

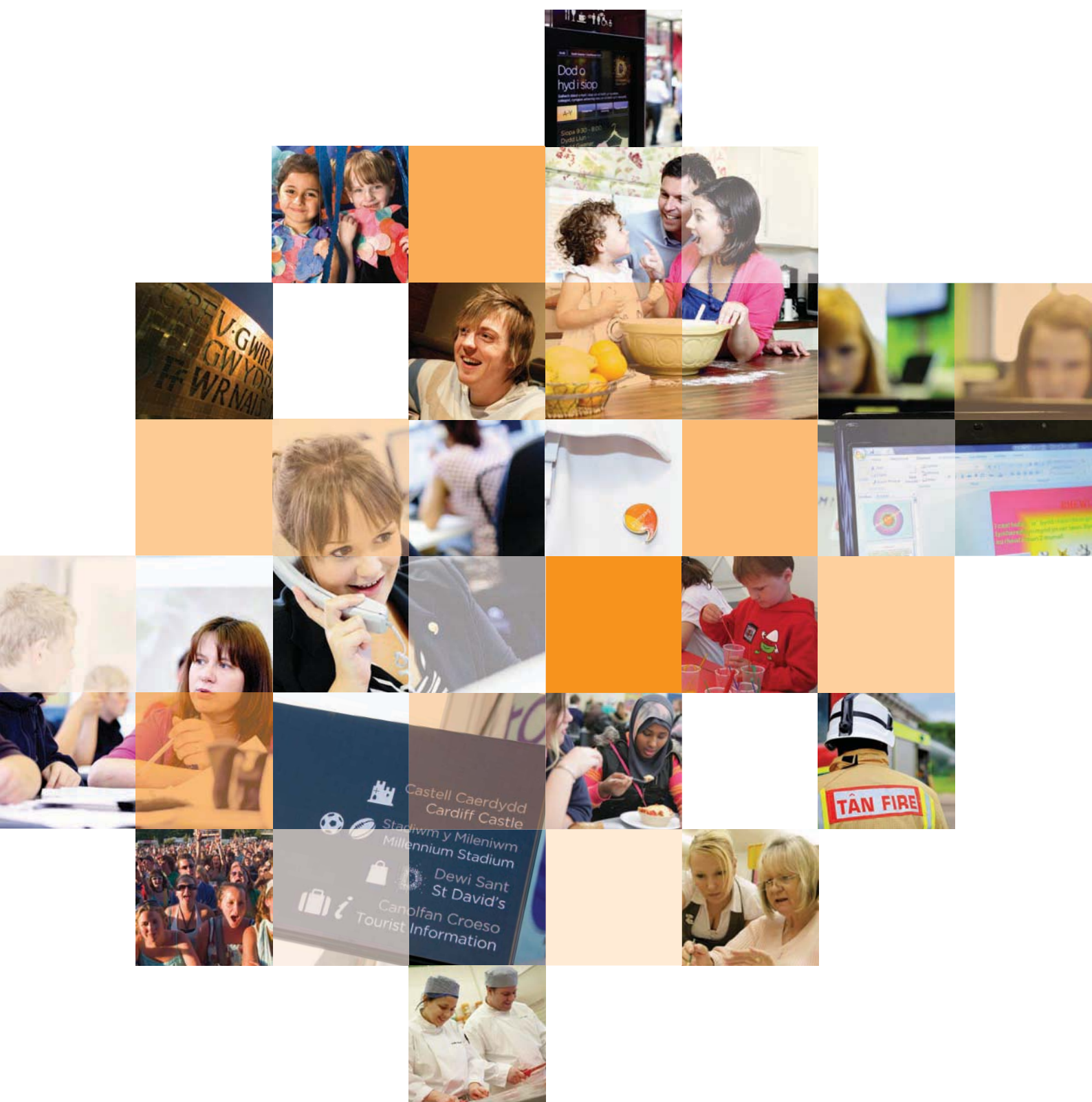


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

A living language: a language for living

Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17

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A living language: a language for living

Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17

- Audience** Welsh Government departments; public bodies in Wales; third sector bodies in Wales; private sector companies in Wales; educational organisations in Wales; organisations working to promote the use of Welsh; organisations working with families, children and young people and communities; and other interested parties.
- Overview** **The Government of Wales Act 2006:** This is the Welsh Ministers' strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. It has been prepared in accordance with Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. This strategy supersedes *laith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003). *laith Pawb* is no longer being implemented.
- Lifespan of the strategy:** This is a strategy covering a period of five years, from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2017. The Welsh Ministers will publish an annual action plan in accordance with Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 which will explain how they will implement the proposals outlined in this strategy during each financial year.
- Further information** Enquiries about this document should be directed to:
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Or by visiting the Welsh Government's website
www.wales.gov.uk/welshlanguage
- Related documents** *Programme for Government 2011–16* (Welsh Government, 2011); *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*; *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010); *Welsh Language Strategy Evidence Review* (Welsh Government, 2012)

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Ministerial foreword

I was delighted when the First Minister gave me responsibility for the Welsh language portfolio in May 2011. As an active Welsh learner, my engagement with the language in a meaningful way goes back to my days as a student in Bangor in the 1970s. The language is important to all of us in Wales, and opinion surveys regularly show the majority of Welsh people are committed to and supportive of the language. We must always strive to protect a political consensus around measures to develop and strengthen the language, and this strategy deliberately builds on the draft strategy published by the One Wales Government.

I pay tribute to the contributions made, not least by members of the Advisory Group on the Welsh Language Strategy established by the former Heritage Minister Alun Ffred Jones. Their input has helped shape the final strategy and I have enjoyed chairing the three meetings we have held since May 2011.

Over the decades, the Welsh language has been sustained by dedicated individuals and communities working together locally and nationally, often under great pressure, in a wide variety of organisations and activities. Those individuals and communities deserve our thanks and acknowledgement. For nearly twenty years, the Welsh Language Board has played a leading role in this process. Past and present members of the Board likewise deserve our thanks and acknowledgement. The preservation of the Welsh language in the twentieth and early twenty-first century has also been a positive demonstration of how politics can deliver, and that should also be acknowledged.

However, the future development and survival of the language depends on the commitment of the people of Wales, and must be owned by all of us. Its protection cannot depend on those who are professionally employed in its development or promotion. We must also ensure that we are encouraging people to use the language skills that they have – and not to contribute to a climate in which they feel that less than perfect Welsh language skills are a barrier to participation.

There is a danger in any sphere that the natural organisational or institutional interests of those engaged professionally in that sphere come to dominate policy development. When it comes to the language, we must avoid bureaucratic professionalism and ensure that we are developing initiatives that engage people at a grass-roots level, not least in those communities where Welsh is a language in daily and active use. In developing language policy in the future, we have to invite in new voices. I want a coalition of the unconventional involved in developing and monitoring the implementation of this new strategy. Devolution set the framework for a new democracy in Wales, and a new accountability, strengthened by the referendum

result in 2011. The voices that dominate in the future should be committed to that new openness, not the protection of the old establishment.

This year will see the thirtieth anniversary of S4C's first broadcast. That anniversary should remind us that the promotion and protection of the language has always depended on political support and grass-roots campaigning. The most damaging thing to happen to the Welsh language in the last two years was the decision by the UK Government to abandon the funding formula for S4C, set down in statute, without any effective public debate. The budgetary loss to the Welsh language in the five years to 2014–15 will be at least £60 million. The failure of the S4C Authority to maximise the cross-party public pressure that existed in Wales in defence of what was a statutory obligation on the UK Government demonstrated an institution whose pre-devolution mentality failed to understand the realities of post-devolution Wales. While broadcasting is not devolved, and it is not the policy of the present Welsh Government to seek the devolution of broadcasting, it is clear that in terms of language policy at least, the Welsh Government will need to take a closer view of the impact of broadcasting policy on the Welsh language. We believe that the new leadership of the S4C Authority and of the Channel itself will be responsive to these concerns.

The new Welsh Government elected in May 2011 has moved swiftly to implement the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Within the first six months, we moved to advertise, interview and appoint the first Welsh Language Commissioner, announcing on 5 October 2011 that Meri Huws would lead the Commissioner's office from 1 April 2012. She will be a robust and active champion for the language – and will work with organisations to increase the number of services available in Welsh, providing more opportunities for people to use the language in their day-to-day lives.

The Commissioner will develop new Welsh language standards, in order to impose duties on a wide range of organisations: to provide services in Welsh, to mainstream the language into policy development, and to develop strategies with regard to increasing the use of Welsh at work.

Welsh language promotion standards will impose duties on the Welsh Government and local authorities across Wales to promote the use of Welsh more widely and to support and encourage its use within the communities they serve. Again, I am determined to make progress as quickly as possible in order to introduce the new standards – and the Welsh Government will work closely with the Commissioner to ensure that this can be done.

Through the system of standards, we have an opportunity to focus on the delivery of services that can make a real difference as far as the language is concerned. We need to ensure that services and activities for children and young people are available in Welsh. We need more face-to-face services in Welsh. We need to ensure that more and more funding decisions are taken with the need to provide Welsh-language services in mind. We need to move from thinking of Welsh as a translation issue to thinking of Welsh as a normal part of day-to-day life in Wales.

For its part, the Welsh Government will inherit from the Welsh Language Board a central and highly significant role with regard to promoting the use of Welsh. I will want to work closely with key stakeholders who can contribute to this task, including the Urdd, the mentrau iaith, local authorities and others. Together, we need to breathe new life into the language – while working hard to ensure that the work we support and deliver is as effective as possible.

As the One Wales Government published the *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* only in April 2010, this strategy does not go into significant detail on the education system. However, it should be read alongside that strategy. Since the *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* was published, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has been formally established. In addition, the incoming Welsh Government has a manifesto commitment to set Welsh in Education Strategic Plans on a statutory basis. In December 2011, local authorities reported back to the Welsh Government on how they are progressing against targets to improve the number of young people learning Welsh and studying through the medium of Welsh. We are determined to ensure effective planning of future provision.

As we look to the future, we must ensure that parents/carers and families better understand how the language can benefit their children, to enable them to make informed decisions with regard to their upbringing and education. We need to ensure that Welsh-medium education is planned and provided in accordance with parents/carers' wishes. We need to provide more and more opportunities for children and young people to enjoy using the language beyond the school gates – and we need to encourage Welsh-speaking parents/carers to use the language with their children. I am determined to make progress as quickly and effectively as possible to deal with the challenges that lie ahead.

One of the significant changes from the draft strategy originally published in 2010 is the additional focus on new media. Throughout the twentieth century, the broadcast media played an important role in the development and preservation of the Welsh language through both radio and television. In the twenty-first century, the existence of Welsh-language digital media content and applications not only allows the Welsh language to flourish, but it also enables Welsh speakers to participate fully as digital citizens and demonstrates to all that the Welsh language is a creative, powerful, adaptive and modern medium.

Our ambition and our expectation should be that Welsh speakers should be able to conduct their lives electronically through the medium of Welsh, should they so desire, whether that be for cultural, informational, entertainment, leisure, retail, transactional, community, or social networking purposes.

The pace of change is significant and striking. In December 2011 alone, the first Welsh-language e-books became available on the Kindle, the Welsh-language magazine *Go/wg* became available via an iPad app, and the Welsh Language Board consulted on Welsh language terminology for use on Twitter.

It is likely that consumer demand and user initiatives will drive some of these developments. However, development is likely to be uneven and there is an important leadership role for Welsh Government.

In this sphere, as in so many others, quality is key. Why should Welsh speakers settle for services that are not of the highest quality? And why should the Welsh Government subsidise services for Welsh speakers which are not able to replicate the quality of consumer experience that they could experience through the medium of English? If, for example, the Welsh Books Council website does not provide as satisfying a customer experience as that of Amazon, would we as a Government be better seeking to develop with Amazon a Welsh interface that provides the highest quality experience and investing in that instead? The experience of the consumer through the medium of Welsh should be first-rate not second-rate.

Separately, some of the most exciting developments in the digital supply of Welsh materials online have come from user-generated content and applications created by Welsh speakers themselves. How do we harness that energy and commitment? Again, this is a matter of thinking beyond the conventional institutions which have served the Welsh language over recent years and giving space to new voices.

We need to think big, have ambition, and aim high. We cannot leave the future of the Welsh language to the established institutions who have built an industry around their own small-scale needs over recent years. We should shout out for the Welsh language – and Welsh Government should lead the way, intervening with the largest players in the market to ensure a presence for Welsh on all platforms, in every aspect of our lives.

In working on this new strategy, one figure has been at the front of my mind. Our statisticians have assessed that between 1,200 and 2,200 fluent Welsh speakers are currently being lost from Wales each year. This new strategy, along with the Welsh-medium Education Strategy, has to begin the process of reversing that trend.

Additionally, it has become evident that, even looking at wider international experience, there is little empirical evidence in relation to the impact of individual programmes on increasing the use of Welsh and other minority languages. This makes it difficult to form an objective assessment of how effectively these have worked, either alone or together, and to evaluate appropriately the likely success of activity of this nature in the future. We need, therefore, to develop a sound evaluation framework to sit alongside this strategy.

There are aspects of this strategy which will be uncomfortable reading for some. But if you pay for what you have always had you will get what you always got.

The central tenet of our approach to Welsh-speaking communities has always been that we must help them develop, innovate, prosper and succeed. It was there again in the manifesto of the incoming Welsh Government where we said that ‘we recognise that the future vitality of the language is inextricably linked to the economic and social future of those [Welsh-speaking] communities.’

This strategy sets out a clear responsibility for the whole of the Welsh Government to lead on the future of the Welsh language, and the strategy develops ideas which have implications for the whole Welsh Government. The strategy was endorsed by the Cabinet of the Welsh Government, and we now seek popular support for its implementation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leighton Andrews". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

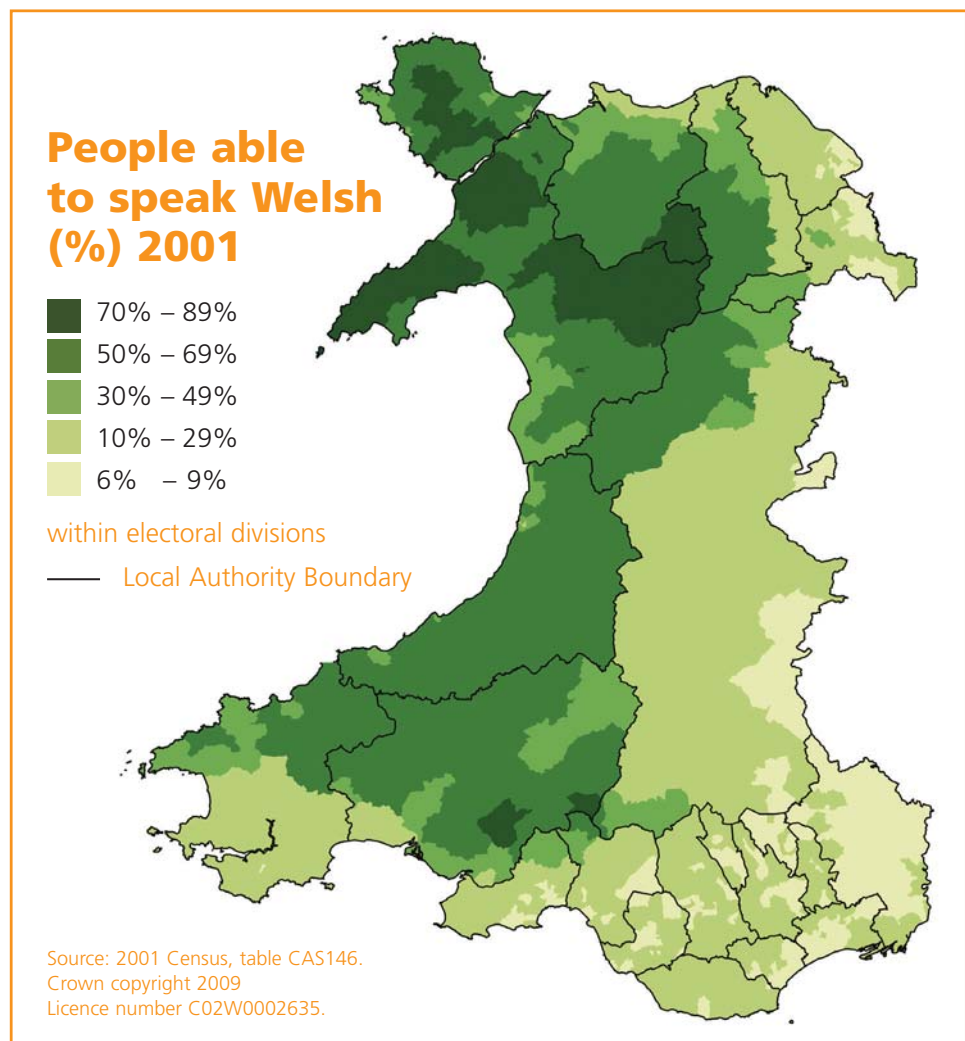
Leighton Andrews AM
Minister for Education and Skills

Context

There is no doubt that Welsh is one of Europe's most robust minority languages. Its cultural influence and traditions remain relevant today and are embraced by new generations learning and using the language. It is testament to the commitment of Welsh speakers that it has survived alongside one of the world's most influential languages. Nevertheless, the situation of the Welsh language remains fragile.

Welsh speakers: numbers, fluency and use

The results of the 2001 Census showed that 20.8 per cent of the population of Wales was able to speak Welsh (582,400 people). This was an increase compared to the 1991 Census (18.7 per cent and 508,100 people). It was also the first percentage increase in the numbers of Welsh speakers ever recorded by a Census, with the greatest increase seen among young people aged 5–16.



Originally published by the Welsh Language Board

But these figures need to be treated with caution. It seems that over half of these young people are learning Welsh as a second language. As such their exposure to the language and their level of fluency is likely to be limited compared to children who receive Welsh-medium education.

Not unsurprisingly, fluency and use are intrinsically linked. According to the Language Use Surveys 2004–06 commissioned by the Welsh Language Board, a little over half (58 per cent) of those who said they speak Welsh count themselves as fluent. Of those who said they were fluent the vast majority (87 per cent) used the language on a daily basis. The challenge we face is to provide the opportunities for all Welsh speakers, whatever their fluency level, to use the language in every sphere of life and to encourage them to do so.

We have undertaken broad estimates of the annual adjustment in the number of fluent Welsh speakers in Wales, and have concluded that between 1,200 and 2,200 fluent Welsh speakers are being lost each year. This results predominantly from the difference between the number of fluent Welsh speakers who migrate out of Wales and the number returning.

Welsh-speaking communities

There is further cause for concern for the sustainability of the language in its traditional Welsh-speaking heartlands. Inward and outward migration has had a profound effect on these areas. Many Welsh-speaking young people have moved from their communities to seek work in urban areas and this is coupled with the inward migration of people unable to speak Welsh. The geographical profile of Welsh in the 2001 Census confirmed this pattern, with a decrease in the percentage of those able to speak Welsh in traditional heartlands such as Anglesey, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd. The number of communities where over 70 per cent of the population was able to speak Welsh dropped to 54 in the 2001 census, compared with 92 in 1991. It has long been argued that such a density of speakers is required in order for Welsh to be an everyday language of the community.

This strategy attempts to address these significant challenges facing the Welsh language.

Number able to speak Welsh by Community 2001

Number of Welsh speakers

- 3,000
- 1,500
- 300

— Local Authority Boundary

Source: 2001 Census, table CAS146.
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Originally published by the Welsh Language Board

The status of the Welsh language

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 confirmed the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and created a new legislative framework for the Welsh language. This followed over fifty years of language planning that has raised the status of the language. This included the Welsh Language Act 1993, the work of the Welsh Language Board and its partners, the growth of Welsh-medium education, and the establishment of S4C, BBC Radio Cymru and the Welsh Books Council.

In recent years, a strong political consensus has developed in relation to the need to safeguard and promote the Welsh language for the future. This has intensified since the creation of the National Assembly for Wales, and cross-party support was given to the Welsh Assembly Government's first strategic framework for the promotion of the Welsh language, *Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales*, which was published in 2003.

In addition, opinion polls suggest that support for the Welsh language exists among the majority of the Welsh public, be they Welsh speakers, learners or non-Welsh speakers. For example, in a survey commissioned by the Welsh Language Board in 2008, over 80 per cent of respondents saw the language as 'something to be proud of' and almost 75 per cent saw the language as 'something belonging to everyone in Wales'. The growth in Welsh-medium education over the past twenty years is testament to the support that exists for the language. The response to the consultation on this strategy also shows there is wide-ranging support for the need to take concerted action to promote the use of Welsh and that various organisations and individuals remain very committed to continuing that work.

Our aim as the Welsh Government is to build on the existing consensus by taking increased responsibility for the promotion and facilitation of the use of Welsh.

Looking back: the impact of past activities

Since its establishment as a statutory body under the Welsh Language Act 1993, the Welsh Language Board has held two roles. The Board has simultaneously operated as a regulator, agreeing and monitoring public bodies' Welsh language schemes, and as a language champion, promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh more broadly. The Board developed a good reputation in Wales and beyond through its innovative work in the area of language planning, and it has provided guidance on an international level in minority language development.

When *Iaith Pawb* was published in 2003 the Board received additional investment from the Welsh Assembly Government to increase its capacity to implement projects at a grass-roots level. The Board developed partnerships with a number of bodies across Wales such as the mentrau iaith, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the National Eisteddfod, Young Farmers' Clubs, Merched y Wawr, Mudiad Meithrin and other bodies operating to promote the Welsh language. In addition, the Board developed the innovative Twf project to encourage parents/carers to speak Welsh with their children.

The investment, coupled with the work undertaken by the Board and its partners, has led to the provision of a broader range of Welsh-language activities at a community and national level. In addition, the Board has approved, under the Welsh Language Act, over 550 Welsh language schemes with bodies from different sectors, and has worked with the private and third sectors to increase their use of Welsh. That has led to ensuring that more Welsh-language services are available to the public.

In preparing this strategy, we have considered what evidence exists to measure the effectiveness of the activities undertaken by the Welsh Government, the Board and its partners over the years, in terms of increasing the use of Welsh. We have also looked at activities beyond Wales, in the context of other minority languages.

For the most part, the work undertaken for our evidence review, published alongside this strategy, suggested that there was a significant deficit in the empirical evidence in relation to the impact of individual programmes on increasing the use of Welsh. This makes it difficult to form an objective assessment of how effectively these have worked, either alone or together, and to evaluate appropriately the likely success of activity of this nature in the future. We need, therefore, to develop a sound evaluation framework to sit alongside this strategy. This is discussed in the next section (see pages 14–24).

However, the evidence that exists suggests the following.

- Continual exposure through the lifespan to any language may be necessary for the individual to maintain that language.
- The population most at risk of abandoning the Welsh language is families with only one Welsh-speaking parent/carer and that the perceived status of the language in the community affects parents'/carers' attitudes towards using the language.
- The language of a child's 'community' of speakers which includes parents/carers, grandparents, siblings, teachers and school, influences the language spoken by the child. The language of interaction with friends correlates highly with the language the child speaks, and is influential in children's attitudes towards either or both languages.
- Initiatives such as Twf have been successful in bringing bilingualism into the mainstream work of midwives and health visitors. It has also helped raise awareness of the advantages of bilingualism.
- The literature suggests that there could be an enhanced role for Early Years providers in providing parents/carers with more practical and intensive support to create a stimulating home learning environment which promotes and facilitates the use of Welsh.
- Early and teenage years are seen as a crucial period in developing a positive behaviour towards a minority language and in determining whether the language is maintained and transferred. However, learning and speaking Welsh at school is not enough on its own; the language needs to be used and supported in the home (if possible) and through wider social and cultural activities.
- Lack of confidence was found to be one of the main obstacles preventing staff from using their Welsh language skills at work. Language-awareness training appears to be a successful means of increasing positive attitudes towards Welsh among staff.
- There is little explicit evidence that the provision of services in minority languages increases language status or use. However there is a body of evidence that shows that languages will thrive only if there are opportunities for use in all spheres of life.

- Support by the population in Wales for Welsh-language service provision is well evidenced. Over nine out of ten Welsh speakers (with a range of fluency levels) take the view that Welsh-language service provision is important to keep the language alive.
- Since the Welsh Language Act, evidence shows that barriers to accessing services in Welsh remain. Main barriers include a lack of supply of services in Welsh, a lack of demand for services due to lack of confidence among non-fluent Welsh speakers and a lack of awareness that services are provided in Welsh. Evidence on the effectiveness of specific ways of addressing these barriers is lacking, although there is some evidence to suggest that marketing of the availability of Welsh-language services can lead to increased uptake.
- Research suggests focusing Welsh language marketing and promotional approaches on younger age groups; improving the accessibility to and relevance of available Welsh-language media and resources; and maximising the potential of technology such as the internet and new social media.

Looking towards the future: a new strategy

Our vision

Our vision is to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales. The Welsh Government will take the lead on delivering that vision. We will work with a wide range of partners who will play a full part in ensuring that it is realised.

We recognise that language planning is a long-term process. The purpose of this strategy is to move towards our long-term aim while achieving the objective in our Programme for Government for 2011–2016 to ‘strengthen the use of the Welsh language in everyday life’. To this end, over the next five years we would want to see:

- an increase in the number of people who both speak and use the language
- more opportunities for people to use Welsh
- an increase in people’s confidence and fluency in the language
- an increase in people’s awareness of the value of Welsh, both as part of our national heritage and as a useful skill in modern life
- the strengthening of the position of the Welsh language in our communities
- strong representation of the Welsh language throughout the digital media.

To achieve these aims, we want to see the responsibility for promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh being shared and embedded among an increasing number of organisations across Wales.

This strategy builds on the vision set out in *Iaith Pawb* published in 2003.

Achieving the vision

There are two core elements to the Welsh Government’s policy for achieving our vision. Firstly, via measures to enable and encourage children and other people to **acquire the language**, such as encouraging language transmission at home and ensuring further growth in Welsh-medium education. Secondly, via measures to enable and encourage people to **use the language** on a daily basis, such as providing opportunities for people to use Welsh socially, at work, when receiving services, and when enjoying entertainment and recreation.

Welsh-medium education

There is no question that the education system has a vitally important role in the future of the language. It is the provision of Welsh-medium education that has generated the greatest gains in the numbers of young people fluent and confident in their Welsh language skills. We are now in a situation where more young people than before the Second World War are able to speak the language; a sound base on which to build for the future.

The future of the language is in the hands of our children and young people. The importance of Welsh-medium education was outlined when the Welsh Assembly Government's *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* was published in April 2010. That strategy sets out the critical role played by the education system and how we intend to strengthen Welsh-medium provision in order to increase the number of Welsh speakers. That includes provision for children and young people to learn Welsh as a first language or second language in schools and colleges – or for adults to learn the language through the Welsh for Adults programme.

The aims of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy are to:

- improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, on the basis of proactive response to informed parental demand
- improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the Post-14 phases of education and training, to take account of linguistic progression and continued development of skills
- ensure that all learners develop their Welsh language skills to their full potential and encourage sound linguistic progression from one phase of education and training to the next
- ensure a planned Welsh-medium education workforce that provides sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training, with high-quality Welsh language skills and competence in teaching methodologies
- improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training
- contribute to the acquisition and reinforcement of Welsh language skills in families and in the community.

As outlined in the diagram on page 17, delivering the implementation programme for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy is a core element of this strategy. Details are contained therein in relation to the measures the Welsh Government and its partners will take to realise the aim of increasing the number of fluent Welsh speakers.

Without a sound Welsh-medium education system, there would be no long-term justification for the other measures contained in this strategy for promoting the use of Welsh in the home, in children and young people's social activities, in the community and in the workplace.

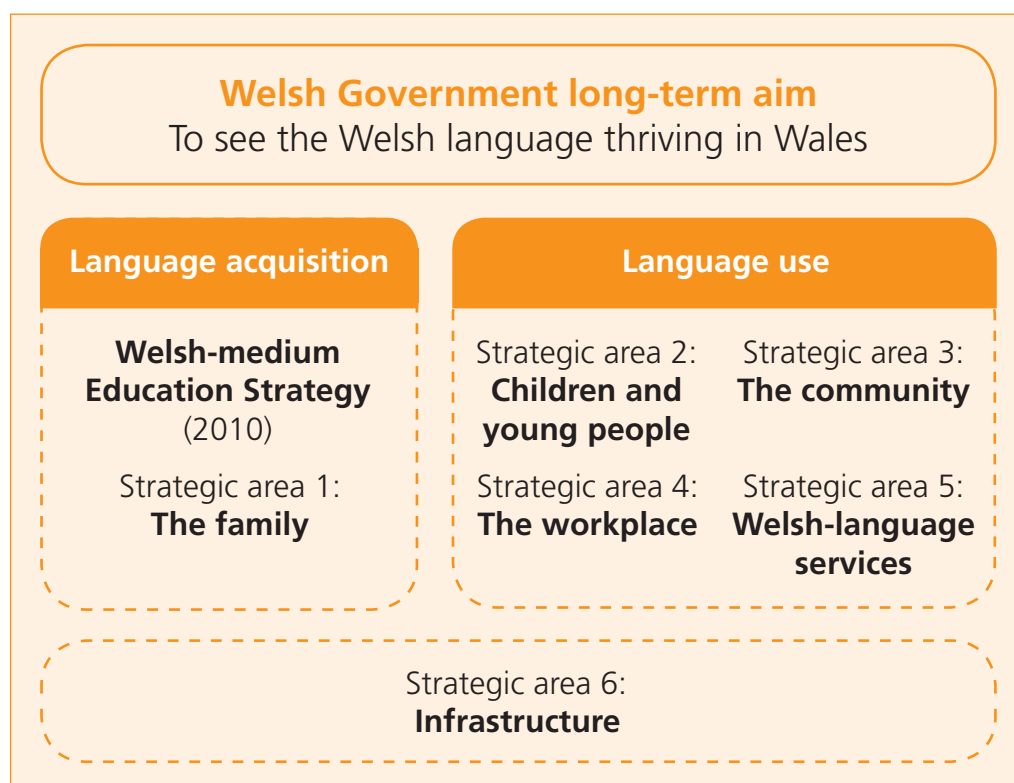
Equally, the education system alone is not enough to produce Welsh speakers who see value in using the language in their daily lives at home, socially or professionally. The intention of the remainder of this strategy is to address the challenges facing the Welsh language in those contexts.

Six strategic areas

We have identified six strategic areas as the basis for this strategy. These are the aims for the six areas.

- **Strategic area 1: The family**
Aim: to encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families.
- **Strategic area 2: Children and young people**
Aim: to increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language.
- **Strategic area 3: The community**
Aim: to strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community.
- **Strategic area 4: The workplace**
Aim: to increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace.
- **Strategic area 5: Welsh-language services**
Aim: to increase and improve Welsh-language services to citizens.
- **Strategic area 6: Infrastructure**
Aim: to strengthen the infrastructure for the language.

The consultation process on the draft strategy, and discussions with the Welsh Government’s Advisory Group on the strategy, showed there was wide-ranging support for action in these areas.



How we will implement the strategy

In order to achieve our vision, we need to employ different means of taking action, depending on the circumstances in question. It is vital that we continue working to encourage people and organisations to use Welsh, while at the same time making full use of the opportunities afforded by the Welsh Language Measure by enabling the Welsh Language Commissioner to impose duties upon various bodies via standards.

In implementing the strategy we will adhere to certain core principles. Those principles are outlined over the following pages, along with the various means by which action will be taken.

Principles

These are the principles to which we will adhere when implementing this strategy.

Continuity and change

The need for action in the strategic areas noted previously is not new. As already mentioned, the Welsh Language Board and its partners have taken action in each of the areas to varying degrees. The Welsh Government is eager to continue the creative work undertaken by the Board over the years. Positioning the Board's Community Development Team within the Welsh Government's new Welsh Language Division from April 2012 will be a core part of that continuity, providing a conduit between the Welsh Government and a number of the partners which will be vital for the success of this strategy.

At the same time, the Welsh Government's Advisory Group on the strategy agreed that the change in structures for promoting and facilitating the Welsh language in light of the Welsh Language Measure, and the publication of this strategy, offered an opportunity for the Welsh Government to review and evaluate the organisations and projects we fund, in order to seek to ensure that we are achieving the best outcomes for the language.

The original draft strategy was published by the One Wales Government. This final strategy draws heavily on that document.

Making the most of the available money

In developing this work, we will face a range of challenges posed by straitened public finances and we will rigorously scrutinise our financial support for the language. We will also place a premium on creative use of funding and on innovation, and will continue the Welsh Language Board's method of funding on the basis of outcomes.

Further collaboration

There will be an even stronger emphasis on collaboration and new forms of partnership working, involving all the organisations that have a part to play in planning a better future for the language. We will continue to convene the Partners' Forum established by the Welsh Language Board. We will also establish a Welsh Language Partnership Council whose work to advise the Welsh Ministers on the implementation of this strategy will commence in April 2012.

The new structures, which will include a strong Welsh Language Division within the Welsh Government, will offer an opportunity for further collaboration to occur with other departments within the Welsh Government in order to ensure that issues relating to the Welsh language, and the aims of this strategy, are mainstreamed into the work of the departments.

Sharing and embedding responsibility for the Welsh language

The Welsh Government is eager to ensure that responsibility for promoting the Welsh language is shared between an increasing number of organisations. The standards system under the Welsh Language Measure (see page 20) will enable the Welsh Government to make standards which will enable the Welsh Language Commissioner to impose duties upon the Welsh Government, local authorities and national park authorities to promote the use of Welsh more widely.

We also realise that many of the successes in relation to the viability of the Welsh language depend on the activities of individuals and communities – and that capability needs to be fostered at the local level to enable those types of activities to continue in the future.

Equality of opportunity

Equality of opportunity is a cross-cutting theme integral to this document and all policies of the Welsh Government. No one, in any part of Wales, should be denied opportunities to use the Welsh language, nor denied the opportunity to learn Welsh because of their race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion. Welsh-language services should be available to, and accessed by, all communities, including those characterised by disadvantage and ethnic diversity. We will expect our partners, providers and stakeholders to recognise this principle and take steps to make it a reality.

Sustainability

This strategy aims to bring about an increase in the numbers able to speak Welsh, and in those who use Welsh on a daily basis. It also builds on the efforts already seen in communities across Wales to take responsibility for the language at a local level, and encourages communities and the organisations that serve them to promote the use of Welsh, thereby encouraging the sustainability of Welsh as a living language within those communities. In addition, it complements the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education

Strategy in planning for sustainability, by ensuring increased opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace. The Welsh-medium Education Strategy has put measures in place to ensure that the workforce of the future will be equipped with Welsh language skills. This strategy aims to ensure that a wide range of organisations respond by ensuring opportunities for Welsh speakers to use those skills at work.

Implementation mechanisms

These are the implementation methods we will employ when seeking to make our vision a reality.

Grants for promoting the use of Welsh

The Welsh Government will distribute grants to bodies for the purpose of promoting Welsh. Over time, we will review and evaluate the use made of those grants, ensuring they are congruous with the priorities of this strategy.

Specific projects for promoting the use of Welsh

We will also continue to implement and develop specific projects for promoting the use of Welsh in different contexts. A number of these projects will be a continuation of projects operated previously by the Welsh Language Board. Over time, we will review and evaluate these projects ensuring they are congruous with the priorities of this strategy.

Legal framework

The Welsh Language Measure established the office of the Welsh Language Commissioner with a general power to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh and to work towards ensuring that Welsh is treated no less favourably than English. The Commissioner will have a key role to play in safeguarding the rights of Welsh speakers and contributing to the public debate surrounding the future of the Welsh language.

The range of services available to the public in Welsh will be improved as a result of the Measure. This will be achieved by creating standards which will impose duties on organisations who fall within the scope of the Measure to:

- provide services in Welsh
- consider the effect of policy decisions on the Welsh language

- promote the use of Welsh in the workplace
- promote and facilitate the use of Welsh more widely
- keep records of compliance with standards and of complaints.

Both the Commissioner and the Welsh Government will have important roles to play in the creation of standards. The Commissioner will also have significant powers to enforce compliance with standards and powers to undertake investigations into allegations of interference with individuals' freedom to use Welsh with one another. The Commissioner will also have the power to advise and make recommendations to the Welsh Government in relation to the Welsh language. The Commissioner will also be duty-bound to formulate a report every five years on the position of the Welsh language.

It is evident, therefore, that the Measure and the work of the Commissioner are key elements of the work required to make the Welsh Government's vision of a thriving Welsh language a reality. While the Commissioner will operate independently of the Welsh Government and determine her own priorities, the work of the Commissioner will complement the activities undertaken by the Welsh Government across all areas in implementing this strategy and will ensure we can share the responsibility for promoting the use of Welsh with others, including local authorities. This necessitates a good working relationship between the Welsh Government and the Commissioner and we will seek opportunities to collaborate effectively with the Commissioner for the benefit of the Welsh language. Research is an example of one area where there may be an opportunity to collaborate.

Mainstreaming across Welsh Government

In addition, the Welsh Government will further mainstream the language into service and policy development, while ensuring that Ministers and officials consider the links between their portfolios and the language. To this end, the Welsh Government's policy process requires the impact of new policies and services on the Welsh language to be assessed, including strategic policy activities.

We also expect policies created, and services delivered, by other public bodies to be consistent with the language needs of the population they serve. The Commissioner will have a key role to play in developing the mainstreaming agenda.

Procurement and grant condition compliance

Sometimes Welsh Government intervention is most effectively exercised through clear procurement or grant conditions which emphasise social conditions on organisations and inward investors. Through using our powers in respect of procurement or grant funding, we will require organisations tendering for public sector contracts or bidding for public sector support, to demonstrate, where relevant, that the Welsh language is incorporated into the services they offer to the public. In procurement terms this means using tools and guidance available such as the sustainable risk-assessment template, the guide to contracting out public services and the Welsh language, and the document *Community Benefits: Delivering Maximum Value for the Welsh Pound* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010).

Monitoring

The implementation of this strategy and its annual action plans, to be prepared in accordance with Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, will be monitored by the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Division, which will report to the Welsh Ministers. An annual report on the implementation of the strategy and annual action plans will be published and laid before the National Assembly for Wales by the Welsh Ministers.

Evaluation framework

It is essential that this strategy is evaluated in order to help assess its effectiveness against its strategic objectives and to ensure learning improvements are based on the available evidence. To do this, we will develop an evaluation framework alongside the strategy, incorporating a range of methods and sources of data including bespoke research and analysis.

In light of the wide range of policy interventions covered, it will be important to ensure a consistent and comparable approach to evaluation across the strategy. The approach should be both formative – to ensure lessons are learned throughout implementation – and summative – to ensure outcomes are captured in a robust and timely manner.

The evaluation framework will:

- set out how the effects of this strategy are to be captured at different levels (individual participant, project/programme and locally/nationally)

- further define the measurable indicators contained in this strategy by way of its expected and possible effects, drawing where possible upon nationally and locally collected data (this should fit as much as possible with partners' own performance-monitoring systems)
- identify gaps in the information/data already gathered and consider how appropriate data might be sourced, taking into account the practicality and cost of deriving additional information and the utility that such information is likely to offer
- identify a programme of data collection, research and analysis which will be published throughout the life of the strategy to inform its development and review – including for the annual report on the implementation of this strategy, which is required under Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

Indicators

We will use the two indicators below to measure the overall success of this strategy. These are the indicators contained in the Programme for Government for 2011–2016.

- The percentage of five-year-olds (at the start of the academic year) who speak Welsh at home.
- The percentage of people able to speak and write Welsh.

We also want to measure the percentage of people who are able to speak but not write Welsh, as well as measure success under each of the six strategic areas. These indicators can be found at the beginning of each of the next six sections. We recognise that further work is required to develop and define these indicators and will do so as we develop our evaluation framework.

Action points

We will:

1. Continue to implement our Welsh-medium Education Strategy, as published in April 2010.
2. Distribute grants and commission projects for promoting the use of Welsh, evaluating the grants scheme, the projects and grant recipients' work from time to time.
3. Complete the process of establishing the new legislative framework under the Welsh Language Measure.
4. Establish the Welsh Language Partnership Council which will advise the Welsh Ministers on the implementation of this strategy.
5. Make standards via subordinate legislation, following the receipt of recommendations by the Commissioner, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on bodies in relation to the Welsh language.
6. Mainstream the Welsh language across all of the Welsh Government's activities. We will improve our performance with regard to the work undertaken under our Welsh Language Scheme.
7. Develop a framework within the Welsh Government's procurement and grant compliance conditions for the establishment of community benefits in respect of the Welsh language, for use where appropriate.
8. Prepare an evaluation framework to develop our ability to measure the impact of interventions under the strategy, and commission research to grow the available evidence base.

Strategic area 1: The family

Aim

To encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families.

Desired outcome

More families where Welsh is the main language used with the children by at least one adult family member in regular contact with them.

Indicator

The percentage of five-year-olds (at the start of the academic year) who speak Welsh at home.

Passing the language from one generation to the next is one of the two most important areas of language planning – the other being education. It is unlikely that Welsh will thrive as a community and social language if it is dependent on the education system alone as a means for new speakers to learn the language. It needs to be the language of the home for as many children as possible – and there is no doubt that learning the language in this way is a natural and effective way to become a fluent Welsh speaker.

There is a body of evidence which suggests that the Welsh language is less likely to be used in families in which only one parent/carer speaks Welsh. According to the 2001 Census, in families where both parents/carers spoke Welsh, 82 per cent of three to four-year-olds could also speak the language, but this accounts for only 5 per cent of this age group. In families where only one parent/carer spoke Welsh, the percentage fell to 40 per cent. This presents a formidable challenge, and the decline of Welsh in families must be reversed if the language is to survive and prosper. Hence, increasing the use of Welsh within families is one of the Welsh Government's key priorities for safeguarding the future of the Welsh language.

A wide range of factors can influence parental decisions regarding language transmission and these need to be considered in the round. The evidence suggests that choice is largely intuitive with parents/carers using the language they know best, or the language that is 'inclusive' of their partner. In terms of influences on the language choice of the child, this includes their 'community' of speakers – including parents/carers, siblings, grandparents, teachers and friends – in addition to other social influences such as the media and community activities.

Over the past decade, the Welsh Language Board has directed considerable energy and expertise to language transmission. Its main initiative was Twf, an innovative and extensive project aimed at encouraging Welsh-speaking parents/carers to speak Welsh with their children. It has a network of field officers located throughout Wales, conveying to parents/carers, prospective parents/carers and the general public the advantages of speaking Welsh at home and the cultural and economic advantages of raising children bilingually.

In addition to Twf, other initiatives directed at parents/carers have been developed by the Welsh Language Board, in partnership with other key organisations. These projects range from language-awareness sessions to schemes aimed at raising the confidence of parents/carers and the extended family to use Welsh with their children and within the community.

Evidence suggests that schemes such as Twf have succeeded in bringing the importance of language transmission into the work agendas of midwives and health visitors. They have also contributed to raising awareness in relation to the advantages of being bilingual.

However, we recognise that it is difficult, on the basis of available evidence, to assess the impact of schemes such as these on language patterns in families and that further work remains to be done to better understand the impact of these interventions. The Welsh Government is committed to better understanding the decisions made by Welsh-speaking parents/carers and, to this end, will look for ways to improve and develop initiatives which persuade parents/carers and the extended family to transmit Welsh to their children.

We also recognise that there is a need to support non-Welsh speaking parents/carers to provide opportunities for their children to have exposure to the language, through activities in the community as well as through multimedia activities in the home such as S4C's Cyw service on television and online.

New technologies also present opportunities for families to maintain face-to-face relationships over long distances, for example between grandparents and their grandchildren. This could provide increased exposure to Welsh outside the immediate family in cases where they live a long distance away from each other.

This is an area where further evidence is required and we will want to ensure, therefore, that further research into language transmission is undertaken after the 2011 Census Welsh language results have been published, in an attempt to better understand the relationship between policy interventions and the choices made by parents/carers.

Finally, the incoming Welsh Government's manifesto in May 2011 committed it to putting Welsh in Education Strategic Plans on a statutory basis, and to require local authorities to plan Welsh-medium education on the basis of parental demand. This commitment, which takes the Welsh-medium Education Strategy a stage further, will be implemented as part of the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme.

Action points

We will:

9. Further develop an effective and coordinated evidence-based approach to encouraging and supporting the use of Welsh within families with babies and young children, including by building on the work of Twf and its associated projects, and by promoting Welsh for Families courses and events.
10. Promote the benefits of Welsh-language transmission in the family and the benefits of Welsh-medium education.
11. Explore ways of improving key services such as Welsh-medium childcare.
12. Put Welsh in Education Strategic Plans on a statutory basis and require local authorities to plan Welsh-medium education on the basis of parental demand.

Strategic area 2: Children and young people

Aim

To increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language.

Desired outcome

Children and young people using more Welsh.

Indicator

Attendance at Welsh-language events organised for children and young people, including those organised by Welsh Government grant recipients.

Each generation of young people brings an enthusiasm and new creativity to the use of a minority language. We can be proud of the fact that young people in Wales are happy to embrace the Welsh language and its traditions, while also using it within contemporary contexts such as with new technologies.

Over the last thirty years we have seen a considerable increase in the number of young people able to speak Welsh (from 14.9 per cent of 3 to 14-year-olds in 1971 to 37.2 per cent in 2001). But these figures need to be treated with caution, since it is likely that over half of these are learning Welsh as a second language. As such, for many Welsh-speaking children from homes without Welsh-speaking parents/carers, school provides one of the few opportunities for them to use the language.

The available evidence suggests that the teenage years are vital in developing a favourable attitude towards a minority language and in determining the extent to which an individual will use the language. In this regard, it appears that the school setting alone is not enough; the child or young person needs to be supported at home (if possible) and encouraged to participate in wider social and cultural activities through the medium of Welsh. There is also evidence that suggests that the language of interaction with friends is closely correlated to the language the child speaks, and that this also influences children's attitudes towards either or both languages.

We need, therefore, to provide children and young people with a wide range of social opportunities to use their Welsh outside school, so that they associate the language not only with education, but also with leisure and cultural activities and, above all, with pleasure and entertainment.

Providing further opportunities of this nature should lead to increased use of the language by the individual, in addition to instilling enthusiasm and a positive attitude towards the language.

In responding to the consultation on this strategy, a number of respondents stated that providing practical opportunities for children and young people to use Welsh was the best way of developing a feeling of value towards using the language. We share that view.

Influencing a young person's use of a minority language is a complex matter and supporting them to make positive choices in favour of using the language needs a variety of evidence-based approaches. We believe that a number of factors influence a young person's use of Welsh, including fluency and confidence levels. Among other factors, we believe that youth culture, peer pressure, community attitudes towards the language, the global media including electronic social networking, and the perceived value of the language as a skill for work are all important elements. We also believe that the significance of these factors varies considerably, depending on whether the young person has acquired the language at home or through the education system. However, we need to undertake further research to better understand these factors.

We also face challenges within the education system to ensure that children and young people continue to choose Welsh-medium education when making choices at key stages of their education – between the primary and secondary sectors, and between the secondary sector and further or higher education. While the Welsh-medium Education Strategy addresses these challenges, we believe that the success of those measures depends, to a great extent, on convincing children and young people of the value of Welsh, economically and culturally. This strategy has an important role in achieving this by supporting activities which seek to raise awareness among children and young people – in addition to those with whom they have regular contact such as their parents/carers, teachers and youth workers – of the value of Welsh. We will seek to track the Welsh language skills of school leavers through data capture within the education system.

Much work has been done to provide children and young people with opportunities to enjoy activities through the medium of Welsh. This has been achieved by a number of organisations, some of which, like the Urdd and the mentrau iaith, are entirely focused on increasing the use of Welsh; others, such as Young Farmers' Clubs, sports clubs, drama groups, and so forth, have a broader remit. These organisations need to remain innovative and creative, while working with the Welsh Government and other partners to develop methods of gathering evidence of the impact their activities have on the use of Welsh.

Our implementation mechanisms in this area include providing grants to bodies delivering activities for children and young people through the medium of Welsh, and by better mainstreaming of the Welsh language in activities promoted by the public sector. Experience from other countries suggests that activities in the minority language need to offer a comparable, if not better, experience than the provision available in the majority language.

However, despite all this activity, it is important that we explore with young people themselves exactly what appeals to them, and what types of activities young people feel they would wish to undertake through the medium of Welsh. We need this to be an ongoing discussion. We have already begun this by commissioning work by the Urdd during the summer of 2011 in terms of young people's needs and aspirations. The conclusion of that consultation was that children and young people were eager to take part in Welsh-medium activities, and that sporting activities were most popular, with dance, drama, art and outdoor activities among other activities listed.

Experience from other countries also suggests that children and young people enjoy creative activities, and get a thrill from seeing their work published – particularly on the internet. In Wales, the Supporting Young People's Language Practices Project, developed by the Welsh Language Board, seeks to empower young Welsh speakers to use the language in informal situations within the school setting. An essential element is getting older learners to encourage younger ones to reflect on the language and to become engaged in innovative projects such as running a school radio station or rock school through the medium of Welsh. We are eager to extend this method of working with children and young people, and to evaluate the work from the point of view of its impact on the use of Welsh. We also want to see more opportunities for children and young

people to use Welsh online, and to encourage them to choose to use Welsh when using social media, software products and electronic devices such as smartphones. The use of Welsh in information and communication technology (ICT), including the making of standards in relation to ICT, is discussed further under strategic area 6.

It is also encouraging to see the development of a three-tiered approach to Welsh-medium provision for young people emerging within youth services, where organisations aim for a more coordinated approach to planning the provision, based on the principle that all young people in Wales have some knowledge of Welsh. This approach is suggested in the Welsh Government's National Youth Service Standards and encourages the provision of more appropriate services, tailored to the linguistic needs of the growing population of young Welsh speakers. This includes different provision for young people with basic Welsh language skills, for those who are learning the Welsh language and for fluent Welsh speakers. We will consider adopting this way of working in other fields.

Action points

We will:

13. Consult periodically with children and young people in order to raise awareness and better understand which activities they wish to undertake through the medium of Welsh and which services they wish to receive through the medium of Welsh.
14. Continue to support the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people in the community and review those activities, from time to time, to ensure that they are effective and aligned with this strategy.
15. Improve awareness among children and young people, and their parents/carers, of the opportunities and activities that exist to use the language socially and in the workplace.
16. Improve the opportunities for children and young people to use Welsh informally within educational organisations.

17. Improve language awareness among youth workers to enable them to develop positive attitudes among young people towards the language.
18. Ensure, including through the making of appropriate Welsh language standards, that public bodies providing or funding services for children and young people – whether directly or through the work of Young People’s Partnerships – provide more of those services in Welsh, including sport and leisure services.

Strategic area 3: The community

Aim

To strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community.

Desired outcome

More use of Welsh within communities across Wales.

Indicator

Attendance at Welsh-language events, including those organised by Welsh Government grant recipients.

Evidence from countries around the world, over a number of decades, shows that there is a strong correlation between the viability and survival of a language and the existence of geographical areas where that language is considered to be the predominant language. The evidence also suggests that a high density of speakers is required for Welsh to be an everyday language of a community.

Communities in Wales which have a high percentage of Welsh speakers are changing. This strategy has already made reference to the fact that the number of communities in Wales where over 70 per cent of the population speaks Welsh has reduced significantly during the past decades. Inward and outward migration processes, limited employment opportunities and limited availability of affordable housing have had profound effects on the demographic and linguistic profile of many communities.

The Welsh Government is eager to build on the work undertaken by the Welsh Language Board, the mentrau iaith and a number of other bodies at a grass-roots level to take action in areas where the Welsh language is, or was until comparatively recently, the main language of daily life, and which are seeing a rapid decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers.

We propose to develop special initiatives in those areas to encourage strategic action to reverse language shift. This needs to be done in partnership with local authorities, third sector organisations and local agencies involved in community and economic regeneration – in addition to the bodies already operating for the benefit of the Welsh language. We will consider the evidence gleaned as a result of establishing a pilot Language Promotion Scheme in the Aman Tawe area – a scheme which seeks to address the decline seen in the use

of the language in that area in a holistic manner – in order to assess whether such a model is one which should be extended to other areas. We will also consider whether the work undertaken within the Môn a Menai Strategic Regeneration Area, including the Brocer Iaith initiative in Peblig, can be replicated in other areas.

The particular challenges in each area will differ but are likely to include issues such as the availability of affordable housing, lack of employment opportunities, low numbers of parents/carers transmitting Welsh to their children, low status of the language within the community, lack of opportunities to use the language, and inward and outward migration. The language renewal task must go hand in hand with the work of improving the social and economic infrastructure of these areas to help ensure that better employment opportunities and more affordable housing become available, so that people can remain in their communities. An important part of this work will be to improve the capacity of the communities themselves to increase the availability of Welsh-language services and activities. We are eager, also, to build on the work undertaken by the Welsh Language-Economy Group, by developing a clear strategy in relation to how benefit could be gained from the Welsh language as an economic asset. These challenges are shared, therefore, across all Welsh Ministerial portfolios and Welsh Government departments, and we will mainstream the Welsh language into our economic development and community development policies accordingly.

All communities evolve and develop over time. Where development is proposed, the planning system is an important tool to manage change in a positive way. Local and national park authorities have either recently adopted, or are in the process of preparing, Local Development Plans (LDPs), which are underpinned by community engagement and evidence. They set out the authority's vision and policies for the sustainable development and use of land. We have recently consulted on changes to *Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (TAN 20)*, in order to provide strengthened guidance on how the Welsh language should be taken into account when LDPs are prepared. The overall aim of LDPs is to support the sustainable development of communities and places across Wales, which includes supporting the linguistic and economic prosperity of Welsh-speaking communities by providing an appropriate mix of housing and employment opportunities. Our planning policies in these areas are set out in *Planning Policy Wales, TAN 2: Planning and Affordable Housing* and *TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable*

Communities. We propose to review with stakeholders how Welsh-speaking communities have engaged in the LDP process and whether that engagement could be better facilitated in future, identify how Welsh language issues have been addressed, and consider the need to provide additional guidance with regard to taking Welsh language issues into account as LDPs are prepared.

As rural and post-industrial Welsh-speaking communities are changing, Welsh cities and towns have also seen a demographic shift. The number of Welsh speakers in cities, especially Cardiff, has increased dramatically in recent years. This is mainly due to young Welsh speakers attending higher education institutions and seeking employment. We need to respond to this shift – and a different community development model is required in cities and large towns such as Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham, where the percentage of Welsh speakers may be comparatively small, but where the numbers of speakers are significant. The opportunities to use Welsh are more varied and numerous than in many rural communities. The challenge, therefore, is to support and enhance existing networks for using Welsh, and create new networks, raising the profile of Welsh and bilingualism in these cities and towns.

An important element of this work will be to take full advantage of the opportunities which arise from new media and social networking, particularly for young people. This is true within towns and cities as well as in the rest of Wales and beyond. While language use in a geographical community is still extremely important, the nature of social interaction is changing for many people, particularly the young. More and more communication occurs electronically and remotely, reducing the extent to which the concept of ‘place’ is key, and increasing the role of communities of interest. It will be important, therefore, to harness the opportunities presented by new technologies for the benefit of Welsh-language communities in Wales and across the world. This is discussed further under strategic area 6.

A key objective will be to increase social and cultural activity through the medium of Welsh throughout these communities (be they geographical or virtual communities). This has been a key part of the work achieved over recent years in the area of language planning. Yet, evidence attributing the impact of these activities to the use of Welsh in the long term is limited.

The Welsh Language Measure will enable the Welsh Language Commissioner to impose duties on local authorities to promote the use of Welsh more widely, which could complement our work in this area.

Action points

We will:

19. Make promotion standards under the Welsh Language Measure, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on local and national park authorities to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh within the communities they serve – and to impose similar duties on the Welsh Government.
20. Identify parts of Wales where there are high percentages of Welsh speakers, but where the language is now under threat – and towns and cities with a healthy number of Welsh speakers – to encourage the development of focused programmes of activities to promote the use of Welsh in those areas.
21. Review the current funding arrangements for organisations and initiatives which promote and support the use of Welsh within communities in order to ensure that the activities are effective and aligned with this strategy and follow good practice with regard to language planning.
22. Continue to explore the links between the economy and the language and respond to those links.
23. Explore the possibility of improving access to translation services for community groups and third sector organisations.
24. Mainstream the language into all of our work related to supporting and developing communities across Wales.
25. Finalise the review of planning policy and associated technical advice on the Welsh language.

Strategic area 4: The workplace

Aim

To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace.

Desired outcome

More Welsh speakers use Welsh at work.

Indicators

- Number of organisations subject to Welsh-language operational standards intended to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh in the workplace.
- Percentage of Welsh Government staff using Welsh at work.

The workplace is one of the key areas which determines language use. As individuals, we spend a considerable proportion of our time at work. A significant number of respondents to the consultation on this strategy agreed that the workplace also has a role in building the confidence of Welsh speakers to use the language in other areas of their lives, and that developing the status of the language in the workplace was important in terms of underlining the value of Welsh-medium education.

Despite the increase in Welsh-medium education, the opportunities for people to work through the medium of Welsh remain comparatively limited. This, therefore, excludes Welsh from one of the key domains for a number of Welsh speakers and deprives Welsh speakers of the opportunity to normalise their use of the language.

Our aim is to provide more opportunities for those who can speak Welsh to use the language at work – in their dealings with each other, with their customers and with their employers. In doing this, we will build on existing good practice. For example, there is some evidence that language-awareness training is a successful means by which to increase positive attitudes towards the Welsh language among employees and employers.

This area of work is comparatively new and poses a considerable challenge. As a result, there is little quantitative evidence available with which to assess the impact of activities undertaken to date. However, the qualitative evidence base is more developed, and recent research showed that a number of different factors influenced the use of Welsh in the workplace, including long-established practices which favour the use of English; matters relating to proficiency in Welsh language skills, and organisational reasons such as insufficient institutional support for the use of the language; and the extent to which an organisation's culture facilitates or promotes the use of Welsh. We also know that workplaces vary, as does the linguistic background of staff working in locations throughout Wales.

Mainstreaming the Welsh language into our work on labour market intelligence will be an important aspect of this work. We also see there being an important role for the Welsh for Adults Programme in helping employees to develop and refine their language skills within the context of the workplace – and across all sectors.

The Welsh Language Commissioner will also have an important contribution to make in this area through the development and imposition of operational standards under the Welsh Language Measure. Operational standards will provide a means of ensuring more opportunities for the language to be used in the workplace. The Commissioner will also be responsible for providing advice to organisations in all sectors regarding good practice – as well as preparing relevant codes of practice.

The Welsh Government recognises that it has a particular responsibility to guide the way in this area as one of Wales' main employers. We are committed to increasing the use of Welsh in all of our offices and to identify appropriate opportunities to extend or replicate the examples of good practice developed recently in our offices in Llandudno Junction and Aberystwyth.

Action points

We will:

26. Invite the Commissioner to develop good practice guidance with regard to the use of Welsh in the workplace across all sectors.
27. Make operational standards, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on organisations to promote the use of Welsh in the workplace.
28. Promote the recognition of Welsh as a skill in the workplace and develop opportunities for people to learn Welsh in the workplace through the Welsh for Adults Centres.
29. Improve labour market intelligence with regard to the demand for staff who have Welsh language skills, on a regional and sectoral level, and to disseminate the information through appropriate channels.
30. Demonstrate good practice with regard to the use of Welsh in the workplace.

Strategic area 5: Welsh-language services

Aim

To increase and improve Welsh-language services to citizens.

Desired outcome

More high quality Welsh-language services available to the public and more use made of those services.

Indicators

- Use of a range of services provided in Welsh.
- Number of Welsh language schemes or policies.
- Number of organisations subject to Welsh language standards.

Since the introduction of the Welsh Language Act 1993 the way Welsh-speaking citizens receive services in the language of their choice has been transformed. The 1993 Act provided the Welsh Language Board with the power to require public bodies to prepare Welsh language schemes. These schemes outline the measures that a public body will take as to their use of the Welsh language in connection with the provision of services to the public in Wales, for the purpose of giving effect to the principle that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality. Since 1993 the Welsh Language Board has approved over 550 statutory Welsh language schemes. There can be no doubt that this development has benefited the language and Welsh speakers alike, due to the fact that the opportunity to use Welsh while receiving services has increased in recent years.

Support by the population of Wales for Welsh-language service provision is well evidenced. Over nine out of ten Welsh speakers (with a range of fluency levels) take the view that Welsh-language service provision is important to keep the language alive. In particular, service users want to see an increase in the provision of face-to-face services available through the medium of Welsh.

However, evidence shows that barriers to accessing services in Welsh remain. The main barriers include a lack of supply of services in Welsh by those bodies who are not operating Welsh language schemes, a low uptake of services due to lack of confidence among non-fluent Welsh speakers and a lack of awareness that services are provided in Welsh.

The Welsh Language Measure will build on the success of Welsh language schemes in order to provide greater clarity and consistency for citizens in terms of the services they can expect to receive in Welsh. By creating a set of enforceable standards the aim is to move the focus towards more effective and thorough delivery of Welsh-language services which meet the needs of Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities, while addressing the barriers described above.

The Welsh Government has an important role to play in planning and providing services to the public. It is the Welsh Government which sets the policy context for the delivery of public services across a number of sectors, and we also deliver some services directly to the public. It is crucial, therefore, that we use our influence for the benefit of the Welsh language and that we mainstream considerations about the needs of Welsh speakers into our policy development and service delivery work.

With that in mind, we recognise that a significant shift is taking place in the funding relationship between those commissioning services and those providing services – be they in the public, private or third sector. This move, away from a grant-based model to a commissioning and procurement model, is accelerating and this has implications for the way in which we can ensure the delivery of Welsh-language services. To this end, when we award grants or contracts we will include conditions, where relevant, with regard to the use of Welsh. The Commissioner will also be able to influence the procurement and grant-giving procedures of a wide range of organisations, by developing relevant standards.

We will also continue with our attempts to influence UK Government departments by encouraging them to provide Welsh-language services to citizens in Wales. The Welsh Language Commissioner will also be able to impose standards upon UK Government Departments under the Welsh Language Measure.

For this strategy to succeed, it is essential that we work collaboratively with a number of sectors.

As well as providing services for citizens, **local authorities** have the potential to be key players in the process of language planning in Wales. This includes Welsh-language education, play provision, youth services, social services, housing, community development and regeneration, planning, and economic development policies, as already described under strategic area 3.

Strengthening Welsh-language services in **health and social care** is regarded as a priority since, for many, language in this context is more than just a matter of choice – it is a matter of need. Although valuable leadership has been provided in recent years, it is evident that the provision of Welsh-language services remains piecemeal and too often it is a matter of chance whether people receive Welsh-language health and social care services. We will, therefore, publish a Strategic Framework for Health and Social Care aimed at ensuring a more strategic approach to strengthening bilingual services. Alongside the imposition of standards on the sector, the strategic framework will improve the experience of patients and service users who either choose, or have a need for, services through the medium of Welsh.

Although responsibility for the **justice sector** in Wales is not a devolved matter, it is important to remember that the sector has been instrumental in increasing the status of Welsh. In addition, a great deal has been achieved in recent years to ensure that Welsh speakers have access to the services they need through the medium of Welsh. Even so, there remains a need to further improve Welsh-medium provision within the sector, including in court proceedings – and we will support the work required to do so.

Representative bodies in the **private sector** have expressed support for the need to increase the use of Welsh, with a clear preference that this should happen on voluntary basis. However, the Commissioner will be able to impose Welsh language standards on those companies who are within the scope of the Measure, such as telecommunications companies, bus and train operators, and utility companies. We will also welcome any moves by companies to opt-in to the standards system, as is possible under the Measure. For the remainder of the sector, the Commissioner will be responsible for encouraging and advising the private sector on their use of Welsh on a voluntary basis, and we want to see more voluntary Welsh language policies adopted by private sector companies. As the Welsh Government, we will also ensure that we convey positive messages about the importance of using Welsh to the companies that we deal with. The Language-Economy work described under strategic area 3 will provide an opportunity to do so.

The **third sector** is another crucial element in our strategy. The organisations forming the sector touch the lives of a great many people in Wales by, for instance, providing care and support, working with communities, and getting people involved in a wide range of events and activities. It is important, therefore, to ensure that the use of Welsh by third sector organisations is promoted and facilitated as much as possible. Again, the Commissioner will be responsible for encouraging and advising the third sector about using Welsh on a voluntary basis building on the work of Estyn Llaw (a scheme that provides practical support to voluntary and community groups to increase their use of Welsh). In addition, the Commissioner will be able to impose Welsh language standards on those organisations that fall within the scope of the Measure, for example organisations in receipt of £400,000 or more of public money per year. As the Welsh Government, we will ensure that we convey positive messages about the importance of using Welsh to the third sector organisations that we deal with, including the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), in line with the Compact between the Welsh Government and the third sector, which was launched in 2010.

Action points

We will:

Public sector

31. Ensure, including through the making of appropriate Welsh language standards which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties, that public bodies providing, or funding, services for the public ensure that more of those services are provided in Welsh – and that they raise awareness of services available in Welsh and encourage Welsh speakers to use them.
32. Publish and implement a strategic framework to strengthen the provision of Welsh-language services in the health and social care sectors.

Private sector

33. Ask the Commissioner to promote the voluntary use of Welsh by the private sector – and encourage the uptake of those services by Welsh speakers.
34. Make standards, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on private sector companies which fall within the scope of the Welsh Language Measure, including telecommunications companies, bus and train operators, and utility companies – and to ensure that appropriate conditions with regard to the use of Welsh are included as grants and contracts are awarded to private sector companies by public bodies.

Third sector

35. Ask the Commissioner to promote the voluntary use of Welsh by the third sector – and encourage the uptake of those services by Welsh speakers.
36. Make standards, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on third sector organisations which fall within the scope of the Welsh Language Measure, including the WCVA – and to ensure that appropriate conditions with regard to the use of Welsh are included as grants, and contracts are awarded to third sector organisations by public bodies.

Strategic area 6: Infrastructure

Aim

To strengthen the infrastructure for the language.

Desired outcome

More tools and resources in place to facilitate the use of Welsh, including in the digital environment.

Indicators

- Number of Welsh-language books, e-books and magazines sold (non-education).
- Readership for *Go!wg 360*.
- Distribution figures for papurau bro.
- Viewing and listening figures for S4C and Radio Cymru.
- Prevalence of popularly used websites that have developed Welsh-language interfaces.
- Prevalence of banks, mobile phone companies and others providing Welsh-language interfaces.

The Welsh Government believes that the language needs a strong infrastructure, reflecting its official status in Wales, while helping those who wish to use the language to do so.

To strengthen the Welsh language infrastructure, research suggests focussing Welsh language marketing and promotional approaches on younger age groups, maximising the potential of technology such as the internet and new social media, and improving the accessibility to, and relevance of, available Welsh-language media and resources.

The media, in all forms, plays an important part in supporting the infrastructure of the language. Access to high-quality Welsh-language books, radio, television and online content is vital in ensuring that the language thrives. Throughout the twentieth century, the broadcast media played an important role in the development and preservation of the Welsh language through both radio and television. In the twenty-first century, the existence of Welsh-language digital media content and applications not only allows the Welsh language to flourish, but it also enables Welsh speakers to participate fully as digital citizens and demonstrates to all that the Welsh language is a creative, powerful, adaptive and modern medium.

Digital content and applications

Our ambition and our expectation should be that Welsh speakers should be able to conduct their lives electronically through the medium of Welsh, should they so desire, including for cultural, informational, entertainment, leisure, retail, transactional, community, family history or social networking purposes.

A wider range of Welsh-language digital services is being developed, building on past achievements such as the productive partnership between the Welsh Language Board, Microsoft and other organisations; the work of Canolfan Bedwyr to develop a number of services and software packages; and the work undertaken by an enthusiastic community of volunteers to develop a number of software packages and online services such as the translation of Facebook into Welsh. In addition, a wide variety of open source software 'localisation' initiatives have been developed, including initiatives sponsored through Welsh Government-supported projects such as Communities@One and its successor programme, Communities 2.0, and private sector-led initiatives such as Welsh-medium cash machines and call centres.

The pace of change is significant and striking. In December 2011 alone, the first Welsh-language e-books became available on the Kindle, the Welsh-language magazine *Go/wg* became available via an iPad app, and the Welsh Language Board consulted on Welsh language terminology for use on Twitter.

It is likely that consumer demand and user initiatives will drive some of these developments. However, development is likely to be uneven and there is an important leadership role for Welsh Government. This role is likely to take the following forms:

- encouraging major private sector service providers, including banks, retailers, mobile phone companies, software and hardware developers, and others to develop online services, applications and interfaces through the medium of Welsh
- facilitating the development of Welsh interfaces for commonly used social networking media, including open source software
- providing, possibly on a matched basis, seedcorn funding for initiatives such as these on an incremental basis over time
- developing a consensus around priority areas where technological investment is required

- ensuring that the public sector is developing best practice in this field
- promoting best practice examples from the private, public and third sectors.

We will explore whether any future Welsh Government investment in Welsh-medium technology could be licensed on a Creative Commons basis.

The Welsh Government supports the principle of top-level internet domain names for Wales in both English and Welsh.

Technology in education

The development of infrastructure is central to the *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* published in 2010. This new strategy for the Welsh language should be read alongside the existing Welsh-medium Education Strategy. Within the Welsh Government, we are moving swiftly to integrate the Welsh Language Unit and the Welsh in Education Unit to form a new Welsh Language Division.

Alongside this, we need to explore whether Welsh-medium software and interface packs could be installed on all workstations in schools, colleges and universities across Wales, with a proactive language choice. Similarly, we will consider the use of Welsh with regard to the Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) used in schools, colleges and universities, building on the work of the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) Cymru under contract for the Welsh Government. We will also continue our discussions with Apple about the development of an iTunes U site for Wales, including the need for a Welsh version of the platform.

Public service broadcasting

Public service broadcasters in Wales, including BBC Cymru Wales, S4C and ITV Wales, latterly as a programme producer, have played an important role in ensuring that the Welsh language continues to thrive. Although broadcasting is not a devolved matter, the Welsh Government is committed to doing all it can to ensure that Welsh-language broadcasting continues to develop and improve, especially in the light of recent discussions about the future and editorial independence of S4C. Additionally, in 2009 the Welsh Government became a significant funder, via the Welsh Books Council, of an online news service through the medium of Welsh, *Go!wg 360*. The Welsh Government has also provided funding to

enable the National Library of Wales to acquire and develop public access to the ITV Wales television archive through the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales. The ITV Wales archive spans over 50 years of programme making in the Welsh language.

The range and standard of Welsh-language programming on S4C and BBC Radio Cymru helps to maintain Welsh as a modern language and as part of everyday life in Wales. The broadcasters also help to increase awareness of the language among those who can, and cannot, speak Welsh. S4C's services for children, including *Cyw* and *Stwnsh*, are recognised as making an important contribution to the task of normalising the language for children of all ages. Both the BBC and S4C have performed an important role in helping people from all backgrounds learn the Welsh language, with a range of broadcast and online resources.

Both S4C and BBC Cymru Wales already work in partnership with many organisations such as the Urdd, the National Eisteddfod and others working at community level to promote the Welsh language. For instance BBC Radio Cymru and the *mentrau iaith* hold a Battle of the Bands competition every year which has proved to be very popular among young people and has been an important vehicle for nurturing musical talent in Welsh. We hope that they will continue to play this role in the future.

However, online service provision through the medium of Welsh has not been given the same priority as it has through the medium of English. We hope that the new arrangements announced for the relationship between S4C and the BBC will lead to a strengthening of online provision through the medium of Welsh, to the same level as that provided through the medium of English.

We will also seek to ensure that Welsh-language service provision is effectively safeguarded and developed by regulatory bodies such as Ofcom.

Reading

Research has shown a link between the extent to which children read Welsh and their grasp of the language. Therefore, if we want to encourage more Welsh speakers to use the language and ensure that they are confident to do so, it will be important to help them become increasingly literate and familiar with written Welsh. To meet this aim, it will be important to encourage Welsh speakers, including children and young people, to read a wide range of Welsh materials, including books, magazines, the *papurau bro*, websites and blogs.

In doing so, it is essential that the Welsh language keeps up with current developments, such as by ensuring that a wide range of e-books are available across all contemporary devices.

Through the Welsh Books Council, we want to maintain editorial support for publishing houses, continue to support authors and support the development of good quality graphics, photography and design, which is especially important with regard to non-fiction books for adults and young people.

We will expect the key commissioners of Welsh-language materials, including the Welsh Books Council and other organisations, to increase significantly the proportion of material that is published electronically.

Terminology

It is important to ensure that a standard source of terminology exists to facilitate the use of Welsh in all aspects of public life, such as in the field of technology, in law, in education and in a wide range of specialist fields. Over several years, a great deal of standardisation work has been undertaken by a number of organisations, including Canolfan Bedwyr (which has established Wales' National Portal for Terms), the Language and Literature Committee of the Board of Celtic Studies of the University of Wales, the Welsh Government Translation Service (which shares Welsh Government terminology online through TermCymru) and the Welsh Language Board (which publishes its terms online, in its National Database of Terms).

The Commissioner will be responsible from April 2012 for coordinating developments with regard to Welsh language terminology and place names.

The Welsh Government will ensure that the language can benefit from a standardised online Welsh language dictionary, based on the significant investment it has already committed to this project over time.

Translation and interpretation

The demand for professional translators and interpreters that work in Welsh and English must be met if we are to satisfy the need for bilingual documents and simultaneous translation at events and meetings. The industry has developed significantly in recent years and we recognise the need to continue this work, and to ensure that robust accreditation and regulation structures are in place to provide assurances with regard to quality.

In addition, the training available for translators needs to be developed further including training in translating different styles, editing, proofreading, interpreting and bilingual drafting. We must also ensure that the translation profession makes the most of the ICT tools that are available to it in order to ensure efficiency, consistency and value for money.

There is potential for public organisations to cooperate in exploiting opportunities for improved efficiencies, and for making more effective use of scarce resources, in the provision of Welsh-/English-language translation and interpretation services. Work will soon be underway to consider proposals for greater collaborative action between local authorities and other public bodies in the delivery and procurement of these services.

This strategy has already mentioned the importance of translation with regard to community events under strategic area 3. Encouraging and supporting more Welsh speakers to use the language in these circumstances will be important.

It is important that people feel confident to draft documents in Welsh or bilingually. As more and more organisations and individuals use the language, it will become increasingly important for public bodies to ensure that they have staff in place able to deal with documents submitted in Welsh, rather than having to translate them into English, for internal use only. The work under strategic area 4, to increase the use of Welsh in the workplace, will help develop this ability.

Research and data

All of the policies and projects discussed in this document have been included with a specific desired outcome: to increase the use of Welsh. Therefore, in order to test the effectiveness of this work, we need baseline data on language use, and regular data collection to allow us to monitor progress against the desired outcome. This strategy has already discussed the importance of this, along with the intention to develop an evaluation framework for the strategy. We will also determine the need to consider the Welsh language as we develop our own research and data projects across all of our policy areas – and as we work with other bodies, such as the Office for National Statistics.

The Commissioner will also have an important role in the field of research and data. The Welsh Language Measure places a duty on the Commissioner to produce a five-yearly report on the position of the language. With this in mind the Commissioner will have the necessary powers to undertake research and collect and analyse data.

Language planning

Many people across various sectors have important roles to play to deliver the aims of this strategy – including civil servants in the Welsh Government, the Commissioner’s staff, officials in other public sector organisations, and staff working in third sector organisations working to promote the language in communities across Wales. We need to ensure that those working in the field of language planning become increasingly skilled in that discipline.

In doing so, we need to maintain the links between Wales and other countries and regions working to promote minority languages so that we can learn from their experiences. These networks include the European Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity and the British–Irish Council. We will also continue our unique relationship with Patagonia.

Promoting the value of Welsh

A critical element in the delivery of our strategy will be to raise awareness of the value of the Welsh language. For many of the organisations delivering the projects and initiatives described in this document this is an intrinsic part of their work. But marketing and advertising activities also play an important part in promoting the value of Welsh and encouraging its use.

Young people are a key target group in relation to promoting the value of the Welsh language. Elsewhere in this document we refer to the need to better understand young people’s choices with regard to language use. This needs to be coupled with better promotion of the benefits of the Welsh language as a skill in future employment.

Any work to market the value of Welsh will need to be based on evidence.

Action points

We will:

Digital content and applications

37. Keep up to date a Strategy and Action Plan for ICT and the Welsh language, to include a focus on the increasingly important role of social media.
38. Make standards, which will enable the Commissioner to impose duties on organisations with regard to the Welsh language and ICT.
39. Promote the use of Welsh-language versions of software products in schools, colleges and universities.
40. Establish a committee on the Welsh language, ICT and new media, and establish a funding mechanism for Welsh-language, ICT and new media developments, on an incremental basis against agreed priorities.
41. Require a growing proportion of online-only commissioning by the Welsh Books Council and the WJEC.

Public service broadcasting

42. Support S4C and BBC Radio Cymru and continue to make the case with the UK Government and the BBC with regard to the need to protect and develop the range of services offered by each, including online services.
43. Investigate with others the possibility of increasing the provision of Welsh-language programming on commercial radio stations operating in Wales.

Reading

44. Continue to support the work of the Welsh Books Council and the papurau bro – and to support work to explore and exploit e-publishing and new ways of accessing written material.
45. Continue, through the Welsh Books Council, to provide financial support to Golwg 360 until March 2014, and to review the effectiveness of the service during that period.

Translation

46. Ask the Commissioner to support and develop the translation industry.

Terminology

47. Ask the Commissioner to coordinate the standardisation of Welsh language terminology and place names.

Research and data

48. Ask the Commissioner to conduct research and prepare a five-yearly report on the position of the language, in accordance with the Welsh Language Measure.

49. Look for opportunities to collaborate with the Commissioner, as necessary, on research and data projects.

50. Mainstream the Welsh language into our research and collection of data across all Welsh Government policy areas, including Careers Wales.

Language planning

51. Support the work of nurturing and developing the language-planning profession.

Promoting the value of Welsh

52. Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for the language, including for marketing linked to projects and activities in support of the language – and to do this in partnership with others, including organisations established to promote the use of Welsh.

