



Home Office

# The Home Office Welsh Language Scheme

Prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

February 2024



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The Home Office has adopted the principle that in the conduct of its public business in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how the Home Office, including its listed associated agencies and public bodies, intends to fulfil this commitment when providing services to the public in Wales. It was prepared under section 21 of the 1993 Welsh Language Act and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner. It came into effect on 14 January 2002 and this revised version received the Welsh Language Commissioner's approval on 05/03/2024.

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.

This document is available also in Welsh.

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# Section 1: Introduction

## Purpose

1.1 The Home Office plays a fundamental role in the security and economic prosperity of the United Kingdom.

## Responsibilities

1.2 We are responsible for:

- working on the problems caused by illegal drug use;
- shaping the alcohol strategy, policy and licensing conditions;
- keeping the United Kingdom safe from the threat of terrorism;
- reducing and preventing crime, and ensuring people feel safe in their homes and communities (England and Wales only);
- securing the UK border and controlling immigration;
- considering applications to enter and stay in the UK;
- issuing passports and visas;
- supporting visible, responsible and accountable policing by empowering the public and freeing up the police to fight crime (England and Wales only); and
- fire prevention and rescue (England only)

## Priorities

1.3 Our priorities are to:

- Cut crime and the harm it causes, including cyber-crime and serious and organised crime.
- Manage civil emergencies within the remit of the Home Office
- Protect vulnerable people and communities
- Reduce terrorism
- Control migration

- Provide world-class public services and contribute to prosperity
- Maximise the benefits of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union

## Who We Are

1.4 The Home Office is a ministerial department, supported currently by agencies and public bodies. Details of which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations#home-office>

1.5 All Home Office agencies and public bodies, unless they run their own Welsh Language Scheme, will follow the Home Office scheme.

1.6 The Home Office agencies and public bodies covered by this scheme are found [here](#)

1.7 The Home Office will ensure that the remaining agencies and public bodies operate in accordance with this scheme.

1.8 The Home Office will encourage its agencies and public bodies to co-operate with the Welsh Language Commissioner if they prepare their own Welsh language schemes.

## Enquiries

1.9 Responsibility for implementing this scheme in the Home Office will rest with the relevant directorate; general enquiries about the scheme and enquiries regarding specific subject areas should be addressed to: [Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk](mailto:Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk)

## Section 2: Content of the Scheme

2.1 This scheme sets out the measures the Home Office will take to give effect to the principle of equality of the Welsh and English languages in the provision of services to our customers in Wales.

2.2 The Home Office is committed to the policies and standards set out in this scheme and will plan all new services with reference to the commitments given in it.

2.3 The Home Office's starting point, in recognising the equality of the Welsh and English languages, is that customers in Wales, who prefer to transact their business in Welsh, whether in correspondence, by telephone or in person, are welcome to do so. The Home Office is committed to providing an equally high standard of service in Welsh and English.

2.4 The Home Office Scheme will:

- conform to the guidelines of the Welsh Language Commissioner, and will be reviewed to take account of any future legislation;
- be reflected in its Business and Corporate Plans;
- help to deliver its service in a positive and effective way to the people of Wales;
- be publicised to both staff and the public; and
- have the full support of the Home Office Executive Committee.



# Section 3: Service Planning and Delivery

## New Policies and Initiatives

3.1 Home Office policies, initiatives and services will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and will help the public in Wales to use Welsh in their day-to-day lives. Consultation documents relevant to the general public in Wales will be issued in both the English and the Welsh language, and will consider the potential impact on the Welsh language of the policy being consulted on. Where this is not possible, an explanation will be provided.

3.2 Guidance provided 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.

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

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

- ensure that the linguistic consequences have been assessed, for example whether any new policy or service has a disproportionate impact on Welsh speakers;
- 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;
- ensure that the measures contained in this scheme are applied to new policies and initiatives when they are implemented; and
- ensure that linguistic consequences are defined, measured and evaluated as part of the overall Home Office evaluation criteria for new policies and initiatives

3.5 When new policies and initiatives which are likely to affect members of the general public (including the public in Wales) are introduced, the Home Office will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh where it is relevant to do so. If existing policies, codes of practice, guidance etc. are found to be at odds with the provisions of the Welsh Language Act and this scheme, they will be revised as soon as possible.

## Delivery of Services

3.6 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 responsibilities as listed in paragraph 1.2.

3.7 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, independent reports, or anything that is published by the Home Office) – and will comply with the principles of the Welsh Language Act and the Welsh Language Commissioner’s guidelines and advice. The Home Office will encourage all other organisations with which it deals to take the Welsh language element into account where appropriate.

3.8 The Home Office will promote a bilingual service in Wales 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.

3.9 Material provided by the Home Office to the police 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.

3.10 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.

3.11 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.

3.12 Where guidance is issued on procedures to third parties, 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.

## **His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services**

3.13 During inspections of police forces in Wales undertaken by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), due regard to the Home Office Welsh Language Scheme will be given (including the provision of Welsh speaking inspectors, when requested by any police force in Wales, and the provision of translation services where this is not possible). 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.

## **His Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO)**

3.14 The main elements of contact with the public are on the telephone and via the passport application form. In both cases an effective language choice will be offered, and His Majesty's Passport Office will ensure that customers who live in Wales will be able to receive a service through the medium of Welsh. Measures outlined in this Scheme indicate how this will be achieved.

3.15 HMPO has developed ICT systems that enable applicants to make online passport applications in Welsh.

## **General Register Office**

3.16 The General Register Office for England and Wales is part of His Majesty's Passport Office. Customers contacting the General Register Office by telephone, e-mail or post will, in all cases, be offered an effective language choice and those living in Wales will be able to receive services through the Welsh language.

3.17 The General Register Office will work with local authorities in Wales to ensure that registration services provided by those authorities are available to the public in the Welsh language.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service**

3.18 Customers contacting the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) by telephone, email or post shall, in all cases, be offered an effective language choice and those living in Wales will be able to receive services through the Welsh Language. DBS has a dedicated Welsh line for Welsh customers. DBS issue Welsh applications to customers on request.

## **The Standard of Service**

3.19 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.

3.20 The Home Office is committed to delivering an equally high quality service in Welsh and English and this will be stated in the Business and Corporate Plans. Implementation will be closely monitored.

3.21 Regular customer surveys are carried out by His Majesty's Passport Office, upon request; customers in Wales who are surveyed will receive a bilingual questionnaire to complete. If a bilingual version is not possible surveys will be sent out in both languages and customers will have the option to conduct the survey in English or Welsh.

3.22 His Majesty's Passport Office information leaflet(s) accompanying the passport sent to customers in Wales will be bilingual or in the language in which the application has been made.

3.23 Welsh language passport applications will be processed within the same timescale as applications made in English.

3.24 Criminal records that are recorded on central records such as the Police National Computer (PNC) cannot be included in Welsh but English only. This is due to requirements of the DBS under Part V of the Police Act 1997.

## Awarding Grants and Loans

3.25 When the Home Office awards grants and loans for activities to be undertaken in Wales, it will include conditions with regard to the use of Welsh. In doing this, the Home Office will follow the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidelines on awarding grants and loans. This is under Bidding for Contracts and Grants, link [here](#).

# Section 4: Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public

## Correspondence

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

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

4.4 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 shall use a scoring system, as agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner, 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). A copy of the relevant guidance for staff will be available on the Home Office intranet and via: [Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk](mailto:Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk)

4.5 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.

4.6 The Home Office will provide appropriate guidelines and training in correct procedures for our staff, setting out the standards that are required when dealing with correspondence in Welsh.

## Telephone Communications

4.7 For telephone help lines, 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.

4.8 Callers from Wales for passport enquiries will receive a bilingual greeting and given the option to have their call dealt with in either English or Welsh. Both services will share the same telephone number.

4.9 The DBS provide a dedicated telephone number for customers from Wales who wish to speak to the DBS in Welsh. Customers who use this number will have their call routed directly to a Welsh-speaking member of staff. A call-back will be made by the DBS where the Welsh language Operator is unavailable at the time of the call and the caller does not wish to proceed in the English language.

## Dealing with Personal Callers

4.10 The Home Office will provide training to staff in Wales, who have contact with the public, in procedures for dealing correctly with enquiries from customers who prefer to transact their business in Welsh.

4.11 His Majesty's Passport Office will aim to increase the number of staff competent to transact business in Welsh by offering Welsh language training courses and recruiting Welsh speaking staff where appropriate.

4.12 The Passport Office will offer a Welsh speaking service at all interview offices in Wales. The Passport Office will ensure that any members of the public who wish to have face-to-face contact are able and welcome to do so in Welsh either via a member of staff or a translator should staff be unavailable. A poster will be displayed advertising the fact that this service is available.

4.13 Border Force Customs controls and Border Force Immigration controls are in place at Cardiff airport and Welsh ports in Pembroke Dock, Fishguard and Holyhead; all of whom are public facing. Members of the public that pass through these channels, who wish to conduct business via the medium of Welsh, are able and welcome to do so via a Welsh speaking member of staff or an interpreter should Welsh speaking staff be unavailable.

4.14 Bilingual identity badges will be worn by all staff on the public counter in Newport Passport Office, Immigration Compliance and Enforcement staff in Cardiff and by Border Force staff at Welsh airports and ports.

## Public Meetings, Inquiries or Hearings

4.15 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 and interpretation

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 and interpretation 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**

4.16 When the Department undertakes public surveys and consultations all communication with the public in Wales will be bilingual.

4.17 His Majesty's Passport Office will explore options to provide Welsh language provision for all of its public services in Wales and will work to ensure all supported processes are in place to deliver these services effectively.

# Section 5: The Department's Public Face

## Publicity Campaigns, Exhibitions and Advertising

5.1 All of the publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material used in Wales (in order to target the general public of Wales) will be produced bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions as appropriate to the audience. 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

5.2 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.

5.3 Uniform and branded logos for staff in Wales will also be bilingual. This is dependant on the size of font, where the branding is deemed too small then bilingual branding will not be needed, for example, baseball caps.

## Titles

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

## Signs

5.5 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.

5.6 All new signs will be bilingual. Existing signs will be made bilingual when they are replaced.



## Publications

5.7 We will publish material made available to the public either bilingually (with the Welsh and English versions together in one document) or in separate English and Welsh versions.

5.8 If the Welsh and English versions are published separately 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, or if circumstances mean otherwise, that we can give reason to. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

5.9 We will use the scoring system to identify objectively when material issued outside of public documents, such as letters to Chief Executives of Local Authorities, should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

5.10 All Home Office material that is available in Welsh can be seen in the Home Office publications section of the Gov.uk website ([www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)). Additionally, inspection reports on institutions in Wales issued by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) shall be available bilingually in English and Welsh.

5.11 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 can receive written guidance on the design and production of bilingual publications from [design102@justice.gov.uk](mailto:design102@justice.gov.uk). 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, if the material is a printed document, the two versions will be equally accessible in Wales, and the intention will be to issue them simultaneously, and to distribute them together, or if circumstances mean otherwise we shall provide a clear reason.

## Paper Forms and Miscellaneous

5.12 Where any type of material printed by His Majesty's Passport Office (including miscellaneous items such as stickers, cards, etc) is produced this will be bilingual or in both languages; such dual language material would automatically be distributed to the public in Wales. However, certain items have low usage and are produced on national systems and in these cases, it is not proposed to produce Welsh versions - this includes items such as receipts (which are only issued to personal callers) and invoices.

5.13 To ensure that customers in Wales have no difficulty in obtaining bilingual/dual version forms and leaflets, His Majesty's Passport Office will maintain procedures to ensure that the Newport Passport Office has them displayed and that they remain

adequately stocked. Where bilingual versions of material exist only these versions will be distributed in/to Wales. Where separate Welsh versions are available, they will be made equally available with the English version.

5.14 The General Register Office will ensure that application forms for use by the public in Wales are available in English and Welsh. Any associated explanatory material will also be available in English and Welsh. All forms and explanatory material will be available to download from the Gov.uk website ([www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)).

5.15 The General Register Office will work together with Local Authorities in Wales to ensure that local registration services have an adequate stock of bilingual/dual version forms and leaflets.

## Websites

5.16 The Home Office webpage is at [www.gov.uk/homeoffice](http://www.gov.uk/homeoffice). Content within the mainstream area of Gov.uk is written and published by the Government Digital Service (GDS). This content is aimed at the general public and gives information about the most used government services and schemes.

5.17 The Home Office will ensure that we provide Welsh versions of our web pages that are relevant to the public in England and Wales to GDS, and will work with them to ensure this information is available.

## Press Notices

5.18 Press releases issued to the Welsh language media will be issued in Welsh. Where this is not possible an explanation will be provided.

## Official Notices, Public Notices and Staff Recruitment Notices

5.19 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. Official and public notifications if used by His Majesty's Passport Office will be in Welsh and English versions and displayed together whether in the press or otherwise.

5.20 Where the Home Office attends an exhibition in Wales as an exhibitor Welsh speaking staff shall be available and the printed material displayed will either be bilingual or in Welsh and English.

## Recruitment

5.21 In the English language media in Wales, posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential will 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 will 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.

5.22 Where the Home Office has stated that the ability to speak Welsh competently is desirable for a particular job, linguistic ability will be considered on the same basis as other desirable competencies. Where linguistic ability in Welsh is essential or desirable, this will be stated in relevant job advertisements.

## Media Campaigns

5.23 Campaign material produced for use by the written or broadcast media, or any other multi-media material which is aimed at the general public shall be fully bilingual in English and Welsh for use in Wales.

5.24 If the Home Office engages in campaigns which involve 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

5.25 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 liaise regularly with appropriate agencies in Wales to determine which of the items they produce have the most impact on those agencies' ability to provide a Welsh language service: this information will then be an important factor in their prioritisation of their translation programme.

## Information and Communications Technology

5.26 In developing its IT strategy, the Home Office will apply the principle of Language equality to all future initiatives. Specifications for new, replacement or adapted IT 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 Commissioner's advice document: Technology, Websites and Software: Welsh Language Considerations. Link can be found [here](#).

5.27 Where existing IT 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

5.28 When the Home Office is the strategic and financial leader within a formal partnership it will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme. When the Home Office joins a formal partnership which another organisation is leading; its input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and the Home Office will encourage the other partners to comply.

5.29 When the Home Office 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.

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

# Section 6: Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme

## Staffing

6.1 The measures set out below are intended to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff employed by the Home Office and its agencies to ensure that it can continue to deliver its services through the medium on the Welsh language.

6.2 The Home Office will identify those jobs for which the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable. Where such a competency applies it will be stated in the job advertisement and incorporated in the person specification. Encouraging those who speak Welsh to apply by including a statement in appropriate recruitment advertisements.

6.3 The Home Office will ensure that those responsible for staff recruitment and training are aware of these commitments and implement them.

6.4 The Home Office strategy to increase its number of bilingual staff will include:

- providing an appropriate Welsh Language training offer to relevant staff;
- recruitment of Welsh speakers to specific posts where the language is essential, on the occurrence of a vacancy or establishment of a new post.

6.5 No staff will come under any pressure to train in Welsh language skills or otherwise learn the language and all appointments will be made on merit and in accordance with equal opportunities policies and employment legislation.

6.6 To address any issues with the retention of Welsh speaking staff, we will continue to advertise and encourage applications from Welsh speakers for relevant roles.

## Learning Welsh

6.7 The Home Office is fully committed to encouraging and supporting those members of staff who want to learn Welsh or improve their skills in Welsh. Financial and other support will be given to those staff attending relevant external courses. The Home Office will use the medium of Personal Development Plans for each member of staff to encourage staff to learn Welsh. Communications encouraging take up of this training will be issued on a regular basis which will be shared in the communication plan.

## Vocational Training

6.8 Training requirements through the medium of Welsh will be assessed and provided as appropriate.

## Implementing

6.9 This scheme is issued with the full support of Home Office Ministers and the Executive Management Committee. The scheme will be co-ordinated and monitored by the co-ordinator of the scheme, within the Home Office Wales Team.

6.10 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 areas of command. This will also be promoted by the Home Office's Welsh Language Champion.

6.11 The co-ordinator of the Home Office Welsh Language Scheme will prepare and continuously update an action plan to be agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner setting out how it will ensure that it will operate in accordance with this scheme. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the new 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 pages on the Gov.uk website.

6.12 Desk instructions, or similar guidance, will be developed for staff to ensure that they know how to implement 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 in Wales will receive information about the Welsh language scheme during their induction period.

6.13 Any translator or interpreter 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.

6.14 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

6.15 The Department will operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Commissioner's advice on the Welsh Language Act and the Freedom of Information Act. When the Department releases information under the Freedom of Information Act, 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

6.16 The Home Office will ensure that any agreements or arrangements made with third parties that 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.

6.17 Whenever tenders are invited for providing services to the public in Wales, the Home Office will specify requirements as to the use of Welsh language. Business managers will monitor the service provided by the successful contractor and obtain regular performance reports. Staff dealing with contracts will be made aware of these requirements.

## Monitoring

6.18 The Department will monitor progress in delivering this scheme against the targets set out in the action plan agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner. A report on that progress will be sent to the Permanent Secretary. 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 Commissioner on progress in delivering this scheme, annually. A self-assessment procedure will be used to monitor progress, to be agreed with the Commissioner.

6.19 The following elements of the scheme will be monitored to ensure the delivery of service in English and Welsh:

- forward planning and procurement;
- response times on all aspects of the delivery and effectiveness of services;
- corporate identity, bilingual publications, forms, publications, signs, notices, etc;
- implementation of staffing and training measures;
- provision and administration of services by agents' partners and contractors;
- performance in implementing the measures set out in the timetable;
- incidence and nature of complaints relating to our Welsh Language Scheme;
- implementation of arrangements made to deliver His Majesty's Passport Office services in Welsh and their effectiveness; and

- His Majesty's Passport Office's effectiveness in encouraging and facilitating the use of Welsh by other parties.
- customer service monitoring to include mystery shoppers and customer surveys.

## Targets

6.20 The Home Office will keep the effectiveness of this scheme under review and consider any necessary amendments to this scheme for further promoting equality between the Welsh and English languages in consultation with the Welsh Language Commissioner. If published standards and targets are not met, the Home Office will give an explanation to the Commissioner and describe the measures being taken to put matters right.

6.21 A report on performance against the commitments given in this scheme and summarised in the schedule will be submitted annually to the Welsh Language Commissioner. A report in an agreed form following consultation with the Welsh Language Commissioner will then be published.

6.22 The Home Office will monitor the number and nature of enquiries, suggestions and complaints it received against its Welsh language scheme. The results will be included in the published annual report on performance against scheme commitments.

6.23 The Home Office will conduct periodic opinion surveys to test the views of Welsh speaking service users about the range and quality of services in Welsh which we provide. Oral surveys will be carried out in the preferred language of the respondent, and questionnaires will be produced bilingually.

## Publishing Information

6.24 The Home Office Annual Report and Accounts will contain specific reference to the Welsh Language Scheme and the progress of implementation of the measures. A copy of the report will be submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

6.25 If published standards are not being met, the report will explain the reasons why and identify what steps are being taken will take to address the problem.

## Reviewing and Amending the Scheme

6.26 The scheme will be reviewed within four years of its coming into effect. Also, from time to time, the Home Office 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 Home Office undertakes existing functions, or for any other reason. No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Commissioner's approval.



## Complaints and Suggestions for Improvement

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

6.28 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: Head of Home Office Wales Team, General Buildings, 31-33 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0AB, Email: [Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk](mailto:Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk)

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

## Publicity

6.30 Copies of this scheme will be available from [Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk](mailto:Cymraeg@HomeOffice.gov.uk) and will be circulated to all interested parties within England and Wales. Details will also be available in both languages in the publications section of the Home Office pages of the Gov.UK website.

6.31 A standard sentence will be included on letterheads for use in Wales welcoming correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh or English.

6.32 A summary of the scheme will be displayed in the public waiting area of all Home Office premises in Wales including those of the Newport Passport Office and at any event in Wales. Information displayed will include services available and the extent to which the public can deal with The Home Office in Welsh.

6.33 All staff in the Home Office will receive a circular outlining the principal provisions and all staff in the Home Office will have access to a copy for the scheme.

6.34 We outsource translations to qualified translators. In circumstances where there are delays with translations due to the capacity of contracted translation providers, we will endeavour to resolve and provide translated materials as quickly as possible.

# Appendix A: Main Targets for Scheme Delivery

CRITERIA	TARGET	Date
<b>Publicising the Scheme</b>	We will publicise the refreshed scheme on our intranet, .Gov website and in any relevant publicity material, including internal communications to all Home Office staff outlining the principal provisions and information on how to access the scheme.	<b>April 2024</b>
	We will hold a series of staff awareness sessions across HMPO and Home Office business areas to promote knowledge of the scheme amongst staff and to explain how the scheme will affect their day-to-day work.	<b>Continuous</b>
	We will provide refreshed Welsh Language Scheme information to new starters for use in induction periods.	<b>Continuous</b>
	We will contact our agencies to draw their attention to the scheme and remind them of their responsibilities under it.	<b>Continuous</b>
	Where consultation responses are sought in Wales, to offer a Welsh language version.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Consultations</b>	We will provide refreshed guidance to staff informing them of the scheme and the implications for their work along with the point of contact for any enquiries. This information can also be used for new starter induction sessions.	<b>May 2024</b>
<b>Guidance</b>	We will provide guidance to senior managers underlining the relevance of the scheme to the process of policy planning and implementation, along with how each business area will be responsible for the scheme's implementation and operation.	<b>Continuous</b>
	We will provide updated desk instruction and guidance for staff to ensure they are aware of how to implement measures within the scheme.	<b>May 2024</b>

	As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Welsh Language Commissioner's advice document: <i>Technology, Websites and Software: Welsh Language Considerations</i> . We will aim to apply the principle of language equality to all future digital services. Specifications for new, replacement or adapted computer programs will look to include appropriate reference to the need to provide a bilingual service in line with this scheme.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Welsh Language Requirements into future digital solutions</b>	We continue to increase the Welsh language content on our websites. Following other departments, we will look to develop similar arrangements with GDS over the length of the new scheme.	<b>Ongoing</b>
	We will conduct a process mapping exercise for HMPO Newport to map the effectiveness in encouraging and facilitating the current use of Welsh Language services.	<b>May 2024</b>
	Apart from the records included on the PNC, DBS will endeavour to produce DBS certificates bilingually.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Audit of Compliance</b>	We will produce a self-assessment procedure to evaluate and monitor progress against the scheme.	<b>May 2024</b>
	We will present an annual report to the Welsh Language Commissioner for consideration under the Commissioner's regulatory framework.	<b>Annually</b>
	We have established champions in senior posts from key areas of the Home Office and HMPO to promote the scheme at a high level.	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Governance</b>	Promote and advertise the availability of Welsh language training to staff that is available via 'Dysgu Cymraeg'	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Training</b>	Advise on vacancies that we consider the ability to speak Welsh essential or desirable; this is with the aim to increase the number of staff who are competent and confident to conduct business in Welsh when required.	<b>Continuous</b>