- 81 teachers were awarded a bursary to keep Welsh and Welsh-medium teachers in secondary schools. We will monitor whether they continue in the system over the next few years.

We continue to support teachers in English-medium schools, to develop their ability to use and teach Welsh. In February 2023, a national officer started with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, to work with the regional consortia, local authorities and sabbatical scheme providers, to plan and develop a coherent programme for practitioners to learn Welsh.

In line with the commitment in the *Welsh in education workforce plan*, alongside this report, we have also published an update to the following documents:

- Welsh in education workforce plan: data analysis
- Welsh in education workforce plan: summary of Welsh in education strategic plans

**Chart 10: The number of teachers who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh**



Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

### The post-16 workforce

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is leading on the development of the post-16 workforce and has a number of training schemes in operation to develop the language and pedagogical skills of staff, ranging from those confident in their Welsh skills to staff embarking on their journey to learn Welsh.

Our funding to the Coleg supports the Coleg's schemes, including the Sgiliaith National Development Programme, the Academic Staff Development Programme, the Gwreiddio Scheme, and they also fund PhD research scholarships that increase the capacity of Higher Education institutions to offer Welsh-medium courses.

The Coleg provides support for Initial Teacher Education partnerships as well as running two specific projects to develop the confidence of students to teach through the medium of Welsh, and to attract students back to Wales to teach through the medium of Welsh. In addition, the Coleg received additional funding in 2023-24 to run a mentoring scheme to encourage and strengthen the Welsh language skills of students following FE Postgraduate Certificate of Education courses at Welsh universities.



Our funding to the National Centre for Learning Welsh supports a range of interventions for the post-16 workforce, including the Work Welsh scheme delivered in conjunction with the Coleg to develop the language skills of tutors and lecturers. During 2023-24, 901 employees followed learning courses, with 7 universities and 11 further education colleges committing to the scheme. In addition, 212 employees followed the Self-Study course with the help of a tutor.

We also provide an incentive grant for Postgraduate Certificate of Education students to improve their Welsh language teaching and learning skills. Under the scheme, students studying any subject (other than Welsh) can apply for an additional grant of £1,000, and Initial Teacher Education providers have committed to providing opportunities (up to 40 credits) on the course to develop Welsh language skills.

### **Educational resources**

On 1 April 2023, Adnodd was established to support schools and practitioners to create resources that support their local curriculum as schools introduce the new curriculum. It will be a prominent and accessible service that will support teachers, publishers, stakeholders and other organisations to work together to create the most useful resources possible for schools and learners. This will help ensure a more strategic approach to commissioning educational resources. New materials will be developed in accordance with the principles and ethos of the new curriculum. Teachers and learners will have better access to relevant and suitable resources for the Curriculum for Wales.

The 2023-24 financial year were very early days for Adnodd as it appointed a Board, Chair and Chief Executive Officer – who took up his role in January 2024.

Over time, all existing Welsh Government contracts and grants are expected to transfer to Adnodd. However, during the reporting year, the Welsh Government continued this work ensuring that a range of resources were available to support learners.

Following the success of *Mwy o Stori'r Iaith*, published by Atebol and Rondo in March 2023, *Mwy o Stori'r Iaith Part 2* was funded to expand provision. The first part of the project coincides with the television series broadcast on S4C in March 2023, *Stori'r Iaith*.

We continued the development of resources for learning about the history and contribution of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people. *Brethyn Cymru* – a digital timeline to accompany bilingual posters sent to all schools in Wales – and *Our Welsh History* – a website celebrating the wealth of diversity within Welsh history – have been published.

Joint work with the Curriculum Division continued on a grant of over £800,000 to the Welsh Books Council. This is a three-year grant (2022-25) to create reading materials for learners between the ages of 3-16 that offer an insight into Wales' culture, people, and history, as well as the wider world. The scheme will support

the objectives of the 4 purposes of Curriculum for Wales, support the development of key empathy skills, contribute to emotional and mental well-being, and ignite learners' imagination and creativity.

To support GCSE, AS and A-level qualifications, 21 new titles were published in 2023-24 through a grant awarded to the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) to provide Welsh language versions of textbooks and revision books.

We continued to work with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to identify the need for bilingual digital resources for post-16 students, to be used in blended learning provision, along with resources to support apprenticeships.

Once again this year, RNIB was awarded a grant to create braille, large print and audio resources through the medium of Welsh as part of the development of resources for learners with additional learning needs.

Work also continued on a £272,000 grant awarded to GwE to develop the Ein Llais Ni scheme. This scheme will build learners' self-confidence and well-being, developing them into confident bilingual communicators, and will experiment with strategies (including the use of digital tools) to promote oracy skills in Welsh.

## Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh

The second main target of *Cymraeg 2050* is to increase the daily use of our language, and we are working with various partners to create opportunities for that use. We believe that the Welsh language belongs to us all and we want everyone, no matter how much Welsh they have, to feel confident to use it every day. We discuss this in the section below.

### **The current situation – how many people can speak Welsh?**

We have set a target to increase the percentage of people aged three or over who speak Welsh daily and who are able to speak more than a few words of our language to at least 20% by 2050, in line with the increase in speakers. This target is also one of the national indicators set out in the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act\) 2015](#).

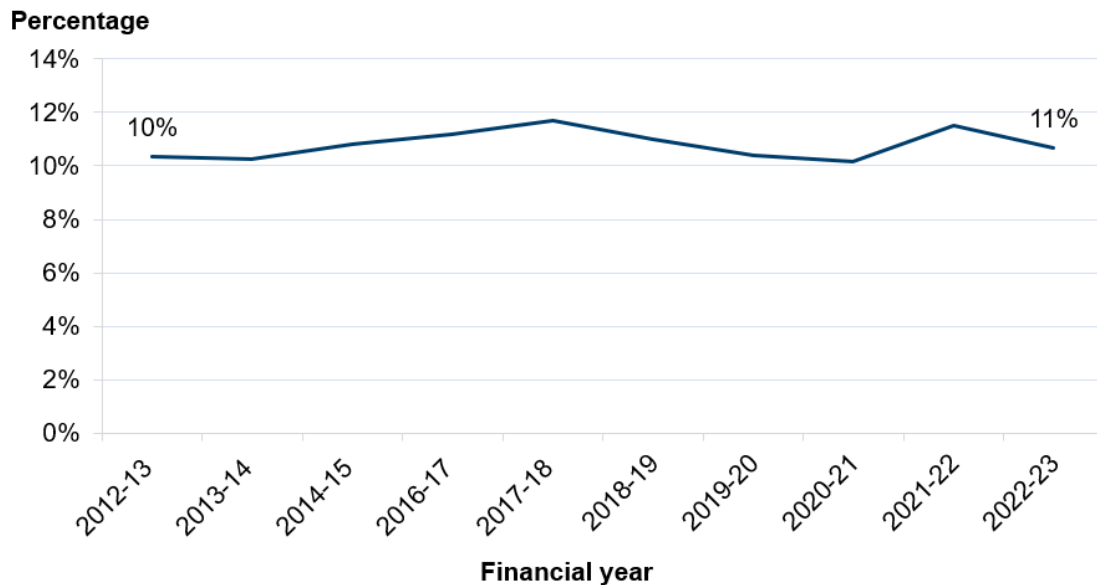
It is very difficult to measure language use. One way of doing this is by conducting occasional language use surveys. To that end, the most recent Welsh Language Use Survey was conducted in July 2019, but was affected by COVID-19. We provided details on the results of this survey in our previous annual report.

The 2019-20 Welsh Language Use Survey shows that 10% of the population continues to speak Welsh daily and more than a few words. This therefore means that half of Welsh speakers use their Welsh every day.

We have published subject summaries about [use of Welsh at home and in education](#), [social use of Welsh](#), and [use of Welsh with service providers](#) from the 2019-20 Welsh Language Use Survey. [A statistical bulletin on Welsh language use in the workplace](#) was published in September 2023, and further discussion of these statistics can be found in the Workplace section below.

Although Welsh Language Use Surveys are used to monitor progress towards the target of doubling the daily use of our language, for more regular results, we also use the results of the National Survey for Wales for adults (aged 16 or over).

**Chart 11: The percentage of people aged 16 years or over who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh according to the National Survey for Wales**



Source: National Survey for Wales

According to the National Survey for Wales, the percentage of adults aged 16 or over who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than a few words of Welsh has remained fairly stable, very similar to the findings of the Welsh Language Use Survey 2019-20. The National Survey for Wales was not held in 2023-24, but the percentage in 2022-23 was 11%.

Further information on this is provided in the Social use of Welsh section below.

### **Language use at school – The Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith)**

The Welsh Language Charter is key in promoting a strong Welsh ethos in schools, and provides various activities to support learners aged 3-18 to enjoy the Welsh language. We want to inspire children and young people to use Welsh in all aspects of their lives, so the Charter encourages all members of the school community to get involved, whether they are members of the school workforce or council, learners and their parents, governors or the wider community.

Different versions of the Charter are available for use in primary, secondary and all-age schools, whether Welsh or English-medium or bilingual.

In September 2023, following close collaboration with external partners, a new National Framework for the Charter was published to provide focus and clear guidance to those implementing it – be it local co-ordinators in local authorities across Wales, school co-ordinators or the whole workforce of our schools.

During the reporting year, we worked on a new publicity programme for the Welsh Language Charter and created a range of resources suitable for use in schools across Wales. New guidance has been commissioned for the implementation of

Charter programmes, including Cymraeg Campus. A short animation explaining the aim and objectives of the programme was commissioned, along with a video to interview those taking part in the Charter across the country discussing its importance in their area. New certificates have also been commissioned to be issued to schools that have been awarded a bronze, silver or gold award on their Welsh Language Charter journey. Work is ongoing to develop new friends for beloved characters Seren and Sbarc, who will develop the inclusion and diversity element of the programme.

## **6. The workplace**

Workplaces are vital spaces in increasing use of Welsh. They offer people the opportunity to use their Welsh, practise speaking it and develop their confidence and skills.

In September 2023, a [new analysis](#) of the 2019-20 Welsh Language Use Survey was published which reports on usage and attitudes towards Welsh in the workplace. This analysis also reported on people's views on the availability of technologies and training opportunities to support the use of Welsh at work.

More than half of Welsh speakers aged 16 or over in work said they spoke Welsh to their colleagues at least sometimes. Just under 1 in 5 always spoke Welsh to colleagues. Older Welsh speakers and Welsh speakers living in the North-west were most likely to report using Welsh in their workplace.

Almost half (46%) of Welsh speakers aged 16 or over in work reported that their employer offered training or support to improve their Welsh (excluding those who replied that they did not know).

Of those who expressed an opinion, almost half (46%) of Welsh speakers said all or almost all of their colleagues were supportive of Welsh, and more than three quarters (76%) considered most or all of their colleagues to be supportive of the language.

Over two thirds (69%) of Welsh speakers aged 16 or over who work, but are not self-employed, believed their employer was supportive of the use of Welsh in most formal and informal aspects of the business. 13% considered their employer to be supportive of the use of Welsh in informal aspects, but not in formal aspects of the business, while 8% considered their employer was not supportive of the use of Welsh in any aspect of the business.

### **Work Welsh**

The National Centre for Learning Welsh's Work Welsh programme provides courses ranging from online self-study taster courses to intensive learning courses. As well as increasing the number of Welsh speakers and Welsh language use, Work Welsh also allows organisations to provide better Welsh language services to their users.

The reporting year was another successful year for the programme, with 578 employers accessing Work Welsh courses during 2023-24. Work Welsh provides courses across a range of levels. During 2023-24, 6,071 people took self-study taster courses, 954 followed learning courses with a tutor or with tutor support, and 331 took intensive learning courses.

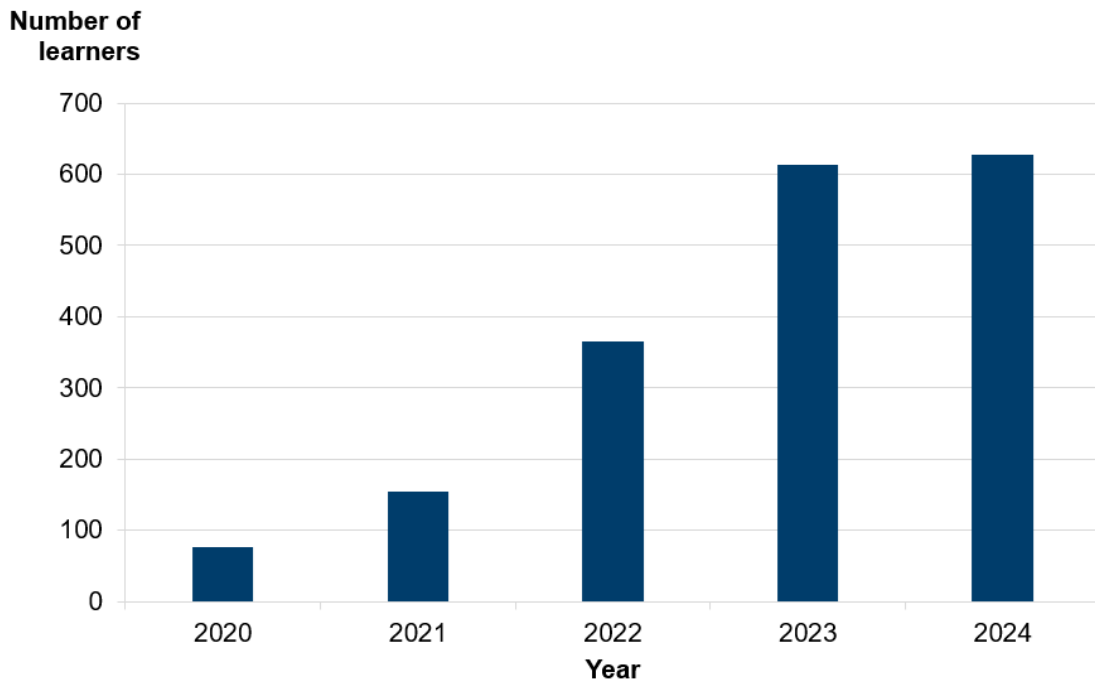
The sectoral courses proved popular again during 2023-24, with 1,113 taking part in the courses for the further and higher education sectors; 500 in the courses for headteachers and teachers; 610 in the programme for local authorities; 1,514 in the health and care sector programme; and 726 in the Camau programme that has been specifically developed for childcare workers.

### **Welsh language use in the Welsh Government**

In our internal use of Welsh strategy within the Welsh Government – [\*Cymraeg. It belongs to us all\*](#), we set a long-term aim to develop and promote the use of the language in the organisation. Our aim is that all staff working for the Welsh Government will be able to understand Welsh by 2050, meaning it would become a workplace where it is normal for Welsh and English to be used naturally and interchangeably.

Four themes have been at the core of strategy implementation during the first few years: learning, leadership, recruitment and technology. We have increased and expanded our Welsh learning programme, which has led to a more diverse and accessible offer and has attracted more learners to the programme. In May 2020, 76 learners were following a formal Welsh language learning programme in the Welsh Government, but by 2024, there was a 740% increase in the number of our Welsh learners in the Government.

## Chart 12: Number of learners following a formal Welsh language learning programme in Welsh Government



Source: Welsh Government annual report on compliance with Welsh Language Standards

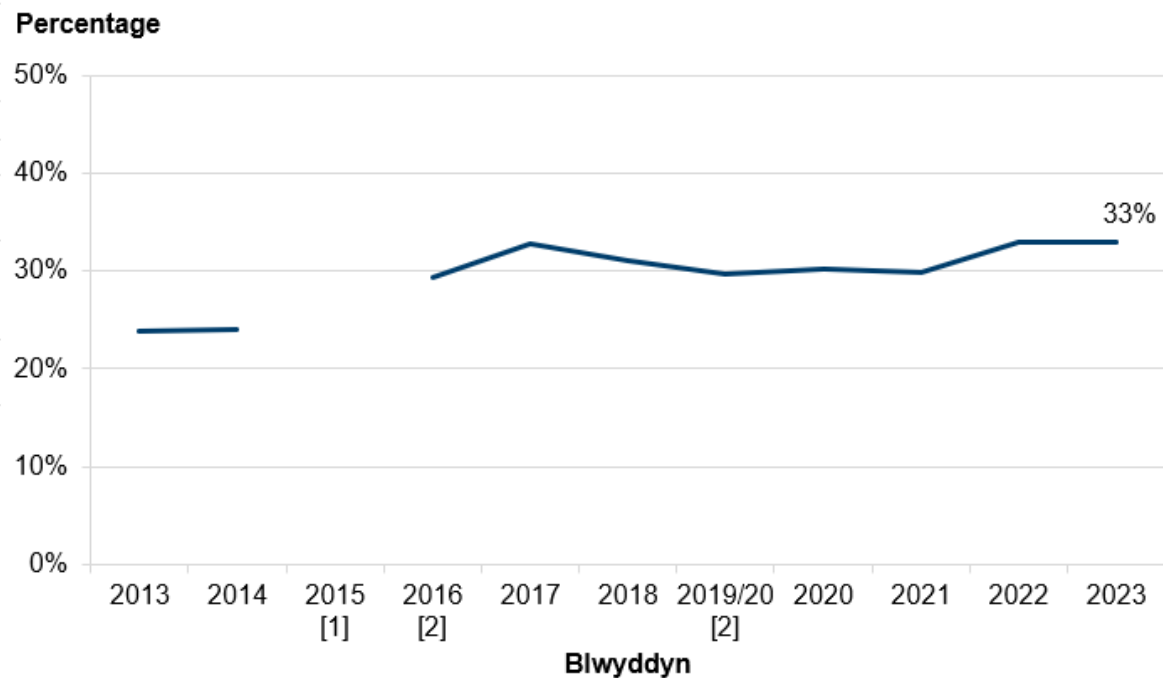
Our Welsh language learning offer to staff now includes 13 different options:

- Weekly classes
- Intensive block course
- Self-study online
- 1:1 Learning
- Confidence-building
- Gloywi (Proficiency)
- SaySomethinginWelsh
- Welsh pronunciation
- Kick Off Cymraeg
- Residential courses
- Welsh language course on social media
- Courtesy level Welsh
- Clwb Cymraeg

During 2023-24, 9 members of staff achieved the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol qualification, the Language Skills Certificate, in a pilot to transfer the qualification to the workplace. The 9 were part of a maintaining and tracking programme this year, after gaining the Certificate, to help them put their skills into practice in the workplace. More generally, support is also provided for our learners to practice their skills regularly through an extensive mentoring programme, Welsh language discussion networks on Microsoft Teams and informal tutor-run practice sessions, the Clwb Cymraeg.

We emphasise in our recruitment material that the Welsh language is an asset in Welsh Government, regardless of the role advertised. An intensive Welsh training programme was introduced to a second cohort of apprentices this year with two weeks of full-time lessons. Our focus on our senior leaders also continues, with an induction programme for new entrants into the Senior Civil Service, and guidance on the use of Welsh when chairing meetings.

**Chart 13: The percentage of the Welsh Government's workforce who use Welsh to do their work**



Source: People Survey (Welsh Government) and Civil Service People Surveys (UK Cabinet Office)

[Note 1] The survey was not carried out in 2015. In 2016, the "More English than Welsh" category was divided into three further categories which are "more English than Welsh but speaking Welsh daily, weekly, or less often than weekly".

[Note 2] The results shown for 2016 and 2019/20 have been taken from the People Survey conducted by the Welsh Government in January 2016 and March 2020 (taking into account the year from April 2019 to March 2020). The other results have been taken from the Civil Service People Surveys (usually conducted by the UK Cabinet Office in October). To a large extent, the same questionnaire was used for both surveys and was conducted in the same way. However, as the People Survey 2020 was conducted in March 2020, the response rate was slightly lower than in previous years. This is likely to be due to COVID-19.

Chart 13 data above shows that 33% of the Welsh Government workforce use Welsh to undertake their work. By achieving our goal of all staff working for the Welsh Government being able to understand Welsh by 2050, we will enable our staff to work in Welsh on a day-to-day basis, and there will be a significant increase in language use as a result.



## **Leading in a Bilingual Country**

This is a language in leadership programme, with attendees having an opportunity to discuss their experiences and views on how to operate in the spirit of *Cymraeg 2050* in their organisations. The programme addresses areas such as:

- Unconscious bias
- Language and power
- Language and culture
- Leadership behaviours
- Vision and values

It is a joint programme between a company of external experts, the Cymraeg 2050 Division and Academi Wales. This year, the third cohort finished and we are now preparing a Leading in a Bilingual Country programme which will last 5 years.

## **7. Services**

### **Welsh Language Standards Regulations**

Preparation of standards regulations continued during the reporting year. Regulations to make standards applicable to water companies were approved by the Senedd on 19 September 2023 and came into force on 31 October 2023. The Welsh Language Commissioner has begun the process of imposing standards on the relevant bodies.

Preparatory work has also been undertaken to consult on adding more public bodies to the standards regime. The associated consultation has now concluded, and we are currently analysing those responses in the hope of laying statutory instruments before the Senedd in early 2025.

### **Helo Blod**

Helo Blod helps individuals, businesses, charities and third sector organisations to use more Welsh by offering up to 500 words of free translations a month, as well as a Welsh text-checking service. It also answers various enquiries from businesses about the Welsh language, provides Work Welsh goods and signposts to sources of support in relevant organisations. Helo Blod is available by phone, via the website, e-mail, and social media.

During 2023-24, the Helo Blod service:

- Received 3,500 requests for support and translation – 1,655 from businesses, 1,422 from charities and 423 from individuals. These included requests to translate signs, posters, text for social media and for websites.
- Translated 545,051 words from English to Welsh and checked 20,435 Welsh words.
- Crossed the milestone of receiving 10,000 requests for support through the website since launching in February 2020.

- Viewed 1,788 accounts created by new customers within the period: 735 on behalf of businesses, 389 on behalf of charities and 664 by individuals.
- Cardiff was the area with the largest number in Wales of new accounts created on behalf of businesses and charities (131), with Gwynedd in second place (89) and Powys third (75).
- 158 new accounts were created by businesses and charities outside Wales.

Staff also promoted the service through partners and other bodies at various events. These included Visit Wales' regional roadshows, a presentation to businesses organised by Llwyddo'n Lleol, and a presentation by the Urdd in Welshpool in preparation for the Urdd Eisteddfod in Meifod.

### ***More than just words 2022-2027***

The aim of *More than just words*, the Welsh Government's plan for strengthening Welsh language services in health and care, is to ensure that organisations recognise that language is an intrinsic part of care, and that Welsh language services are proactively offered to the people who need them.

The new [More than just words 2022-27](#) plan was launched in August 2022. The plan is set in the context that the Welsh language belongs to us all and that it should be incorporated into health and social care services across Wales so that individuals receive care that meets their language needs without having to ask for it. The [first annual report](#) on the plan was published in December 2023 in order to look at its first year (August 2022-August 2023).

During the reporting year, senior leaders from across the health and care sector took part in the *Leading in a Bilingual Country* programme, which works towards embedding the spirit of *Cymraeg 2050* in organisational culture and policies. Personal performance objectives were set for NHS board chairs and Directors of Social Services. The aim was for organisations to show how they have led in a way that mainstreams the Welsh language within plans and services. The Duty of Quality was also introduced, with the statutory guidance recognising the importance of the Welsh language and the *More than just words* plan.

Many of the staff working in health and social care are able to speak some Welsh, but lack confidence to use it. During the year, the National Centre for Learning Welsh developed a learning Welsh programme to support colleagues to gain confidence to use their Welsh.

To coincide with the compulsory language awareness course, launched last year for the NHS, this year Social Care Wales launched a Welsh language awareness e-learning module to help people working in social care, early years and childcare learn more about Welsh and working bilingually.

Reflecting the important role technology has to play in increasing interaction between patients, service users and professionals, the NHS app, which includes a range of useful features to help the public interact with the NHS, has been made available bilingually.

An Advisory Board has been set up to monitor and scrutinise progress with *More than just words*. The board met with representatives of health and social care groups, with discussions focusing on the need to strengthen Welsh language provision and the active offer. The board is working with Llais to ensure that health and care service users are able to contribute to the work of *More than just words*.

In recognition of those who are leading the way in giving consideration to the Welsh language in service delivery, the Welsh language was included in two of the 2024 NHS Award categories – namely Person-Centred Care and Equitable Care. One organisation was shortlisted and the winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in the autumn.

## **8. Social use of Welsh**

Increasing the social use of Welsh is essential to enable us to reach our target of doubling the daily use of our language. As Welsh is not a majority language throughout Wales, plans must be made to create, protect and extend opportunities and spaces where we can use Welsh together.

One type of Welsh language monolingual space where we have increased our engagement is co-operative organisations. These also, of course, offer employment opportunities and contribute to the economy, and sometimes they fulfil an important social function, all in Welsh. Further details of our work in this area can be found in the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan section below.

### **Grants**

During 2023-24, 43 organisations were allocated grants under the Grant to Promote and Facilitate the Use of Welsh to increase the use of our language at community level and nationally. The aim of this funding is to enable organisations to instigate, develop and sustain a wide range of activities, including activities for children and young people, to create a bridge between formal education and using the Welsh language in social situations.

The work of organisations such as the Urdd, the Young Farmers' Clubs, the mentrau iaith and the National Eisteddfod all offer opportunities for young people aged 11-25 to use Welsh outside school. Here are some examples:

- The network of 21 mentrau iaith sustains a wide range of activities across our communities, based on evidence of the need within their areas. During the reporting year, emphasis was placed on empowering communities to develop ideas and activities of their own for the benefit of the Welsh language.
- Tafwyl, Menter Caerdydd's Welsh language festival, was held in the city's Bute Park during the reporting year. The festival attracted thousands during the weekend and the fringe events also continue to go from strength to strength.

- Grants have been allocated to 54 papurau bro (hyper local newspapers) during 2023-24, with a specific aim of trying to reach new audiences, attracting volunteers and publishing digitally.
- Merched y Wawr ran a full and varied programme of activities, with over 60,000 attending across communities in Wales. Their projects focused on the areas sponsoring our main festivals, e.g Llanymddyfri for the Urdd Eisteddfod, the Dinasoedd project which aimed to bring Country and City together at the Royal Welsh Show, and Llwybrau in Llŷn and Eifionydd for the National Eisteddfod.

### **New Welsh speakers**

Through the Cefnogi Dysgwyr (Supporting Learners) scheme, the National Centre for Learning Welsh continues to work with partners in the community to provide opportunities for new Welsh speakers to use their skills.

The Centre continues to co-ordinate the Siarad scheme in order to support learners to use their Welsh with more confident speakers in an informal context. The aim of the scheme is to build learners' confidence by providing opportunities for informal conversations. The Siarad scheme is growing annually, with over 350 pairs in operation during 2023-24.

The Centre is also implementing a new scheme called Hapus i Siarad (Happy to Talk), in partnership with the mentrau iaith. The aim is to ensure that new speakers have the opportunity to use their Welsh within their communities.

### **The Urdd Eisteddfod**

The 2023 Eisteddfod in Carmarthenshire was another success. Building on our previous support to enable the Eisteddfodau to offer free tickets to lower income families, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced additional one-off funding worth £150,000 to the Urdd in order to offer free admission to eligible families. Almost 9,000 tickets were distributed through the scheme, which enabled a number of families to attend the Urdd Eisteddfod for the first time as a result of this extra support.

During the 2022 Urdd Eisteddfod, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced an investment of £200,000 a year over a five-year period to re-establish the Urdd Youth Theatre. The following year, in September 2023, the Urdd Youth Theatre, Y Cwmni, staged its first production since relaunching. Deffro'r Gwanwyn was a hugely successful production that provided backstage and performance opportunities for a number of talented young people from across the country.

### **Urdd Sports**

The Urdd's sports provision reaches thousands of children and young people annually. During the reporting year, the Urdd received funding from Sport Wales as well as a contribution as part of their core *Cymraeg 2050* grant. Welsh Government funding gives young people across Wales the opportunity to participate in sport through the medium of Welsh. The scheme offers extensive

opportunities across a range of sports including football, rugby, netball, gymnastics and multi-skill activities.

### **The National Eisteddfod**

A truly memorable Eisteddfod was held in Boduan, Llŷn and Eifionydd in 2023, with the Welsh language showcased at its best through our unique culture. Much like the support for the Urdd Eisteddfod, additional funding was also provided to the National Eisteddfod in order to offer free entry to low-income families in 2023.

We continue to work with the Eisteddfod to ensure that the impact of the festival on the Welsh language and communities begins immediately after the Eisteddfod announces its next location. During the busy period of preparation for the Llŷn and Eifionydd Eisteddfod, the Eisteddfod organised several community events in Rhondda Cynon Taf as they prepared to stage an urban Eisteddfod in Pontypridd in August 2024. There will be more about this Eisteddfod in the next annual report.

### **Welsh Language Music Day**

Dydd Miwsig Cymru (Welsh Language Music Day) was held for the ninth time on 9 February 2024. Since the inception of the campaign, the main aim has been to introduce Welsh music to a new audience. This has evolved to recognising the importance of encouraging community events where people are able to use Welsh.

Over 30 Welsh language events were held across Wales as part of the campaign, ranging from gigs in community pubs to large gigs in our cities. By working with the community locations once again, we have secured a cultural legacy for Welsh Language Music Day events within communities, with each of the participating settings confirming that they would be hosting a Welsh language music event again in the future. The opportunity to work with a professional company to promote the gigs was a valuable experience in terms of event promotion, whilst also passing on valuable skills to the volunteers who run the pubs.

The campaign proved again to be an opportunity to work with partners over social media and in their workplaces, with Cardiff City Football Club, Welsh Water, Football Association of Wales, Green Man Festival and others taking part.

## Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

The third theme supports the previous two themes of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and the use of Welsh. This will be achieved by creating favourable conditions and fostering an environment in which our language and its speakers can flourish.

Although we have targets for increasing the number of Welsh speakers and the number using the language, neither one nor the other can be achieved without suitable infrastructure.

### 9. Community and economy

In October 2022, the Welsh Government, as part of the *Co-operation Agreement*, announced £11m for phase 2 of the ARFOR programme. The intention is to build on previous projects and the findings of the independent evaluation of the ARFOR 1 programme as well as add value to economic and linguistic programmes already in place. The programme operates within the boundaries of the local authorities of Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire and Ynys Môn.

The main aim of ARFOR 2 is to achieve economic prosperity in the Welsh heartlands. During the reporting period, the following projects were established and implemented:

- Llwyddo'n Lleol – to create opportunities for young people and families to remain in or return to their communities – supporting them to succeed locally by engaging in enterprise or developing a career and ensuring a livelihood that fulfils their aspirations.
- Cymunedau Mentrus – by creating enterprising communities through supporting commercial and community organisations that aim to preserve and increase wealth locally while taking advantage of the unique qualities and identity of their areas.
- ARFOR Challenge Fund – with the aim of encouraging collaborative activity – by establishing a mindset of learning by doing and continuous improvement, learning from an activity within individual areas and then extending it, but tailoring it to local circumstances.
- Bwrlwm ARFOR – by strengthening the identity of communities with a high density of Welsh speakers – by supporting the use and visibility of the Welsh language and encouraging a sense of place and loyalty in the area.
- Lessons learned – develop the concept of continuously learning lessons, sharing good practice to broaden our understanding of the relationship between the economy and the Welsh language, while improving understanding of the economic interventions that can make a difference to the prosperity of the Welsh language and contribute to the objectives of *Cymraeg 2050*.

#### Agriculture

The [Agriculture \(Wales\) Act](#) received Royal Assent on 17 August 2023 and established a framework of four Sustainable Land Management (SLM) objectives, for the future support and regulation of agriculture in Wales.

One of the Sustainable Land Management objectives is to: *“Conserve and enhance the countryside and cultural resources and promote public access to and engagement with them, and to sustain the Welsh language and promote and facilitate its use”*.

This objective recognises the importance of the Welsh language in our agricultural sector. In addition, pursuant to the provision of support within the Act, one of the listed purposes enables for the provision of support to the sector for the purpose of *“sustaining the Welsh language and promoting and facilitating its use”*, thereby supporting actions the sector may take towards achieving this purpose.

The Act places a duty on Welsh Ministers to consider how any future agricultural support best contributes to the Sustainable Land Management objectives. This includes the implementation of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

The Act also includes a duty to set indicators and targets to measure progress towards achieving the Sustainable Land Management objectives, as well as to publish regular impact reports detailing the way in which, and the extent to which, the support has achieved the purposes for which it was provided and how it has contributed to achieving the Sustainable Land Management objectives.

In December 2023 we published the final formal consultation on the SFS, [Sustainable Farming Scheme – Keeping farmers farming](#). The consultation closed on 7 March 2024 and the [summary of responses](#) was published in July. We continue to work with a range of stakeholders to refine and test SFS proposals, before Welsh Ministers can make final implementation decisions. The findings will be published in the next Annual Report.

## **Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan**

Our [Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan](#) includes a range of interventions aimed at addressing the economic, housing, community development and language planning issues of geographical communities with a high density of Welsh speakers. Many of these communities have seen strong demand for properties to be used as second homes, which has raised concerns about affordability and the future of the Welsh language as a thriving community language. Our aim is to empower the Welsh-speaking communities facing numerous social, economic and linguistic challenges to take responsibility and find solutions of their own to issues that threaten the sustainability of Welsh as a living community language.

During the reporting year, the following was achieved through the interventions of the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*:

- Through Perthyn's small grants fund, 27 community groups received support of up to £12,000 to set up co-operatives and community-led

housing schemes. The aim is to support the local economy, make housing more affordable, as well as ensure local communities are sustainable in the future.

- The Perthyn scheme adds value to the support offered by Social Business Wales and Communities Creating Homes by taking a focused approach to building capacity in communities.
- Funded schemes include the Eagles Enterprise scheme in Llanuwchllyn and the Vale Pub Enterprise in the Aeron Valley – where both communities purchased the local pubs and secured a prosperous future for them. The Tŵr initiative in Pwllheli also received funding to purchase the hotel and to start to renovate the iconic building in the town centre. Also funded was the Egni Trefin community energy project, which is developing renewable energy schemes in Trefin, Pembrokeshire.
- An engagement event was held with the estate agents of the Dwyfor second homes and affordability pilot area. The event was an opportunity to bring together the local estate agents and stakeholders of the pilot to share information about the pilot schemes and the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*, as well as seek input from the estate agents on these schemes.

On St David's Day 2024, the then Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and the Welsh Language launched the Cultural Ambassadors Scheme. The scheme is a series of modules that promote and raise awareness of our culture, heritage and the Welsh language within our communities and among newcomers. These modules include the following themes:

- Early history of the Welsh language
- Useful information for newcomers and visitors about the Welsh language
- Welsh-medium education

The main aim of the course is to build and empower a network of Ambassadors to promote the use of the Welsh language and help people integrate into their new communities.

We will further investigate issues related to the protection of Welsh place names, including historical names, topographic names, and property names. See more details in the Place Names section below.

### **Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities**

In June 2023, the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities published a [Position Paper](#) summarising its initial findings. The aim of the Commission is to make public policy recommendations in order to strengthen Welsh-speaking communities. The Commission is chaired by Dr Simon Brooks and consists of ten members representing important policy areas, including the economy, housing, education, local government, community regeneration and language planning.

The Commission published its [final report](#) and recommendations to the Government in August 2024.



## **Affordability, second homes and the Welsh language**

The *Programme for Government* includes a number of commitments relating to affordability, second homes and the Welsh language, for example:

- Build 20,000 new low carbon social homes for rent.
- Publish a White Paper to include proposals for a right to adequate housing including fair rents and new approaches to making homes affordable for those on local incomes.
- Take forward actions to cap the number of second homes, bring more homes into common ownership and licence holiday lets.
- Support cooperative housing, community-led initiatives, and community land trusts.
- Develop further effective tax, planning and housing measures to ensure the interests of local people are protected.

Significant cross-cutting progress has been made, in line with the Welsh Government's three-pronged approach to second homes and bringing to bear the most comprehensive package of interventions in a UK context.

The Welsh Government extended powers for local authorities to charge a discretionary premium rate of council tax on second homes and long-term empty properties. From 1 April 2023, the maximum that local authorities can choose to apply rose from 100% to 300%. From April 2024, seven authorities increased the level of premium and a further seven have introduced premiums for the first time – 18 of 22 local authorities are now charging premiums on either or both types of property.

We changed the rules around short-term holiday accommodation – which means that to be liable for non-domestic rates (rather than council tax), short-term holiday lets operators must be available to let for at least 252 days in any 12 month period, and actually let for a minimum of 182 days within that period. These changes will ensure that owners make a fair contribution to host communities.

We have also introduced ground-breaking changes to the planning system; these changes established three new planning use classes: primary residence, secondary home and short-term holiday accommodation. Local planning authorities, where they have evidence and put in place an Article 4 Direction, can now require property owners to seek planning permission in order to change use between these classes. The Welsh Government is also committed to establishing a statutory registration and licensing scheme for all visitor accommodation providers in Wales.

We have been pleased to encourage affordable housing development in the most rural parts of Wales through our Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) programme. Funding is provided to support six RHE programmes across the most rural parts of Wales. RHEs play a vital role in these areas, working with partners to identify local housing need in communities.

## **Affordability and second homes pilot**

Working with partners such as Cyngor Gwynedd, Eryri National Park, Grŵp Cynefin and Adra Housing Associations, we have established and integrated a pilot in Dwyfor, Gwynedd. The pilot aims to test a number of interventions and to assess their effectiveness in terms of managing second homes and their effect on affordability.

We have tailored and are trialling new rules in the pilot for our Homebuy shared equity scheme and have already seen 14 completions in the area; far outstripping the figures prior to the pilot. Cyngor Gwynedd has consulted on applying an Article 4 planning direction. We have committed financial support for Cyngor Gwynedd's Article 4 direction in the Dwyfor pilot area so the resource and practical implications of imposing a direction can be independently evaluated and the learning shared on an all-Wales basis. Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri has also consulted on a proposed Article 4 direction.

An independent evaluation will report on the Dwyfor pilot. Findings will be shared on an ongoing basis until the final report in 2026. The evaluation will consider the effectiveness of the interventions and, throughout, facilitate shared learning and practice with other areas facing similar challenges.

### **The Welsh language and equality**

Just as *Cymraeg 2050* is a long-term strategy, the Government has other long-term cross-government social justice strategies. In collaboration with *Cymraeg 2050* partners, the Government has made significant progress in relation to the actions and commitments in our [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) and [LGBTQ+ Action Plan](#). *Cymraeg 2050* is embedded in the fabric of these equality schemes and they are intended to co-exist and reinforce each other. Please see the relevant progress reports for more detailed updates on our work in these areas: [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan – A year on](#) / [LGBTQ+ Action Plan: progress update](#).

## **10. Culture and media**

We are working across various sectors and policy areas to implement *Cymraeg 2050*. In this respect, all of our sponsored bodies in the culture and sport sector are committed to supporting our target to increase language use and reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

We want to see and hear the Welsh language widely used in popular culture in all its arts media and in literature, theatre, film and television. The use of Welsh by role models such as sportsmen, musicians, actors, and other prominent figures and organisations is a means of raising the status of the Welsh language as a living language.

### **The Cymru Wales brand**

The Welsh language is a central part of the Cymru Wales brand and has been used extensively again this year to promote Wales and to attract tourism and investments. In the tourism sector, this includes encouraging businesses to ensure

a strong sense of place in their provision, and the use of the Welsh language is central to this. The language has also been central to our main tourism campaigns, Addo, to encourage people to behave responsibly while visiting Wales. Addo asks visitors and residents to make a pledge to Wales, which includes asking people to respect and celebrate our unique language and culture. We are also leading on the successful St David's Day campaign, which asks people everywhere to do the little things, and promotes the Welsh language and culture around the world.

We have continued to support businesses to reflect the values of the brand in their work. We also used the Welsh language in major campaigns to promote Wales. During 2023-24, our main campaign was Llwybrau, which encourages people to follow different pathways on their journey in Wales, whether in relation to food, art or adventure. The word Llwybrau is prominent in all our marketing material, and the main campaign logo sent to stakeholders in the tourism sector for use in their own campaigns leads with the Welsh word.

We have established partnerships with Welsh record labels to allow us to use Welsh language music in some of the videos we create for our social channels, to give Welsh language music a wider platform, and we are focusing on introducing yet more Welsh generally on our social channels. We now use mostly Welsh-only place names on our social channels, as well as on our website, putting the English name in brackets if necessary.

We will continue to do more to showcase the Welsh language in our campaigns over the coming years, including on social media and in our marketing campaigns.

In line with the *National Events Strategy for Wales*' theme of Authenticity, all events receiving Welsh Government grant funding are encouraged to take a creative and inclusive approach to use of the Welsh language.

In 2023, many supported events promoted Welsh language and culture through their artistic line-up including Gottwood, Focus Wales, Sŵn and Llais music festivals. Alongside Welsh music artists, Other Voices Aberteifi also featured talks such as 'Who we are: Culture, Identity and Diaspora' with a panel including the First Minister with Welsh and Irish simultaneous translation available to enable speakers to engage in their chosen language.

For the third year, the bespoke Ysbrydoli, Cystadlu, Joio city dressing was implemented at the World Para Triathlon Series events in Swansea showcasing the Welsh language, alongside global brands such as Ironman, to international visitors and competitors, for an extended period. In January 2024, Wales hosted the Wheelchair Fencing World Cup – all signage at the event was bilingual and the world federation adopted a bilingual version of their event logo for this. Athlete briefings included some useful Welsh greetings, as did the event website for overseas competitors and visitors.

## **Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales**

The Welsh language is an intrinsic part of Welsh heritage and culture – as such, Amgueddfa Cymru has a key role in developing people's knowledge and understanding of the history of the Welsh language and culture, as well as using and celebrating the language in their work.

During 2023-24, the Museum has supported the new Curriculum for Wales, developed activities for schools to normalise and promote the use of Welsh, and incorporated a multilingual approach into its brand voice.

One of the highlights of the reporting year was The Lost Words exhibitions which explored the relationship between language and the world, and the power of nature to awaken the imagination. The project was developed with Oriel y Parc Gallery and Yr Ysgwrn, and organised by Compton Verney, with Hamish Hamilton and Penguin Books. For the first time ever, Jackie Morris' original artwork was displayed alongside Robert Macfarlane's English poems and Mererid Hopwood's Welsh poems. The project reintroduces words from nature, highlights biodiversity and showcases the work that's being done to try to stem its decline.

### **Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales**

The work on compiling and maintaining the list of historic place names in Wales continues to be a priority project. The [List of Historic Place Names](#) now holds over 700,000 names, from almost 1,400 different sources. The List continues to be drawn upon by local authorities and other relevant planning bodies for the purposes of naming new developments.

This approach to conserving and protecting community place names was further supported during 2023-24 with various community driven projects such as:

- A new Welsh-Asian Heritage Project: Celebrating and Archiving the Experiences of Ugandan Asians was launched during the 2023 National Eisteddfod. This project showcases how cultural and religious activities have contributed to the diversity of the built environment in Wales and demonstrates the assimilation and co-operation within local Asian communities to record the stories of Ugandan Asians – particularly those who came to the resettlement camp in Tonfanau, Tywyn, Meirionnydd after being exiled from Uganda in 1972.
- Community engagement, which has included a number of Welsh language guided walks and talks ranging from the Angylion y Wawr group to schoolchildren.
- In keeping with the theme of promoting a bilingual Wales, numerous projects were discussed across a variety of media platforms, including the Welsh place names and Pendinas community projects, as well as the Dan Ddirgel Ddaear project discussing the Grade II\* Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones, Amlwch site and C20 schools in Wales and C20 buildings more generally.

### **The National Library of Wales**

The Library's exhibitions offer information that attract interest in the Welsh language and its history by providing an introduction to Welsh history, society and culture.

The Library's volunteering scheme offers volunteering tasks to be undertaken in Welsh, face to face or online, including those suitable for new speakers.

All Library Education Service activities are available in Welsh, bilingually, or in English with some Welsh content. When schools request provision through the medium of English, staff will ensure that they introduce Welsh terms, and that the language is heard throughout the session.

The Library Education Service offers learning sessions that present the historical, social and cultural context of the Welsh language. These are specifically targeted at people of all ages learning the language. They are also an opportunity for pupils to visit a Welsh-speaking workplace and to see Welsh in action as a working language. Some schools where Welsh is a second language have continued to arrange visits to the Library specifically for pupils to practice using the language.

All of the Library's printed and digital learning resources are available in both Welsh and English. During 2024, the Library Education Service has published materials in Welsh in support of the Government's *Anti-racist Wales Action Plan*, including bilingual resources on the battle against Apartheid, and a resource on the Welsh myths of Gypsies and the traditions of traveller and Romany communities.

The Wales Broadcast Archive offers an opportunity to use Welsh in Clip Corners across Wales where individuals can be involved in researching, maintaining lists, selection, rights checking, editing and publishing. One example of a project that took place during the reporting year is where volunteers developed skills through training sessions at Carmarthen Library, producing a cartoon at the end.

## **Sport Wales**

### **The Welsh language in sport**

Sport Wales and the Welsh Language Commissioner have continued their partnership to support and encourage national organisations in the sports sector to extend their Welsh language offers. Sport Wales sees this work as an important part of its Welsh language duties through encouraging the development and promotion of more opportunities to use the Welsh language to play sport.

The first Welsh National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport achieved the Welsh Language Commissioner's Cynnig Cymraeg recognition in 2023. Welsh Triathlon and the Welsh Rugby Union both achieved the award to mark their commitment to the Welsh language and to extending their Welsh services. Other NGBs and National Partners are working towards this accreditation and Sport Wales staff use the What Matters process with their partners to track readiness and work in partnership with the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## **Urdd Gobaith Cymru**

As a key strand of its Welsh language commitment, Sport Wales works in partnership with and invests in the Urdd's extensive programmes to deliver Welsh language opportunities in sport and recreation.

A summary of a some of the Urdd's achievements in 2023-24 include:

- Extra-curricular provision of clubs and activity.
- Community provision through collaboration with several local, regional and national partners across the public, private and third sector. Sport specific community clubs; multi-sport clubs; family engagement through sport and physical literacy; #FelMerch – women and girls participation projects; legacy projects – post national events such as rugby 7s delivering community focused projects; targeted projects around diversity, inclusivity and language.
- A national provision of holiday activity, inclusive of: multi-sport weekly camps; sport specific camps working on skills development; family engagement – range of activities in leisure centres and parks; #FelMerch forums and activities; partnership projects i.e., Fit, Fed and Fun with the Welsh Rugby Union.
- Collaboration on inclusion projects with Disability Sport Wales and other partners across Wales.
- Welsh-medium Learn to Swim provision delivered across Cardiff and the Vale, RCT, and with a focus to further develop provision across Bridgend, Newport and Wrexham.
- Competition and events: regional events – primary schools; national and regional events – high schools and colleges; international learning opportunities; Chwarae yn Gymraeg / Rugby World Cup Partnership.

Sport Wales has also supported Mentrau Iaith Cymru to connect with delivery partners to implement a new initiative to support the employability of young people in high density Welsh-speaking areas to deliver sporting opportunities.

## **Marketing, communications and digital**

All of Sport Wales's public e-communications and media content continue to be produced bilingually, with recent changes making them more appealing to a Welsh-speaking audience, such as formatting changes to make Welsh language content stand out on a variety of devices. Any partner newsletters are also produced bilingually.

Sport Wales's Welsh language X and Facebook accounts have seen significant increases in interactions and engagements. On social media, Sport Wales integrates Welsh phrases, such as Llongyfarchiadau and Pob Lwc into its English content to encourage others to use the language when celebrating Welsh sport.

## **Arts Council of Wales**

The Welsh Art Consortium, during their second year, have concentrated on implementation of the 4 identified areas:

- Llais y Lle lottery fund targeting individuals to develop creative use and ownership of the Welsh language within communities.
- Explore creative translation and strategic needs within the creative sector.
- Develop and pilot Synhwyrô'r Iaith resource for the sector.
- Cymraeg yn y canol, placing the Welsh language at the heart of creative developments.

The first year of Llais y Lle fund had 9 successful applicants and supported the individual development of a further 6. All projects focused on developing creative use of the Welsh language within communities. A second year begun in May 2024 with 17 new successful applicants.

[Synhwyrô'r Iaith](#) (Sensing the Language) is a resource developed by the Arts Council of Wales' (ACW) Welsh Language Enabler and Consortium Cymraeg to provide guidance and ideas to creative practitioners on how to use, include and present Welsh within their creative practice. Synhwyrô'r Iaith has been further developed and piloted with artists from Llais y Lle Pontypridd, 12 higher level learners in Nant Gwrtheyrn, within Creative learning training programmes and is part of a research project by Cardiff University looking at creative methodologies of presenting the Welsh language as a subject in secondary schools in response to the new curriculum.

[Cyfieithu creadigol](#) took place in January to explore creative methodologies for simultaneous translation in relevant settings. ACW's Welsh Language Enabler worked with Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru to bring 8 professional and experienced translators together with some consortium members. Plans for the next phase are under way, to include BSL in ACW's understanding and methodologies.

## **Media**

We have continued to explore opportunities to support the provision of Welsh language broadcasting and media services during the reporting period, recognising the critical role the media plays in supporting our aim of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. We have maintained close relationships with S4C and BBC Cymru Wales, including through the framework of our Memorandums of Understanding, noting the contribution of S4C and Radio Cymru's provision in helping to deliver our ambitions to increase the number of Welsh speakers and support opportunities to use and enjoy the language.

Creative Wales has continued to work with S4C and Ffilm Cymru to deliver Welsh film initiatives. Sinema Cymru, a collaboration between S4C and Creative Wales, and delivered by Ffilm Cymru, is aimed at developing a minimum of three feature films a year, with a view to progressing one for production funding. Sinema Cymru aims to put Welsh language film on the map by fast-tracking independent Welsh language films, which are bold, unconventional, and have the potential to gain international cinema release. The £280k fund supported four projects with up to

£30,000 of development funding in 2023-24, alongside a training package for the upcoming writers and producers. Development is currently underway and a minimum of one of these projects will be selected to go into full production with funding from both S4C and Creative Wales.

In 2023-24, Creative Wales' production funding has continued to play an important role supporting the provision of Welsh language broadcast content for the screen. Through this mechanism, Creative Wales has supported a number of Welsh language and back-to-back productions, including *Hafiach*, *Minibuds* and *Cleddau / The One That Got Away*. During this period, Creative Wales has also provided location assistance to Welsh language productions through Wales Screen.

We have continued to raise a range of issues consistently with the UK Government and Ofcom over this period to stress the vital role of effective broadcasting in sustaining and growing the Welsh language. This has included engagement on proposals set out in the UK Government's Media Bill, its BBC Funding Model Review and Ofcom's Future of TV Distribution consultation. This is important in order to ensure that as the shift in the broadcasting landscape from traditional broadcast to more online content continues, the rights of Welsh language speakers are promoted and protected on more digital and online channels as the regulatory framework evolves.

In response to the Broadcasting Expert Panel's *A New Future for Broadcasting and Communications in Wales* report, the Welsh Government announced the establishment of a Broadcasting and Communications Advisory Body. The Advisory Body will provide timely advice to the Welsh Government on current broadcasting matters in a rapidly evolving sector, including the provision of Welsh language content, to inform the development of policy to help strengthen the media in Wales.

### **Welsh Books Council**

During 2023-24, over 183 Welsh language books and 19 printed and digital magazines were supported for adults and children. There are now 1,901 Welsh e-books on Gwales/ffolio.cymru – most being books for children and young people. Publishing an e-book alongside the printed book is now common.

We continue to provide a grant to Golwg 360 and their online statistics during the reporting year are as follows: monthly average of website visits – approximately 243,000, impressions on Twitter – over 223,000, and engagement with Facebook material – approximately 16,467. Their Instagram presence is fairly new and their reach grew from 1,000 at the start of this reporting year to 5,800 at the end, resulting in an average over the year of 5,577 (peak 14,000 in August). Due to Welsh Government investment, Golwg 360 was able to reach out to TikTok, and their followers increased from zero to 792 over a short part of this reporting year.

Council grants sustained 19 Welsh-language magazines during the year, four of them with one-off funding (*Klust*, *Codi Pais*, *Chwys* and *Hanes Byw*). The one-off funding came as a result of the *Co-operation Agreement*.



Diversity remained a central topic of the Council's work, particularly diversity in relation to race and ethnicity in the context of the Welsh language. A second wave of Welsh Government New Audiences funding allowed the Council to fund the publication of books and articles by Welsh speakers from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. In addition to *Y Bysgodes*, *Y Delyn Aur* was published (which was on the 2024 Book of the Year shortlist). A second book by Malachy Edwards has been commissioned and a book by Melanie Owen as well. This funding is also available to magazines such as *Golwg*, *Barddas* and *Barn* to continue to commission and work with writers and photographers, to create content by and about people who are normally underrepresented in the Welsh language press.

Books for learners have continued to be published – a total of 45 are now available in the Amdani series, and 60,000 have been sold. The Welsh Government's New Audiences funding enabled them all to be turned into e-books and talking books.

Materials were provided in Welsh to coincide with the Summer Reading Challenge and World Book Day. 3,997 copies of the £1 Welsh book *Ffeithiau Ffiaidd y Corff* were sold within 6 weeks. A Welsh-language story-writing competition was launched in collaboration with Radio Cymru's Al Hughes programme.

## **11. Wales and the wider world**

We want to show the world that we are a multilingual country that encourages people from all over Wales and beyond to use Welsh. We celebrate that our language is spoken by people from all walks of life and want to welcome everyone to try to use it.

### **Refugees and asylum seekers**

The Welcome to All programme has been run by the National Centre for Learning Welsh since January 2023. The aim of the programme is to introduce the Welsh language and Wales itself to people for whom English is not their first language or who do not speak much English.

Different resources are available under the scheme, in a variety of languages and all resources are available free of charge. Digital self-study modules are available in Ukrainian, Cantonese, Syrian Arabic, Farsi and Pashto, introducing Welsh people and places, the history of the language, and our arts, legends and sport. One of the Centre's partners, SaySomethinginWelsh, also offers online Learn Welsh courses through Syrian Arabic, Pashto, and Dari.

During the reporting year, the Urdd collaborated with several partners, including the Government to welcome and rehouse families who had fled the war in Ukraine. The Welsh language was central to the welcome and contributed greatly to our work to ensure Wales is a Nation of Sanctuary.

### **London Welsh School / Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain**

During the reporting year, we continued to award an annual grant to Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain. The school promotes the language in London and provides Welsh-medium primary education to the children of the city. Many of them return, in due course, to the Welsh-medium education system in Wales.

## **Patagonia**

The Welsh Language Project (WLP) continues to develop the language in Welsh-speaking communities in Chubut province, Patagonia, through formal teaching in classes for young people and adults, in the 3 bilingual schools and via informal social activities. During 2023-24, there were over 970 registered learners (schools and adult learners) – a rise from 623 in 2020. The teachers on placement also delivered a range of community and cultural activities, both within Chubut and through virtual linkages between Chubut and schools and community groups in Wales.

A permanent Teaching Co-ordinator from Wales responsible for the quality of the teaching is also based in Patagonia. The project also supports a network of twenty Welsh-speaking tutors who are based in the region, providing support teaching to the bilingual schools in addition to adult teaching.

Through summer scholarships funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, adult learning courses give Patagonian educators opportunities to visit Wales to attend Welsh language courses, ensuring that the project helps maintain teaching standards and the latest methodologies are in place.

Throughout 2023-24, a Wales-based content developer has continued to create digital content for the project on the YouTube channel Gales Con Marian (Welsh with Marian) including sharing vlogs of Wales for learners to see in a Welsh context, which are able to be used both in and out of the classroom, and also by students outside of the catchment area in Chubut. The digital resources have been able to attract the interest of people who are new to learning Welsh as well as supporting current and advanced students.

The project has continued to facilitate a range of linked activities and visits in 2023-24. Pupils and staff visited the area from various Welsh schools, colleges and universities which also included volunteering opportunities. Three members of Mudiad Meithrin staff visited to work alongside local teachers and to share best practice in the early years. Ysgol Gymraeg y Gaiman, in Chubut, also took part in the Urdd Eisteddfod by participating online.

## **International Relations**

Officials have continued to place the Welsh language at the heart of our work in implementing the [International Strategy for Wales](#). This includes sharing good practice and supporting countries with minority languages around the world.

## **The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity**

The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) is a Europe-wide network working in the field of language policy and planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small State Languages throughout Europe. The primary aim of the NPLD is to raise awareness at European level of the importance of linguistic diversity. Another aim is to facilitate the exchange of best practice among governments, policy makers, practitioners, researchers and experts from across Europe.

The Welsh Government remains a full member of the NPLD. In June 2023, we presented and discussed our work in terms of behaviour change and language transmission at the NPLD conference. In November 2023, we contributed to an event organised by the NPLD on equality of services for speakers of the network languages who have disabilities.

### **The British-Irish Council**

We continue to chair the British-Irish Council's Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages work group, and continue to take advantage of this forum to share good practice and expertise with people from different backgrounds.

To mark a quarter of a century since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement during the reporting year, the group developed a collection of poems in all of the British-Irish Council languages, with English translations. This is the first collection of its kind, with the poems inspired by the languages' connection to land and sea. It was published as a [booklet](#) and [video](#), and displayed at Council summits throughout the year.

In June 2023, the group travelled to the Celtic Media Festival in Donegal to foster links with others working in language and minority language media. The group was part of a panel session on documentaries where there was an opportunity to look at how to use minority languages in different contexts on global platforms.

The group's ministerial meeting was held in Jersey in October 2023, where ministers from the member-administrations reviewed the group's work in recent years and approved the next programme of work. The next programme will focus on social use of Welsh (at home, among young people and in workplaces), linguistic infrastructure (for example dictionaries and place names) and culture.

### **United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-32**

During the reporting year, Welsh Government officials discussed several topics with UNESCO, specifically technology for lesser used languages as part of the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-32 activity. We will continue to raise the profile of the Welsh language and share best practice with others across the world as part of our commitment to being “*a nation responsible at a global level*”. This work includes continuing to develop and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders such as Wales Arts International.

During the reporting year, Wales Arts International has continued their Listening project, focusing on the art of listening to the wisdom that belongs to indigenous languages and at-risk communities and the land they inhabit. Projects that have

been underway during the year include: learning more about juoiggus, the ancient song tradition of the Sámi; connecting with a mother tongue by listening to the Gawa Undi and the Elders of the Chewa people; listening to the voices of ancestors and the traditional healing ritual of Colombia's Muisca indigenous people; continuing to explore the links between Welsh and Khasi people through poetry, music and performance; and exploring and initiating a dialogue around creating queer language in Irish and Welsh.

### **European Charter Classroom Activities (ECCA)**

The Welsh Government was a key partner of this project which aimed to inspire young people's sense of pride in their minority languages. Learners from Ysgol Garth Olwg had the opportunity to represent Wales at a minority languages campus for young people in Mallorca in May 2023 after winning a competition to create a video explaining why Welsh is important to them. In addition, they travelled to Brussels to present their project and findings to the European Commission and Council of Europe in collaboration with young people who speak minority languages across Europe.

### **International agreements**

Throughout the reporting year, officials have continued to implement language policy commitments outlined in various international bilateral agreements involving regions such as Brittany, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Ireland. New agreements were signed during the year with Silesia, Flanders, Birmingham (Alabama) and Baden-Württemberg.

### **International events**

We have continued to raise the profile of the Welsh language throughout the year in delivering our [International Strategy for Wales](#). Our annual Saint David's Day celebrations across the world continued to showcase the Welsh language to international audiences. Examples of activity which promoted Cymraeg during 2023-24 include events in Europe, North America, Canada, Japan, India and the United Arab Emirates.

The Welsh language was at the heart of the Government's Year of Wales in France 2023. Wales was showcased as a confident bilingual nation throughout the year, and France's minority languages, specifically Breton, were supported. Various activities were organised in partnership with key stakeholders such as Wales Arts International and Urdd Gobaith Cymru. For example, the Urdd engaged over 800 children and young people in their Chwarae yn Gymraeg (Play in Welsh) sessions to introduce Welsh to children and young people across Lorient, Nantes and Lyon. The British Council successfully developed 29 new schools' partnerships between Wales and France and confirmed a new school twinning between Nantes and Cardiff. Also, in collaboration with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, a tutor travelled to Nantes, during the Rugby World Cup to run Welsh lessons with city residents and championship volunteers.

The new Wales in France open-call cultural fund supported NoFit State's performances in Lyon and Gruff Rhys' debut of his new album in Paris. A First Minister-led Welsh delegation attended a learning and exchange networking event with UNESCO Secretariat and Member States to identify new relationships in the youth, arts, heritage, social values, and language revitalisation spheres.

To celebrate the success of the Year of Wales in France and to promote our international relations, an original four-lingual poem was also commissioned by crowned bard Aneirin Karadog, entitled Y Ceiliog, y Carlwm a'r Ddraig.

The 2023 Ireland-Wales Ministerial Forum took place in October 2023. The two-day programme included roundtable discussions showcasing the strength of Wales in different areas, including late immersion provision. During the visit, the former First Minister Mark Drakeford and the Tánaiste of Ireland, Micheál Martin, visited Ysgol Gymraeg Morswyn in Holyhead which has an established connection with Gaelscoil Thaobh na Coille in Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. In addition to meeting pupils, they had the opportunity to learn about late language immersion centres and also met SaySomethinginWelsh who have developed a language learning digital tool focused on speaking skills.

### **Urdd Message of Peace and Goodwill**

Continuously since 1922, the annual process on May 18 of sending a message on behalf of the young people of Wales to young people across the rest of the world has been stimulating and inspiring international and humanitarian activity. The 2023 Urdd Message of Peace and Goodwill focused on anti-racism. It was created by Cardiff University students with musician Eädyth and S4C Education Content Officer, Natalie Jones. It is a call by the young people of Wales to take direct action to:

- Dismantle systemic discrimination
- Challenge unconscious bias
- Always call out racism when we see it.

The message was translated to 67 languages and was shared on social media in 47 countries across the world. The social media reach was 10.6m and the message was shared by celebrities such as Michael Sheen and Matthew Rhys, and organisations such as Save the Children and the Football Association of Wales.

## **12. Digital technology**

The [final report](#) on our *Welsh language technology action plan* (2018) was published in February 2024. The priorities of the plan were to develop and share new infrastructure in relation to our language, specifically:

- Welsh language speech technology
- Computer-assisted translation
- Conversational Artificial Intelligence

One of the main principles of the plan was to develop a culture of open innovation. We wanted more digital resources and Welsh language data to be available, without unnecessary conditions limiting their use, and shared under a suitable licence – open and permissive wherever possible – to support efforts to innovate digitally for the benefit of our language.

Here are some of the highlights of the plan during the reporting year:

- ChatGPT can be used within [Macsen](#), Bangor University's chatbot, and the University has started working with OpenAI on Welsh language models for [GPT-4](#) to improve the output for the language. This was discussed at [Wales Academic Symposium on Language Technologies 2023](#) and funded by the Welsh Government. The keynote speaker was Colin Jarvis, OpenAI, and he discussed how academia and OpenAI can improve the LLMs (language models) of lesser-resourced languages.
- Bangor University announced improvements to their bilingual text-to-speech voices, their [Transcriber](#), and the chatbot, [Macsen](#). These improvements in turn fed into their voice banking project, [Lleisiwr](#).
- [Cysgliad](#), a grammar and spell-checking tool, was downloaded 12,586 times.
- There are now more contributions to the Welsh language [Wikipedia](#) (Wikipedia), with the number of new articles increasing since the publication of the [Welsh language technology action plan](#) in 2018. The content created by these volunteers adds to the Welsh language presence on the internet, which helps to increase social capital and encourages more writing in Welsh. By the end of the reporting period, there were 279,643 Welsh articles on Wikipedia, and the number of Wikidata items with Welsh labels reached 3,593,389.
- We continue to share a collection of free Welsh Government translation memories on [BydTermCymru](#) and have funded work to create domain specific machine translation systems also in the areas of health and care and legislation.
- As part of our partnership with Microsoft, we continue to develop the [simultaneous translation facility on Microsoft Teams](#). This is available at no additional cost to existing Teams users.
- We funded development work on the [Digigrid](#) website with Cardiff University in order to gather together language resources e.g. Thesawrws, a text summarising resource, corpora, Tiwtiadur, and FreeTxt that analyses text sentiment.
- We continue to update a list of [Welsh and bilingual technology resources](#) currently available.

### 13. Linguistic infrastructure

Linguistic infrastructure resources help us to use Welsh on a day-to-day basis, and include dictionaries, terminology resources, corpora, as well as research and standardisation work. We directly fund a number of projects in this field, including *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, and *Y Termiadur Addysg* (an education terminology dictionary). A number of the other main resources also receive public funding through various agencies.

The [Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy](#) was published on 27 June 2023. The main aim of the policy is to make it easier for people from all walks of life to use Welsh – individuals at workplaces, schoolchildren, teachers, new speakers or confident speakers – by making sure they know where to turn to access linguistic resources.

To drive this policy forward, we have created a new Unit within the *Cymraeg 2050* Division to address matters relating to infrastructure, as well as work on place names. During 2023-24, work began to improve how the different elements work together, with the medium-term aim of ensuring the resources are marketed effectively. This includes maintaining and developing relationships with key stakeholders, seeking new opportunities to collaborate, and forging new connections.

The Unit is currently undertaking work to establish a new easy-to-access, easy-to-use website for everyone who wants to use Welsh. The intention is to develop a site where users can find advice on what resources are best for them, and for easy access to resources such as the main dictionaries and terminology repositories, as well as corpora, maps and lists of standard place names, all in one place. During the reporting year, work was initiated with the Centre for Digital Public Services to conduct user research, in order to better understand the requirements of different audiences, target specific audiences and ensure they have the best possible experience.

During 2023-24, the initial discussions of the Welsh Language Standardisation Panel's first programme of work to address orthographic issues, under the chairmanship of Dr Dylan Foster Evans of Cardiff University, were completed. A summary of the decisions was produced for final approval by the Panel. Once these are agreed, we will share them publicly, and the resources involved will be updated to reflect those decisions. By including some of the main infrastructure resource providers in the project, it is hoped that this will be a step towards achieving greater consistency to make it easier for everyone to use their Welsh confidently. The Panel is now preparing its second programme of work.

## **Translation**

We continue to support Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru, the professional association that upholds and promotes professional translation standards, as well as improving and developing the skills and knowledge of translators. During the reporting year, the Association had 385 members. A series of activities were held throughout the year, including 'Let's meet the Chief Officer' sessions in Cardiff, Caernarfon and virtually. A programme of lunchtime sessions and a Members' Day were held on 26 October 2023.

## **Simultaneous translation in Microsoft Teams**

As part of our partnership with Microsoft, we have worked together to create a simultaneous translation facility in Microsoft Teams meetings. This is available at no additional cost to existing Teams users. Work continues with Microsoft to further develop this facility in the hope that it will lead to the creation of similar and

new resources for languages spoken around the world, based on our work in Wales.

## Place names

In our *Programme for Government*, we have made a commitment to work to protect Welsh place names.

In June 2023, we published our *Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy*, which reaffirmed the initial steps in this regard, which were first articulated in our [Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan](#) in October 2022. Among the main steps identified in these documents was conducting research in order to better understand the processes that lead to changing a place name. Therefore, in early 2023 a research project was commissioned by Cadw, in conjunction with officials from the Cymraeg 2050 Division, with the aim of identifying where, how and why changes to names are taking place, how many names are changing or have recently changed, and the nature of these changes. The purpose is to make informed recommendations on possible options to safeguard those Welsh language place names that may be under particular threat. The following types of place names are being considered:

- Property names — including houses, farms and other buildings
- Business names
- Development and associated street names

The research findings will inform our direction of travel in terms of next steps in this area, including those set out in the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan* and *Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy*. We anticipate that the results will be presented in a final report to WG by the end of the year.

Our Welsh Place Names Forum has continued to meet during the reporting period, which includes representation from the Welsh Government as well as the local authorities of Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. The purpose of the Forum is to:

- Share knowledge.
- Identify gaps in the way place names are dealt with and find opportunities to collaborate.
- Support each other to try to find practical solutions to prevent Welsh names from being displaced.
- Share good practice, so that examples of what works in one organisation can be adopted, where appropriate, in another organisation.
- Develop ideas about how to mainstream the use of Welsh place names in materials and on English as well as Welsh channels.

## 14. Language planning

Everything covered in this report relates to language planning. We are using Welsh Government structures to implement *Cymraeg 2050* across its various policy areas and beyond.



## **Cymraeg 2050 Programme Board**

The members of the *Cymraeg 2050* Programme Board are senior officials from across the Government. The purpose of the Board is to scrutinise progress, and offer advice, guidance and assurance in the implementation of *Cymraeg 2050*. During the year, the Board met each term to discuss issues such as the work of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, the Welsh Language and Education Bill, and the 2021 Census results, and the Government's strategy for the internal use of Welsh. A presentation was given as well as a discussion with the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## **The Welsh Language Partnership Council**

The Welsh Language Partnership Council was established under section 149 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. During the reporting year, the Council has continued to meet at least once a term to provide advice to Welsh Ministers in relation to *Cymraeg 2050*. The Council discussed, considered and advised the Minister on various issues affecting the Welsh language policy area, for example the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*, the Welsh Language and Education Bill, the work of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, equality and the Welsh language, the early years and the Grant to Promote and Facilitate the Use of Welsh.

## **The Welsh Language Promotion Group**

The aim of the Welsh Language Promotion Group is to bring together a range of partners working in language planning to network, share information, discuss various matters and share ideas. During 2023-24, a joint face-to-face meeting was held with the Welsh Language Partnership Council and the Minister for Welsh Language and Education to discuss monolingual Welsh spaces, and our grant scheme.

## **15. Evaluation and research**

Following the publication of the first results of the 2021 Census on the Welsh language in Wales in December 2022, we have now published additional analyses, including on [Welsh language composition of households in Wales](#), [Welsh language by population characteristics](#), [Welsh language household transmission rates by sex](#), and [Welsh language by sexual orientation and gender identity](#) (please note that the last two bulletins were published beyond the reporting period of this annual report, in May and July 2024).

The [Welsh Language Use Survey](#) was conducted between July 2019 and March 2020, and a statistical bulletin on [Welsh language use in the workplace](#) was published in September 2023 based on the survey. A selection of these findings are included in this report.

We have also continued to publish estimates of the population's ability in Welsh from the Office for National Statistics' [Annual Population Survey](#) on our website on

a quarterly basis. Welsh Government statisticians have been working closely with the Office for National Statistics to improve our understanding of the main sources of administrative data and surveys used to compile statistics on the Welsh language. A joint work plan between the Welsh Government and the Office for National Statistics was published in April 2023, and in October 2023, as part of that work plan, an article was published about the [Differences between estimates of Welsh language ability in Census 2021 and household surveys](#).

Work was undertaken during the reporting year to carry out a [rapid evidence assessment of effective approaches and methods in immersion education](#), and it was published in May 2024. Evidence relating to Welsh language immersion in Wales and immersion on an international scale was found, evaluated and summarised. This evidence assessment aims to provide guidance to practitioners, trainers and policy makers on how to provide effective immersive education for learners aged 3 to 16 in Wales.

Throughout the year, the mainstreaming of the Welsh language in Government research and evaluation was further developed across the various policy areas.

## **Conclusion**

This report is an opportunity to look back at our work and that of our partners in a wide range of areas during 2023-24. It details our progress against our targets to double the daily use of Welsh and reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050. It's important to note that this reporting year, as always, should be considered as part of a long term path for our Welsh language strategy.

Whilst looking back at our progress, we now look forward towards the end of our current Work Programme in 2026. We will continue to work across the Government and beyond to prioritize the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill, to sustain our Welsh-speaking communities, to increase language use in all areas and contexts, and to develop language technology.