

Forestry Commission Wales

Welsh Language Scheme

Welsh Language Scheme prepared under
Welsh Language Act 1993

The Scheme was approved by the Welsh
Language Board under Section 14(1) of
the Welsh Language Act 1993 on 13th
December 2011

Forestry Commission Wales has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how Forestry Commission Wales will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales.



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1. 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 Forestry Commission scheme covers the services that we provide to the public in Wales.

It describes how Forestry Commission will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act 1993 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.

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 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. The scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board under Section 14 of the Act. The original scheme came into effect on 1st April 2000, and reviewed and approved on 8th June 2007. This current reviewed scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board on December 13th 2011.

Further information about the scope and purpose of Welsh language schemes can be found in the Welsh Language Board's guidelines <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Pages/PublicationItem.aspx?puburl=/English/publications/Publications/120.pdf>

Since publication of our original scheme, we have implemented the requirements of the scheme and monitored our progress against the targets set and reported to the Welsh Language Board, on an annual basis. Forestry Commission has a Welsh Language Monitoring Group with Welsh Language Champions nominated representative for each of its offices in Wales. The Forestry Commission has prepared a Welsh Language Action Plan, setting out how it will operate in accordance with this scheme. As our relationship and alignment to the Welsh Government has developed since 2000, we have formed the view in conjunction with the Welsh Language Board, that a revised scheme is necessary to update a number of our commitments and targets.

In preparing this revised version of the scheme, we have taken the opportunity to refine, consolidate and enhance the wording of various measures by modifying them and introducing further clarity to them.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE ORGANISATION

A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR A BILINGUAL WALES

In February 2003, the Welsh Assembly Government published *Iaith Pawb*, (<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/welshlanguage/publications/iaithpawb/?lang=en>) a 'national action plan for a bilingual Wales'. The plan represents the first ever national framework for action planned at governmental level for preserving, sustaining and promoting the Welsh language throughout Wales. As an organisation dedicated to the stewardship of Wales's woodlands and one that acts as the Welsh Government's Forestry Division, we support the aims of this strategy for cultural diversity. We are pleased to present our revised Welsh Language Scheme as an important sectoral contribution towards the realisation of this broader national strategy.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The provision of services bilingually in Welsh and English by public bodies in Wales is one of the statutory equalities issues in Wales since the passing of the *Welsh Language Act 1993*. (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/38/contents>). We recognise that language is an essential part of a person's identity and that members of the public can express their views and needs better in their preferred language. In implementing the measures of this scheme, we will emphasise respect for the rights and fair aspirations of the users of the Welsh language. Therefore, our strategy for the forward planning of our services is based on the belief that it is always fair and reasonable for the public in Wales to expect to receive a service or communication from the Forestry Commission in Welsh or English, according to their choice.

The Welsh Language Measure became legislation on 9th February 2011 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/contents/enacted>) Forestry Commission Wales will ensure equality between Welsh and English language as set out in the legislation.

STATUS

The Forestry Commission is the Government department responsible for advising on and implementing forestry policy in Great Britain. Prior to devolution the Forestry Commission fell under the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and the Secretary of State for Wales. Following devolution these arrangements changed. The Forestry Commission in Wales now reports to the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government has taken on the formal powers in relation to forestry in Wales, including the power of direction over the Forestry Commission and financial responsibility for its activities in Wales. Non-devolved issues such as international policy, plant health, research and the UK forest standard remain as GB issues.

Forestry Commission Wales came into being on 1st April 2003 and serves as the forestry department of the Welsh Government to advise on and implement forestry policies. It also manages the national forest estate in Wales, amounting to some 125,000 hectares, to deliver

public benefits. The responsibility for forestry policy and its financial framework rests with the Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development.

Forestry Commission is a cross-border public body with a Chairman and Board of Commissioners. The responsibilities and powers of the Forestry Commissioners are derived mainly from the Forestry Acts 1967 and Plant Health Act 1967. (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/8>) There are a number of other applicable Great Britain Acts and Statutory Instruments, including the Forestry Commission Bye Laws 1982. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-677JBL>

NATURE OF THE BUSINESS, OUR STRATEGY, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Strategy

The Welsh Government sets out its aims and objectives for all woodlands and trees in Wales in its Woodlands for Wales strategy. (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wwstrategy>) Originally published in 2001 it was revised in 2009 setting out a 50-year plan for woodlands and trees and how the people of Wales can benefit from them. The strategy looks at the role they play in delivering social economic and environmental benefits and also the contribution they can make towards addressing the impacts of climate change. All trees in Wales are considered in the strategy - in rural and urban areas, and in public and private ownership.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of Forestry Commission Wales flow from Woodlands for Wales and from the wider objectives of the Welsh Government. Forestry Commission Wales's response to these challenges and ambitions are set out in the corporate plan "Our purpose and direction". (http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/portal/page?_pageid=33,1681837&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

This is a three year plan which is updated each year. Within the Corporate plan the work of FCW is built around 10 wide ranging work programmes which are grouped under four theses:

- Responding to climate change
- Woodlands for People
- Developing a competitive and integrated forest sector
- Improving environmental quality

As the Welsh Government's department of forestry our work takes place in or has an influence on the public, private and voluntary sectors. The work we do is undertaken in a number of ways:

- Stewardship of the public woodlands we manage on behalf of the Welsh Government
- Business in the forestry sector
- Grants
- Regulation
- Policy development
- Communications and research
- Partnerships

Location

The National Office for Forestry Commission Wales is in Aberystwyth from where most of our departmental and corporate functions are delivered along with other sub offices across Wales.

The wider Forestry Commission operates across Scotland and England, as well as having an Executive Research Agency [Forest Research], which operates at a GB wide level.

3. OUR VISION

THE FORESTRY COMMISSION'S VISION FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

During the initial period of implementation of our Welsh Language Scheme, we focused on establishing firm foundations for operating bilingually and offering language choice when dealing with the public. We have now evolved a vision for our future development as a bilingual organisation. In operating this revised scheme over the next decade we have several long term objectives which we will seek to achieve. A Bilingual Strategy is now in place to implement the statutory guidance published under Welsh Language Act 1993 and provide a working tool which enables Forestry Commission Wales to plan a bilingual workforce for the future.

Over the next four years we will

- operate increasingly as a naturally bilingual organisation, and forward plan to increase the proportion of staff with speaking and writing skills in Welsh in order to encourage our staff to take pride in the Welsh language and the Forestry Commission's commitment to providing bilingual services;
- foster a greater interest in our work among Welsh speakers and learners, with a view to attracting more applicants from Welsh speaking communities to pursue careers with the Forestry Commission;
- nurture more Welsh speaking specialists in the forestry, community and environmental fields relevant to the Forestry Commission's work to help contribute towards an increased use of Welsh in specialist subject areas;
- influence other organisations and individuals both within and outside the forestry and environmental sectors to operate in accordance with good bilingual practice;
- seek opportunities to promote and develop the use of Welsh proactively through the medium of our services and specialisms;
- take advantage of opportunities to interpret our commitment to the Welsh language as a parallel to our work of managing and safeguarding the woodlands of Wales.

4. SERVICE PLANNING, PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND DELIVERY

4.1 POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND INITIATIVES

The Director and the Forestry Commission Wales Management Board will ensure that the principle of language equality is considered in all aspects of our work, and that each Unit operates in accordance with the scheme. Financial support for the scheme will be provided from within the existing planned expenditure.

All new projects and policies formulated and operated by Forestry Commission Wales or on our behalf will be subject to the requirements of this scheme. During the planning and preparation of any such projects and policies, we will ensure that they are consistent with the aims of this scheme.

Our consultation documents will discuss the relationship between the Welsh language and the policies, initiatives and services under development.

When we contribute to the development of 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.

The Welsh Language Officer, reporting directly to Forestry Commission Wales Director, will be given the responsibility for overseeing the scheme on a day to day basis and for maintaining a monitoring process. This Officer is identified in Forestry Commission literature and on our website. Forestry Commission Wales Director and the Management Board will be responsible for identifying the need for any evolutionary changes to the scheme and for providing the Welsh Language Board with the required reports. The Welsh Language Officer will be the contact for enquiries regarding the scheme and its operation.

4.2 DELIVERING SERVICES

Our normal practice will be to ensure that our services are available to the public in Welsh. The implementation of our Welsh Language Scheme is based on delivering services in Welsh to the general public by means of a Unit responsibility approach.

- Unit Managers will identify how their service provision will be delivered in Welsh and English on a team basis;
- We will ensure that each member of staff has access to a copy of the scheme and to staff guidance relating to specific services;
- Management Board members and Unit Managers will be responsible for encouraging the use of Welsh within the workplace;
- Members of staff may use Welsh or English in their work as long as this is consistent with the scheme and does not impede the effectiveness of internal communication;
- Services provided in Welsh will be equal to those provided in English.

When conducting business with another business, we will do so using their preferred language.

We will be guided by Welsh Language Board guidance on Contracting out public service contracts and the Welsh language <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/using/Pages/ContractauGwasanaethauCyhoeddus.aspx>

4.3 STANDARDS OF QUALITY

Standards of Quality services provided in Welsh and English will be of equal quality and standard will be provided within the same timescale, and will be kept under continuous review to ensure equal standards.

4.4 OUR REGULATORY FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES UNDERTAKEN ON OUR BEHALF BY THIRD PARTIES

Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties will be consistent with the relevant parts of the scheme, when these relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales. This will ensure that third parties provide those services in accordance with the scheme.

All contracts that provide a service to the public will be subject to scrutiny to ensure that the contract complies with the requirements of Welsh Language Scheme.

When we are the strategic and financial leader within a formal partnership, we will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme.

When we join a formal 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.

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. We will be guided by the Welsh Language Board guidance on Partnerships and the Welsh Language. (<http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/using/Pages/Partneriaethau'rIaithGymraeg.aspx>)

4.5 AWARDING GRANTS

When we award grants for activities to be undertaken in Wales, including public access and recreation, we will include conditions with regard to the use of Welsh. We will take into account the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on awarding grants.

5. DEALING WITH WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

5.1 WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

5.1.1 The Forestry Commission welcomes correspondence in both Welsh and English. When someone writes to us in Welsh we will reply in Welsh. Our target time for replying will be the same

as for letters or e-mails in English (acknowledge receipt within 2 working days and reply within 20 working days).

We will initiate correspondence in Welsh following face-to-face or telephone conversation in Welsh unless we know that the recipient would prefer correspondence in English.

5.1.2 When we initiate correspondence with an individual, group, or organisation, we will do so bilingually unless we know that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh or English only. All standard letters and circulars intended for the public will be bilingual. Stationery will be bilingual, including titles, addresses and logos.

Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual. Enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual. All hard-copy Welsh correspondence that we issue will be signed in Welsh or bilingually.

Forestry Commission Wales has a translation service to assist with correspondence and check for accuracy. Staff will be encouraged with the help of Welsh computer technology to deal with routine/non technical items of Welsh correspondence independently. Staff with a high level of writing competency in Welsh will be able to deal with their own written correspondence using the computer technology provided. Staff with little or lower level of written competency in Welsh will need to have the work checked to ensure quality and standard.

FCW will maintain an up-to-date record of those who prefer to deal with us through the medium of Welsh.

5.2 E-MAIL

Name, job details and contact details will be bilingual on all staff auto-signatures on e-mail.

All e-mail out of office replies will be bilingual.

5.3 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

We welcome telephone enquiries in Welsh or English. Calls to the National Customer Services contact centre will be answered with a bilingual greeting. The caller will be dealt with in their preferred language.

5.3.1 INITIAL GREETING

All our staff will use bilingual messages on their personal answering machines, including mobile phones.

Local office answering machines will have a bilingual recorded message. The Welsh message will precede the English message.

5.3.2 DEALING WITH CALLS

If the caller wishes to speak Welsh, our contact centre staff will try to connect to a Welsh speaker to deal with the enquiry.

The Commission's internal telephone directory, which is available to all staff and the contact centre team on the intranet, indicates where staff work, their job titles, and who are fluent Welsh speakers and learners. When we set up telephone help-lines or similar facilities to give information, services or support to the public, we will provide a Welsh language service. This will be advertised alongside the English language service, both services will share the same telephone number.

5.4 PUBLIC MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

5.4.1 PUBLIC MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES – ADMINISTRATION ARRANGEMENTS

We will provide simultaneous or consecutive translation from Welsh into English at our public meetings unless we have established that all participants are likely to use the same language.

Invitations and advertisements for public meetings will be bilingual and either say that translation facilities will be available or invite the public to let us know in advance which language is preferred.

We will encourage contributions in Welsh at public meetings and select suitably qualified Welsh speaking members of staff to attend public meetings. We will provide bilingual papers and other information for public meetings and ensure that reports and papers produced after meetings are published in Welsh and English.

When we arrange seminars, training courses or similar events for the public in Wales, we will assess the need to provide them in Welsh. In conducting this assessment, we will consider the preferred language of those attending

When we arrange face-to-face meetings with members of the public, we will establish their language preference at the earliest opportunity and ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh speaking member of staff deals with those whose prefer to speak in Welsh.

Administrative staff will greet, give directions and respond in both Welsh and English at the reception desks of all bilingual conferences and meetings.

Identity badges provided by Forestry Commission Wales for those attending meetings or conferences will be bilingual.

At bilingual meetings, the Chair will open proceedings with a bilingual greeting and draw attention to the availability of the translation service.

When we undertake public surveys, we will ensure that all aspects of communication with the public will be bilingual including verbal contact. Respondents will be asked if they wish to respond to the survey in Welsh or English.

5.4.2 INTERNAL STAFF MEETINGS

Forestry Commission Wales will conduct the two all Wales staff meetings bilingually. Staff will be encouraged to contribute using their preferred language. Translation provision will be provided at these meetings.

All group meetings will be opened and closed bilingually.

5.4.3 SCHOOL AND VOLUNTARY GROUP MEETINGS/VISITS

Forestry Commission staff who undertake visits with schools and voluntary groups will offer the choice of delivery in either Welsh or English.

6. THE FORESTRY COMMISSION'S PUBLIC FACE

6.1 PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS, EXHIBITIONS AND ADVERTISING

All of the publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material we use in Wales will be produced bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions where the English version is for circulation throughout Britain. 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 and will be equally accessible. Exceptions to the above will be:

- material used at events such as Wales' eisteddfods where Welsh only publicity, public information, exhibition and advertising material may be used;
- material aimed at a limited and specialised audience. We will consider the need to produce this bilingually in each case, whilst bearing in mind the nature of the audience and the subject being dealt with.

Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers and periodicals distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Both versions will appear simultaneously and be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality. In Welsh language publications advertisements and media presentations will be in Welsh only.

6.2 PUBLICATIONS

We will publish all material made available to the public bilingually, with the Welsh and English versions together in one document. Welsh will appear to the left or above the English, or equally prominent (e.g. 'tilt and turn' bilingual publications). If versions have to be published separately, for practical reasons because of the size of the document, both versions will be of equal size and quality. Each version will contain a message stating that the publication is also available in the other language.

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

Some of the scientific and technical reports based on the Forestry Commission GB work intended for a specialist and limited audience will be published in English only. Others such as future revisions of the UK Forest Standard and Forest Guidelines that have a more policy dimension or a broader audience, will be published in full bilingually. A middle category of technical publication has been identified where the Welsh version may be made available on the website only and printed on demand.

The decision on whether Welsh is a requirement for scientific and technical documents except those specifically stated in paragraph above will be made by a scoring system, which will be agreed with the Board. It sets out clearly those items that will always be bilingual and those that will usually be in one language, as well as how these versions will be made available. The criteria will be applied to all new publications including revisions.

6.3 FORMS AND ASSOCIATED EXPLANATORY MATERIAL

We will ensure that all forms and associated explanatory material for use by the public in Wales will be fully bilingual, normally with the Welsh and English versions together in one document, this will include interactive forms published on our website..

If Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, for practical reasons because of the size of the document, both versions will be of equal size and quality. We will ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly a message stating that the form is also available in the other language.

When other organisations distribute forms on our behalf, we will ensure that the forms sent will be bilingual in accordance with our scheme.

6.4 WEBSITE AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

We will maintain a fully bilingual website. All Welsh and English language publications will be posted on our website at the same time. When re-designing new websites or re-developing our existing website, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards(<http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Pages/PublicationItem.aspx?puburl=/English/publications/Publications/3963.pdf>) and any other guidance issued by the Board with regard to developing websites.

Whenever we post English language publications on our website, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time.

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 Welsh Language Board's ICT standards. We will modify our existing information and communications technology systems to ensure that they enable us to provide information and services in Welsh and operate in accordance with this scheme.

6.5 CORPORATE IDENTITY

We will adopt a bilingual corporate identity in Wales. Our 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 our stationery and material such as publications, advertisements, business cards, identity badges, passes, car park tickets, acknowledgement cards, complement slips, invitations and Commission vehicles, buildings and displays. Welsh will appear to the left or above English, or equally prominent.

The size, quality, legibility and prominence of the text on all material must adhere to the principle of equality. We may use Welsh only branding for some initiatives.

6.6 SIGNS IN WALES

We will ensure that all of our permanent and temporary signs, which give information to the public will be bilingual with the Welsh and English text being treated equally with regard to size, legibility and prominence. We will follow the Welsh Language Board's 'Best Practice for Bilingual Signs' guidance, which includes:

- Signs should be fully bilingual, with the Welsh language appearing to the left of or above the English language
- Both Welsh and English must be equally visible and eligible, and easily distinguishable from one another – design elements like different text colours can be used to achieve this
- Signs should not include a mix of italic and normal text – or different font sizes – to distinguish between the languages
- Where there is a relationship between a number of signs – for example at the same location – they should all use the same method of distinguishing between Welsh and English

Signs used at events such as the eisteddfod may be in Welsh only. If separate Welsh and English signs are provided, they will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence.

6.7 OFFICIAL NOTICES, PUBLIC NOTICES AND STAFF RECRUITMENT NOTICES, PRESS RELEASES AND CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

Press releases to the Welsh language press and broadcasting media in Wales will be issued in Welsh. Press releases on our website will be bilingual. We will ensure that Welsh speakers are available to undertake interviews with the Welsh language press and broadcasting media.

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. The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence. For Welsh language publications, the notices will be in Welsh only.

In 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 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.

7. IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME

7.1 STAFFING

We will be guided by the Welsh Language Board's *Guidance on Promoting and Facilitating Bilingual Workplaces*. (<http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Pages/PublicationItem.aspx?puburl=/English/publications/Publications/Promoting%20and%20Facilitating%20Bilingual%20Workplaces.pdf>)

7.2 BILINGUAL SKILLS STRATEGY

The Commission will operate a Bilingual Skills Strategy for managing its skills resource in accordance with the methodology recommended by the Welsh Language Board.

<http://alpacorn.forestry.gov.uk:7777/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ECONNECT/FC%20WALES/FCW%20HR%20TEAM/WMB%2029%2010%20BILINGUAL%20SKILLS%20STRATEGY%20REPORT.DOC>

The level of Welsh required for each post will be identified in accordance with this Strategy.

With regard to operating the Strategy, the language skills requirements of new posts will be determined initially by Unit Managers, and then verified and agreed by the Welsh Language Officer. Guidance to assist Managers in making their initial determinations on the Welsh language skills requirements for specific posts is available as part of the Bilingual Skills Strategy. Where there is no agreement, the language skills level for the post will be determined by the relevant senior manager and if necessary by Director Wales.

For some posts the post holder will need to be fully fluent, either in spoken Welsh, or in both spoken and written Welsh. In such cases the need for bilingual skills is immediate, and the officer should be fluent on appointment. For certain other posts for which Welsh is an essential requirement, it may be acceptable for a non-Welsh speaker or Welsh learner to be appointed on condition that Welsh is learned within a clearly defined timescale to the standard required to fulfil

the needs of the post. Staff appointed to these posts will follow a specified learning programme over a set period that will lead to them achieving the required standard by the end of the period.

We also need to develop staff in order to deliver this bilingual service to the public. We will need to respond to any shortfall in Welsh language skills through internal and external recruitment and selection by;

- skills acquisition or improvement;
- reorganising duties and responsibilities/ job redesign.

Progress on the implementation of the Bilingual Skills Strategy will be by production of regular progress and monitoring reports to the Welsh Language Monitoring Group and the Welsh Language Board.

7.3 WELSH LANGUAGE AWARENESS TRAINING

For all posts in the Forestry Commission the ability to pronounce Welsh place names and personal names, and the ability to understand and use basic phrases of Welsh is an essential requirement. All staff need to be able to use Welsh for informal greetings, including opening meetings, and when answering the phone.

Training will be given to all new staff as part of their induction programme. Existing staff with no bilingual skill will have the opportunity to attend Welsh Language Awareness training to ensure that they are able to pronounce people and place names in Welsh, and can use basic Welsh phrases.

7.4 POST FILLING REQUIREMENTS

The posts for which fluency in Welsh is an essential requirement, are key posts involving significant direct contact with the public, and we will do our utmost to meet our stated targets when appointing to these posts. All of our workplaces and services that have contact with the public in Wales (whether written or spoken) need access to sufficient and appropriately skilled Welsh-speaking staff to enable them to deliver a full service in Welsh to the public.

We have identified those workplaces or roles where Welsh language ability is essential (with regard to speaking, reading and writing – all to specified levels).

This requirement is defined as a component of a workplace or team, or is attached to a particular role for example: Welsh language skills must be available in posts and/or teams where:

- Front line services are provided, for example reception areas and our contact centre.
- A post/team is a main point of contact with the Welsh-speaking public and/or organisations, including local authorities, schools and colleges, charities, community groups and voluntary organisations.
- A point of contact is provided for consultation documents, projects and services.
- They regularly organise and/or attend Forestry Commission conferences/external events and;
- They administer grants, tenders, application forms.
- The main purpose is providing services/information to the public

7.4.1 TEAM COMMITMENTS

In addition, there will be posts for which specific skills in Welsh are an essential requirement in order to meet the team commitments. As an organisation we will aim to have staff with expertise across all our subject areas who are competent in spoken and written Welsh. In all of these areas and service situations, the Commission will aim to ensure through the implementation of its Bilingual Skills Strategy that service provision is of equal quality and available in Welsh and English.

The Commission will aim to ensure that staff members fluent in Welsh are available at all times in our offices and teams to offer a service in the Welsh language.

Every Unit Manager will be guided by the Bilingual Skills Strategy drawn up under this Scheme when establishing or reviewing team responsibilities and producing associated person specifications. <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/using/Pages/Recriwtioa'rlaithGymraeg.aspx>

We will continually monitor the number of Welsh speakers who are directly or indirectly involved in providing services to the public in accordance with the Welsh Language Scheme. The aim will be to ensure that numbers reflect Forestry Commission Wales' commitment to operating increasingly as a naturally bilingual organisation.

7.4.2 EXTERNAL APPLICANTS

Applications will be equally available in both languages and further details of the post and other relevant employment documentation in the language of their choice.

7.4.3 INTERVIEW

Where the request is made by the applicant for a Welsh language interview, we will interview in English and Welsh as we require equality of standard in both languages, following Welsh Language Board guidelines on recruitment.

- If fluency in both Welsh and English is essential for a post, interviews for that post will be conducted using both Welsh and English. The interview panel will require at least one fluent Welsh speaker who will be responsible for assessing the candidate's level of ability in Welsh, against the required standard. There will also be a language test conducted separately and observed by the Welsh speaking Board member.
- Standard guidance and instructions for interview panel members responsible for the assessment and evaluation of skills in Welsh will be prepared
- Contracts of employment will be provided in Welsh or English in accordance with the appointee's stated language preference.

7.5 EXTERNAL INITIATIVES

It can be difficult to recruit suitably qualified Welsh speaking staff into some posts. The Commission is seeking to address this particular problem in different ways:-

- We are one of the lead partners in the AmNawdd scheme for sponsoring Welsh speaking students following environment-related courses in higher education, and provides work placements for the students taking part in the scheme
- We contribute to the Welsh Language Working Group for the Environment Sector, a key partnership drawing together representatives from across the environmental, higher education and language planning sectors
- In order to reach potential applicants with Welsh language skills, we will ensure that we include universities in Wales, further education colleges and Welsh medium/bilingual schools when undertaking careers related visits (including careers and jobs fairs).

7.6 STAFF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Commission will provide appropriate levels of learning support including time, course fees as advised by our Learning and Development criteria to help staff receive Welsh language training to develop their Welsh skills.

Learning requirements will be identified as part of the induction process for new staff and as part of ongoing development requirements for existing staff. The agreed learning programme will be incorporated in Individual Learning Plans for both new and existing staff and evaluated accordingly through our Performance Management system.

Guidance is available regarding Welsh language courses and learning options

Practical support will be provided by the means of a Mentoring Scheme should the learner wish to participate. Time will be allocated on their Forward Job Plan to meet up on a regular basis with their Mentor for informal conversation using the skills learnt in Welsh lessons.

Siop Siarad will be introduced in Offices where there are a cluster of Welsh learners.

Forestry Commission Wales will encourage Welsh speakers and Welsh learners to make use of their spoken and written Welsh wherever practical and support the efforts of Welsh learners.

In order to measure the progress of those staff following a specified Welsh learning programme to attain set targets, identified as part of their contract of employment, regular assessments will be conducted by an external assessor. Programmes will be closely monitored and full support given by the Commission in reaching the level of attainment required. If attainment targets are not reached in the time allowed, the post-holder's performance will be reviewed in accordance with the contract of employment.

8. INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE SCHEME

The measures in this scheme carry the full authority, support and approval of our organisation. Managers will have the responsibility of implementing those aspects of the scheme relevant to their work.

The Welsh Language Scheme has an integral action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme is implemented.. 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 we deliver the commitments set out in this scheme as soon as possible.

The scheme will be available to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on our website in a prominent place and will be made available to all staff. Our staff guidance notes will be amended to reflect the measures contained in this scheme. We will arrange briefing and training, sessions for our staff to increase awareness of this scheme and to explain how it will affect their day to day work.

We have access to a translation service of qualified members of the Association of Welsh Translators.

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.

8.1 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS

We will be guided by the advice issued by the Welsh Language Board, following consultation with the Information Commissioner, on the Welsh Language Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations.

When we release information under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, we will translate them into the applicant's preferred language.

8.2 MONITORING THE SCHEME

We will monitor our progress in delivering this scheme against the targets set out in the action plan and report to Director Wales. Our existing monitoring and reporting procedures will include reference to progress in delivering this scheme.

Forestry Commission Wales has agreed to adopt a new framework for monitoring and reporting on implementation of our Welsh Language Scheme to Welsh Language Board and will report back annually every June.

Forestry Commission Wales will report on:-

- Implementation of the scheme's timetable

- Mainstreaming the Welsh Language by producing a copy of the generic tool(s) used by the organization to assess the impact of new policies, initiatives and legislation on the Welsh language
- Examples of policy documents, legislation or new initiatives planned or produced by organization which ensure Welsh language is main consideration
- Monitor the ability of frontline staff to deliver services such as telephone services and face to face services in accordance with the scheme
- Assess annually compliance of services provided through 3rd parties
- Information about support given by organization to staff to learn Welsh and efforts to ensure awareness of the language amongst staff
- Assess the extent to which needs of Welsh speaking service users are considered within development and procurement of new IT systems
- Report on number of complaints received by organization about a failure to provide services in Welsh

8.3 REVIEWING THE SCHEME

The scheme will be reviewed on a regular basis, every four years. No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Board's approval.

8.4 HANDLING COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Complaints related to this scheme, or suggestions for improvement, should be directed to Director Wales at the following address:

Forestry Commission Wales
Welsh Assembly Government
Rhodfa Padarn
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3UR

Or by e-mail to: fcwenquiries@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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

Forestry Commission Wales serves as the forestry department of the Welsh Government and is responsible to Welsh Ministers

Contact

Forestry Commission Wales
Welsh Government Offices
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3UR

Tel: 0300 068 0300
Fax: 0300 068 0301
E-mail: fcwenquiries@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Web: www.forestry.gov.uk/wales
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Appendix 1

BILINGUAL WORKPLACES – SUMMARY OF INTERNAL ACTIONS

BACKGROUND

Forestry Commission Wales will be guided by the Boards *Promoting and Facilitating Bilingual Workplaces* (<http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/Pages/PublicationItem.aspx?puburl=/English/publications/Publications/Promoting%20and%20Facilitating%20Bilingual%20Workplaces.pdf>) advice regarding the use of Welsh in workplaces on methods of achieving this.

We will encourage our staff to take pride in the Welsh language and Forestry Commission Wales' commitment to providing bilingual services.

We will operate increasingly as a naturally bilingual organisation, and forward plan to increase the proportion of staff with Welsh speaking and writing skills in order to:

- i. organise the scheme's commitments and;
- ii. decrease staff dependency on the translation service.

Aim to foster a greater interest in our work among Welsh speakers and learners, with a view to attracting more applicants from Welsh communities to pursue careers with the Forestry Commission and within the wider forestry sector;

Seek opportunities to promote and develop the use of Welsh proactively through the medium of our services and specialisms;

The delivery of services to the public will be enhanced by a strong Welsh language ethos in the workplace, which includes the proper integration of Welsh within all aspects of the organisation's operation;

Management Board members and Unit Managers will be responsible for encouraging the use of Welsh within the workplace wherever practical;

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME AND GUIDANCE

We will ensure that each member of staff has access to a copy of the scheme and to staff guidance relating to specific team functions and the service provided by that team to the public. The scheme and the staff guidance will also be made available on the organisation's intranet.

COMMUNICATION

Members of staff may use Welsh or English in their work as long as this is consistent with the scheme and does not impede the effectiveness of internal communication.

There will be encouragement for Welsh speakers and Welsh learners to make more use of their oral and written Welsh in all aspects of their work, and for Welsh speakers to support learners' efforts in this regard.

Welsh computer technology, word, x-cel and the grammar/spell check program Cysgliad will be offered to all staff.

Name, job details and contact details will be bilingual on all staff auto-signatures on e-mail.

All e-mail out of office replies will be bilingual.

All our staff will answer the telephone with a bilingual greeting and use bilingual messages on their personal answering machines, including mobile phones.

Local office answering machines that are linked to the contact centre will have a bilingual recorded message. The Welsh message will precede the English message.

The Commission's internal telephone directory, which is available to all staff and the contact centre team on the intranet, indicates where staff work, their job titles, and who are fluent Welsh speakers and learners.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Training will be given to all new staff attending Forestry Commission Wales arranged New Entrants Course and current staff to ensure that all are able to pronounce place names and names of people in Welsh, and can use basic Welsh phrases.

MEETINGS

Forestry Commission Wales will conduct the two annual all Wales staff meetings bilingually. Staff will be encouraged to contribute using their preferred language. Translation provision will be provided at these two meetings.

All meetings will be opened and closed bilingually.

WELSH LANGUAGE MONITORING GROUP

Welsh Language Monitoring Group set up to oversee and monitor the implementation of Forestry Commission Wales's Welsh Language Scheme.

Appendix 2

FORESTRY COMMISSION WALES

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

ACTION PLAN

Section	Action(s)	Target Date	Responsibility
3	Vision		
3	Continue to support Amnawdd Student Scheme through providing work placements for Welsh language students and annual financial contribution Contribute as an active partner to management of the Scheme	June/July annually	HR Wales Team Unit Managers
4	Service Planning and Delivery		
4.1	Welsh Language Scheme requirement to be assessed at the outset for each new Policy and Project in Wales using the assessment tool developed.	December 2012	HR Wales Team Policy Team



4.1	Monitor inclusion of Welsh Language in Equality Analysis documents	Annually	HR Wales Team Unit Managers Management Board
4.2	Ensure each member of staff has access to copy of scheme and guidance notes on Intranet, also ensure that staff who do not have access to computers have copies	December 2012	HR Wales Team Welsh Language Monitoring Group Members Unit Managers
4.3	Ensure Standard of Quality Services is provided equally in Welsh and English in all areas of business and monitored by Welsh Language Monitoring Group Members in their day to day duties	December 2012	HR Team WLMG
	Ensure Welsh Language is written into Pre-Qualification Questionnaire used in Procurement process as per advice given by Welsh Language Board	December 2012	HR Wales Team Procurement Advisor
5 Dealing With The Welsh Speaking Public			
5.1 5.1.1 5.2	Guidance Note 4 – Written and Electronic Communication placed on Intranet and will be updated in accordance with revised Welsh Language Scheme in consultation with Office Services, with reminder sent out to all staff	Task completed to be reviewed annually in June	HR Wales Team Office Services
5.1.2	Communication Plan and Guidance Note to be issued to all staff and placed on	November 2011	HR Wales Team IT and Comms



	Intranet on Welsh Language Computer Technology in consultation with IT and Comms Manager		Manager
5.3 5.3.1 5.3.2	Guidance Note 3 – Telephone Communication and Reception Areas placed on Intranet and will be updated in accordance with revised Welsh Language Scheme	Task completed to be reviewed annually in April	HR Wales Team
5.4.1	Guidance Notes need to be written on Conducting of Internal and Public Meetings and Conferences, issued to staff and placed on Intranet	January 2012	HR Wales Team
6 Forestry Commission Wales's Public Face			
6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6	Guidance on branding, signage and templates available on Intranet and updated as necessary	Task completed to be reviewed annually	Interpretation Manager
7 Implementing The Scheme			
7.1	Guidance Notes on recruitment placed on Human Resource and Welsh Language Pages on Intranet and updated regularly	Task completed to be reviewed annually	HR Wales Team
7.3	Guidance Notes 2 – Welsh Language Learning options placed on Intranet along with Learning and Development Criteria	Task completed to be reviewed annually in August	HR Wales Team
7.3	Welsh Language Officer to	October	Welsh Language

	attend Welsh Language Awareness Training to enable delivery to all new staff attending New Entrants Courses and existing staff who request advancement to level 1	2011	Officer
7.6	Provide ongoing support to Welsh learners through Mentoring Scheme, advice notes placed on Intranet Encourage introduction of Slop Siarad in all Offices by meeting learners and help initiate the process	December 2011	HR Wales Team Mentors

8 Internal Administrative Arrangements To Implement The Scheme			
8	Prepare Communication Plan to the business for revised Welsh Language Scheme	October 2011	HR Wales Team Welsh Language Monitoring Group
8.2	Forestry Commission Wales to report annually to Welsh Language Board	June annually	HR Wales Team Unit Managers Welsh Language Monitoring Group
	Scheme will be reviewed every four years and agreed by Welsh Language Board	June 2015	HR Wales Team Unit Managers Management Board
8.4	Guidance Notes on	Task	Secretariat Team



	Complaints Procedure placed on Intranet and updated	completed to be reviewed annually in March each year	
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