



# Snowdonia National Park Authority's Welsh Language Standards: 2015/16 Monitoring Report

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 On the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2015, the Welsh Language Commissioner issued the Authority with a Compliance Notice in accordance with section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which confirmed the Welsh Language Standards that the Authority is subject to.
- 1.2 The Authority's Welsh Language Scheme ceased to apply on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. On this date, the Authority was expected to comply in full with all but 4 of the Standards. The remaining 4 Standards have the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 as the compliance date.
- 1.3 As the Authority has been operating fully bilingually for a number of years, no major changes have been needed in order to comply with the vast majority of the Standards.
- 1.4 Although the new Standards have only been in place for 1 day in the 2015-16 financial year, the Authority is required to produce an annual report in line with the requirements of the Compliance Notice.

## 2. Service Delivery Standards

- 2.1 Correspondence: The Authority sends out correspondence in the language of choice of the recipient, or in cases when this is not known a bilingual version of the correspondence is sent.
- 2.2 When bilingual correspondence is sent out, the Welsh and English language is treated equally by appearing side by side (where this is possible), with the same font and size used in both languages. On rare occasions when separate Welsh and English correspondence is produced, both versions are identical in terms of font and size, including contact details, signatures etc.
- 2.3 Telephone Calls: All staff who work at the Authority's main receptions and Information Centres are fully bilingual and accordingly are able to deal with all enquiries through the medium of Welsh at the first point of contact.
- 2.4 The Authority does not have automated telephone systems, but a pre-recorded message for calls received out of hours or for callers who

experience a busy line is in place. The pre-recorded message is bilingual with the message in Welsh being transmitted first.

- 2.5 When contact is made through a direct line telephone number, staff are instructed to greet the caller with a bilingual greeting (with the Welsh first) or with a neutral greeting, ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.
- 2.6 As the majority of the Authority staff are bilingual, any calls from Welsh speakers are dealt with at the first point of contact. For the staff that are not fully able to carry out a conversation in Welsh, they will transfer the call to a colleague without any delay.
- 2.7 Meetings: All meetings arranged with an individual have and will continue to be conducted in the language of choice of the individual. For meetings that have been arranged for a group of individuals, they will be conducted in Welsh with simultaneous translation being arranged for any non-Welsh speakers in attendance (unless none of the invited individuals are able to communicate in Welsh, in which case the meeting will be conducted in English).
- 2.8 All public meetings of the Authority have and will continue to be conducted in Welsh with simultaneous translation available for those who cannot communicate through the Welsh language.
- 2.9 All publicity, written materials and any documentation produced by the Authority and handed out at public events or meetings are fully bilingual, with the Welsh and English languages treated equally.
- 2.10 Public Documentation: All the Authority's public documents, including forms are bilingual with the Welsh appearing first or on the left hand side of the document. The Welsh and English languages are treated equally, with the same font and size of text used for both languages. On rare occasions when the Welsh and English language versions are in a separate document, a sentence is included on the English version, stating that a Welsh version is available.
- 2.11 Website, Apps and Social Media: The Authority's website and apps are fully bilingual with the user being able to choose their preferred language on the home page. Every single page of the website has a toggle button which can be used to access the other language. All pages correspond fully between both languages.
- 2.12 The Authority has corresponding Welsh and English versions of Facebook pages, twitter accounts etc. All messages from the Authority are replicated identically on the Welsh and English versions of the various social media sites, or bilingually in some instances. Any messages received in Welsh through social media are always answered in Welsh.

- 2.13 Reception Services: As previously stated all staff who work at the main reception areas or at Information Centres are fully bilingual. Each reception has the 'iaith gwaith' logo on display to indicate that a Welsh service is available and all reception staff have 'iaith gwaith' badges.
- 2.14 Grant Schemes: The Authority administers 3 main grant schemes, namely CAE sustainable development fund, small communities grant scheme and grants for the repair of listed buildings at risk. All documentation including application forms and guidance notes are fully bilingual, and correspondence is carried out in the language of choice of the applicant or bilingually.
- 2.15 The CAE grant scheme (which incorporates the small community grant fund) has recently been reviewed and will be renamed the Snowdonia Partnership Fund and changes will be made to how the fund accepts and decides on applications for funding. All new bilingual marketing materials (including a new logo) will be designed and produced by the Authority, as well as changes required to application forms, guidance notes and associated documents.
- 2.16 Contract Tenders: All Public Notices for Invitations to Tender or to Express an Interest are produced bilingually. All submissions received in Welsh have been processed and treated in the same way as submission in English, and correspondence is carried out in the language of choice of the applicant or bilingually.
- 2.17 During the year, face to face interviews only took place with one contract. These interviews were conducted in Welsh with simultaneous translation available for individuals / company representatives who were not able to communicate through Welsh.
- 2.18 Education Courses: One of the standards has raised a new requirement for the Authority in terms of the educational courses that we offer. Every public education course offered at Plas Tan y Bwlch must now be subject to an assessment of the need for that course to be offered through the medium of Welsh.
- 2.19 All the public courses at Plas Tan y Bwlch are run on a commercial basis, which means that courses are only programmed if there is a viable market for them. Some courses are already offered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually as determined by the mix of participants.
- 2.20 During the process of setting the public course programme for 2016/17 an assessment was undertaken on whether the courses offered could be run entirely in Welsh or bilingually. A number of factors were taken into account including demand, practicality and whether Welsh medium tutors were available for the subject area. The results of the assessments are published in a 50 page document on the Authority's website.

- 2.21 Complaints relating to Complying with the Service Delivery Standards  
During the year no complaints were received relating to the way in which the Authority complied with the Service Delivery Standards.

### **3. Policy Making Standards**

- 3.1 Policy Formulation: With every new policy that is developed (or if a present policy is revised and updated) an Equality Impact Assessment screening process is undertaken as part of the process. Although the Welsh language is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the Authority has included the Welsh language as part of the assessment.
- 3.2 The screening process will determine if the proposed policy will or is likely to have a negative effect on the Welsh language or the ability of people to use the Welsh language. The assessment will also identify the potential for the proposed policy to have a positive effect on the language either through its use or through its promotion.
- 3.3 If the proposed policy goes out to public consultation, the responses received through the consultation will be taken into account in full when undertaking the impact assessment. Members of the Authority will also have an opportunity to scrutinise the proposed policy at various point through the process. If a negative impact were to be identified, a fully equality impact assessment would take place to identify mitigation measures required and to decide whether to proceed with the policy.
- 3.4 During 2015/16, 32 equality impact screening assessments were undertaken. Of these, 3 went on to receive a full equality impact assessment. None of the assessments identified any negative effect on the use of the Welsh language.
- 3.5 Awarding Grants: As noted previously the CAE fund has now been changed to the Snowdonia Partnership Fund. The previous grant scheme has guidance notes for applicants detailing our expectations in terms of the use and promotion of the Welsh language. Accordingly, conditions were set with grant offers requiring the applicant to produce bilingual documentation, publicity, services etc.
- 3.6 This documentation will now be revised and updated in line with the new fund's objectives. However, conditions on the use and the promotion of Welsh, and to ensure equality for the Welsh language will continue to be part of the grant scheme requirements.
- 3.7 If the Authority were to commission research to assist with policy making decisions, we would ensure that the research would include identifying the potential positive and negative effects of the proposed policy on the Welsh language. During 2015/16, no research of this type was undertaken.

3.8 Complaints relating to Complying with the Policy Making Standards  
During the year no complaints were received relating to the way in which the Authority complied with the Policy Making Standards.

#### **4. Operational**

4.1 On the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016, the Authority employed 140 staff of which 132 are fully bilingual, representing 94%.

4.2 The Authority has a fully bilingual policy in place for all personnel matters. This means that all documentation relating to the employment of an individual is produced bilingually and given to all staff members. Any correspondence that is sent out periodically from the personnel service to individual staff members is also produced bilingually.

4.3 Disciplinary or appeal hearings are all conducted in the language of choice of the staff member. Face to face meetings with an individual employee such as informal meetings or an appraisal will usually be conducted in the language of choice of the staff member unless it is inexpedient to do so.

4.4 In addition, staff are welcome to correspond in the language of their choice. Both Welsh and English are treated equally and there would be no delay in responding to correspondence received in either language.

4.5 All personnel policies are always produced bilingually, and are available on the staff intranet.

4.6 Staff and Members Intranet: The intranet is accessed through the Authority's website and is also fully bilingual. The toggle button at the top of the page allows the user to change from English to Welsh or vice versa.

4.7 Training: Training courses are always provided in Welsh where possible. Although some courses were provided bilingually, no courses were offered entirely through the medium of Welsh during 2015-16.

4.8 Employees who cannot fully communicate in Welsh are encouraged to attend Welsh language courses and training, which can be undertaken in work time.

4.9 Recruitment: During 2015/16, 13 vacant posts were advertised. All post were classed as Welsh essential.

4.10 All recruitment advertisements are advertised in Welsh. All documentation is available bilingually e.g. application form, job description, person specification and equality monitoring form. Job interviews are conducted in Welsh.

4.11 As with all other correspondence, letters sent to job applicants informing them of the outcome of their application are sent in the language that the

application was submitted, or bilingually if a bilingual application was submitted.

4.12 Complaints relating to Complying with the Operational Standards

During the year no complaints were received relating to the way in which the Authority complied with the Operational Standards.

**5. Record Keeping Standards**

- 5.1 A document titled 'Snowdonia National Park Authority Welsh Language Standards' has been produced, which is available in the Authority's offices and on the website. The document outlines all the Standards that the Authority is subject to and sets out how members of the public can make a complaint about the Authority's compliance with the Standards or any aspect of the Welsh language service offered by the Authority.
- 5.2 The Authority has kept records of how it complies with the Standards in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## APPENDIX 1

### 1. Staff Skill Levels - Overview

The number and % of staff within the Authority's services which are able to speak Welsh according to directorate			
	No. of Staff	No. of Welsh Speakers	%
Corporate	84	80	95%
Planning and Land Management	56	52	93%

The number and % of staff within the Authority's services which are able to speak Welsh according to post grade			
	No. of Staff	No. of Welsh Speakers	%
Management Team	3	3	100%
Heads of Service	11	10	91%
Grade 7+	51	45	88%
Up to Grade 6	75	74	99%

The number and % of staff within the Authority's services which are able to speak Welsh according to workplace			
	No. of Staff	No. of Welsh Speakers	%
Head Office	69	63	91%
Information Centres	14	14	100%
External Staff	33	33	100%
Plas Tan y Bwlch	24	22	92%

## 2. Staff Skill Levels by Service

### Corporate Directorate

The number and % of staff within the service which are able to speak Welsh			
<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Management	4	4	100%
Finance	4	4	100%
Personnel	2	2	100%
Administration	12	12	100%
Information Systems	6	4	67%
Property	4	4	100%
Legal	1	1	100%
Plas Tan y Bwlch	22	20	91%
Communication and Education	29	29	100%

Number and % of staff within the service, by post grades, which are able to speak Welsh			
<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Chief Executive	1	1	100%
Directors	2	2	100%
Heads of Service	7	6	86%
Grade 7+	22	20	91%
Up to Grade 6	52	51	98%

## Planning and Land Management

The number and % of staff within the service which are able to speak Welsh			
<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Development Control and Compliance	10	7	70%
Strategic Policy and Plans and Community	7	7	100%
Cultural Heritage	3	3	100%
Wardens and Access	29	29	100%
Conservation, Trees and Agriculture	7	6	86%

Number and % of staff within the service, by post grades, which are able to speak Welsh			
<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Heads of Service	4	4	100%
Grade 7+	29	25	86%
Up to Grade 6	23	23	100%

### 3. Staff Skill Levels – Reception

The number and % of posts in the main reception areas that have been designated 'Welsh essential' and that were filled by bilingual staff.			
<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Staff</b>	<b>No. of Welsh Speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Head Office	5	5	100%
Plas Tan y Bwlch	7	7	100%
Information Centres	16	16	100%