

CFA17 Individual 07

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol |
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Cymraeg i bawb? | Cymraeg for all?

Ymateb gan: Unigolyn 07 | Evidence from: Individual 07

1. What are the main barriers that prevent wider use of the Welsh language in areas with fewer Welsh speakers, and what might help to change this?

Other than at the Welsh language centre in Merthyr, I am unsure as to where I can speak Welsh. Many shops/businesses/services do not display the orange 'Cymraeg' badge or any other such sign, and the staff don't always wear a lanyard or badge. Could the use of these be promoted?

2. What sort of spaces and opportunities might encourage greater use of, and increase confidence in, the use of the language in areas where day-to-day use of the language is limited?

Places for adults to meet in the evenings (free of charge) without having to go to the pub!

Opportunities for parents while children attend extra-curricular sessions in the same building or nearby, if possible.

Youth clubs for teenagers are sorely missed. They are very much needed to help with anxiety, and to help foster the social skills that have suffered a great deal, particularly since COVID.

3. Can you share examples of successful initiatives or activities that have encouraged Welsh language use in areas where use of the language is limited?

Menter Iaith Soar. Several learners meet in Canolfan Soar before their Welsh lessons, and on other days, to practise or to enjoy the Welsh-speaking environment.

The Old Library, Porth. Groups meet there on a weekly basis and Welsh language events are promoted.

4. What sort of spaces and opportunities might encourage greater use of, and increase confidence in, the use of the language in areas where day-to-day use of the language is limited?

Technology can help with learning vocabulary and speech patterns, and developing listening skills and hearing different accents, but is less useful when it comes to having a real-life conversation.

Perhaps AI could help in this regard. Could something be developed that is able to hold a conversation?

5. What impact, in your view, do cultural events such as national Eisteddfodau or Welsh language festivals have on Welsh language use, particularly in areas with fewer Welsh speakers?

Last year, the Eisteddfod was held in Pontypridd, an area close to where I live, and I have since seen more bilingual signage in local shops/businesses, and I have also heard more people speaking the language and learning it. Menter Iaith RCT is working particularly hard to keep this momentum going.

Local people's attitudes have changed because they too were welcome at the Eisteddfod, as were other non-Welsh speakers.

6. How might these events (whether large or small in size) be adapted or improved to better serve communities with fewer Welsh speakers

Holding similar, smaller events in towns/villages so that people without access to a car, or who live in an area where there is an infrequent bus service, can attend and participate.

7. Are there any other matters you would like to draw to the Committees attention about the Welsh Government's approach to supporting the Welsh language in areas with fewer Welsh speakers?

Establishing Welsh language centres. Canolfan Soar is a welcoming and safe space where people feel comfortable speaking Welsh, enabling them to grow in confidence to the extent that they feel able to speak the language in other places too.
