

## CFA24 Cwmpas

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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: Cwmpas | Evidence from: Cwmpas

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**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?**

**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?**

Without a strong supply of locally or community-owned initiatives, these spaces will not be available. If the ownership of these spaces is limited to corporate businesses with no ties to Wales, the value of the language may be lost. Additionally, if these spaces are run and managed solely by the public sector, local knowledge and access to networks and communities stemming from community-owned businesses may be missed. Through community ownership and management, we can maximise social value and opportunities to develop ideas that support the Welsh language.

**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?**

### **Hen Ysgol Bodorgan – Malltraeth Ymlaen**

- Malltraeth Ymlaen, on Anglesey, is working for the Welsh-speaking community in Aberffraw, in the Bodorgan area. The group's aim is to purchase the old school building from Anglesey County Council before the end of the initial lease period, which began in March 2023.
  - The statistics included in the group's application show that, according to the 2021 census, 55% of people in the Bodorgan area speak Welsh – a decline of 12.7% since the 2011 census. This decline is mainly due to the purchase of homes by people who do not speak Welsh, for example, people moving to Anglesey from other parts of the UK, as well as an increase in the number of second homes.
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- The group submitted a Perthyn grant application to support the establishment of the following:
- Accredited Welsh language courses and substantial support to anchor them in the centre
- Courses, training, and events delivered in Welsh as described below
- Accurate and regular translation of all written communication through a translation service

With the aim of developing:

- Education and skills development programmes
- Access to information
- Enterprise support
- Health and wellbeing services
- Cultural and leisure activities
- Youth development programmes
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Access to technology

This project is now a successful example of a community-based initiative providing Welsh language opportunities in an engaging and inclusive way. Although this case study is also from a local authority area where the Welsh language is strong, this initiative has shown how community-led projects can bring different groups of people together to learn and use the language. A significant proportion of those accessing the services provided through this community asset are not first-language Welsh speakers, but because the initiative is led by locally rooted people, services are tailored to the community's needs and bring new people and communities into the mission to protect the language.

### **Saith Seren**

- Saith Seren is a community-owned pub and cultural centre in Wrexham with the aim of promoting and protecting the Welsh language. The initiative was established in 2012 following a community campaign to save the old Seven Stars.
- Saith Seren hosts a wide range of events, including concerts, poetry nights, language classes, and community meetings. These activities provide an informal environment where fluent speakers and learners feel comfortable, encouraging wider use of Welsh in social settings. This inclusive approach helps to normalise the language in an area where it is not the majority language.

Saith Seren shows how a community-owned business can contribute to the revival of the Welsh language by integrating it into everyday life, fostering pride and resilience in the local community. Promoting the Welsh language is just one of the ways this business contributes to the local area — as well as creating jobs for local people, working with local suppliers, and providing an inclusive and accessible space for the arts. It demonstrates that communities themselves know best how promoting the language can go hand in hand with activities that benefit local people and include them in the journey of learning and using Welsh.

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The next step is to ensure that these initiatives can start and grow in every community in Wales.

**4. How could technology and digital offers help to use the use of the Welsh language, to identify those who use the language infrequently or lack confidence?**

**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?**

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

**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?**

Recommendations for the Welsh Government:

- Expand the Perthyn Project, including into areas where Welsh is not the majority community language, and engage with local groups and individuals who are rooted in these communities and can connect with networks and identify opportunities to develop Welsh language initiatives and community-led projects.
  - Foster a network of community businesses across Wales that share the mission of promoting the Welsh language and provide services and spaces for its use.
  - Support communities to take ownership of assets of community value by introducing a Community Empowerment Act, along with ensuring high-quality support and funding options for these initiatives.
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