

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES



**Comisiwn Ffiniau
i Gymru**

**Boundary Commission
for Wales**

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME
Prepared Under the Welsh Language Act 1993

February 2015

Date Approved: February 2015
Approved by: Commission Members
Review Date: February 2017

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STATEMENT

This scheme has been prepared in accordance with section 21(3) of the Welsh Language Act 1993 and has received the full endorsement of the Welsh Language Board on 7 November 1997

This scheme was revised and updated in February 2015, taking into consideration the implications of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

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Prepared pursuant to Section 12 of the Welsh Language Act 1993

1. INTRODUCTION

The Boundary Commission for Wales is an advisory Non Departmental Public Body sponsored and funded by the Cabinet Office. It is constituted under schedule 1 to the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) as follows:

Chairman	The Speaker of the House of Commons
Deputy Chairman	A Judge of the High Court appointed by the Lord Chancellor
Two Commissioners	Appointed by the Secretary of State
Assessor	The Statistics Board
Assessor	The Director General of Ordnance Survey
Secretary	Appointed by the Secretary of State
Assistant Commissioners	Independent Persons appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct Public Hearings

The Commission holds its meetings in Cardiff and is supported by a Secretariat of up to 9 staff, currently provided by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, based in Cardiff.

The Commission are required by the Parliament Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) and the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 (as amended) to periodically conduct a general review of all constituencies in Wales at the same time, and submit to the Secretary of State a report showing the constituencies it recommends.

When conducting reviews, the Commission is required to publish its initial proposals, to invite representations about those proposals, and to take such representations into account. The Commission also issues news releases and maps to assist in the understanding of its proposals.

As part of the review the Commission may hold Public Hearings. The purpose of a Public Hearing is defined in the legislation to enable representations to be made about any of the proposals with which the hearing is concerned. Such hearings will be held bilingually.

At the completion of each review, the Commission must submit its final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office in a report which he is required to lay before Parliament together with a draft Order in Council giving effect to the Commission's recommendations. If approved by both Houses of Parliament, the Order is submitted to be made by Her Majesty in Council. After the Order in Council has been made, the new constituency boundaries take effect at the next following general election.

In fulfilling these functions, and in order to provide a service in both languages, this is what we shall do.

2. SERVICE PLANNING

The Commission prepares an Annual Business Plan, which sets out a programme of work, annual targets, performance indicators, standards and resources for each year. In planning the provision of services we are committed to:

- Maintaining those measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme.
- Extending the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase, and ensuring that additional measures are developed which are consistent with this scheme.
- Obtaining the Welsh Language Commissioner's agreement to any changes in the scheme.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.

3. DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND STANDARDS OF QUALITY

Our primary statutory function is to keep under continuous review the distribution of seats at Parliamentary elections, to conduct regular reviews of the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies and to make reports with recommendations to the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended).

Extensive publicity is undertaken to ensure that our review work and consequent proposals are widely known. We welcome responses to our consultation processes in the Welsh language.

To give effect to our Welsh language policy all initial letters, publications and publicity are bilingual. Standard templates and script compatible IT software are in use. We have a contract for the provision of a comprehensive translation service.

We have taken steps to provide an equal service in both languages. These steps are expressed as measures in the following sections. In two respects: in answering telephone calls and in dealing with visitors without appointment, the ability to respond in Welsh varies from time to time according to the linguistic skills of the staff employed at that time. The measures taken to address these circumstances are set out in the relevant sections dealing with communications and recruitment.

Performance standards are the same for both languages.

4. DEALING WITH THE WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

Correspondence

As a matter of courtesy, we normally inform directly the national headquarters of the main political parties, MPs, Assembly Members, local authorities, and other interested parties, of the start of a review.

We begin each review by forming proposals from a position of independence and impartiality, without influence by any particular viewpoint or opinion. Following publication of proposals, the statutory procedures allow for a full public debate, and interested parties may make their views known to the Commission by letter or email or through voicing views at public hearings.

Measures:

- Letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual, as will other letters sent to those whose preferred language choice is unknown.
- Our letter templates are prepared in both languages.

The Commission welcomes letters and e-mails written in Welsh.

Measures:

- If you correspond with us in Welsh we will reply in Welsh.
- Our target time for replying to letters and e-mails in Welsh is exactly the same as for replying to letters and e-mails in English.
- When we write to an individual, a group or an organisation who we know works mainly in Welsh or prefers to receive correspondence in Welsh, we will write in Welsh.
- Following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, any follow-up correspondence will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.
- To enable these measures to be implemented, the links to our translation service are by telephone and e-mail. We keep a database of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.

Telephone Calls

Telephone enquiries in Welsh are welcome. The availability of staff able to speak Welsh varies from time to time with staff turnover but we will always try to find someone who speaks Welsh to answer your query.

Measures:

- If you ring the Commission and wish to speak Welsh, but the person taking the call cannot speak Welsh you will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking member of staff, if available. If a Welsh speaking staff member is not available, you will be given the choice of an external interpreter 'phoning you back, or continuing the call in English.
- There may be times, however, when there is no one available who can answer your query in full - especially if it is specialised. (The same problem can arise with telephone queries in English.) In these cases someone will ask you for details of your query,

or they may advise you to send your query to us in writing. You will then receive a reply in Welsh by post.

- We have a bilingual message-answering machine.

Public Meetings

We periodically organise public meetings throughout Wales and welcome people using Welsh.

Measures:

- We will publicise meetings bilingually, making clear our language policy.
- We will ensure that a Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat attends public meetings.
- We will provide simultaneous interpretation at all public meetings, and endeavour to ensure that a Commission representative can engage with Welsh-speaking contributors.

Other Meetings with the Public

As well as public meetings, there are occasions when other meetings with individuals and organisations are held.

Measures:

- When we organise a meeting in advance with an individual or organisation we will ask which is their preferred language. If they prefer to use Welsh, we will hold the meeting in Welsh if possible or offer to provide interpretation.
- Visitors without an appointment who wish to use Welsh will be offered the service of our external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.

5. THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Corporate Identity

The Commission has a bilingual identity and we have adopted measures to reinforce this.

Measures:

- The Commission's name, address and associated information are bilingual on our office signs, publication covers and all other forms of public display.
- Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery all follows the same bilingual format.
- Both languages are shown with equal prominence.

Publications

For each review we publish provisional, revised and final recommendations for public consultation. We also produce guidance notes and other publications from time to time.

Measures:

- We will produce all publications in Welsh and English.
- When considering the names of constituencies, we will consider any advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- The Welsh and English language versions will be published simultaneously. The versions will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.

Press Notices

Press Notices are issued to newspapers in areas under review to publicise the provisional, revised and final stages of reviews.

Measures:

- Press notices issued to newspapers in Wales will be bilingual.
- Both languages will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence on the notices we issue.

Media Notices

We issue notices to press, radio and television editors informing them of provisional, revised and final recommendations.

Measure:

- We prepare bilingual media notices. These notices are normally in one document. However, long notices may be prepared separately in Welsh and English and issued together.

Public Surveys

It is occasionally necessary to conduct public surveys, for example to gather statistical information or to seek public opinion. An external organisation might be contracted to do this work.

Measure:

- We will conduct public surveys in Wales in both Welsh and English.

Web Site

The Commission's web site provides information about the Commission as well as access to publications concerning the reviews, minutes of meetings, annual reports etc.

Measure:

- We will maintain a bilingual web site with all web pages and documents being available in Welsh and English. Updates to the web site will be applied in both languages at the same time.

Social Media

We also provide information about the Commission on social media sites, including alerts regarding review publication and developments.

Measure:

- We will issue all social media messages in Welsh and English. These messages will be issued in both languages at the same time.

6. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

Staffing

The goal of the Commission is to have enough appropriately skilled Welsh-speaking staff to enable a full service to be delivered through the medium of Welsh. Our strategy towards the attainment of the goal includes a review of team and post specifications taking opportunities to attract Welsh-speakers during recruitment and training.

Measure:

- We shall examine posts to consider whether it would be essential or desirable to have Welsh speakers, and specify this in the job descriptions.

Recruitment Advertising

Staff vacancies, including those of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, are publicised on the Civil Service Jobs Website.

Measures:

- Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website
- Our language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information.

Recruitment

The assessment of candidates' abilities is undertaken by using objective criteria to ensure appointments are made in each case on a fair and

consistent basis.

Measures:

- Linguistic ability will be one of a number of skills to be borne in mind when appointing staff and will be assessed against the previously identified level of skills needed for the post.

Language Training

Language training plays an important part in increasing the number of staff able to work in Welsh.

Measures:

- We encourage and, in certain circumstances, may require staff to take up suitable language training, for example, to assist with the pronunciation of Welsh place names.
- We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training.
- We will assess the need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh.

Administrative Arrangements to Facilitate the Scheme

The measures set out in this scheme are designed to give effect to the Commission's Welsh language policy. We have adopted the following additional administrative measures to support the implementation of the scheme as an integral part of our work.

Measures:

- The Secretary and the Deputy Secretary have been given specific responsibility to ensure consistent implementation of the scheme.
- All members of staff have received detailed written guidance in the form of desk instructions which include the use of Welsh in the work of the Commission, and

have been given copies of this scheme.

- We will ensure that the specification of new or replacement IT systems meets the needs of this scheme.
- Tenders for translation services will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.
- Translations will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure the quality of Welsh utilised in our publications is acceptable.

Services Delivered on behalf of the Commission by Other Parties

We recognise that the same standards should apply when work is done on our behalf as when it is done by our own staff.

Measures:

- Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties that relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent with the terms of the scheme.
- The Commission will provide, through contracting arrangements, that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public.
- The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts.

Monitoring

We shall be monitoring how well we are meeting our commitment to the principle of giving equality of treatment to the Welsh language through this scheme.

Measures:

- Each year the Secretary will prepare a report for the Commission showing performance in meeting the implementation of the specific measures we have

adopted in respect of:

The Annual Business Plan
Delivering services
Dealing with the Welsh-speaking public
Corporate identity
Staff recruitment and training
Services delivered by others
The timetable for implementation
Suggestions and complaints

- Performance will be assessed against targets in the timetable annexed to this scheme, supplemented by records of quantifiable items. The report will give reasons for any targets missed and indicate proposed remedial steps.
- The report will be supplied to the Welsh Language Commissioner's office. The report will be available free of charge to the public and available on the Commission's web site.
- We will include a summary of the report in the Commission's Annual Report. The Annual Report is publicised on the Commission's web site.

Publicity for the Commission's Welsh Language Services

In accordance with the former Welsh Language Board's guidelines, this scheme was advertised in the press and circulated widely. However we want the public to continue to be aware of the ways in which they can choose to communicate with us.

Measures:

- We will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public in our Annual Report.
- All publications and publicity associated with the Commission's reviews - our main contact with the public - will make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. English language publications will advise the public that a Welsh language version is also available.

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS/COMPLAINTS

We welcome suggestions for improvements to our measures for dealing with the Welsh speaking-public. If we do fall short of the commitments we have made in this scheme, we hope that members of the public will tell us. Should you have a suggestion for an improvement or a complaint about the Commission's services in Welsh please write to:

The Secretary
Boundary Commission for Wales
Hastings House
Fitzalan Court
CARDIFF
CF24 0BL

or telephone 029 2046 4819

or fax 029 2046 4823

or e-mail bcomm.wales@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

TIMETABLE AND TARGETS

Measure	Timetable Target
Maintain measures which promote and facilitate the principle of equality of use of the Welsh language in accordance with this scheme.	On-going
Ensure additional measures are developed to extend the principle to any new policy, activity or purchase.	On-going
Obtain the Welsh Language Commissioner's agreement to any changes.	As necessary
Monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the measures set out in this scheme.	On-going
Initial and covering letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Letter templates are prepared in both languages and updated as necessary.	Already implemented
Replies to Welsh correspondence to be in Welsh.	Already implemented
Same target time for replying to letters in Welsh as for replying to letters in English.	Already implemented
Write in Welsh to an individual, a group or an organisation known to work mainly in Welsh or prefer to receive letters in Welsh.	Already implemented
Follow-up correspondence, following a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation in Welsh, will be in Welsh, unless requested otherwise.	Already implemented
A database to be maintained of those wishing to deal with us in Welsh.	Already implemented
Callers wishing to speak Welsh will be transferred to a Welsh-speaking member of staff or an external interpreter will 'phone them back, or the call can be continued in English.	Already implemented
In cases when there is no one available who can answer the query in full, callers will be asked for details of the query, or they may be advised to submit the query in writing. A reply in Welsh will then be sent by post.	Already implemented
A bilingual message will be recorded on the answering machine.	Already implemented
Meetings will be publicised bilingually.	As necessary
A Welsh-speaking member of the Commission or the Secretariat will attend public meetings.	As necessary

Interpretation facilities will be provided at meetings when a requirement has been identified.	As necessary
Meetings organised in advance will be held in Welsh if required.	As necessary
Unscheduled visitors wishing to converse in Welsh will be offered the service of external translator by telephone if a Welsh speaking member of staff is not available.	As necessary

The Commission's name, address and associated information will be bilingual on office signs, publication covers and all other forms of public display.	Already implemented
Printed information on the Commission's letter headings, compliment slips, staff business cards and other corporate stationery will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Both languages will be shown with equal prominence.	Already implemented
All publications will be produced in Welsh and English.	Already implemented
Whilst considering names of constituencies, we will consider advice provided by the Welsh Language Commissioner	On-going
The Welsh and English versions will be published simultaneously and will be equally accessible and of the same quality, format and prominence.	Already implemented
Press notices issued to newspapers in Wales will be bilingual.	Already implemented
Both languages in public notices will be afforded equality in terms of format, size and prominence.	Already implemented
Media notices will be bilingual and normally in one document. However, long notices may be prepared separately in English and Welsh and issued together.	Already implemented
Public surveys will be conducted in both Welsh and English.	As necessary
A bilingual website will be maintained. Updates to the website will be applied in both languages at the same time.	Already implemented
Social media messages will be issued in both Welsh and English. These messages will be issued at the same time.	Already implemented

Posts will be examined to consider whether it would be essential or desirable to have Welsh speakers and this will be specified in the job descriptions.	As necessary
Job descriptions will be available bilingually via a link on the Civil Service Jobs website	As necessary
The language policy will be stated and the linguistic skills expected of the post holder will be specified in all recruitment information.	As necessary

Linguistic ability will be one of a number of skills to be borne in mind when appointing staff and will be assessed against the previously identified level of skills needed for the post.	As necessary
We encourage and, in certain circumstances, may require staff to take up suitable language training, for example, to assist with the pronunciation of Welsh place names.	As necessary
We will consider financial support, in appropriate cases, should staff wish to take up suitable language training	As necessary
The need for specific vocational training through the medium of Welsh will be assessed.	On-going
The Secretary and the Deputy Secretary will ensure consistent implementation of the scheme.	On-going
All members of staff will receive detailed written guidance in the form of desk instructions which include the use of Welsh in the work of the Commission, and will be given copies of this scheme.	On-going
The specification of new or replacement IT systems will be required to meet the needs of this scheme.	On-going
Tenders for translation services will continue to be assessed for capability and quality of service as well as price.	On-going
Translations will be monitored by staff to ensure the quality of the publication.	On-going
Any agreements or arrangements made with third parties that relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales will be consistent with the terms of the scheme.	On-going
The Commission will provide through contracting arrangements that the contractor implement any relevant elements of the scheme when dealing with the public.	On-going
The Commission will specify the requirements as to the use of Welsh in tender documents and contracts.	As necessary
Each year the Secretary will prepare a report for the Commission showing performance in meeting the implementation of the specific measures we have adopted.	Annually in April
The report will give reasons for any targets missed and indicate proposed remedial steps.	Annually in April
This performance report will be supplied to the Welsh Language Commissioner. The report will be available free of charge to the public.	Annually in May
A summary of the report will be included in the Commission's Annual Report.	Annually in September
The Commission's Annual Report will publicise our measures for serving the Welsh-speaking public.	Annually in September
All publications and publicity associated with the Commission's reviews - our main contact with the public – will make it clear that the public can deal with the Commission in Welsh. English	On-going

language publications will advise that a Welsh language version is available.	
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