



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru

South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

Welsh Language Standards

Annual Monitoring Report

1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

This document is also available in Welsh.



Introduction

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) is pleased to publish its 2023/2024 Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report. The Service has continued to monitor its progress against the Standards throughout the past year and has continued to offer quality bilingual services. We continue to strive to ensure that both Welsh and English languages are treated equally, and that people feel comfortable requesting that enquiries, job applications and interviews be conducted in either language. Our aim is to actively contribute to the Welsh Government's "[Million Speakers by 2025](#)" strategy.

The Welsh language is key to our modern Welsh identity and here at SWFRS we very much want to be part of that.

USEFUL LINK:

[Million Speakers by 2025](#)



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Background to the **Welsh Language** Standards

Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, all public service organisations in Wales are required to comply with language duties, which ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.

The duties encourage promotion of the Welsh language, the use of Welsh within internal administration and require that provision is made for the accessibility of Welsh to the public. Section 44 of the 2011 Measure permits the Welsh Language Commissioner to issue a Compliance notice, requiring a body to comply with one or more Standards specifically applicable to it. The Welsh Language Standards (No. 5) Regulations 2016 were introduced to the Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales on 30th September 2016.

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

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

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

72

Service Delivery Standards that focus on the use of Welsh when delivering services, and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language as we provide services to the public.

15

Policy Making Standards that ensure that the Service consider what effect, if any, our policy decisions will have on an individual's ability to use the Welsh language when engaging with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

53

Operational Standards that focus on promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language in our internal administration processes.

10

Record Keeping Standards that require the Service to keep records for compliance with the requirements of the standards in areas such as staff Welsh language skills, training, complaints, and recruitment.



Implementing the **Welsh Language** Standards and Monitoring Compliance

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

The Authority is required to record periodically how we comply with the Welsh Language Standards and how we engage with members of the public. Recording this detail enables us to demonstrate how we maintain compliance. Monitoring compliance with the Standards also involves publishing an Annual Monitoring Report on the external website by 30th September each year.

The content of this report is as follows:

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



Service Delivery Standards

Welsh Language Standards

website page

The Service has a dedicated Welsh Language Standards page featured under 'Who we are' on the Service's website menu. The page contains information explaining the Welsh Language Standards along with links to the Authority's Compliance notice, Implementation Plan and Annual Monitoring Report. Details are provided for the website user explaining how to register a complaint or compliment regarding compliance with the Standards and contact details are provided for queries regarding our Service and the Welsh language.

USEFUL LINKS:

[Welsh Language Standards](#)



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[Procedure for complaints and compliments regarding the Welsh Language Standards](#)



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Welsh Language Translation Services

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



Total number of words for 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Words translated: 295,714

Words proof read: 167,075

Our translators continue to provide informal support to individual staff members who identify as Welsh learners and wish to practice their skills in the workplace. This support helps colleagues to build their confidence at speaking and writing through the medium of Welsh.



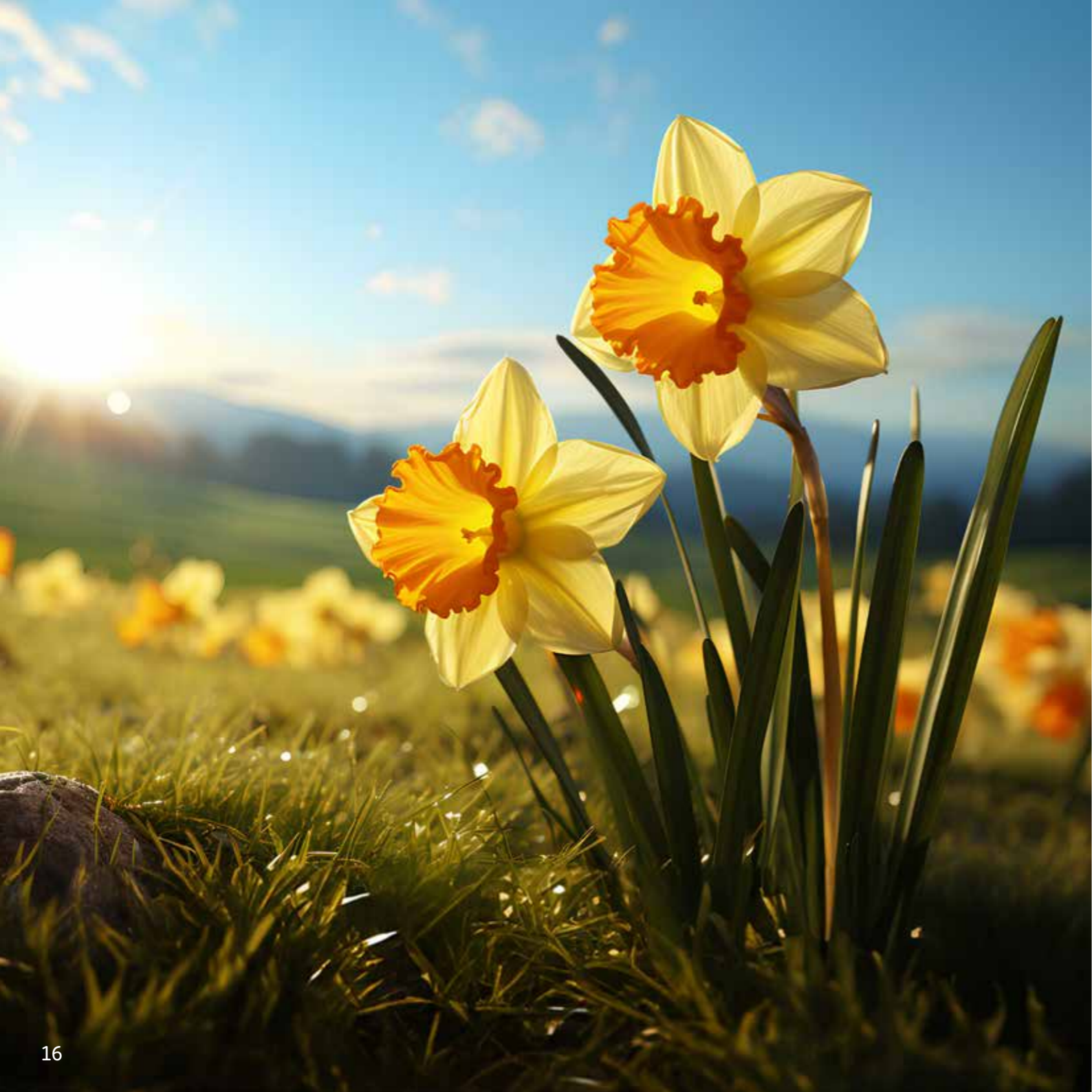
Delivering our Community Risk Reduction activities

We deliver a broad programme of educational activities and audits to those at risk within out communities to reduce the risk of fire and related injuries in domestic, business and other premises. Our work to reduce deliberate fires, including wildfires and refuse, and on water safety will ensure communities are able to enjoy outdoor environments in safety. Our road safety education programme provides information to stakeholders that will make travelling on our roads safer.

The Service ensures that all methods of requesting educational activities are available bilingually (via telephone and online) and our specialist Risk Reduction teams have numerous Welsh-essential roles to deliver activities in Welsh. The table on page 15 provides an overview of community Risk Reduction activities delivered during 2023/2024 along with the number delivered in Welsh.

Community Risk Reduction activity	Delivery Language	
	English	Welsh
Home Fire Safety Check	15,001	2
Home Safety – Events / Presentations / Group Talks	261	1
Key Stage 1 – Year 2	516	28
Key Stage 2 – Year 5	390	25
Key Stage 3 – Age 11-14	5	0
Key Stage 4 – Age 14-16	6	0
Domino – Road Safety education Age 16-25	80	3
Crucial Crew – youth engagement	258	42
School Arson Vulnerability Assessment	496	3
Options – 'Seatbelts'	61	0
Options – 30mph-20mph	59	0
Arson Vulnerability Assessment	42	2
Schools Grassfire Talks / Assembly	29	0
Road Safety Public Education	52	0
Water Safety Talk	51	0
Fire Safety Audits	625	0

Work will commence during 2024/2025 to ensure that delivery of our Community Risk Reduction activity in Welsh is proactively offered to our communities.



Number of hits received to **Welsh Language** website pages

The Service's external website is fully bilingual and actively offers all visitors the option of accessing its content through the medium of Welsh or English. The performance of the Welsh language version of the site during April 2023 - March 2024 in comparison with the English version is recorded in the table below:

southwales-fire.gov.uk

Criteria	Welsh website		English website	
	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023
Unique page views	8,200	7,420	501,000	544,281
Users	5,000	3,948	171,000	189,929
Most popular page	Latest Vacancies	Latest Vacancies	Latest Vacancies	Latest Vacancies



Analysis of interactions with Social Media pages

The Service has taken steps to ensure all its promotional and safety campaigns via its social media channels are as readily available to Welsh language speakers as they are to English language speakers. This has been achieved by creating separate channels for both languages, with a Welsh language dedicated X account @TanDeCymru and a Welsh language dedicated Facebook page. Below is some performance data for each of the channels for April 2023 – March 2024.

Facebook

Criteria	@TanDeCymru		@SWFireandRescue	
	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023
Followers (Apr-Mar)	454	421	45,665	41,138
New Likes (Apr-Jun)	5	27	1,141	1,119
New Likes (Jul-Sep)	13	23	1,257	786
New Likes (Oct-Dec)	6	16	760	609
New Likes (Jan-Mar)	9	7	1,369	621

formerly Twitter

Criteria	@TanDeCymru		@SWFireandRescue	
	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023
Followers (Apr-Mar)	281	241	38,276	37,637
Tweets	1,518	1,664	1,761	2,045
Likes	615	653	16,170	13,468

Instagram

Criteria	Bilingual page	
	2023/2024	2022/2023
Followers (Apr-Mar)	8,662	8,222
Post Likes	15,928	21,345
Posts	191	201

E-recruitment system

Since its launch in 2021, the system has been used for a range of different vacancies and recruitment processes, including some large-scale recruitment campaigns for Firefighters and Control room staff. The Service's E-Recruitment System provides the user with the option to navigate its pages and submit an application through the medium of Welsh. Within the online form,

applicants are requested to provide information about Welsh Language status e.g., Welsh speaker or learner and their overall level of Welsh. The form also provides an option to receive further correspondence through the medium of Welsh. The system has already improved the job application experience for our end users.





Phone calls and correspondence received in Welsh

All telephone numbers that we advertise to the public, such as that of our reception desk and 0800 numbers, are answered bilingually. These public facing call handler job roles are all Welsh essential, and all requests for further Welsh services are managed centrally.

We have Welsh email addresses and we welcome correspondence in both Welsh and English equally.

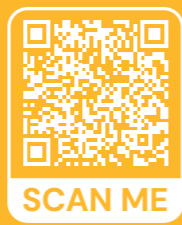


Corporate Policies and Procedures

The Service complies with the legal requirement of carrying out Integrated Assessments and includes Welsh language as an area for assessment. Assessments are completed for all policies and procedures, including older documents being amended. Our Corporate policies, which substantiate all service delivery and supporting activities, are public facing. The policies are published on the Service's Website can be accessed [here](#).

USEFUL LINK:

[Corporate policy](#)



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Operational Standards

Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

The Service actively promotes the Welsh Language and Culture both internally for its employees and externally for service users and the general public. During April 2023 - March 2024 we celebrated and publicised three important dates using global emails, intranet articles, posters and social media:

15th October 2023	Diwrnod Shwmae
25th January 2024	St. Dwynwen's Day
1st March 2024	St David's Day

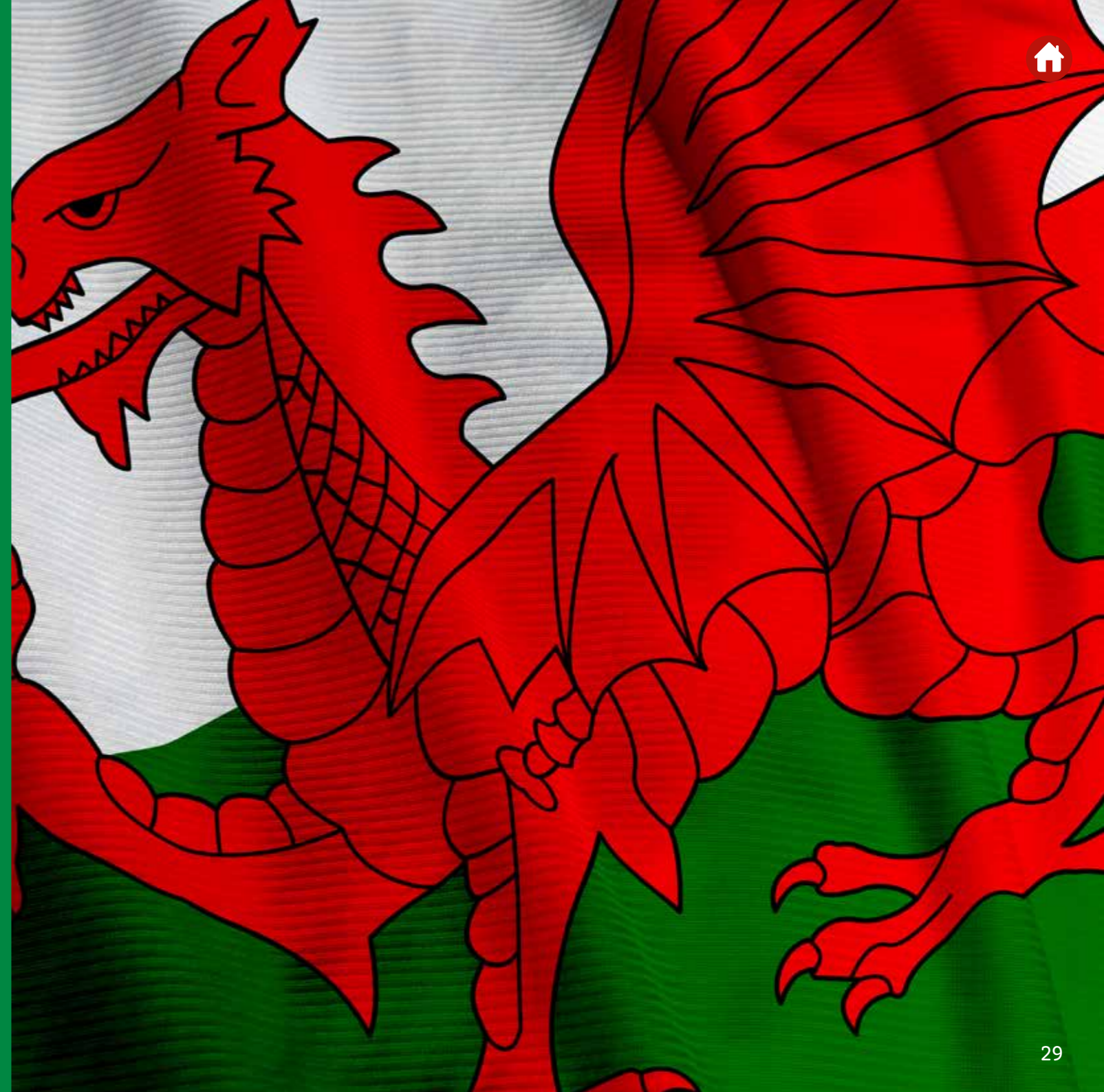
Welsh Language Rights Day

On 7th December 2023, the Service participated in Welsh Language Rights Day to promote the Welsh Language Services provided by Public Organisations in Wales. The date was set by the Welsh Language Commissioner to commemorate the day in 2010 when the Welsh Language Legislation was passed by the National Assembly. Welsh Language Rights Day provides the opportunity to inform people of their rights, in receiving services through the medium of Welsh. The Service published a list of its Rights which are permanently displayed in our Headquarters Reception area. Service users and employees can access the Welsh Language Rights page on our website using this link: [Welsh Language Rights](#).

With us, you have the right to the following:

- Documents in Welsh
- Websites in Welsh
- Apply for a job in Welsh
- Letters and emails in Welsh
- Leaflets in Welsh
- Social media messages in Welsh
- Signs in Welsh
- Speak Welsh in Reception
- Use Welsh on the phone

[Welsh Language Rights](#)





Record Keeping Standards

Number of staff who have Welsh Language skills

The Service's HR Portal has the ability to record language skills. Each employee is asked to assess their level of skills from 0 - 5 in Welsh and English at reading, spoken, understanding and written language and state whether their preferred language is Welsh or English. The Service is working to increase the number of self-assessments completed with announcements on the Intranet site, global e-mails and guidance documents. Data was extracted from the CoreHR system during May 2024, which revealed that **86 employees** had indicated that they have Welsh Language Skills at Level 1 or above in one or more proficiencies.

Category	Reading	Spoken	Understanding	Written	Grand Total
Level 0	180	177	177	187	721
Level 1	28	35	29	22	114
Level 2	11	14	11	13	49
Level 3	12	10	5	11	38
Level 4	7	6	7	3	23
Level 5	11	8	11	7	37
					982

Job posts and Welsh Language Skills

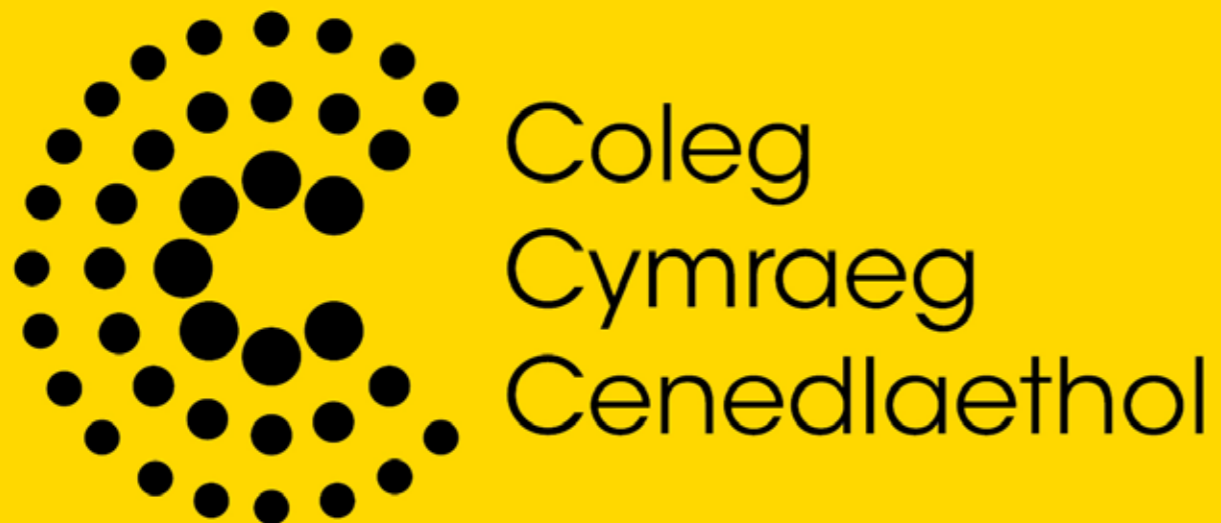
The Service advertises vacancies in the medium of Welsh and English and these are featured on the 'Latest Vacancies' page of its website. All job roles within the Service are categorised as Welsh Essential or Welsh Desirable. For those posts within the Essential category, candidates are assessed on their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

New and vacant posts 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

Welsh essential 2

Welsh desirable 52





Training and Courses through the medium of Welsh

There are two main points of contact for staff training, the Learning and Development Team at Fire Service Headquarters and the Training and Development Centre in Cardiff Gate. There were no training courses carried out or requested through the medium of Welsh during 2023/2024.

Welsh Language Award for Firefighters

All new Wholetime Firefighters employed by the Service are required to enrol onto an Apprenticeship qualification facilitated by Cardiff and Vale College. The Level 3 Diploma in Emergency Fire and Rescue Services includes the Prentis-iaith General Course provided by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Prentis-iaith is a six-module course which covers Welsh Language and Culture. The course is interactive and includes an automated self-marking system, allowing learners to work individually at a pace they are comfortable with. A variety of methods are used to engage the learner and guide them through the modules, including a verbal element to help the learner practice their pronunciation of Welsh phrases. Each learner is awarded a certificate on completion of the course. One Wholetime Firefighter utilised the Additional Learning Fund (ALF) to attend Dysgu Cymraeg Mynediad 2.

Complaints received in relation to the **Welsh Language Standards**

The Business Support department records and initially deals with all complaints received by the Service through the 'Contact us' page. Complaints are then directed to the relevant department. The Service did not receive any complaints regarding its compliance with the Welsh Language Standards during 2023/2024.





Actions to be taken during **2024/2025** and beyond

There is an action plan for enhancing the organisation's ongoing compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

The action plan includes:

- We will promote our existing mechanism for capturing the Welsh Language skills of our staff and the importance of staff updating their personal information within our system. This will ensure that we have a data set that accurately reflects our organisation and drives our future aims, objectives and ambitions.
- We will review and update our Welsh Language Standards Implementation Plan if necessary, identifying any further actions that will enable us to achieve our organisational aspirations to support the uses and promotion of the Welsh language.
- We will finalise a procedure for using Welsh Language internally within the organisation. This will ensure that staff understand the Welsh Language Standards and can access relevant training and guidance that will enhance their skills.
- We will review our processes for scheduling community risk reduction activities within our communities, ensuring that the offer to receive the activity in Welsh is actively offered.
- We will enhance our promotion of the Welsh Language by raising awareness of Welsh Language events and organising a programme of Welsh development groups for staff across our Service – we aim to create a network of support to facilitate the informal use of Welsh, enabling Welsh-speaking staff to use Welsh more often.

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