



monmouthshire sir fynwy

Monmouthshire County Council's
Welsh Language Standards
Annual Monitoring Report
1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026



Overview

This is Monmouthshire County Council's annual report on the Welsh language standards. Its purpose is to evaluate our compliance with the standards, and the ways in which we have promoted and facilitated opportunities to use Welsh and ensured that the language was treated no less favourably than English during the year. It was produced in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, to meet the requirements of standards 158, 164 and 170.

Further Information

This report can be found on the Monmouthshire County Council website: www.monmouthshire.gov.uk. If you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, please contact us on the details below.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh, contacting us in Welsh will not lead to a delay in response.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.



This document is also available in Welsh.

Related Documents

[Monmouthshire County Council 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027](#)

The cabinet member with responsibility for the Welsh language during 2025/26 was Cllr. Angela Sandles.

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1. Background

Monmouthshire County Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Language as an integral part of our cultural identity, heritage and community cohesion. Throughout the year 2025/2026 the council has been dedicated to fostering an environment where the Welsh language can thrive, and Welsh speakers are able to use the language in their everyday lives.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework that imposed a duty on Monmouthshire County Council, alongside other public organisations, to comply with standards relating to the Welsh language. The key principles of these standards are that:

- the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than the English language.
- we should promote and facilitate the use of the language

In 2015, Monmouthshire Council received a compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner. This document outlines the standards that the council must comply with. In total, there are 176 Welsh Language standards that apply to Monmouthshire Council. These standards are grouped into 5 categories, which are:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

The Welsh Language Standards require us to:

- Produce and publish on our website a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in our area. (Standards 145,146)
- Produce an annual report, in relation to each financial year, which deals with how we have complied with the standards and published on our website. (Standards 158, 164, 170)

The council's [compliance notice](#) can be found on our bilingual website.

2. Compliance

Service Delivery Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken 2026/2027
Standards 1 - 7 Correspondence sent and received.	Staff reminded of requirements to the Welsh language in our correspondence.	Monitor compliance across the authority.
Standards 8 - 22 Telephone calls made and received.	Telephone calls made to the Council in Welsh are dealt with by Welsh-speaking staff at the Contact Centre.	- Ensure that the nature of calls to the Council, including the departments concerned, is recorded manually by Contact Centre staff. - Ensure that all staff are aware of the processes when receiving Welsh language phone calls.
Standards 24 – 36 Meetings with the Public.	Simultaneous translation provided in public meetings where required.	Monitor to ensure that the offer of simultaneous translation continues to be actively and consistently made.
Standards 37 - 51, 69 - 70 Other bilingual documents.	- Staff issued reminders of the need to state that documents are also available in Welsh. - Compliance monitored through website checks and translation requests made through the Cymraeg translation service. - All forms for public use are created bilingually. - All official notices are produced and displayed bilingually.	- Utilise 'Welsh Tip' within the Compass Staff Newsletter to remind staff of requirements. - Continue to monitor compliance closely.
Standards 52 – 60 Websites, Social Media, Apps, and Self-service Machines.	Websites and social media accounts monitored closely to	Continue to monitor and log compliance.

	ensure compliance by the Website Officer and Welsh Language Officer. - The Welsh Language Officer has developed training on Welsh Language Standards requirements relating to social media accounts. - The number of hits on Welsh and English pages are as follows: Recycling and Waste: English: 125,192 Welsh: 186 Council Tax: English: 42,720 Welsh: 62 Early Years, Childcare and Schools Education: English: 2,414 Welsh: 52 Welsh Medium Education: English: 479 Welsh: 33 Community Hubs and Libraries: English: 26,021 Welsh: 214 Cost of Living English: 2,620 Welsh: 74	- Circulate mandatory training for website authors on the use of the Welsh language across digital platforms. - Create a log of any issues identified and any actions taken to resolve them.
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Standards 61 – 63 Signs	• All new street signs are either bilingual or monolingual Welsh. Names are carefully chosen to reflect the history and heritage of the area. The Welsh Language Officer works closely with the Street Naming Officer to help with this process. • To ensure accurate translations, all street naming translations are sent to an individual translator who is knowledgeable and experienced in translating street names. • Examples of the new Welsh-only street names introduced this year include 'Cwrt Cip y Cadno' and 'Gwêl y Wennol'. • The Street Naming Officer has produced information sheets for residents of new Welsh-only street names, explaining why the names were chosen, how they are pronounced, and their significance. • Work is currently underway by the Street Naming and Numbering Officer, Welsh Language Officer and GIS team to develop webpages providing	• Welsh Language Officer to continue to work closely with the Street Naming Officer on the naming of new streets. • Publish webpages on the Welsh language and street naming.
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	information on Welsh street names, including pronunciation guides.	
Standards 64 – 68 Reception Services	• Receptions across the authority are monitored to ensure 'Cymraeg' posters are displayed indicating that Welsh can be used. • Welsh language skills assessed during interview for reception roles. • Internal Audit conducted a review of receptions' Welsh language compliance. The findings highlighted inconsistencies in Welsh language skills across reception services, with a full Welsh language service not always available.	• Develop targeted Welsh language training for reception staff to enhance existing skills and build confidence in delivering bilingual services. • Collaborate with reception service managers to establish clear plans for meeting public demand for Welsh language reception services. • Ensure all new reception posts are advertised as Welsh language essential to support consistent service provision. • Continue to monitor reception services across the authority.
Standards 71 – 75 Awarding Grants	• The council has a policy for 'Awarding Grants and the Welsh Language'.	• Monitor to ensure compliance.
Standards 76 – 80 Awarding Contracts	• The council has a Welsh Language Requirements - Procurement checklist.	• Monitor to ensure compliance.
Standards 81 – 82 Promoting Welsh Language Services	• Welsh language services are actively promoted on the council's website and social media pages. • Social media posts created for important dates in the Welsh language calendar to promote the Welsh	• Monitor social media to ensure that Welsh language services continue to be actively promoted. • Schedule promotions for key events / dates.

	language.	
Standard 83 Corporate Identity	• All staff issued with bilingual e-mail addresses. • Ensure that all aspects of corporate identity are bilingual and that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably.	• Ensure that bilingual e-mail addresses are used across our website, documents and forms.
Standards 84 & 86 Educational Courses	• Educational courses are assessed to determine the need to be delivered in Welsh.	• Continue to assess and monitor the need to deliver educational courses in Welsh.
Standard 87 Public Address Systems	• All public address systems are bilingual. • Monitoring compliance through visits.	• Issue reminders to staff of requirements. • Monitor for compliance.

Policy Making Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken 2026/2027
Standards 88 - 93 Policy Making.	• Training on Welsh Language Impact Assessments is available to staff via the Democratic Services Section of the Hub. • Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken for all policy decisions. • Quality assurance meetings for Impact Assessments and feedback provided to report authors - Policy Team. • Integrated Impact Assessment template and guidance has been reviewed and updated. • Videos have been launched as part of the Managers' Pathway on Thinqi, providing officers with guidance on how to complete the Welsh Language Impact Assessment.	• Quality assurance meetings to continue and monitor effectiveness on outcomes. • Monitor compliance of standards and issue further training to staff where issues are identified.

Operational Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken in 2026/2027
Standards 99 – 104 Employment Documents.	Staff are regularly reminded of their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh through updates shared in the Cymraeg Teams channel.	Continue to issue regular reminders to staff about their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh.
Standards 105 – 111 Human Resources Policies.	- All HR policies and guidance documents are currently being reviewed and made available in Welsh. A small number of policies remain under review and are expected to be available bilingually by October 2026. - Work is underway to develop a Welsh version of the PageTiger directory which will be accessible via the staff Hub, with additional access provided through a QR code, enabling staff to view documents on any device.	Ensure that bilingual versions of HR policies are made available to staff.
Standards 112 – 119 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.	Staff are made aware of their right to complete the complaints / disciplinary process in Welsh.	Continue to ensure this is actively offered. Utilise the Cymraeg Teams Channel to ensure reminders are issued to staff.
Standards 120 – 126 Staff Intranet and IT Resources.	- Cysgliad is available on every computer, providing Welsh language spelling and grammar checking, as well as an English - Welsh dictionary. - To Bach Software is provided on every computer to assist staff in typing more easily in Welsh.	- Continue to offer support to staff on using 'Cysgliad' - Collaborate with the Hub officer to improve the layout and usability of the Welsh language section on the staff intranet, and broaden the range of support documents available to better assist staff in

	• Guidance is provided on how to use Cysgliad / To Bach on Cymraeg Teams Channel. • A dedicated Welsh language page is available on the staff intranet, offering key documents and support.	using Welsh confidently in their roles
Standard 127 Staff Language Skills.	• Information on staff language skills is collected during the application process for new posts. • Welsh Language Officer receives information from HR about new starters and leavers and their recorded Welsh language skills. The list of Welsh speakers is updated on a regular basis.	• Undertake an authority-wide Welsh language skills audit to ensure that staff data is accurate and up to date.
Standards 128 – 133 Staff Training.	• The Welsh Language Officer, alongside the Equalities and Welsh Language Manager, delivers Welsh language awareness training to new staff as part of the corporate induction programme. This is delivered in two parts: a video covering the Welsh Language Standards and key awareness messages, which staff can revisit at any time, followed by an in-person session for further guidance and questions. The induction covers the history and importance of the Welsh language, the Council's responsibilities under the Standards, and the role employees play in supporting and promoting the language.	• The Welsh Language team will continue to participate in the corporate induction process. • Continue to promote and advertise Welsh language training opportunities to staff. • Launch training for officers and councillors on the use of Welsh in meetings. • Continue to promote Welsh language awareness training to staff to maximise participation and completion rates.

	Staff are also signposted to support resources, including opportunities to learn Welsh and practical tools to support its use in the workplace. • Welsh language courses at all levels are available to all staff members. • 42 staff members completed a Welsh course in 25/26. • The Council took part in a pilot of the ARFer app, a behaviour-change initiative developed by Bangor University to support increased use of Welsh in the workplace. The app encourages staff to complete small, practical tasks during their working day to build confidence and embed the use of Welsh in everyday interactions. The trial involved a team with a mix of Welsh language abilities and provided an opportunity for staff to practise their skills in a supportive, real-life context. • Work is underway to develop resource materials for staff and councillors, including useful Welsh phrases for meetings, supported by audio clips to aid pronunciation. • Welsh Language Awareness training is available to staff via the Thingi learning platform.	
Standards 134 & 135 Wording and Logo for Staff Email Signatures	• All staff have access to the translation service to ensure their email signatures are bilingual. • The 'Work Welsh' logo is available on the staff	• Continue to utilise the Cymraeg Teams channel to share information and resources with Welsh-speaking staff.

	intranet and the Cymraeg Teams channel for staff to include in their email signatures, indicating whether they are Welsh speakers or learners.	Use the “Welsh Tip” section in the staff newsletter to remind staff of the requirement for bilingual email signatures and provide guidance on how to request translations.
Standards 136 - 140 Recruitment Process	- Please see the ‘Recruitment’ section. - The Council classifies each new vacancy as either Welsh language essential or Welsh language desirable. - All vacant posts are advertised bilingually; they include the Welsh language skills framework and Welsh language assessment. - The Welsh Language Officer monitors new job adverts to ensure compliance. - All roles that are assessed as being Welsh Language Essential and some select Welsh Language Desirable roles are advertised on Welsh language recruitment sites.	- Continue to make use of Welsh language recruitment sites. Welsh Language Officer to monitor the outcomes of these adverts. - Provide additional information for Welsh language essential posts to specify what kinds of skills will be needed for the role. - Create training for managers on Welsh language recruitment.
Standards 141 – 143 Internal Signage	- Guidance provided to staff for internal signage. - Signs monitored for compliance.	Continue to monitor for compliance.
Standard 144 Workplace Announcements	All announcements are recorded bilingually.	Monitor for compliance.

3. Complaints

Complaints from the Public

Catffrwd / Catbrook Signage - During the reporting year, a complaint was received from a resident, alongside correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner, regarding the signage for the village of Catbrook, which displayed the place name in English only. The complaint highlighted that the Welsh form of the name, “Catffrwd”, had not been included.

Following investigation, it was established that the signage had been installed as part of a joint project involving Monmouthshire County Council, the Wye Valley National Landscape, and local Community Councils. At the time of installation, the Welsh form “Catffrwd” was not included on the Welsh Language Commissioner’s Standardised Welsh Place Names List, and therefore the signage was erected using the English name “Catbrook” only.

Subsequent correspondence confirmed that “Catffrwd” has since been adopted as the recommended Welsh form. As a result, the Council has committed to amending the signage by applying a bilingual overlay to include both the Welsh and English names.

Welsh Language Translation at Meetings - During the reporting year, a complaint was received regarding the lack of Welsh language provision at a meeting held in relation to Estyn. The complaint highlighted that no simultaneous translation service was made available during the meeting, despite the discussion involving Welsh-medium education and stakeholder contributions being made largely through the medium of Welsh.

The absence of translation provision was recognised as a shortcoming and did not reflect the Council’s usual practice. A formal response was issued acknowledging that the lack of translation at such an important meeting was unacceptable and did not meet expected standards of accessibility or the Council’s commitment to the Welsh Language Standards.

In response, assurances have been provided that greater consideration will be given to the linguistic requirements of future meetings, including the purpose of the meeting and the needs of attendees, to ensure that appropriate translation services are provided where required.

This complaint has highlighted the importance of consistent application of the Welsh Language Standards in all stakeholder engagement activities and has informed improvements to planning processes to prevent similar issues arising in the future.

Complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner

We have not received any complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner during this reporting year.

4. Welsh Language Skills

The following tables present data on staff who have recorded some level of Welsh language skills.

Staff Welsh Language Skill Levels

Welsh Language Skill Level	Number of Staff (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Fluent	50	13.1%
Advanced	9	2.4%
Intermediate	54	14.1%
Foundation	34	8.9%
Beginner	235	61.5%
Total	382	-

Welsh Language Skills by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	47	12.3%
Place and Community Wellbeing	105	27.5%
Law and Governance	8	2.1%
Resources	42	11.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	124	32.5%
People, Performance and Partnerships	16	4.2%
Infrastructure	40	10.5%
Total	382	-

Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Fluent Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	2	4.0%
Place and Community Wellbeing	16	32.0%
Law and Governance	6	12.0%
Resources	6	12.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	15	30.0%
People, Performance and Partnerships	4	8.0%
Infrastructure	1	2.0%
Total	50	-

5. Welsh Language Courses

The Council offers a wide range of Welsh language courses for staff at all levels, aimed at increasing the number of Welsh-speaking staff and building confidence in using the language in the workplace. Supporting staff to learn Welsh is essential to ensuring the authority can deliver equitable Welsh language services to residents and meet its obligations under the Welsh Language Standards.

Courses are delivered through the National Centre for Learning Welsh, via Coleg Gwent, and are funded by the Welsh Language Department. Staff are supported to undertake this learning during working hours.

In 2025/2026, the number of staff who attended Welsh language courses at each level is as follows:

Language Level of Course	Number of Staff Completing a Course 2024/2025	Number of Staff Completing a Course 2025/2026
Mynediad 1 / Entry 1	26	10
Mynediad 2 / Entry 2	10	16
Sylfaen 1 / Foundation 1	9	4
Sylfaen 2 / Foundation 2	3	6
Canolradd 1 / Intermediate 1	0	1
Canolradd 2 / Intermediate 2	3	1
Uwch 1 / Advanced 1	0	2
Uwch 3 / Advanced 3	2	2
Hyfedredd / Proficiency	0	0
Total	53	42

Staff completing Welsh courses per directorate 2025/2026

Directorate	Number of Staff	Percentage %
Place and Community Wellbeing	4	9.5%
Infrastructure	5	11.9%
Resources	7	16.7%
Learning, Skills and Economy	13	31.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	9	21.4%
People, Performance and Partnerships	3	7.1%
Law and Governance	1	2.4%
Total	42	-

Standard 128, requires the Council to provide training in Welsh for staff in the following areas, if they are provided in English:

- Recruitment and interviewing;
- Performance management;
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- Induction;
- Dealing with the public; and
- Health and safety.

Staff are asked whether they would like to receive these training sessions in Welsh.

We utilise our Welsh Language Teams Group to actively remind staff that they are able to access the above training though the medium of Welsh.

6. Recruitment

Posts Advertised During 2025–2026

	2024- 2025 Number	2024- 2025 %	2025-2026 Number	2025-2026 %
Vacant/new posts advertised	384	-	717	-
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential'	9	2.3%	28	3.9%
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	375	97.7%	689	96.1%
Vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0
The number of vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

School Posts Advertised During 2025–2026

	2024- 2025 Number	2024- 2025 %	2025-2026 Number	2025-2026 %
Schools vacant/new posts advertised	299	-	202	-
Schools vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential';	15	5.0%	22	10.9%
Schools vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	284	95.0%	180	89.1%
Schools vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0

The number of schools vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

The job application process is fully accessible in Welsh, in line with the Welsh Language Standards, and all vacancies are advertised bilingually. In accordance with Standard 136, each post is assessed to determine the level of Welsh language skills required, with all roles classified as at least Welsh language desirable.

Roles involving significant public interaction, or where there is limited Welsh language capacity within the service, are designated as Welsh language essential. For these posts, managers are encouraged to clearly specify the Welsh language skills required, helping to support applications from learners who may otherwise lack confidence in applying.

All job advertisements include the Welsh language skills framework, and Welsh language recruitment platforms are used to promote both essential and selected desirable posts, improving visibility among Welsh speakers.

The Welsh Language Officer regularly reviews job advertisements to ensure compliance with Welsh language requirements throughout the recruitment process.

7. Customer Service

Welsh Language Phone Calls

During the reporting year, Welsh language telephone calls were managed through the Contact Centre. Following the introduction of a new telephony system in March 2025, Welsh calls are now directed to a Welsh-speaking advisor within the Contact Centre. Where a Welsh-speaking advisor is not immediately available, the system reverts to the previous 'hunt group' arrangement, routing calls to Welsh-speaking staff across the authority to ensure a timely response.

Data from the telephony system indicates that a total of 189 calls were received via the Welsh language line during the reporting period, with a monthly breakdown provided below:

Month	Number of Welsh Calls Recorded by the Telephony System
April 25	36
May 25	20
June 25	15
July 25	18
August 25	14
September 25	13
October 25	13
November 25	17
December 25	10
January 26	9
February 26	14
March 26	10
Total	189

Manual monitoring indicates that 57 calls were received where customers requested to have their queries handled in Welsh. This is broadly consistent with previous years, with 51 calls recorded in 2022/23, 56 in 2023/24, and 69 in 2024/25. The higher figure recorded by the telephony system reflects its current limitation in identifying the language in which the interaction was conducted, whereas manual records more accurately capture the language of service delivery.

Due to the transition to the new telephony system, detailed information on the nature of calls and the service areas involved was not consistently recorded during the reporting year. However, feedback from the Contact Centre suggests that a significant proportion of Welsh language calls related to Recycling and Waste services.

Processes have since been strengthened to ensure that the nature of Welsh language calls and the relevant service areas are recorded consistently moving forward. This will support improved monitoring and provide a clearer understanding of demand for Welsh language services in future reports.

In addition to telephone services, the Council continues to provide a fully bilingual digital offer through the My Monmouthshire app, enabling customers to make payments, report issues, and request services in Welsh.

8. Promotion

Welsh Tip

The Council has continued to utilise the “Welsh Tip” feature within the Compass staff newsletter to promote the Welsh language and support compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. These bilingual tips provide practical guidance on specific standards, helping staff understand their responsibilities and how to apply them in their day-to-day work.

In addition to raising awareness of requirements, the Welsh Tips also signpost staff to available support, including Welsh language learning opportunities and resources such as Iaith Gwaith. The newsletter has also been used to promote wider Welsh language campaigns, further reinforcing key messages.

This approach provides a consistent and accessible method of communication, helping to embed good practice, increase confidence, and encourage the use of Welsh across the organisation.

Cymraeg Teams Channel

The Cymraeg Teams channel continues to play a key role in promoting the Welsh language across the organisation. Open to all staff, regardless of language ability, the channel provides a supportive and inclusive space for both Welsh speakers and learners to engage with the language. Content shared on the channel is bilingual, encouraging participation and ensuring accessibility. The platform is used to share resources, promote training opportunities, and provide updates on Welsh language initiatives, as well as to foster a sense of community among staff. By creating regular opportunities for informal interaction and practice, the channel supports increased confidence in using Welsh and helps to embed the language in everyday working life.

Dydd Miwsig Cymru

The Council marked Dydd Miwsig Cymru through a programme of internal staff promotions aimed at raising awareness of Welsh-language music and encouraging engagement with Welsh culture. Promotional content was shared across internal communication channels, including the staff newsletter and Teams, highlighting Welsh artists and providing links to curated playlists and resources. A short video was also produced to give staff a taste of the range of Welsh-language music available.

These activities supported the visibility of the Welsh language within the workplace and encouraged staff to engage with the language in an informal and accessible way. By linking cultural promotion with everyday communication channels, the initiative contributed to normalising the use of Welsh and reinforcing its presence across the organisation.

St David's Day Event

The Council marked St David's Day with a well-attended event at County Hall, celebrating Welsh language and culture. The community was invited to join the celebrations, which also provided an opportunity to recognise the commitment and achievements of staff who have been learning Welsh over the past two years, with certificates presented in acknowledgement of their efforts. The event featured musical performances, contributions from local Welsh-medium schools, and addresses from senior leaders. Refreshments and informal activities encouraged attendees to practise their Welsh in a relaxed environment, helping to build confidence and promote everyday use of the language in the workplace. The event was supported through Community Cohesion grant funding, alongside contributions from the Social Care team to further promote the Welsh language within their services.

9. Conclusion

Welsh Language Courses

In the 2025/26 reporting year, a total of 42 staff members completed a Welsh language course. This represents a decrease from 2024/25, when 53 staff completed a course, but remains slightly higher than 2023/24, when 40 staff participated. While this reduction is noted, participation levels remain strong and continue to demonstrate sustained engagement with Welsh language learning across the authority.

Overall, this reflects a significant increase compared to the early stages of the current Welsh Language Strategy (2022–2027), when 19 staff completed a course in 2021/22. Although the reasons for the decrease are not fully clear, a contributing factor may have been the later promotion of courses this year, resulting in reduced time for staff to register before places were filled.

Welsh language courses are promoted to staff throughout the year, with a targeted campaign typically commencing in June to support enrolment for courses beginning in September. These courses involve approximately two hours of learning per week and run over a 32-week period during term time. Staff are able to contact the Welsh Language Officer at any point to discuss their learning, provide feedback, or raise any concerns, enabling ongoing engagement and close liaison with Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent.

Staff were also invited to attend the Council's St David's Day event, where those who had been learning Welsh over the past two years were recognised and presented with certificates in acknowledgement of their commitment. Initiatives of this nature play an important role in celebrating staff achievements, reinforcing the value of Welsh language learning, and encouraging continued participation.

Welsh Language Training

During the year we have developed a range of training for our staff alongside the usual Welsh language courses. Welsh language awareness training is available to all staff on the Council's e-learning platform Thinqi. Alongside this the Welsh Language Officer and Equalities and Welsh Language Manager participates in the corporate induction process. New videos were created this year to improve the corporate induction process where an introduction to the Welsh language and the Welsh Language Standards are provided in an accessible way that staff can easily revisit if they need a refresher in the future. The second part of the induction involves an in person day where the team provides further information about the Welsh language and where staff can access support along with an opportunity to take any questions.

Additionally, videos have been created and launched as part of the managers pathway on Thinqi which provides guidance on how to complete an effective Welsh Language Impact Assessment for policy decisions and why this is a requirement to consider potential impacts our policy decisions will

have on the Welsh language. This is additional to the training which is already available on the democratic services area of the hub on completing an effective impact assessment.

We have also been developing training for staff on using the Welsh language on social media accounts. The training is designed for all staff who have access and responsibility for MCC owned social media accounts. The training covers things like the Welsh Language Standards requirements relating to social media use, best practices and useful tips. The goal is to make it a requirement to complete this training where staff have access to updating social media accounts. We hope to launch this soon.

Work is currently underway to develop resources for officers and councillors to support increased use of the Welsh language in meetings across the authority. These will include audio recordings of simple words and phrases to aid pronunciation and practical use. It is anticipated that these resources will be made available in the coming weeks.

ARFer App

The Council has been actively exploring ways to increase the use of Welsh across the authority and to build staff confidence in using their existing language skills. As part of this, we engaged with Bangor University to pilot the ARFer app, a behaviour-change initiative designed to support increased use of Welsh in the workplace. It is important to note that ARFer is not a language learning tool; rather, it focuses on encouraging practical use of Welsh in day-to-day work.

The app prompts staff to complete small, manageable tasks as part of their daily routines, helping to build confidence and embed the use of Welsh in everyday interactions. The trial involved a team with a range of Welsh language abilities, including fluent speakers, learners, and those with little or no prior experience. This created a supportive environment in which staff could learn from one another and gradually increase their use of Welsh in a meaningful and practical way.

Initiatives such as this play an important role in normalising the use of Welsh in the workplace and support the Council's wider aim of creating a more bilingual working environment.

Welsh Language Translations

During the reporting year, significant work has been undertaken to review and strengthen the Council's translation processes, with a clear focus on improving efficiency, consistency, and cost-effectiveness. This has been driven by the need to better manage increasing demand for translations and address ongoing budget pressures.

A key area of focus has been the exploration of alternative delivery models, including greater collaboration with neighbouring authorities and a move away from the long-standing use of multiple external translators. This includes consideration of a shared service model, offering opportunities for cost savings through reduced per-word rates and more streamlined request processes.

Alongside this, there has been an increased emphasis on promoting more effective and considered use of translation services. The Cymraeg mailbox, through which translation requests are submitted, has been closely monitored by the Welsh Language Officer, enabling the identification and resolution of issues such as duplicate or inefficient requests. Departments have also been encouraged to

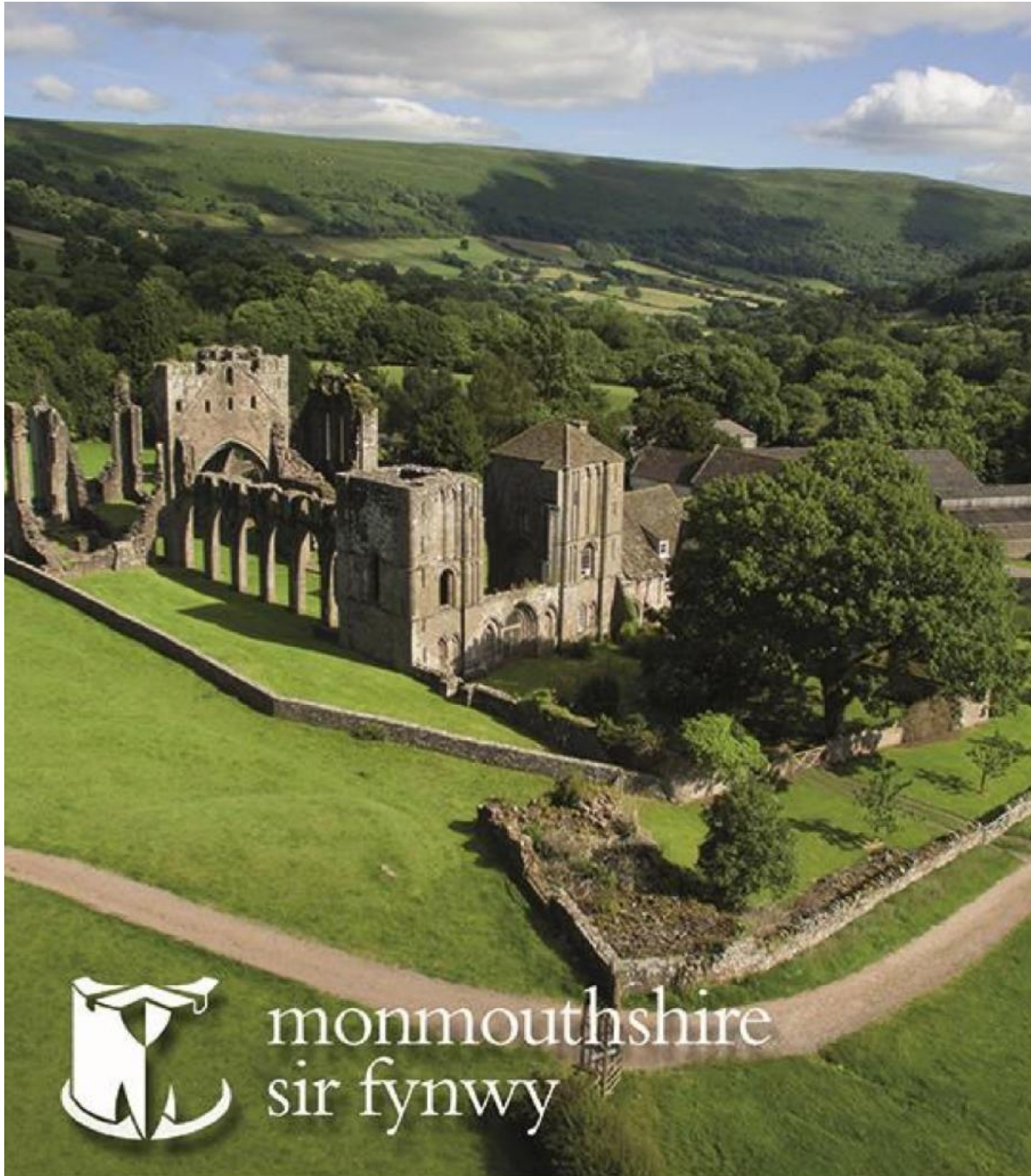
engage at an early stage when planning larger pieces of work, allowing sufficient time to manage demand, agree timescales, and ensure value for money.

As part of these improvements, there is a renewed focus on developing more structured processes for submitting, tracking, and analysing translation requests. This will support improved planning, stronger budget management, and the identification of further efficiencies across the organisation.

The Council will continue to refine its approach to translation provision to ensure it remains sustainable, cost-effective, and fully compliant with the Welsh Language Standards, while maintaining high-quality bilingual services. A revised translation process is expected to be implemented in the coming months, informed by a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Overall, the Council continues to make steady progress in strengthening its Welsh language provision, with ongoing work focused on increasing capacity, improving consistency, and embedding the language across all areas of service delivery.

Monmouthshire County Council Welsh Language Strategy Report 2026



Policy Context

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to place a duty on public bodies to comply with standards in relation to the Welsh language. March 2016 saw the introduction of new Welsh language standards. There are 176 standards applying to Monmouthshire County Council and these can be found in the [compliance notice](#) published on our bilingual website. The Standards aim to ensure that:

- the people of Wales have a legal right to use the Welsh language.
- the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.
- the use of the language is promoted and facilitated in all aspects of the Council's work and service delivery.

Two of these standards specify the requirement to produce and monitor a 5-Year Welsh Language Strategy.

Standard 145 requires us to produce a 5-Year strategy which shows how we will promote, facilitate and grow the use of Welsh in the County including a target for the number of Welsh speakers and a statement about how we intend to reach that target.

Standard 146 requires us to produce a monitoring report at the end the strategy period showing the progress that we have made.

In addition to this requirement there are other pieces of legislation and policies that guide our work:

- The Well-being of Future Generations Act has a clear goal for public bodies to work towards a Wales of thriving culture and vibrant Welsh language and culture.
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050 articulates the ambition of Welsh Government to see an increase in numbers of Welsh speakers to safeguard our language and make Wales a truly bilingual country.
- The Mwy Na Geiriau/ More than Words Strategy promotes the “active offer” of language choice in the social care sector.
- Our Corporate Plan describes the aspirations for our county and our core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities which recognises the important role the Welsh language plays.
- The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is prepared under Section 84 of The School Standard and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019. The Council is currently preparing a revised 10-year WESP for 2022-2032 and this plays a very important part in this 5 -Year Strategy.

Local Profile of the Language

At the time of developing the Strategy information from the Census in 2011 showed that 9.9% of people in Monmouthshire spoke Welsh with the latest data from the Welsh Population Survey, at that time, showing a rise to 16.4% or 14,800 of the population.

The data from the Census in 2021 shows that 8.7% of Monmouthshire's residents age 3+ reported they can speak Welsh, the national average was 17.8%.

Number of Welsh speakers in Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire population (aged 3 and over):	90,690
Number of people who speak Welsh (aged 3 and over):	7,866
Percentage of people who speak Welsh (aged 3 and over):	8.7%

(Source: Census 2021)

Age profile of speakers

3 to 15 years of age	4.1%	3,757
16 to 64 years of age	3.8%	3,411
65 + years of age	0.8%	698

(Source: Census 2021)

However, the Census 2021 also shows us that people who reported some Welsh skills in Monmouthshire were 11,545 or 12.7%.

A comparison of the most recent Annual Population Survey data reveals the following increases over the period of the strategy so far:

Measure	31/12/2020		31/12/2025		Change	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	percentage	number
Speak Welsh	14,300	15.9%	17,900	19.7%	+ 3,600	+ 3.80%
Read Welsh	13,600	15.1%	16,400	18.1%	+ 2,800	+ 3.00%
Write Welsh	11,900	13.2%	14,100	15.6%	+ 2,200	+ 2.40%
Understand Welsh	16,500	18.3%	20,300	22.3%	+ 3,800	+ 4.00%

[Census: Welsh Language - Data Cymru](#)

[Annual Population Survey - Ability to read, write and understand spoken Welsh by local authority and year | StatsWales](#)

What We Wanted to Achieve: Our Objectives 2022-27

We aimed to achieve an increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Monmouthshire from 14,800 to 16,130 (9%) by the end of the 5-Year Strategy. The latest Annual Population Survey (December 2025) reports 17,900 (19.7%) of people can speak Welsh in Monmouthshire. This is an increase of 20.1% and over double the target.

Below are the 4 Objectives we wanted to achieve within the Strategy, together with related actions and their updates for this report.

Objective 1: Increase the number of children who are educated through the medium of Welsh	
Action	Update
Increase the number of nursery children who are educated through the medium of Welsh	The number and percentage of 3-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh (PLASC data) is 97 (8.58%). This is an increase of 31% from 2024 which was 74 (6.45%). We have made positive steps to increase the number of children accessing Welsh-medium early education. A third Welsh-medium school opened in September 2024 offering 30 nursery places and take-up has exceeded expectations. Take up of places has also increased at our other two Welsh-medium LA nurseries.
Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh	Our target for proficient Welsh speakers is 4.2%. (44 school based) Current proficient Welsh speakers is 5.7% (60 school based) Current entry level Welsh speakers is 48.1% (517 school based)
Ensure that more learners study for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh	There are no Welsh-medium secondary schools within Monmouthshire. However, learners from the county do access Welsh-medium secondary education at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gwent Is-Coed. As a result, all subjects within Monmouthshire secondary schools are delivered through the medium of English,

	with the exception of Welsh as a second language. During transition into Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form, learners are offered a free choice of courses and qualifications. At present, there have been no enquiries from cohorts regarding the availability of studying further qualifications through the medium of Welsh.
Increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs	We currently have 11 primary learners with ALN (3.5% of all learners) who are educated in Welsh-medium schools, compared with 280 learners (5.6%) in English-medium primary provision. At secondary level, there is currently no Welsh-medium ALN provision, while 258 ALN learners (6.2%) are educated in English-medium settings. A review of Welsh-medium ALN provision was undertaken during the 2024. This review identified gaps in the availability of Welsh-language ALN resources. It involved Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin and led to recommendations for additional investment in Welsh-language resources and enhanced collaboration with Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy. ALN Capital Grant funding was allocated to ensure all Monmouthshire Welsh-medium schools are in receipt of suitable literacy, numeracy and wellbeing resources to support intervention for children with barriers to their learning and progress. The current review of impact demonstrates an improved offer around literacy intervention, including suitable assessment processes to identify specific skill deficit areas and targeted support strategies. In April 2025, funding was made available to secure identified resources, and autism training materials, together with standards and competency frameworks, available in Welsh. Ongoing collaboration between the three Welsh-medium schools is also supporting the implementation of agreed

	actions and the sharing of effective practice. We are continuing to work collaboratively with colleagues across Wales and the ALN National Implementation Lead (Welsh language) to share expertise and develop Welsh-medium ALN provision and resources. Staff from Monmouthshire's Welsh-medium primary schools attended a Welsh-medium ALN Effective Practice Event, and Welsh-language autism resources developed locally are already being shared more widely. A second Welsh-medium ALN review is planned for spring/summer 2026 and will include Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
Explore the feasibility of appointing a Welsh Medium Education Promotion Officer in partnership with others	During the Strategy period, the Council has actively participated in a regional project to promote Welsh-medium education across South East Wales, led by the South East Wales Welsh-medium Education Promotion Partnership. This partnership brings together local authorities, Mentrau Iaith, Cymraeg i Blant, RhAG and the Welsh Government. The partnership was established through Grŵp Deddf (South East Wales Welsh Language Officers) in recognition of the benefits of a more coordinated, collaborative approach to promoting Welsh-medium education. As part of this work, a regional Welsh-medium Education Promotion Officer was appointed through the Cymraeg i Bawb partnership to support promotion across the region. The partnership has delivered a range of promotional initiatives, including the development of bilingual promotional videos, including those focused on Welsh-medium education and additional learning needs, one of which featured a family from Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni. A series of "Welsh-medium education for all" videos were also produced to support wider awareness. In addition, promotional banners were

	provided to all Welsh-medium schools across the region, and a training package was developed for school admissions staff and those working with families and children. Following the success of this collaborative approach, the Cymraeg i Bawb project has since been expanded across Wales. Locally, the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) meets termly to monitor progress against the WESP action plan. Through this process, the groups identify the priorities for the next year, which are reflected in work plans. The Promotion sub-group continues to play a key role in raising awareness of the benefits of Welsh-medium education throughout the year, particularly during key admissions periods. The group proactively organises events, and works closely with schools and communities to create opportunities for learners to use and develop their Welsh language skills in meaningful, real-life contexts.
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Objective 2: Provide more opportunities for adults to learn and use the Welsh language	
Run a marketing campaign to increase take up of Welsh adult learner classes	We have recently re-engaged with the 'Welsh for Adults' provision delivered by Coleg Gwent to expand opportunities for adults to learn Welsh through a partnership approach, whereby the Council provides the venue and Coleg Gwent provides the tutor. Classes are starting again in our Hubs from September 2026, supported by a programme of promotion in advance to raise awareness and encourage participation. Provisionally there will be a minimum of 1 class per hub and we will grow according to demand.
Increase the awareness of Welsh	Welsh for Adults classes are hosted from the hubs. The courses provided

language courses and material for parents who send their children to Welsh-medium schools	are Welsh for Adults by Coleg Gwent (as above). This year we have two classes at the Abergavenny Community Hub on a Friday am and pm. We do have additional classes being offered from September 2026 as follows: Caldicot Hub - Tues AM Chepstow Hub - Friday PM Monmouth Hub - Tues PM Menter Iaith hold Welsh language swimming lessons including water safety in Caldicot Leisure Centre for 8+ (every Monday for 5 weeks over the summer). At the same time, we are looking to run a second session for parents and babies. Mother and toddler sessions currently run in Monmouth (Rockfield Community Centre), with a scheduled messy play session as well as a Party in the Park event planned for July. The mother and toddler sessions are bilingual and advertised through local mother and toddlers' groups. The children are feeders for the new school – Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni.
Promote the use of apps and other online resources as a way to learn Welsh	Within MCC we have piloted the use of ARFer. This is an app for the mobile phone that has been developed by Bangor University to give learners of Welsh more opportunity to use it within the workplace. It focuses on the practical use of Welsh in day-to-day work. We also promote the use of DuoLingo app for colleagues who are learning Welsh. Monmouthshire and its near neighbours have a number of Welsh clubs and societies at which the language can be spoken and practiced. These can be accessed through our website: Monmouthshire and the Welsh Language - Monmouthshire Say Something in Welsh have a number of clubs throughout Monmouthshire as well as online and the app is available to download onto a mobile phone.

	We have also produced an online booklet for those thinking about sending their child to a Welsh-medium school. BecomingBilingualBooklet_2022.pdf
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Objective 3: Increase the number of opportunities for the public to interact with public services delivered through the medium of Welsh	
Increase the number of staff who are learning Welsh in the workplace	In 2021/22, 19 members of staff were learning Welsh. By 2025/2026, this has increased to 42, representing a 121% increase over the course of the strategy to date. A wide range of fully funded Welsh language courses is available to staff at all levels, delivered by Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent. These courses are promoted regularly throughout the year, supported by targeted communications to encourage uptake and engagement from both staff and managers. In addition to formal learning opportunities, staff are signposted to a range of self-directed learning resources, including those available through the National Centre for Learning Welsh. Targeted support is also provided through initiatives such as the Camau Scheme for social care staff, where learning is tailored to support the practical use of Welsh within their roles. Staff are further supported through a range of initiatives aimed at encouraging ongoing engagement and the practical use of Welsh in the workplace. These include participation in behaviour-change pilots such as the ARFer app, Welsh language awareness training delivered via the Council's e-learning platform, and the development of resources to support the use of Welsh in everyday workplace settings.
Increase the number of Welsh	There are currently 50 members of staff (13.1%) who report that they are fluent

speaking staff in the council from 44 – 66 (an increase of 50%)	in Welsh. This represents an increase of 13.6% since 2022. In total, 382 members of staff have some level of Welsh language ability ranging from beginner to fluent. During 2025/26, 689 posts (96.1%) were advertised as 'Welsh language skills desirable', with 28 posts (3.9%) advertised as 'Welsh language skills essential'. The council does not advertise any vacancies as 'Welsh language skills are not required'. While progress has been made, further work is required to meet the target of 66 fluent Welsh speakers. Ongoing actions to support this aim include promoting Welsh language learning, supporting staff to progress to higher proficiency levels, and strengthening Welsh language requirements within recruitment processes.
Improve recruitment processes to increase the number of Welsh speakers applying for public sector jobs	The job application process is fully accessible in Welsh through our new Talentlink system, and all job vacancies are advertised bilingually. As part of the recruitment process, every vacant post must be assessed for the necessity of Welsh language skills. We classify each new vacant post as Welsh language desirable at a minimum. For positions that involve a high degree of interaction with the public or where there is a lack of current Welsh language skills in the service area, these roles are assessed as Welsh language essential. For these essential posts, we encourage managers to specify in the job description the types of Welsh skills required. This approach aims to encourage applications from individuals who have learnt the language, as learners often lack the confidence to apply for Welsh language essential roles due to uncertainty about the tasks they will need to perform in Welsh.

	Additionally, we include the Welsh language skills framework in every job advert. We also utilise Welsh language recruitment sites to advertise posts that are assessed as Welsh language essential, as well as some Welsh language desirable posts. By advertising roles on these dedicated recruitment sites, we make it easier for Welsh speakers to find our vacant posts. This approach has supported the successful appointment of Welsh speaking candidates.
Ensure that Artificial Intelligence generated responses on the Council's digital channels is of equal quality in Welsh and English	The Monty chatbot has been removed from both the Council's website and Facebook Messenger. As a result, AI-generated Welsh responses are no longer in use, as the chatbot functionality is no longer available. If people message through Facebook messenger, they are then greeted with a holding message in either English or Welsh.

Objective 4: Work with partners to create of more social opportunities for people to use the language in everyday life.	
Create more social opportunities for people to engage with and use language in community hubs and libraries	The following groups and sessions are held in our hubs or libraries: • Welsh University of 3rd Age (U3A) groups in Caldicot and Monmouth • Welsh conversation groups in Abergavenny, Monmouth and Usk • Welsh language Book Club in Usk • Cymraeg i Blant sessions in Abergavenny, Caldicot and Usk • Town Council organised 2 sessions in Monmouth so that people could learn the Welsh National Anthem

	All libraries hosted Mali a'r Môr / Mali & the Sea bilingual performances Mali a'r Môr / Mali & the Sea home Siôn Tomos Owen did a bilingual session in Caldicot (for Ysgol Y Ffin) and in Monmouth for a Welsh learner's class from Monmouth School. Say Something in Welsh run by Menter Iaith run 3 weekly events in Monmouthshire: Monmouth Coffee Morning (Bore Coffi Trefynwy) - Every Monday 10-11:30am Chepstow Coffee Morning (Bore Coffi Casgwent) Every Wednesday 10-11am Abergavenny Welsh Group (Siawns am Sgwrs Y Fenni) Every Thursday 1:30-2:30
Increase the stock of Welsh language books in local libraries	The number of Welsh language book stock increases annually in line with budget allocation and reader demand. We held 2 sessions in Caldicot with students studying Welsh from Caldicot School, showing them what the library has to offer and asking their opinions on our Welsh language stock. For adult Welsh language Reading Groups, we purchased an additional 7 sets of Welsh language titles (70 books). For a project starting this year (On the Same Page) encouraging Reading Groups in Years 7 & 8, last year we purchased 5 Welsh language titles for pupils (50 books). We offer free access to Welsh language eBooks and eAudio books through Borrowbox. This includes books for learners. You can also access Welsh language magazines through the same service. As part of an all-Wales Service Level Agreement with the North Wales Society for the Blind, supporting the production and distribution of Welsh-language audiobooks through BorrowBox, each participating local authority contributes £500 per year towards the provision of physical copies. Under the

	terms of the SLA, each authority receives one physical copy of each of the 24 Welsh-language audiobook titles produced annually — 12 for adults and 12 for children.
Make available grant funding for community groups to hold events which support and promote use of the language	During the Strategy period, the Council has provided funding to organisations such as Menter Iaith BGTm to support events including 'Miri Mynwy', and the Urdd for initiatives such as the 'Chwarae yn Gymraeg' project, all of which promote and encourage the use of Welsh language within communities. We are currently reviewing our translation processes, which is expected to release additional resources that can be redirected to support organisations and community groups in delivering Welsh language events. This work will be finalised within the next 3 months.
Develop a monthly newsletter featuring Welsh language job, volunteering and training opportunities	The fortnightly staff newsletter, Compass, is regularly used to include a 'Welsh Tip' feature, which promotes the Welsh language and supports compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. These bilingual tips provide practical guidance on specific requirements, helping staff understand their responsibilities and apply them in their day-to-day work. In addition to raising awareness, the Welsh Tips signpost staff to available support, including Welsh language learning opportunities and resources such as Iaith Gwaith. The newsletter is also used to promote wider Welsh language campaigns, reinforcing key messages and encouraging engagement. This provides a consistent and accessible method of communication, supporting the embedding of good practice and increasing confidence in the use of Welsh across the organisation. The Cymraeg Teams channel further complements this approach by providing a safe and inclusive space for staff, regardless of language ability, to engage with Welsh. Content shared is bilingual to ensure accessibility and encourage participation. The channel is used to share resources,

	promote training opportunities, and provide updates on Welsh language initiatives, while also fostering a sense of community. By enabling regular informal interaction and practice, it supports increased confidence and helps embed the use of Welsh in everyday working life.
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