

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Monitoring Report

1st April 2020 - 31st March 2021



**Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru**

**South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service**

This document is also available in Welsh.

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Introduction

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service is pleased to publish its 2020 - 2021 Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report. The Service has continued to monitor its progress against the Standards throughout the past year, despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. During this time we limited the number of people entering our Fire and Rescue Service premises and implemented home working for our office based employees.

For a period of time our community interactions were significantly affected and we had to re-think the way we had previously carried out some aspects of our work. Video link applications have been used extensively across the Service in place of face to face meetings and interviews.

In October 2020 the Service participated in a thematic study for the Welsh Language Commissioner about the Impact of Covid-19 on Welsh Language provision. Throughout the pandemic we upheld our commitment to the Welsh Language Rights of our Service users and continued to offer quality bilingual services.

Highlights for 2020 - 2021

- Our new bilingual E-Recruitment system was launched in January 2021
- A very busy year for the Translation Team, with a variety of work undertaken throughout the pandemic
- Two Service leaders attended the Academi Wales programme – ‘Leading in a Bilingual Country’
- The Service participated in the 2nd Annual Welsh Language Rights day, promoting rights for services users and employees
- Welsh Language and Culture, three key dates promoted internally for staff
- A significant increase in the number of staff using their portal accounts to register their Welsh Language Skills
- New qualification for Recruit Firefighters incorporating a 6 module Welsh course

Background to the Welsh Language Standards

Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, all public service organisations in Wales are required to comply with language duties, which ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language. The duties encourage promotion of the Welsh language, the use of Welsh within internal administration and require that provision is made for the accessibility of Welsh to the public.

Section 44 of the 2011 Measure permits the Welsh Language Commissioner to issue a Compliance notice, requiring a body to comply with one or more Standards specifically applicable to it. The Welsh Language Standards (No. 5) Regulations 2016, were then introduced to the Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales.

In accordance with section 44 of the 2011 measure, the purpose of the Welsh Language Standards is to provide:

- Clarity for organisations on the Welsh language
- Clarity for Welsh speakers on what services they can expect to receive in Welsh
- Greater consistency in Welsh language services and improvement of quality for users

Standards applied to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

A total of 150 Welsh Language Standards are now in place within the following categories:

- **Service delivery** 66 Standards
- **Policy making** 9 Standards
- **Operational** 47 Standards
- **Record keeping*** 8 Standards
- **Supplementary*** 20 Standards across 4 categories

The record keeping* and supplementary* Standards are applied to help organisations with the process of self-regulating their compliance.

Welsh Language Standards website page

The Service has a dedicated Welsh Language Standards page featured under 'Who we are' on the Service's website menu. The page contains information explaining the Welsh Language Standards along with links to the Authority's Compliance notice, Implementation plan and Annual monitoring report.

Details are provided for the website user explaining how to register a complaint or compliment regarding compliance with the Standards and contact details are provided for queries regarding our Service and the Welsh language.

Link to Welsh Language Standards page:

www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/who-we-are/Welsh-language-Standards

Procedure for complaints and compliments regarding the Welsh Language Standards:

www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/contact-us



Implementing the Welsh Language Standards and Monitoring Compliance

The responsibility for the Authority's compliance with the Welsh Language Standards lies with the Executive Leadership Team and the Heads of Service. Each Head of Service is responsible for compliance with the Standards relevant to their department and is required to carry out a compliance review once a year. As a public body the Service is required to self-regulate for the Welsh Language Commissioner. This involves monitoring our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and ensuring that we provide enough opportunity for people to use the Welsh language when working with us or using our services.

Standards set by the Welsh Language Commissioner to assist with self-regulation are the record keeping Standards and supplementary Standards. The Authority is required to record periodically how we comply with the Welsh Language Standards and how we deal with the public. Recording this detail enables us to demonstrate how we maintain compliance. Monitoring compliance with the Standards also involves publishing an Annual Monitoring Report on the external website by 30th September each year.

The content of this report is as follows:

- The way in which the Service has complied with the different classes of Standards
- The number of employees who have Welsh Language Skills - Standard 147
- The number (and percentage if relevant) of staff members who attended specific training that must be provided in Welsh if it is available in English (namely training on recruitment and interviewing, performance management, complaints and disciplinary procedures, induction, dealing with the public and health and safety) - Standard 148
- The number of new and vacant posts categorised as those where Welsh Language Skills are essential, desirable, not necessary, or need to be learnt - Standard 151
- The number of complaints the organisation received about each class of Standards - Standard 143

Systems for Monitoring and Reporting

Further progress was made during 2020 – 2021 on the Service’s new system for monitoring and reporting compliance with the Standards. All Standards were entered into the system bilingually and dashboard pages were established to illustrate performance and direction of travel for each standard. Additional work is required to confirm the ‘owners’ for the Standards.

Welsh Language Translation Services

The Service has its own in house Translation team with two permanent members of staff. The team operate as part of the wider Media and Communications Department and play a key role in ensuring the Service continues to deliver the highest standard of bilingual content for all stakeholders. During the past year, despite the additional professional and personal challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, the team have made an outstanding contribution to the Service, providing prompt translation for a range of materials including complex technical documents, business plans, reports, video and social media messaging.

The team also supports major All-Wales campaigns such as ‘Don’t Fuel the Fire’ targeting deliberate rubbish fires with the intention to reduce incidences and educate the public about safe disposal of waste items. The toolkit was released in 2020 inclusive of press releases, images, video and social media messages. A professional package of translation was provided, enabling us to share the toolkit with a range of partners for use on their own channels, thus amplifying our message.

Our translators continue to provide informal support to individual staff members who identify as Welsh learners and wish to practice their skills in the workplace. This support has been invaluable and in building confidence for staff.

Total number of words for 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

- Translated: 286,312
- Proof read: 86,896

Corporate Policies and Procedures

The Service complies with the legal requirement of carrying out Equality Risk Assessments (changing to Integrated Assessment in October 2021) and includes Language as an area for assessment. Assessments are completed for all policies and procedures, including older documents being amended. Our Corporate policies which substantiate all service delivery and supporting activities are public facing. The policies are published on the Service's Website in both Welsh and English and can be accessed here: www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/who-we-are/corporate-policy

Job posts and Welsh language skills

The Service advertises vacancies in the medium of Welsh and English and these are featured on the 'Latest Vacancies' page of its website. All job roles within the Service are categorised as Welsh Essential or Welsh Desirable. For those posts within the Essential category, candidates are assessed on their Welsh Language skills as part of the Shortlisting and Selection process.

New and Vacant posts 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

- Welsh essential: 3
- Welsh desirable: 28

New E-Recruitment System

During January 2021 the Recruitment and Resourcing Team launched its new E-Recruitment System and On-line application form. The system was trialled with two large scale Recruitment Campaigns; the Wholetime Duty System Firefighter and Control Firefighter. The new system provides the user with the option to navigate its pages and submit an application through the medium of Welsh.

Within the online form, applicants are requested to provide information about Welsh language status e.g. Welsh speaker or learner and their overall level of Welsh. The form also provides an option to receive further correspondence through the medium of Welsh. The new system has already improved the job application experience for our end users. Further work for the On-line system is scheduled to establish a reliable process for extracting data from completed application forms.

Academi Wales - Leading in a Bilingual Country

In March 2021 two of our Service Leaders began a programme of workshops with Academi Wales on 'Leading in a Bilingual Country'. The programme is inspired by the Welsh Government's Strategy "Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers" which has three main objectives:

1. To increase the number of Welsh speakers
2. To increase the use of Welsh
3. To create favourable conditions - infrastructure and context

The main aim of the programme is to empower leaders to work towards cultural change within their organisations, creating an environment which will encourage Welsh speakers of all skill levels. The workshops facilitate discussions around bilingualism, considering the three values 'inclusive, pride and inspiring' with the emphasis on the 'Welsh Speaker' rather than 'fluency'.

Welsh Language Training Provision

The Service recognises the benefits of Welsh Language Learning and is seeking to create a working environment, where bilingualism will continue to grow. Our employees are provided with the opportunity to submit applications for Welsh Language Training via our Additional Learning Fund. The fund can be accessed by individuals at any time throughout the year, for additional learning and development opportunities and has continued to be available throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

During the 2020 – 2021 academic year, two members of staff enrolled onto Welsh Language courses. One employee accessed learning through Learn Welsh Gwent and another through Learn Welsh Glamorgan. The Service recognises the benefits of bilingualism and is currently in the process of creating a new advert for its staff intranet site to further promote learning and development opportunities for all employees.

Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

The Service has promoted the Welsh culture internally using the intranet, global e-mails, posters, signs and Welsh vocabulary resources. This has included the promotion of special dates in the Welsh calendar:

- 15th October 2020 - Diwrnod Shwmae
- 25th January 2021 - St. Dwynwen's Day
- 1st March 2021 - St. David's Day



Welsh Language Rights Day

7th December 2020

On 7th December 2020, the Service participated in Welsh Language Rights Day to promote the Welsh Language Services provided by Public Organisations in Wales. The date was set by the Welsh Language Commissioner to commemorate the day in 2010 when the Welsh Language Legislation was passed by the National Assembly.

Welsh Language Rights Day provides the opportunity to inform people of their rights, in receiving services through the medium of Welsh. The Service published a list of its Rights which are permanently displayed in our Headquarters Reception area. For 7th December 2020 we recorded a video of a member of staff talking about their experience with the Welsh Language and promoted it internally through our staff Intranet.

Service users and employees can access the Welsh Language Rights page on our website using the link below:

www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/who-we-are/Welsh-language-Standards/Welsh-language-rights

With us, you have the right to the following:

1. Documents in Welsh
2. Websites in Welsh
3. Apply for a job in Welsh
4. Letters and emails in Welsh
5. Leaflets in Welsh
6. Social media messages in Welsh
7. Signs in Welsh
8. Speak Welsh in Reception
9. Use Welsh on the phone

Number of hits received to Welsh Language website pages

The Service's external website is fully bilingual and actively offers all visitors the option of accessing its content through the medium of Welsh or English. The performance of the Welsh language version of the site during April 2020 - March 2021 in comparison with the English version is recorded in the table below:

Criteria	Welsh Website	English Website
UNIQUE PAGE VIEWS	7,185 (10,931)	562,226 (723,484)
USERS	4,900 (3,802)	217,972 (167,734)
AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON WEBSITE (PER SESSION)	1 minute 12 seconds	1 minute 59 seconds
	(1 minute 41 seconds)	(2 minutes 3 seconds)
MOST POPULAR PAGES	Swyddi gwag diweddaraf Ymladdwr Tân ar Alwad Rôl Diffoddwr Tân (Swyddi gwag diweddaraf) (Swyddi Diffoddwyr Tân) (Gweithio gyda ni)	Latest vacancies Wholetime Firefighter WDS2021 (Latest Vacancies) (On-Call Firefighter) (WDS2020)

The figures in brackets indicate the comparative data for 2019/2020

Analysis of interactions with social media pages

The Service has taken steps to ensure all its promotional and safety campaigns via its social media channels are as readily available to Welsh language speakers as they are to English language speakers. This has been achieved by creating separate channels for both languages, with a Welsh language dedicated twitter account @TanDeCymru and a Welsh language dedicated Facebook page. Below is some performance data for each of the channels for April 2020 – March 2021.



	@TanDeCymru	@SWFireandRescue
FOLLOWERS (APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021)	177 (147)	34,000 (30,000)
TWEETS	1,600 (2,000)	2,100 (2,500)
LIKES	202 (361)	30,000 (26,000)

The figures in brackets indicate the comparative data for 2019/2020



Criteria

Criteria	Welsh Page	English Page
INCREASE OF FOLLOWERS FROM (APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021)	262 to 380 (234 to 262)	28,305 to 35,962 (23,567 to 28,305)
NEW LIKES (APRIL 2020 - JUNE 2020)	79 (10)	3,117 (756)
NEW LIKES (JULY 2020 - SEPTEMBER 2020)	4 (6)	1,698 (590)
NEW LIKES (OCTOBER 2020 - DECEMBER 2020)	8 (3)	541 (152)
NEW LIKES (JANUARY 2021 - MARCH 2021)	10 (8)	1,609 (2,010)

The figures in brackets indicate the comparative data for 2019/2020



Criteria

Bilingual Page (as of 31st March 2021)

FOLLOWERS

7,200

POST LIKES

48,000

POSTS

286

Number of staff who have Welsh language skills

The Service's HR Portal has the ability to record language skills. Each employee is asked to assess their level of skills from 0 - 5 in Welsh and English at reading, spoken, understanding and written language and state whether their preferred language is Welsh or English. The Service is working to increase the number of self-assessments completed with announcements on the Intranet site, global e-mails and guidance documents.

Skill	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Summary
Reading	237	39	13	13	8	12	322
Spoken	232	48	16	10	8	9	323
Understanding	233	39	14	6	7	12	311
Written	243	30	15	12	5	7	312
Total	945	156	58	41	28	40	1,268

Data collected 31/02/2021

Welsh Language Award for Firefighters

During 2020, the Service began enrolling new Wholetime Firefighters onto an Apprenticeship qualification facilitated by Cardiff and Vale College. The Level 3 Diploma in Emergency Fire and Rescue Services, includes the Prentis-iaith General Course provided by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Prentis-iaith is a six module course which covers Welsh Language and Culture.

The course is interactive and includes an automated self-marking system, allowing learners to work individually at a pace they are comfortable with. A variety of methods are used to engage the learner and guide them through the modules, including a verbal element to help the learner practice their pronunciation of Welsh phrases. Each learner is awarded a certificate on completion of the course.

Training and courses through the medium of Welsh

There are two main points of contact for staff training, the Learning and Development Team at Fire Service Headquarters and the Training and Development Centre in Cardiff Gate. There were no training courses carried out or requested through the medium of Welsh during 2020 - 2021.

Phone calls and Correspondence Received in Welsh

A total of 40 Welsh Language phone calls were received by our main switchboard in Headquarters from April 2020 - March 2021, this is broken down into quarters below:

April - June 2020 = 1
July - September 2020 = 22
October - December 2020 = 14
January - March 2021 = 3

No Welsh Language correspondence was received by the Business Support Department during April 2020 - March 2021.

Complaints received in relation to the Welsh Language Standards

The Business Support department records and initially deals with all complaints received by the Service through the 'Contact us' page. Complaints are then directed to the relevant department. The Authority did not receive any complaints regarding its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards during 2020 - 2021.



**Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru**

**South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service**

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South Wales Fire and Rescue Service would welcome feedback regarding the information contained in this report and the way in which it is presented.
Contact us by phone 01443 232000 or email WelshLanguage@southwales-fire.gov.uk