

Culture Committee - CC-16-01(p.2)

Date: 7th November 2001
Time: 9.00am-12.15pm
Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly

Submission by Cymuned to the Culture Committee

7 November 2001

Background

0.1 **Cymuned** was established to promote Welsh-speaking communities. The review will have received evidence from several other sources about the decline in the number and density of these communities. It is not necessary to repeat these well-known facts here; suffice to say that **Cymuned** views this historical trend with alarm; that the process is accelerating, not stabilising, and that Wales is now facing the real possibility that within a few years there will be no Welsh-speaking rural or village communities remaining, and only one Welsh-speaking urban community, the town of Caernarfon.

Cymuned believes that action is urgently needed, and substantial resources should be made available, in order to halt this trend.

2. This document has been based on discussions that arose during a policy conference held at Aberystwyth, 29-30 September. Over 100 people attended and 20 policy documents were presented to the conference. Some of the documents may be viewed on our website (www.cymuned.org). Debates held both within and without the organisation since that time have also contributed to this paper.
3. For some months **Cymuned** has been collecting evidence about the Welsh language within specific Welsh-speaking communities. The evidence has been

very valuable to us and will be presented to the Assembly shortly.

The Right to Exist

1.1 **Cymuned** believes that the right of indigenous language communities to exist is an irrefutable right that Welsh-speaking communities share with other indigenous minoritised cultures throughout the world.

1.2 **Cymuned** calls upon the National Assembly to declare that the Welsh language is the 'rightful language' (*prïod iaith*) of Wales. By 'rightful', we mean that it is particular to, and distinctive and peculiar of, Wales.

3. **Cymuned** calls upon the National Assembly to state unequivocally that it will fulfil its duties according to international law to protect the interests of the Welsh-speaking minority, and in particular with regard to Resolution 47/135 of the United Nations, its 'Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic minorities.'

The first Article of the Declaration states:

1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.
2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends.

Cymuned agrees with Fernand de Varennésin in his paper drawn up for the UN Sub-Committee on the rights of minorities that:

At the very least Article 1 suggests that it is no longer sufficient for a state to claim it has no obligation in respect of linguistic minorities except non-interference in their affairs. Even if the identity of a linguistic minority is not endangered directly because of a state-led policy or some other state conduct, Article 1 gives states a role to play in creating an environment of safety and respect. The minority language must be protected from outside menaces, and the state must encourage conditions for its promotion instead of permitting

negative conditions to dominate and pressure a minority. To do otherwise would be contrary to the very essence of human rights: the recognition of the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings, as well as to their diversity.

1.4 **Cymuned** calls upon the National Assembly to state unequivocally that Welsh-speaking communities have the moral right to exist.

1.5 **Cymuned** calls upon the National Assembly to state unequivocally that there will be Welsh-speaking communities in Wales.

The National Assembly's Strategic Aims

2.1 **Cymuned** supports the National Assembly's aim of creating a bilingual Wales. To a large extent, that aim depends on the linguistic resources of Welsh-speaking communities. To a considerable degree, it is individuals who were raised in Welsh-speaking communities that staff our Welsh-medium schools in those areas that are not predominantly Welsh-speaking, and who supply many of the Welsh-speaking civil servants in our Assembly and our public bodies.

Furthermore, there is not a single example in Europe of a language being restored after it has ceased to be the language of everyday use of every community in its traditional language territory. Accordingly, we ask the Committee, when it produces its report, to put its main emphasis on ensuring the future of the Welsh language as a community language.

2.2 This does not mean that we do not support the growth of the Welsh language outside Welsh-speaking areas. We totally support these efforts. When it draws up its strategy for promoting the language outside the Welsh-speaking areas, the Committee will need to consider a central plank of language planning that there must be an increase in the numbers of people who transfer the Welsh language to their children as a first language, rather than merely depending on schools to teach them Welsh as a second language. It will be necessary to establish Welsh

at a neighbourhood level in these areas, and we must not be content with the growth of Welsh within the education system alone, believing that this will be enough. It is merely one piece of the language tapestry. Schools by themselves will never preserve any language.

In addition, support should be given to the Language Initiatives (*Mentrau Iaith*) that have evolved recently. A network of local language centres should be established also. This has occurred on a large scale in other countries; 200 language centres have been established in the Basque country, as have the *kohanga reos* (language nests) amongst the Maori in New Zealand.

2.3 Perhaps the Assembly should focus on those communities outside the Welsh-speaking areas where a high percentage of children attend Welsh medium schools. The Welsh Language Board's language transmission initiative should be extended throughout Wales, focusing on ex-pupils of Welsh medium schools who learnt Welsh as a second language and who are now on the point of having their own children.

If Welsh is to survive outside the Welsh-speaking areas, support must be given to people who have learnt Welsh as a second language so that they can transfer Welsh as a first language to their children.

The Problem Facing the Welsh Language

3.1 **Cymuned** believes that the best way of achieving these strategic aims is to stabilise the Welsh language as the main language of those Welsh-speaking communities that exist at present. There is no conflict between this view and an acknowledgement that English is the main language of other communities in Wales, that non-Welsh speakers have just as Welsh an identity as Welsh speakers, that Welsh is a language that is spoken outside the Welsh-speaking areas, and that Wales is a multi-lingual country.

3.2 Despite this, it must be recognised that stabilising Welsh-speaking communities is essential for the future of the Welsh language. In *Reversing Language Shift*, the definitive work on revitalizing minority languages, Joshua Fishman maintains that a language must be kept viable at the community level:

Instead of being the language of linguistically isolated families (however numerous and large these may come to be), Xish (i.e. the minority language) must also become the language of interfamily interaction, of interaction with playmates, neighbors, friends and acquaintances. Via demographic concentration, those who [...] are organised only on an individual family basis strive to attain an even higher form of social organisation: beginning with family they attain community. Most languages of the world are rather limited, both numerically and sociofunctionally, but are self-perpetuating on this very basis and it is truly foundational if further, higher order Reversing Language Shift efforts are to be successfully pursued.

Cymuned agrees with this emphasis on Welsh as a language of community interaction. We concur with Fishman that Welsh-speaking communities are important because they offer Welsh ‘the informal daily life of a speech community’.

3. Fishman maintains that a minority language is restored by stabilising communities; and he defines these as the interface between the home, the family and the physical neighbourhood. Since this is a difficult task, there is sometimes a tendency amongst language campaigners to lobby for more easily attainable victories, such as minority language provision in government, the media and in public status.

Fishman emphasises that these can never take the place of the natural language community.

4. Applying Fishman's analysis to Wales, one can see that the history of the language movement has been one of lobbying for corporate and ‘symbolic’ victories such as bilingual road signs, S4C, a new Language Act, rather than safeguarding the territorial integrity of naturally Welsh-speaking communities.

It will be necessary from now on to make the safeguarding of naturally Welsh-speaking communities the main goal of our efforts to restore the Welsh language if Welsh is to live.

The Welsh-speaking Communities

- 4.1 On examining the reasons for the decline in the number and density of Welsh-

speaking communities, it can be seen that there are two socio-linguistic factors at work:

1. Demographic change
2. The inability of Welsh-speaking communities to effectively manage the linguistic side effect of demographic change

This demographic change is the consequence of a two-way process of population movement.

4.2 In-migration. Wales is an extraordinarily beautiful country, and as such it is a natural destination for people who wish to move to the countryside. Rural in-migration of this nature is a common phenomenon in the western world, but it brings far-reaching linguistic change in its wake. **Cymuned** believes that the Government of Wales must recognise the phenomenon of rural in-migration and plan accordingly, as do other European states, and as has already been acknowledged in a report commissioned by the European Commission.

4.3 Outward migration. At present the Welsh-speaking areas are facing an economic crisis. A lack of jobs means that people, particularly young people, are forced to leave. It could be argued that depopulation has been a characteristic of these areas for over a century, but the process has been accelerated of late by the failure of three vital employment sectors.

i The long-term decline in the numbers employed in the agricultural industry has accelerated considerably over the last five years. Agriculture has always been a backbone of the Welsh language.

ii The Welsh-speaking areas offer few opportunities to develop professional careers. At the same time, Cardiff has developed a wide range of professional jobs that require Welsh language skills. As a result, young people from the Welsh speaking areas have moved to Cardiff *en masse*, seriously weakening Welsh as a community language.

iii Many of the most populous Welsh-speaking communities (the Aman and Gwendraeth Valleys, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Dyffryn Nantlle, Dyffryn Ogwen] are post-industrial, and are unemployment blackspots.

4.4 Welsh-speaking communities thus face two simultaneous demographic trends. Welsh speakers are leaving, and this is particularly true of Welsh speakers

of child bearing age, the most vital age group in terms of ensuring successful intergenerational language transmission. At the same time, English speakers arrive, but because of the weakened nature of the indigenous Welsh speaking community, it is difficult to integrate them linguistically.

4.5 In this context, it will be necessary to introduce strong linguistic measures to enable English-speaking in-migrants to learn Welsh and become integrated members of their new communities.

4.6 **Cymuned** believes that a three-pronged approach should be implemented to deal with this crisis if Welsh is to survive as a community language; in the field of housing and planning, economic development and language planning.

4.7 We have placed these categories under the titles of Housing, Employment and Language.

8. Some of the recommendations below have no financial implications. Others have substantial financial implications. It will not be possible to achieve these aims if the Executive's expenditure proposals for the next three years are adhered to in their present form.

The great disadvantage of Welsh language expenditure at present is that it is based on the small amount of language grants given to cultural projects by the Conservative government in the 80's, under the auspices of Sir Wyn Roberts.

These grant support schemes were transferred to the Welsh Language Board by the 1993 Welsh Language Act. But these were not payments for language regeneration; rather, they were grants to cultural organisations (The National Eisteddfod, The Welsh Books Council, etc).

In the Assembly's Draft Budget Proposals for 2002-2003, the Welsh language draft budget line is £7.28m. As total expenditure in the budget is £10.458 billion, we can see that direct expenditure on the Welsh language in 2002-2003 will amount to only 0.069% of the total Budget.

Cymuned believes that this is woefully inadequate. An expenditure model which results in a Budget line of only 0.069% for language planning is an appalling indictment of the marginal position that the Welsh language had in Government prior to devolution. This is a legacy of Thatcherism and should be treated as such.

Cymuned believes that the Assembly and the Government of Wales should discard this expenditure model completely. Expenditure should be based instead

on international standards. One needs to be realistic and acknowledge that we are talking about direct expenditure of about £100-200m per annum in the field of language planning alone, or a sum equivalent to 1-2% of the National Assembly's total budget.

Housing and employment costs should be considered separately, not as language expenditure, but as investment in policy development in those areas.

Housing

5.1 **Cymuned** will be presenting a paper to the Local Government and Housing Committee later today (7 November 2001). As this evidence is also relevant to this committee, a copy of the paper is enclosed, at Appendix A.

Employment

1. The Welsh-speaking areas are economically disadvantaged. These are some of the most economically disadvantaged communities in Western Europe.

6.2 Within these Welsh-speaking areas, there has been a tendency for Welsh speakers to occupy jobs that are lower paid and with lower status than those occupied by the rest of the population, with the better jobs, particularly in the private sector, being occupied by non-Welsh speakers from outside the region. This situation has been referred to by academics as the 'cultural divide in the workplace'.

The 1981 census figures indicate that the non-Welsh-born were proportionally over-represented in professional and managerial categories as well as in the supervisory categories. In contrast Welsh speakers are over-represented in the unskilled, semi-skilled and agricultural categories. Even when we make allowance for the slight disparity between the size of the respective groups this observation holds true.

For example, in Gwynedd, over 50% of managers in the private sector were born outside Wales. There are several reasons for the inability of Welsh speakers to penetrate the employment market: the fact that newcomers have more capital

than the local population, which enables them to purchase businesses; the branch structure of many British companies that appoint managers centrally; and the estrangement of Welsh speakers as an ethno-linguistic group from the capitalist system in Britain.

3. The economic situation has had a linguistic effect. It has meant that the indigenous population cannot remain in their communities.
4. However, providing jobs is not sufficient. The fact that Welsh speakers cannot penetrate into some employment sectors means that language planning and economic development must go hand in hand. Precedents exist for coupling economic development with the need to tackle social inequality, as can be seen from the emphasis placed in Objective One Documents on the interests of women, disabled people and ethnic minorities. It is worth noting that Welsh speakers are also under a similar disadvantage, in terms of employment, in many areas.
5. Without improving the economic performance of Welsh speakers as a group, it will not be possible to raise the economic performance of the Welsh-speaking areas substantially.

6.6 **Cymuned** believes that a number of specific steps need to be taken to deal with these economic failures.

7. An Economic Development Authority should be established specifically for Welsh-speaking communities, based on either a Welsh model, such as the disbanded Development Board for Rural Wales, or on a European model such as *Udaras na Gaeltachta* in Ireland. The Authority would be responsible for establishing and developing indigenous companies, attracting appropriate inward investment, and ensuring that economic development does not militate against the interests of the Welsh language.
8. An urgent review should be conducted into the way in which Objective One monies are being spent in Welsh-speaking areas.
9. Furthermore, the Welsh Language Board should be a statutory observer on the Objective One Monitoring Committee, and the promotion of the Welsh language should be a consideration when deciding on projects in Welsh-speaking areas. As Welsh speakers are economically disadvantaged, targets should be set to improve their economic performance as is done in the case of women, disabled people and ethnic minorities. We are of the opinion that the *Single Programming Document* has been ineffective in addressing the importance of the Welsh

language and that this situation needs to be remedied.

6.10 There should be better co-operation between business development agencies, community development organisations and the language initiatives to secure the economic well being of Welsh-speaking areas.

11. Interest-free or low-interest loans should be offered to indigenous companies to invest in research, marketing and product development.

6.12 The public sector should be encouraged to purchase more of its services and goods from local suppliers. Procurement should not necessarily mean that a contract is given to the lowest tender. Stabilising the Welsh language ought to be a valid reason for giving a contract to a local firm rather than a company from outside. If work is allocated to an external sub-contractor, then that sub-contractor should comply with the language policy of the public body it is contracted to.

6.13 Specific programmes should be developed to attract back local people who have left the area for reasons of employment. A worldwide e-register could be compiled of Welsh speakers and their skills and this could be used to fill essential skill gaps in Welsh-speaking communities.

14. Further developments similar to the Lifelong Learning Centres that have been established in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Penygroes and Caernarfon should be encouraged. The Assembly should release more resources to Local Authorities and ELWa to develop similar centres throughout Welsh-speaking areas.

6.15 We should seek to increase the use of the Welsh language in the tourist industry, and develop cultural tourism.

6.16 Every effort should be made to revitalise and protect the agricultural industry in Wales. Safeguarding the family farm is of vital importance to the future of the Welsh language. **Cymuned** is currently developing its agricultural policy, and will seek to consult the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee on its content.

17. The National Assembly should establish a Community Fund for rural communities who wish to form co-operative companies to safeguard specific services in their locality, such as the village shop, the pub and so forth. In the same way a Community Development Bank could be established to invest in indigenous businesses. Credit Unions should also be supported.
18. It should be honestly acknowledged that some of our young people do not wish to live in the countryside. Rather than lose these young people to Cardiff or other areas, some towns in the Welsh-speaking areas should be developed as centres

that would appeal to young people of an urban inclination.

19. These 'growth towns' should be developed economically, by moving the headquarters of Welsh movements and institutions there; establishing low rent business parks; adopting a specific policy of developing a Welsh-language youth culture, and supporting cultural community initiatives such as Y Sesiwn Fawr in Dolgellau. It should be possible to enjoy a 'cosmopolitan' lifestyle in Welsh-speaking areas through the medium of the Welsh language.
20. The Assembly should instruct those agencies and public bodies that receive funding from the Assembly and are dependent on the Welsh language for their existence to relocate from Cardiff and move to a Welsh-speaking area.
21. The Assembly should begin discussions immediately with S4C and the Government at Westminster with the aim of relocating S4C to a Welsh-speaking area.
22. The Welsh Language Board should move to a Welsh-speaking area.

6.23 The Assembly should ask each public body that it sponsors to undertake a feasibility study justifying their reasons for retaining their headquarters in Cardiff. Those organisations that employ the highest percentage of Welsh speakers should move to a Welsh-speaking area. Other organisations should be moved to Wrexham, Conwy, Swansea or disadvantaged communities in the Valleys.

6.24 There is a great need to increase the number of civil servants who have Welsh language skills. Rather than attracting talented young people from the Welsh-speaking areas to Cardiff to achieve this, part of the civil service should be de-centralised from Cardiff using e-technology, video-conferencing, telephone conferencing and the like. A centre for the civil service should be established in a Welsh-speaking area and an attempt should be made to locate a considerable number of the Welsh-speaking staff who are appointed in that centre.

25. The Assembly's translation and Record of Proceedings teams should be moved from Cardiff immediately and relocated to a Welsh-speaking area.
26. As the only remaining 'safe' Welsh-speaking community in Wales, we believe that stabilising the economy of Caernarfon and the surrounding area is essential, not only for the future of the Welsh language, but also for the linguistic and cultural heritage of Europe.
27. Because of its geographical location, its post-industrial nature, the loss of Trawsfynydd power station, and the lack of work in general, we are seriously concerned about the economic state of the second largest town in Welsh-speaking Wales, Blaenau Ffestiniog. We are similarly concerned about economic inactivity in other Welsh-speaking towns.
28. The Welsh Development Authority should specifically name Welsh-speaking towns, amongst them Llangefni, Pwllheli, Y Bala, Dolgellau, Tregaron, Cardigan, Machynlleth and Lampeter, and then set targets for economic development. It

should also name specified Welsh-speaking villages such as Crymych, Llandysul, Brynaman, Pontyberem, Dinas Mawddwy, Trawsfynydd, Penrhyndeudraeth, Nefyn, Llanberis, Penygroes, Bethesda, Gaerwen, Llanrwst, Llanbryn-mair and so forth, setting targets for economic developments there also.

Because the strongest Welsh-speaking communities are often the furthest from the European and British marketplace, setting economic targets for Welsh regions, or even counties, will not suffice. Setting a target for Gwynedd, for example, might not succeed, as employment might all go to Bangor, leaving the Llyn Peninsula, for example, without work.

Language

7.1 Unless the enormous demographic shifts within Welsh-speaking Wales are dealt with and appropriate policies put in place in the field of housing and employment, the Welsh language will not survive as a community language, and if it does not survive as a community language, then, after a while, Welsh will cease to exist as a language.

7.2 Even if the population were to be stabilised, particular steps would have to be implemented in the field of language planning. In most of rural Welsh-speaking Wales the non-Welsh-speaking population has almost become a majority. This language trend can be seen in the figures for first language Welsh-speakers amongst 5-year-old children. In Gwynedd, only 54% of 5-year-olds spoke Welsh at home in 2000; in Anglesey, only 33%; in Ceredigion, 28%; and in Carmarthenshire, 22%. It is obvious, therefore, that if the Welsh language is to be a viable community language for the next generation it will be necessary to implement schemes for language regeneration in Welsh-speaking communities.

3. In order to get to grips with this language crisis, the Assembly will have to demonstrate exceptional political leadership. **Cymuned** believes that this is our last chance to 'save' the Welsh language. Apart from the establishment of the state of Israel, which has a totally different socio-linguistic background to Wales, there is not a single example in the world of a language that has been restored as a community language after it has disappeared as an everyday language from all its traditional territory.
4. In order to restore the Welsh language in its strongholds, **Cymuned** believes that the following policies should be implemented:

Statutory Education

8.1 **Cymuned** believes that Welsh medium statutory education is essential if we are to buttress the community's ability to ensure successful language transmission from generation to generation. We intend to present full evidence to the Education Committee during its review of Welsh medium education. Accordingly, we are only presenting an outline of our recommendations for education here today.

8.2 We are aware of the comprehensive research that has already been accomplished in the education field and we urge the Assembly to establish a national strategy for Welsh medium education on the basis of that research.

8.3 We believe that all children in Wales should have the opportunity to become confidently bilingual at 16 years old. In the Welsh-speaking areas, a failure to provide this opportunity would be equivalent to denying the rights of children to play a full part in their community.

8.4 To achieve this successfully, **Cymuned** calls upon the National Assembly to ensure that the education system in the Welsh-speaking areas normalises the Welsh language as the medium of instruction for pupils between 3 and 16 years old.

8.5 The present system of language streaming in schools should be abolished. Children from non-Welsh-speaking homes that are educated through the medium of English do not leave school fluent in both languages.

6. Gwynedd County Council's policy of providing special language centres in order to immerse non-Welsh-speaking children who have recently migrated to the area should be extended immediately to other Welsh-speaking areas. This scheme should also be extended to the secondary sector.
7. We welcome the acknowledgement in Elwa's National Council Draft Corporate Strategy of the importance of bilingualism in Wales; we welcome also the declaration of intent in the National Assembly's Paving Document *The Learning*

Country. **Cymuned** calls upon the Assembly to implement these strategies, and further strategies, so that they will contribute towards strengthening the Welsh language as a community language in Welsh-speaking areas.

8.8 The Assembly should insist that education providers who receive public monies for the provision of vocational training, community education, and life long learning should deal with the Welsh language as a cross-cutting theme.

8.9 This would mean that providers would have to offer Welsh or bilingual courses in Welsh-speaking areas. This will require co-operation at national level to avoid duplication and waste and will lead to innovative teaching and learning methods. It will also ensure that individuals in Welsh-speaking areas are given appropriate and equal opportunities for educational continuity and development that do not exist at present.

10. We support the establishment of a Welsh-medium Federal University College, as we do improved Welsh-language vocational education. We believe that this will make more Welsh speakers qualified for a wider range of professional jobs in Welsh-speaking areas than is currently the case. The centres of the Federal College should be colleges at Bangor, Aberystwyth, Lampeter and Carmarthen.

Integrating non-Welsh speaking Adults

9.1 **Cymuned** believes that newcomers in Welsh-speaking communities have a civic responsibility to learn Welsh. We also believe that Welsh-speaking areas have a responsibility too; the responsibility to facilitate the task of teaching Welsh to newcomers, making it as attractive, effective and convenient as possible. To enable Welsh-speaking communities to do this, the Assembly will have to make a significant financial investment.

2. In this context **Cymuned** welcomes the recent statements by the Labour Party, the Conservative Party and the Commission for Racial Equality agreeing with the Home Secretary, David Blunkett, in his desire to see in-migrants learning the language of their new community.

The Home Secretary stated, 'I believe we need to educate new migrants in citizenship and help them to develop an understanding of our language, democracy and culture.' The Shadow Home Secretary, Oliver Letwin, greeted the proposals with the statement 'we welcome them'; and the Labour M.P., Ann Cryer, added her support, 'it would also encourage, in my view, integration.' A spokesman on behalf of the Commission for Racial Equality, Robin Banerji, said, 'It is a good idea on general principle [...] anything that helps people understand the place they are coming to must be welcome.'

3. **Cymuned** calls upon the Assembly to support the new consensus in Britain for teaching the language of the community to in-migrants, by stating its wish to facilitate the teaching of Welsh to newcomers in Welsh-speaking communities. **Cymuned** believes that this would facilitate equal opportunities as well as safeguarding the Welsh language.

9.4 We do not believe that the present system of teaching Welsh to newcomers is successful. Only 1.7% (2,606 individuals) of the non-Welsh speaking population in a Welsh-speaking area like the old county of Dyfed were registered on Welsh courses in a year when an academic study was undertaken. Throughout the whole of Wales, only 94 individuals were successful in Higher Level examinations for adults learning Welsh in 2000. The drop out rate for language courses in Britain is high; about 90% according to some experts.

Given the Assembly's responsibility to ensure the continuance of Welsh-speaking communities in the face of huge demographic changes, these figures are totally unacceptable.

9.5 There is an urgent need for research into the factors that would motivate newcomers, particularly those with children, to learn Welsh effectively.

6. A network of language centres should be established, similar to the language centre Popeth Cymraeg in Denbigh, for activities at a county level, as well as the development of a network of community language teachers for more local activity.
7. These centres and tutors should also provide courses that give an outline of the historical and cultural background of the community that newcomers have moved to. These could be the equivalent of the 'citizenship lessons' that the Government wishes to develop throughout Britain.
8. Community language tutors should arrange sessions in local centres, such as the local primary school, where non-Welsh speaking parents can learn Welsh alongside their children. This is the sort of co-ordination between the family, the

child and the neighbourhood that is vital for the survival of Welsh as a community language. **Cymuned** welcomes the Liberal Democrats' proposed scheme to establish centres that would teach Welsh to parents alongside their children.

9. A pilot scheme should be undertaken in three or four Welsh-speaking villages in different parts of Wales that would seek to integrate newcomers. The approval of the local Community Council should be sought, together with other community leaders, and the community spirit of that village should be restored around the aim of teaching Welsh to newcomers and improving the language ability of those whose grasp of Welsh is uncertain.

9.10 The contribution made to the linguistic viability of their new communities by individuals who have moved to Wales from other parts of the United Kingdom and have learnt Welsh should be publicly acknowledged. A project should be financed to link those individuals who have learnt the language successfully with other newcomers, to discuss with them how they set about learning Welsh, reaction to this, and their feelings about the cultural identity of their new community.

11. Local authorities in Welsh-speaking areas, together with public bodies that are accountable to the National Assembly, should receive additional funding to enable them to release non-Welsh speaking staff to attend intensive Welsh language courses. They should organise a mentoring system in the workplace, after these staff members have returned, so that they have an opportunity to practise their language skills daily. Mentors' responsibilities should be regarded as being equal with other responsibilities and should be reflected in their pay. Comprehensive training must be given to these mentors.
12. Private businesses and the self-employed should be given rate or tax reductions if they themselves or members of staff attend Welsh courses. People should be released for extended periods as happens in the Basque country. The mentoring system discussed in 9.10 above should also be available in companies.
13. Businesses should be supported to find suitable replacements when staff members are attending Welsh language courses.
14. These courses should be available free to newcomers and new resources should be released to ensure this.
15. Guidelines should be available after the completion of a course to ensure that people begin to use Welsh in the workplace in a structured manner.
16. A body should be established similar to HADE (The Institute for Literacy and the Re-Basquization of Adults) in the Basque Country; a body that would be charged with the role of co-ordinating these efforts to teach Welsh to newcomers in Welsh-speaking areas.

9.17 After newcomers have made the effort to learn Welsh, local residents will have to undertake the responsibility of socialising with the new Welsh-speakers. Following a long period of communicating in English with newcomers, there will

be a tendency amongst some local people to continue speaking English with them. To overcome this problem a task force should be established to research ways of facilitating socialising between Welsh first language speakers and second language speakers. Social events for new Welsh-speakers should be held in venues where local Welsh-speaking people socialise naturally.

18. Significant financial investment will be necessary to fulfil these aims. Schemes for teaching such skills should be eligible for Objective One funding.
19. The Assembly will also have to shoulder its share of this new financial burden. We believe, however, that this is a small price to pay for the reward of strengthening communities, providing newcomers with an essential skill, and ensuring a future for the Welsh language.
20. **Cymuned** believes that it is possible to promote the Welsh language in a way that reinforces the cultural viability of the indigenous community, as well as giving practical support to newcomers. Therefore, once again, we believe that the Assembly's aims of promoting equal opportunities and creating an inclusive society go hand in hand with safeguarding the Welsh language as a community language.

Facilitating the use of Welsh in the community

10.1 The in-migration of non-Welsh-speaking individuals into Welsh-speaking communities has led to a situation where Welsh is not used naturally in a wide range of activities. Specific steps need to be taken to support the Welsh language when it is faced by a more dominant language.

10.2 To achieve this we need specific schemes to restore communities as Welsh-speaking communities.

3. The work of the Language Initiatives should be supported and properly financed.

10.4 Consideration should be given to reorganising the catchment areas of some of the language initiatives according to linguistic need rather than administrative convenience. In Ynys Môn, Dinbych-Conwy and Maldwyn, for example, there is a fairly well defined demarcation between the Welsh-speaking communities (Anglesey's hinterland, the hinterland of Denbigh-Conwy, north and west

Montgomeryshire) and more English-speaking areas.

10.5 Under the auspices of the language initiatives, a scheme should be developed to employ language *animateurs*. These individuals would offer intensive language planning expertise within communities.

10.6 Welsh should be made the internal language of local authorities in Welsh-speaking areas. Such a system should be established immediately in the in Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire County Councils, following Gwynedd's example. To facilitate this, the pattern outlined in Section 9 for training non-Welsh speaking staff should be followed.

10.7 There should be considerable investment in simultaneous translation equipment and courses should be made available to train local people and volunteers in its use. The use of these resources should be normalised, working towards a situation where every community council in Welsh-speaking areas has a simultaneous translation kit. The equipment should be available for the use of local organisations either for free or for a small fee.

10.8 A knowledge of Welsh should be a statutory obligation for those individuals who provide a public service. In many villages, the local post office provides these services. Those who work in post offices in Welsh-speaking communities should be able to speak Welsh.

10.9 Statutory requirements should be imposed on private businesses in the service sector in Wales to provide a Welsh language service. To this end, we support the Welsh Language Society's call for a new Language Act.

10. A national Language Planning Centre should be established, perhaps under the auspices of the University of Wales. It should be similar to other centres of excellence in the University, such as the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth. This is a field where Wales could be a world leader, and contribute at the same time to the regeneration of its own communities.

10.11 We should recognise the cultural reality that churches and chapels, despite the decline of Nonconformism, are still powerful community institutions. Most places of worship in Welsh-speaking communities are Welsh-language institutions and advantage should be taken of the socio-linguistic resources that they offer to the community. CYTUN should be asked to establish a pilot scheme in half a dozen communities where local churches and chapels will: gather evidence about Welsh community life; take an interest in the whole life of the community, including its attitude towards language; support voluntary community activity; and

adapt buildings for community use. Chapels and churches should also arrange Welsh lessons for newcomers and view this as part of their pastoral role.

12. A Federation of naturally Welsh-speaking Community Youth Clubs should be established in Welsh-speaking working class communities. We consider that there is a gap in the provision for young people in this category at present as Young Farmers Clubs are too rural and Urdd Gobaith Cymru is too middle class.
13. Welsh language youth culture should be supported. The Welsh Arts Council should implement schemes similar to those in France where musicians and bands that play a specified number of gigs in a year receive a living allowance. It was sad to see the most popular Welsh-language band in Wales, Anweledig, splitting up recently because they could not earn a living through their music. Work should commence also on encouraging pubs and clubs in the Welsh-speaking areas and beyond to play Welsh language music.

Inside the Assembly

1. The Welsh language should be treated as a crosscutting theme in the Assembly, in the same way as equal opportunities. Welsh should not be considered as a 'bolt-on issue'.
2. The Assembly should develop a permanent relationship with other countries that have expertise in the field of language planning, such as the Basque country, Catalonia, Quebec, other Canadian states, Ireland, Finland, Belgium, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States of America. This relationship should be encouraged to look for examples of international 'best practice' that could be applied to Wales.

11.3 The language targets in *www.planforwales.wales.gov.uk*, should be reviewed, notably the commitment to 'stabilise the proportion of Welsh speakers and sustain the growth amongst young people' by 2003/4 and ensure 'more people who can speak Welsh, with the sharpest increase amongst young people' by 2010. A sub-clause should be added to both statements stating 'in the Welsh-speaking communities as well as in Wales as a whole'. An additional sub-clause 'and attaining more social use of Welsh' should also be added to both statements.

The Governance of Welsh-Speaking Communities

12.1 **Cymuned** believes that Wales is a nation, and considers that the Welsh language is a language relevant to all Wales.

12.2 We also believe that the Welsh-speaking areas form a cultural region within Wales. We believe that any model that is used to regionalise Wales should acknowledge this linguistic fact.

12.3 The present Welsh administrative regions - such as 'North Wales' and 'Mid and West Wales' - divide the Welsh-speaking communities rather than unite them. Furthermore, local government borders do not necessarily follow language boundaries. Many Welsh-speaking communities are located within the borders of local authorities that are not predominantly Welsh-speaking, and who may not be prepared, perhaps, to implement strong language policies.

12.4 As the Welsh-speaking communities are similar in terms of their socio-linguistic and economic profile, we believe that co-operation between Welsh-speaking communities should be encouraged across these administrative borders.

5. To this end, a regional committee should be established within the Assembly, based on the Welsh-speaking areas.
6. An elected Statutory Council should also be established to represent the interests of Welsh-speaking communities. The Council could follow international models such as *Udaras na Gaeltachta*, the elected council of the Irish-speaking communities of Ireland, mainly responsible for economic development, or *Comisiun na Gaeltachta*, the body that advises the Government in Dublin on Irish-speaking communities, or *Udallerri Euskaldunen Mankomunitatea*, the umbrella organisation for community councils in the Basque country where over 75% of the population speak Basque.

The new Statutory Council could be responsible for the linguistic environment, in exactly the same way as the three National Park Authorities in Wales are responsible for the visual environment. This Statutory Council should be able to set targets for minimum language performance levels for county councils that have within them Welsh-speaking communities. In this respect, the Council should have legal powers. It should also be responsible for secondary legislation in planning.

7. In due course, consideration may be given to developing the Language Initiatives to undertake statutory functions at a local level, or to operate as the community building blocks of the Statutory Council above.

Notes