

BIS | Department for
Business Innovation & Skills

BIS WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

BIS Commitment to
Welsh Language Act

2009

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Introduction

Under the Welsh Language Act 1993 every public body providing services to the public in Wales has to prepare a scheme setting out how it will provide those services in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Board approved BIS's (then known as the Department of Trade and Industry) initial Welsh Language scheme in August 2000. This is the first revision of that scheme and it describes how BIS will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality. The scheme covers the services that we provide to the public in Wales.

In this scheme, the term public means individuals. It includes the public as a whole, or a section of the public who are acting in a private capacity. It does not, however, include persons who are acting in a capacity which is representative of the Crown, Government or the State. Consequently, persons who fulfil official functions of a public nature, even though they are legal persons, do not come within the meaning of the word *public* when they are fulfilling those official functions.

This scheme was prepared under Section 21 of the Act - and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Board under Section 9 of the Act. It came into effect on 28 May 2009, and replaces the original scheme approved by the Board on 30 August 2000.



Further information about the scope and purpose of Welsh language schemes can be found in the Welsh Language Board's guidelines shown at: www.byig-wlb.org.uk.

Background to the organisation

BIS's role is to help to ensure business success in an increasingly competitive world by promoting the creation and growth of business and a strong enterprise economy across all regions; ensuring that all Government Departments and agencies deliver better regulation for the private, public and third sectors; delivering free and fair markets, with greater competition, for businesses, consumers and employees and ensuring Government acts as an effective and intelligent shareholder.

BIS ensures there is a renewed focus from central Government on these important challenges. It ensures that there is a Department in Government

which has a deep and effective engagement with the business community, with the ability to promote the productivity and competitiveness agenda across critical policy areas and to deliver a radical programme of regulatory reform for the business, public and third sectors.

Coverage of the Scheme

The BIS scheme applies to all BIS headquarters functions and the department undertakes to cooperate closely with the National Assembly for Wales on Welsh Language Act matters. A Concordat has been agreed which confirms the demarcation of functions between the BIS and the National Assembly for Wales. The responsibilities of the two organisations with regard to Welsh language provision will observe this demarcation. Where the National Assembly for Wales or its partners have responsibility for developments in Wales, BIS will ensure that sufficient time is allowed to enable provision of the necessary Welsh language dimension.

While the Executive Agencies operate within broad policy guidelines set by Ministers, day to day operations, including the implementation of Welsh Language Act measures, are a matter for the Chief Executive of each Agency. Where BIS Agencies do not have their own Welsh Language Schemes, BIS will make its scheme available to those Agencies and encourage them to meet the needs of the Welsh-speaking public in Wales in line with the principles enshrined in the Welsh Language Act.

BIS will use its influence to promote awareness of the needs of Welsh speakers in Wales and will encourage the adoption by relevant Non-Departmental Public Bodies of the principles of the Act.

Service planning and delivery

Policies, legislation and initiatives

Our policies, initiatives and services will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and will, whenever appropriate, help the public in Wales use Welsh as part of their day to day lives.

When we contribute to the development or delivery of policies, initiatives, services or new legislation led by other organisations, we will do so in a way which is consistent with this scheme. We will also ensure, whenever appropriate, that new primary and secondary legislation sponsored by the Department will support the use of Welsh.

Delivering services

We will ensure that where appropriate our services are available in Welsh and we will let the public know when they are available. This will enable Welsh speakers to access our services.

Our regulatory functions – and services undertaken on our behalf by third parties

Any agreements or arrangements which we make with third parties will be consistent with the relevant parts of this scheme when those agreements or arrangements relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales. This will include services which are contracted out, granting licences and granting other permissions.

Standards of quality

Services provided in Welsh and English will be of equally high quality and will be provided within the same timescale. This commitment will be stated publicly in the Departmental report, on the BIS Reports and Publications website and in other literature as appropriate. The commitment will also be stated on the BIS's website. The BIS Reports and Publications website is searchable and instructions on how to identify Welsh language documents that are available will be placed on the Welsh language FAQ section of the site.

Awarding grants and loans

When we award grants and loans for activities that affect the Welsh public we will where appropriate include conditions with regard to the use of Welsh. In doing this, we will have regard to the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on awarding grants and loans.

Dealing with the Welsh speaking public

Correspondence

Our normal practice will be as follows:

When someone writes to us in Welsh we will issue a reply in Welsh (if a reply is required). Our target time for replying will be the same as for replying to letters written in English, which is 15 days for Ministerial correspondence and 20 working days for a Freedom of Information request.

If the Welsh and English versions of any correspondence have to be published separately, our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time. Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, where possible.

The above will apply to e-mail correspondence as well as all hard-copy Welsh correspondence.

Our Ministerial Correspondence and Enquiry Unit will develop a system to record the language preference of those who wish to correspond with us in Welsh.

Decision letters

If a decision letter is intended to convey policy to a much wider audience than those directly involved with an inquiry, or other statutory procedure, we will consider whether it should be treated, under this scheme, as a publication.

Telephone communications

It would not be practicable for us to conduct telephone conversations in Welsh because of our location. However, when we set up telephone help-lines, or similar facilities, to give information, services or support to the public in Wales we will consider providing a Welsh language service. This will be advertised alongside the English language service. Both services will share the same telephone number.

Public meetings

BIS will ensure that members of the public attending public meetings i.e. formal hearings, enquiries, legal proceedings and similar official events, are welcome and able to contribute in Welsh. Invitations and notices publicising an event in Wales will be bilingual and will normally invite those who wish to speak in Welsh to notify the arranger of the event in advance so that interpreting facilities can be arranged.

Our normal practice will be to provide papers and other information for these public meetings in Welsh and English – and for reports or papers produced following public meetings to be published in Welsh and English, in line with the publication commitments in this scheme.

Other meetings with the public

Because of our location it would not be practicable for us to conduct face-to-face meetings with the public through the medium of Welsh.

Other dealings with the public in Wales

When we undertake public surveys in Wales, our normal practice will be to ensure that all aspects of communication with the public will be bilingual. Whenever practicable, respondents will be asked if they wish to respond to the survey in Welsh or English.

When we arrange seminars, training courses or similar events for the public that are based in Wales, we will assess the need to provide them in Welsh.

Any audio-visual displays, audio tours or interactive media that we prepare for the Welsh public will be bilingual.

Our public face

Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and advertising

All our publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material aimed at the Welsh public will be produced bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, both versions will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality - and both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible.

Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales will be bilingual or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions (with both versions appearing simultaneously and will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality.

Television, cinema and radio advertising targeting Wales specifically will be conducted in Welsh and English. Television campaigns which appear on S4C during Welsh programming hours will be in Welsh. Radio campaigns broadcast on Radio Cymru or during Welsh language programmes on commercial radio stations will be in Welsh. Our normal practice will be to avoid using Welsh language subtitles or dubbing adverts into Welsh.

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

Where a variety of different media are employed in a particular campaign BIS reserves the right to employ the medium or media that it considers will be most cost effective for delivering the campaign message in Welsh to the Welsh speaking public.

Publications

Publications which are of interest to the general public will be made available in Welsh. Anything relating to Wales or an area of Wales will also be made available in Welsh. This will include:

- Policy and consultation documents which relate to issues which are of interest to the general public
- Pamphlets and leaflets targeting the general public
- Forms and explanatory material aimed at the general public
- Circulars and standard letters,

Where we produce material for the public bilingually, the Welsh and English versions will usually be published together and will be comparable. On occasions, both versions would be included in the same document where this was appropriate. Reasons for not including both versions in one document

would be that it would be too lengthy or bulky or for practical or environmental considerations. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language and be equally accessible.

If not available free of charge, the price of a bilingual document will not be greater than that of a single language publication - and the price of separate, Welsh and English versions will be the same.

The above will also apply to material made available electronically on our website, on CD Rom or otherwise.

Websites

Our website will include pages in both Welsh and English.

We will include, where appropriate, Welsh versions of some interactive pages on our websites.

When designing new websites, or redeveloping our existing website, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on website design.

Where possible, we will post publications on our website that are available in both English and Welsh at the same time.

We will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, setting out how we will increase the Welsh language content of our website over time.

Forms and associated explanatory material

Our normal practice will be to ensure that all forms and associated explanatory material for use by the public in Wales will be fully bilingual, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document. This will include interactive forms published on our website. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

We will send bilingual forms to the public, where appropriate, unless we know that the recipients would prefer to receive the information in Welsh or English only. When other organisations distribute forms on our behalf, we will ensure that they do so in accordance with the above.

Corporate identity

Welsh headed letters will be produced for correspondence in Welsh.

Where documents are produced bilingually or in Welsh the name of BIS: Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform will remain to ensure the Department's brand identity but will have a descriptor in Welsh.

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Notices will be in Welsh in Welsh language publications.

The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence – whether produced as a single bilingual version, or as separate Welsh and English notices.

In the English language media, posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential may be advertised in Welsh, with a brief description in English.

Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution may be in English, unless the post is one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English.

Any official notices, public notices or staff recruitment notices placed elsewhere in Wales will be bilingual.

Press releases and contact with the media

Press releases to the media in Wales will be issued in Welsh and English where deadlines permit and if the issue would affect the Welsh public.

Implementing the scheme

Staffing

BIS are not formally based in Wales, though have part of the department's Human Resources based there. We will seek information about the Welsh language skills of existing staff, and job applicants, where the job requires close contact with the Welsh speaking public.

Recruitment

For any posts having extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales we will consider whether fluency in Welsh should be a desirable or essential skill – and this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements.

Language training

We will consider supporting and funding training for staff that, as part of their duties, have extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales – and who wish to learn, or improve their Welsh. We will allow staff to attend courses during work where necessary.

Vocational training

Whenever practicable, we will provide vocational training in Welsh to develop the ability of staff who, as part of their duties, have extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales.

Information and Communications Technology

The need to provide information and services in Welsh, and operate in accordance with this scheme, will be catered for as we develop, design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Board's ICT standards.

Partnership working

When we are the strategic and financial leader within a partnership, we will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme except where the partner delivering the service has a Welsh language scheme. In these circumstances, our service will comply with the delivery partner's scheme.

When we join a partnership which another organisation is leading, our input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and we will encourage the other partners to comply, unless the lead organisation has a Welsh Language scheme. In these circumstances, we will encourage the partnership to comply with the lead organisation's scheme.

When we are a partner in a consortium, we will encourage the consortium to comply with this scheme. When acting in the name of the consortium, we will operate in accordance with this scheme. Where we act in consortium with other organisations that also have Welsh Language Schemes, we will encourage the consortium to decide to abide with one scheme in all its work. The above refers only to partnerships dealing with services available to the public in Wales.

Internal arrangements

The measures in this scheme carry the full authority, support and approval of our organisation.

Managers will have the responsibility for implementing those aspects of the scheme relevant to their work. The Head of the Information Rights Unit will coordinate the work required to deliver, monitor and review this scheme.

A detailed action plan about how we will operate the scheme will be prepared and regularly updated. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect. The plan will include targets, deadlines and a report on progress against each target.

The scheme will be publicised to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on our website and be available on demand from our BIS Publications Orderline. It will also be publicised in the Departmental Report and a press notice will be issued notifying media organisations of the revised scheme.

Existing guidance used by our staff will be amended to reflect the measures contained in this scheme.

We will arrange briefing and training sessions for staff whose work is significantly impacted by the revision of the scheme. This will increase awareness of this scheme and explain how it will affect their day to day work.

We will ensure that we use only qualified translators or interpreters to help with the delivery of this scheme.

Any form of contact with the public in Wales which is not specifically dealt with by this scheme will be undertaken in a manner which is consistent with the general principles enshrined in this scheme.

Monitoring

We will monitor our progress in delivering this scheme against the targets set out in its accompanying action plan. We will send monitoring reports to the Welsh Language Board, when requested by them, outlining progress in delivering this scheme.

Reviewing and amending the scheme

We will review this scheme within four years of its coming into effect.

This scheme may be reviewed or amended at any time because of changes to our functions, or to the circumstances in which we undertake those functions, or for any other reason. No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Board's approval.

Complaints and suggestions for improvement

Complaints related to this scheme, or suggestions for improvement, should be directed to:

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Fax: 020 7215 5713

Email: [Information Rights Unit](#)

We will co-operate with the Board in order to resolve any complaints – and during any investigations held under Section 17 of the Welsh Language Act.

Appendix A – Main targets for scheme delivery

Target	Action	Date of completion
Policies, legislation and initiatives		
Policies, initiatives and services to be consistent with scheme.	Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives	August 2009
BIS legislation will support use of Welsh where appropriate.	Remind Parly Branch. Arrangements to be set up to alert Bill teams	
Correspondence		
Commitments on handling correspondence received in Welsh and on handling enclosures	Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives. Remind MCU (Ministerial Communications Unit)	May 2009
Decision letters intended to convey policy to wide audience: consider whether to treat as publication.	Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives Inform Legal Services	May 2009
Public meetings		
Offer interpreting facilities at public meetings	Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives Remind Translation Service	May 2009
Publicity campaigns, exhibitions and advertising		
Commitments on publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material aimed at the Welsh public Television, (incl cinema and radio advertising targeting Wales)	Remind: Comms Heads of relevant directorates eg.CCP, ER	May 2009
Consideration for telephone response lines etc and other ways of responding to campaigns targeting Wales to be bilingual or include separate Welsh response service.	Remind: Comms Head of Communications CCP Head of Communications ER ICT contracts manager	June 2009

Publications		
Commitments related to publications of interest to general public or relating to Wales or an area of Wales	<p>Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives</p> <p>Remind:</p> <p>Comms</p> <p>Heads of CCP, ER etc</p>	May 2009
Language training		
To consider supporting and funding training for staff that, as part of their duties, have extensive and regular contact with public in Wales.	Alert HR	August 2009
Partnership working		
Commitments when working in partnership with others	Include in general guidance/awareness initiatives	May 2009
Internal Promotion of the Scheme		
Update IRU Intranet Welsh Language pages		May 2009
Update Publications Unit BISnet Welsh Language pages		May 2009
Put Welsh Language page on Legal Services BISnet		May 2009
Include references in Policy Making BISnet site		June 2009
Update consultation BIS Intranet Welsh Language references		June 2009
Produce Electronic Noticeboard notice		June 2009
Alert GIM (Group Information Managers) network		June 2009
Article for GIM newsletter		June 2009
Update guidance for HMUs (heads of management units)		May 2009
Update procurement manual		June 2009
BIS Interface article		June 2009