



Home Office

THE HOME OFFICE WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

September 2009

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BWRDD YR IAITH
GYMRAEG • WELSH
LANGUAGE BOARD

The Home Office has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how the Home Office, in providing services to the public in Wales, intends to fulfil this commitment. It was prepared under section 21 of the 1993 Welsh Language Act and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Board under section 9 of the Act. It came into effect on 14 January 2002 and this revised version received the Welsh Language Board's endorsement on 23 September 2009.

In this scheme, the term **'public'** means individuals, legal persons and corporate bodies. It includes the public as a whole, or a section of the public, as well as individual members of the public. The term includes voluntary organisations and charities. Directors and others representing limited companies are also within the meaning of the term 'public'. It does not, however, include persons who are acting in a capacity that 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.

Despite this, we support the Welsh language provision of our agencies and the police to the public and will support their ability to work internally through the medium of Welsh. We will also support the police to carry out recruitment and promotion activities in Welsh.

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose, objectives and values.

PURPOSE

Our purpose is working together to protect the public.

OBJECTIVES

Working together to protect the public, we focus on seven key objectives. We will work with the public and our partners at local, national and international level to:

- Help people feel secure in their homes and local communities
- Cut crime, especially violent, drug and alcohol-related crime
- Lead visible, responsive and accountable policing
- Protect the public from terrorism
- Secure our borders and control migration for the benefit of our country
- Safeguard people's identity and the privileges of citizenship
- Support the efficient and effective delivery of justice.

VALUES

The values we developed in consultation with our staff and stakeholders underpin how we will achieve our objectives, and guide our everyday behaviour:

- We deliver for the public
- We are professional and innovative
- We work openly and collaboratively
- We treat everyone with respect.

1.2 The central Home Office comprises the following directorates:

Communication Directorate, Crime and Policing Group, Financial and Commercial Group, Human Resources Directorate, International Directorate, Legal Adviser's Branch, Office for Criminal Justice Reform, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism, Private Office, Science and Research Group, Shared Services Directorate, Strategy and Reform Directorate.

1.3 Except as a source of information and publications, the Department provides few services direct to the general public, whether in England or Wales. Most services to the public are provided by agencies or by non-departmental public bodies.

Agencies

1.4 The Department will ensure that delivery agencies operate in accordance with this scheme unless they have their own Welsh language scheme. The Department will encourage the UK Border Agency, Criminal Records Bureau, National Offender Management Service and Identity and Passport Service to co-operate with the Welsh Language Board as they prepare their own Welsh language schemes if requested by the Welsh Language Board.

ENQUIRIES

- 1.5 Responsibility for implementing this scheme in the Home Office will rest with the directorate concerned. Enquiries about specific subjects should thus be addressed to the relevant directorate.
- 1.6 The Welsh Language Co-ordinator at the Central Office of Information will be responsible for the overall co-ordination and monitoring of this scheme. The address is:

Welsh Language Co-ordinator
Translations
Central Office of Information
Hercules House
Hercules Road
London SE1 7DU

Section 2 Service planning and delivery

NEW POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

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

Whenever possible, consultation documents relevant to the general public in Wales will discuss the relationship between the Welsh language and the policies, initiatives and services under development.

2.2 Guidance to senior managers will underline the relevance of the scheme to the process of policy formulation, and the importance, at the planning stage, of considering the need to offer and provide a service in Welsh.

2.3 The Welsh Language Board will be consulted in advance regarding any proposals that will affect this scheme, or will affect the schemes of other organisations.

2.4 When formulating new policies and initiatives the Home Office will:

- ensure that the linguistic consequences have been assessed;
- ensure that the contents of such policies and initiatives are consistent with this scheme, and do not undermine it or the schemes of other organisations; and
- ensure that the measures contained in this scheme are applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented.

2.5 When new policies and initiatives are introduced which are likely to affect members of the general public (including the public in Wales), the Home Office will:

- promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever it is possible to do so; and

- move the Department closer to implementing the principle of equality at every opportunity.

If existing policies, codes of practice, guidance etc. are found to be at odds with the provision of the Welsh Language Act and this scheme, they will be revised as soon as possible.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

2.6 Home Office services to the public in Wales will be delivered in accordance with the contents of this scheme, which describes how the Welsh language will be used in the course of addressing the Home Office's strategic objectives as listed in paragraph 1.1.

2.7 All directorates of the Home Office are covered by this scheme – together with any other organisations to which the responsibilities of those directorates may have been passed (whether as a result of market testing, contracting out, or on any other basis) – will comply with the principles of the Welsh Language Act and the Welsh Language Board's guidelines and advice. The Home Office will encourage all other organisations with which it deals to take the Welsh language dimension into account where appropriate.

2.8 During inspections of police forces in Wales undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, due regard to the Home Office Welsh Language Scheme will be given (including, whenever possible, the provision of Welsh speaking inspectors, when requested by any police force in Wales). Service plans or reporting frameworks (such as best value) include measures about the use of Welsh when related to the delivery of services to the public in Wales. The Welsh language will be considered as an equality and diversity strand in Wales, in the same way as other areas of the Equality & Diversity agenda.

- 2.9 The Home Office will facilitate the provision of a bilingual service in Wales by others and remove any obstacles that might prevent third parties from using Welsh.

The use of the Welsh language in Wales is an important factor in equal opportunities and diversity and, as such, will form an integral part of the Home Office's equal opportunities agenda.

A Concordat has been drawn up which defines operational and working procedures between the Home Office and the Welsh Assembly Government. This is relevant to issues such as joint working and co-operation between the two bodies. Decisions on the division of responsibility for Welsh language provision will be determined in consultation with the Welsh Assembly Government and with reference to the Concordat.

Material provided by the Home Office to the police, and the National Offender Management Service, or for use by the public in Wales will be made available in both Welsh and English or in a bilingual format, in accordance with the approach described below.

Where prescribed forms, regulations, rules or procedures are required for use by the public in Wales, these will be produced in Welsh or in bilingual format, in line with the commitments in this scheme.

Computer systems and packages procured by, or in partnership with, the Home Office – for itself or associated organisations – will provide bilingual outputs for use by the public in Wales and can (subject to the data protection legislation in force) record and transfer information on an individual's or organisation's preferred language. This will be implemented from the planning and assessment stage of any new system or package.

Where guidance is issued on procedures to third parties such as coroners, this will reflect the need to offer a Welsh language service in Wales.

Welsh language skills of applicants will be considered when appointments are made to boards, panels or tribunals.

THE STANDARD OF SERVICE

- 2.10 Services provided in Welsh and English will be of equal quality and will be provided within the same timescale, where possible. The Home Office will make this clear wherever it makes statements on service quality and equal opportunities.

AWARDING GRANTS AND LOANS

- 2.11 When the Home Office awards grants and loans for activities to be undertaken in Wales, the Department will include conditions with regard to the use of Welsh. In doing this, the Home Office will follow the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on awarding grants and loans.

Section 3 Dealing with the Welsh speaking public

CORRESPONDENCE

3.1 Members of the public who deal with the Home Office will be able and welcome to do so in Welsh as well as English. If a member of the public in Wales writes to the Department in Welsh, the Department will:

- reply in Welsh; and
- do so within the same target date for replies as for those who write in English.

3.2 When the Department initiates correspondence with an individual, group or organisation, it will be in Welsh when it is known that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh.

3.3 All subsequent correspondence will be in Welsh, unless the person or organisation concerned indicates to the contrary.

3.4 Staff will be given guidance on how to deal with correspondence written in Welsh.

Subject to the scoring system referred to below, when we send standard or circular correspondence to several recipients in Wales, it will be bilingual unless we know that all recipients would prefer to receive it in Welsh or English only.

We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, to identify objectively when standard or circular correspondence should be published as bilingual documents or as separate Welsh and English versions (for instance, when the correspondence is very technical or lengthy).

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, when available.

Enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, when available.

The above will apply to e-mail correspondence as well as paper correspondence.

All hard-copy Welsh correspondence that we issue will be signed.

The Home Office response to any communication received in the Welsh language will be drafted in English. Once approved, it will be translated into Welsh and sent as the reply. Both the English and Welsh versions of the communication will be held on file within the originating department so as to aid Home Office staff unfamiliar with the Welsh language.

TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

3.5 Because of our location it would not be practicable for us to conduct telephone conversations in Welsh. However, for telephone helplines, call centres, or similar facilities established to give information, services or support relevant to the general public in Wales, the Home Office will provide a Welsh language service. This will be advertised alongside the English language service. Both services will share the same telephone number.

PUBLIC MEETINGS, INQUIRIES OR HEARINGS

3.6 The Home Office does not often hold public meetings, inquiries or hearings. However, if such meetings are held, and they take place in Wales, translation services will be provided unless we have established that all participants are likely to use the same language.

- Invitations and advertisements for such public meetings will be bilingual and either note that translation facilities will be available or invite the public to inform the Department in advance which language they wish to speak.
- Papers and other information will be provided for public meetings in bilingual format and all reports and papers produced following public meetings will be produced in both languages.

OTHER DEALINGS WITH THE PUBLIC IN WALES

3.7 When the Department undertakes public surveys all communication with the public will be bilingual.

Section 4 The Department's public face

PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS, EXHIBITIONS AND ADVERTISING

- 4.1 All of the publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material used in Wales (in order to target the general public) will be produced fully 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. Both versions will be available simultaneously whenever possible and will be equally accessible.

CORPORATE IDENTITY

- 4.2 The Home Office will adopt a bilingual corporate identity in Wales. The Department's name, contact details, logo, slogans and other standard information will appear in Welsh and English on all material which displays our corporate identity. This includes departmental stationery and material such as business cards, identity badges, passes, tickets, acknowledgement cards, compliment slips, invitations and vehicles.

TITLES

- 4.3 When documents are issued in Welsh, the name 'Home Office', and the name of the issuing directorate or unit, will be in Welsh.

SIGNS

- 4.4 All external and internal signs in public areas of any offices in Wales for which the Home Office has direct responsibility will either be bilingual or in separate Welsh and English formats. Where separate language signs are used they will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence.
- 4.5 All new signs will be bilingual. Existing signs will be made bilingual when they are replaced.

PUBLICATIONS AND FORMS

- 4.6 The Department will publish material made available to the public bilingually, subject to the scoring system referred to below, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document.

If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal size and quality – and our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, to identify objectively when material should be published in Welsh/ bilingually.

- 4.7 Some Home Office material is already available in Welsh – and can be seen on the Welsh section of the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/Cymraeg). Additionally, inspection reports on institutions in Wales issued by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary will be issued bilingually in English and Welsh. Data on crime and criminal justice are available in a bilingual statistical summary published by the Welsh Assembly Government. The scoring system described above will apply to all new publications and reprints issued after the scheme's approval – as well as existing publications that are due for revision, re-issue or reprinting.

Staff, consultants, designers and printers will receive written guidance on the design and production of bilingual publications. Where publications are charged for, the price of a bilingual text will not be greater than that of an English version; similarly, where documents are published separately, the price of the Welsh version will not exceed the price of the English. In the latter case, the two versions will be equally accessible in Wales, and the aim will be to issue them simultaneously, and to distribute them together.

WEBSITES

- 4.8 The Home Office website will include pages in both Welsh and English and will have Welsh versions of interactive pages.

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.

- 4.9 The Home Office is making increasing use of the internet for the dissemination of information. Access to Welsh material will be clearly signposted on the home page. It is our intention that the Welsh web pages will provide all relevant information for the general public within Wales in the Welsh language. This will include information about our objectives and values, how to contact us and how to make a complaint and a publications page listing all our publications in Welsh. We will also include pages in Welsh about our main areas of work such as crime, security, passports & immigration, anti-social behaviour, drugs and the police.

PRESS NOTICES

- 4.10 Press releases to the Welsh language press and broadcasting media in Wales will be issued in Welsh, where deadlines permit.

When press releases are posted on the website, the normal practice will be to post them in English and Welsh.

OFFICIAL NOTICES, PUBLIC NOTICES AND STAFF RECRUITMENT NOTICES

- 4.11 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 in Wales, 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 will 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.

MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

- 4.12 Campaign material produced for use by the written or broadcast media which is aimed at the general public will be fully bilingual in English and Welsh for use in Wales.
- 4.13 The approach described in the previous paragraph will also be applied to any multi-media material the Home Office may produce.
- 4.14 If the Home Office was ever to engage in campaigns which involved members of the public making direct telephone contact with Home Office staff or contractors, we will enable Welsh speakers to contact us by telephone or in writing as appropriate.

MATERIAL PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

4.15 The Home Office recognises that the availability of Welsh language material may be an important element in the ability of other agencies to achieve effective language equality in the services they provide. Relevant Home Office units will thus liaise regularly with appropriate agencies in Wales (such as the police) to determine which of the items they produce have the most impact on those agencies' ability to produce a Welsh language service: this information will then be an important factor in their prioritisation of their translation programme.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

- 4.16 In developing its computer strategy, the Home Office will apply the principle of language equality to all future initiatives. Specifications for new, replacement or adapted computer programs will include appropriate reference to the need to provide a bilingual service in line with this scheme. As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards*.
- 4.17 Where existing computer programs/systems cannot be adapted to facilitate the Home Office Welsh Language Scheme, or the Welsh language services of others, interim arrangements will be made to overcome any difficulties.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

4.18 When the Home Office is the strategic and financial leader within a formal partnership, the Department will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme.

When the Department joins a formal partnership which another organisation is leading, the Department's input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and the Department will encourage the other partners to comply.

When the Department is a partner in a consortium, it will encourage the consortium to comply with this scheme. When acting in the name of the consortium, it will operate in accordance with this scheme.

The above refers only to formal partnerships dealing with services available to the public in Wales.

Section 5 Implementing and monitoring the scheme

IMPLEMENTING

5.1 This scheme is issued with the full support of Home Office Ministers and the Home Office Board. The scheme will be co-ordinated and monitored by the co-ordinator of the scheme.

5.2 All Directors and Heads of Units will be sent guidance on the operation of the scheme, and will be responsible for its implementation and operation within their spheres of command. Each directorate will have a member of staff responsible for liaising with individual units within the directorate about the scheme, and with the scheme co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator of the Home Office Welsh Language Scheme will prepare, and continuously update, a detailed action plan to be agreed with the Board, setting out how the Department will ensure that it will operate in accordance with this scheme. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect, or as soon as possible thereafter. The plan will include targets, deadlines and a report on progress against each target. The overall aim of the action plan will be to ensure that the commitments set out in this scheme are delivered as soon as possible. The main targets for the scheme delivery are listed in Appendix A.

The scheme will be publicised to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on the Department's website in a prominent place.

Desk instructions, or similar guidance, will be developed for staff to ensure that they know how to implement the measures contained in this scheme.

Existing desk instructions, or similar guidance used by staff, will be amended to reflect the measures contained in this scheme.

Briefing and training sessions for our staff will be arranged to increase awareness of this scheme – and to explain how it will affect their day-to-day work. All new staff will receive information about the Welsh language scheme during their induction period.

5.3 Any translator used by the Home Office will be suitably qualified and able to provide a high-quality and cost-effective service. We will expect those translators to be members of the Association of Welsh Translators or a similar organisation.

Any form of contact with the public in Wales that 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.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS

5.4 The Department will operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Board's advice on the Welsh Language Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations.

When the Department releases information under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, it will be translated into the applicant's preferred language provided that the number of words to be translated does not make it financially prohibitive to do so.

SERVICES DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF THE DEPARTMENT BY THIRD PARTIES

5.5 The Home Office will ensure that any agreements or arrangements made with third parties which relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales are consistent with the terms of the scheme. This will include the contracting and sub-contracting of services.

5.6 Whenever tenders are invited for providing services the Home Office will specify requirements as to the use of Welsh language, where this is a relevant factor.

5.7 Business managers will monitor the service provided by the successful contractor and obtain regular performance reports.

- 5.8 Staff dealing with contracts will be made aware of these requirements.

MONITORING

- 5.9 The Department will monitor progress in delivering this scheme against the targets set out in the action plan agreed with the Welsh Language Board. A report on that progress will be sent to senior management.

The existing monitoring and reporting procedures will include reference to progress in delivering this scheme, as appropriate.

The Department will report to the Welsh Language Board on progress in delivering this scheme, when requested by them.

The target is to ensure that the Home Office acts in accordance with the aims and objectives of this scheme within four years of its coming into effect. A self-assessment procedure will be used to monitor progress, to be agreed with the Board.

- 5.10 Complaints about specific aspects of the implementation of the scheme will be dealt with by individual units in accordance with their own complaints procedures.

REVIEWING AND AMENDING THE SCHEME

- 5.11 The scheme will be reviewed within four years of its coming into effect.

Also, from time to time, the Department may need to review this scheme, or propose amendments to this scheme, because of changes to departmental functions, or to the circumstances in which the Department undertakes existing 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

- 5.12 Complaints related to this scheme, or suggestions for improvement, should be directed to the senior member of staff with responsibility for the scheme, at the following address:

Home Office
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
Email: publicenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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

PUBLICITY

- 5.13 Copies of this scheme will be available from cymraeg@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk and will be circulated to all interested parties within England and Wales. Details will also be available in both languages on the Home Office website.

September 2009

Appendix A Main targets for scheme delivery

Target	Date of completion
<p>1. Website</p> <p>We will agree with the Welsh Language Board a programme to increase the Welsh language content on our websites and update these websites on this basis.</p>	<p>September 2009</p>
<p>2. Working group</p> <p>We will establish a working group consisting of representatives from key directorates within the Home Office to push forward the delivery of the scheme.</p>	<p>30 September 2009</p>
<p>3. Champions</p> <p>We will establish champions in senior posts from key areas to promote the scheme at a high level within the Home Office.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>4. Staff awareness session(s)</p> <p>We will hold staff awareness session(s) to promote knowledge of the scheme among staff.</p>	<p>Within 2 months of scheme approval</p>
<p>5. Staff guidance</p> <p>We will provide guidance to staff informing them of the scheme and the implications for their work and the point of contact for any enquiries.</p>	<p>Ready for scheme approval</p>
<p>6. Agencies</p> <p>We will contact our agencies to draw their attention to the scheme and remind them of their responsibilities under it.</p>	<p>Within 1 month of scheme approval</p>
<p>7. Contracts</p> <p>We will amend our standard contracts and contract templates to include reference to the scheme.</p>	<p>30 September 2009</p>
<p>8. Publicity for the scheme</p> <p>We will publicise the scheme on our website and in any relevant publicity material.</p>	<p>Within 2 months of scheme approval</p>

