

laith Pawb

A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales

Welsh Assembly Government

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Foreword by the First Minister and the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language

Our Vision

The Welsh Assembly Government believes that the Welsh language is an integral part of our national identity. The Welsh language is an essential and enduring component in the history, culture and social fabric of our nation. We must respect that inheritance and work to ensure that it is not lost for future generations.

From the inception of the National Assembly for Wales, the Assembly Government has been committed to the cause of reviving and revitalising the Welsh language. The Assembly Government's first strategic plan, *Betterwales.com*, set out the Assembly's intention of fostering Wales's unique and diverse identity and promoting the benefits of bilingualism. This was given added impetus by the commitments in '*A Plan for Wales 2001*' which outlined the Assembly Government's broad ambitions for the Welsh language:

- *By 2003-04: to stabilise the proportion of Welsh speakers and sustain the growth amongst young people*
- *By 2010: more people who can speak Welsh, with the sharpest increase among young people.*

Our vision is a bold one and was set out in our policy statement on the Welsh language, *Dyfodol Dwyieithog : A Bilingual Future* published in July 2002. Our aspiration is expressed in the title of that document - a truly bilingual Wales, by which we mean a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either or both Welsh or English and where the presence of the two languages is a source of pride and strength to us all. *Dyfodol Dwyieithog : A Bilingual Future* committed the Assembly Government to prepare and publish before the end of 2002 a national action plan which would set out in the clearest terms the strategy and the commitment of resources by which the goal of a bilingual Wales would be achieved. This document is that action plan.

A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales

In constructing a national plan for a bilingual Wales, the Assembly Government recognises that it is not a matter of starting from scratch. Over the last three or four decades, UK governments have enacted legislation and introduced policies which have both raised the status of the Welsh language and contributed in no small way to the stabilisation in its decline between 1971 and 1991. The Welsh Language Acts of 1967 and 1993, the launch of S4C, the Welsh language television station, in 1982 and the establishment of the Welsh Language Board in 1988 and the activities flowing from these initiatives have helped enormously to raise the profile and status of the language in public life and in the public consciousness. The most important

policy developments have probably been those in the education sector where the steady increase in the provision of Welsh medium and bilingual education has had a significant impact in the number and percentage of school age children able to speak Welsh.

The Assembly's Culture and Education and Lifelong Learning Committees undertook an invaluable year-long review of the Welsh language, culminating in their joint report, *Our Language: Its Future*. The review and joint report highlighted several of the issues to be addressed and helped inform our policy deliberations.

These developments have made an important impact. The Welsh language has gained status, it has a policy profile, it has a proactive strategic support structure and it has a relevance to the lives and aspirations of young and old alike in Wales. We probably have a greater appreciation of the current state of the language than previous generations, but we are also more aware of the issues and challenges it faces.

There is clearly much that needs to be done to build on these foundations. The Assembly Government is committed to taking the lead in working to support and promote the Welsh language. It may not be straightforward, nor may we achieve our goals quickly, but we will do all we can to create the right conditions in which the Welsh language can grow and flourish in all aspects of Welsh life. This action plan represents a significant step in that process.

Rhodri Morgan AM

Jenny Randerson AM

1. The Welsh Language and Welsh-Speaking Communities

Context

1.1 In tracking the state of the Welsh language, the most extensive source of regular statistical data is the population census, held every ten years.

The census: 1901 - 1991

1.2 Using data from the censuses from 1901 it is possible to track at 10-yearly intervals how many and what percentage of the population of Wales aged 3 years and over spoke Welsh. The picture which emerges is an overall downward trend from 1901 to 1991, although the rate of decline tails off at the end of the period. The following table shows the extent of the decline (in numbers and percentages) over the course of the 20th Century.

Table 1 – Welsh speakers (persons present on census night) (a)

Year	Persons (thousands)	Percentage	Year	Persons (thousands)	Percentage
1901	- 929.8	49.9	1961	- 656.0	26.0
1911	- 977.4	43.5	1971	- 542.4	20.8
1921	- 922.1	37.1	1981	- 508.2	18.9
1931	- 909.3	36.8	1991	- 500.0	18.5
1951	- 714.7	28.9			

Source: Office for National Statistics and the National Assembly for Wales

(a) Persons present aged 3 and over who were reported as speaking Welsh at each Census.

Recent trends 1971 - 91

1.3 Against this back-cloth, the returns from the two censuses since 1971 presented some cause for guarded optimism. Although the trend continued downwards, the decline was much less marked. The percentage of Welsh speakers fell from 20.8% in 1971 to 18.9% in 1981, with a further marginal fall to 18.5% in 1991. Whilst this suggested that the downward trend had begun to stabilise, it comprised two distinct patterns – continuing falls in the proportions of those **over** school age who said they spoke Welsh counterbalanced by strong growth among those of school age.

Geographic and demographic distribution

1.4 There are over half a million Welsh speakers in Wales and their distribution and concentration across the country and among age groups are pertinent to the formulation of the Assembly Government's strategies for the Welsh language. The counties of the Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire all have Welsh-speaking populations which represent more than 50% of the local total population.

Geographically contiguous, these counties together with the adjacent areas of western Conwy and northern Pembrokeshire, effectively constitute what is often termed the “Welsh-speaking heartland”. Outside these core areas, and parts of the sizeable county of Powys, the number and prevalence of Welsh speakers among a county’s population tend to decrease the further east one moves. Thus in Newport, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent, the Welsh-speaking population is very small in number and constitutes a tiny proportion of the county’s total population.

1.5 But it would be wrong to imply that the future of the Welsh language is an issue confined to four or five counties in the north and west of Wales. There are significant numbers of Welsh speakers in areas of Wales outside the “heartland”. There are some 130,000 Welsh speakers in the area of south east Wales from Swansea to Monmouth and south of Powys, almost 20,000 of them living in the city of Cardiff. There are also over 30,000 Welsh speakers in the north east counties of Wrexham and Flintshire.

1.6 Welsh speakers living outside the “heartland” are a significant number in their own right – and constitute almost 40% of the total Welsh-speaking population. Table 2 illustrates just how widely distributed Welsh speakers were within Wales in 1991 in the areas which correspond to the present unitary authorities¹. Figures from the 2001 census are awaited, but it is unlikely that disparities between areas will be less evident.

Table 2 – Number of Welsh speakers in 1991 by unitary authority ranked in descending order (*figs rounded*) (b)

Unitary Authority	Thousands	Unitary Authority	Thousands
Carmarthenshire	89	Flintshire	19
Gwynedd	78	Cardiff	19
Isle of Anglesey	41	Wrexham	16
Ceredigion	36	Bridgend	10
Conwy	31	Caerphilly	10
Swansea	28	Vale of Glamorgan	8
Neath Port Talbot	23	Merthyr Tydfil	4
Powys	23	Newport	3
Denbighshire	23	Torfaen	2
Rhondda Cynon Taff	20	Monmouthshire	2
Pembrokeshire	20	Blaenau Gwent	2

Source: Office for National Statistics and Welsh Office

(b) Welsh Office estimates based on the 1991 Census of Population. Figures are for Welsh residents on Census day.

1.7 The situation is more complex than can be represented in a table showing data by local authority area. The large number of Welsh speakers in south

¹ Enumeration districts used in 1991 census aggregated in accordance with the new unitary authority boundaries established in 1996.

east Wales are for the most part distributed among an overwhelmingly English-speaking population, but there are communities in places such as the Swansea, Loughor, Amman and Neath valleys where Welsh is spoken by some 25% of the population (and over 75% in Lower Brynamman and Gwaun-cae-Gurwen). Similar concentrations of Welsh speakers can be found in other areas outside the “heartland”, for example in south and north Powys.

The Language at the Community level

1.8 The state of the language in communities where it was spoken by over 70% of the local population aged 3 years and over in 1991 is worthy of particular attention. These are communities where the density of Welsh speakers means that the language is more likely to be spoken in social, leisure and business activities and not be confined to the home, chapel and school. In these areas Welsh is a living, everyday language, spoken, heard and seen in the community; it is part of the fabric of the community. Censuses and surveys over recent decades have shown a continuing decline in the number of communities where more than 70% of the population speaks Welsh. Continuing decline could arguably threaten the existence of the Welsh language since it would no longer have a natural environment in which it was spoken as a matter of course in the range of social contexts.

1.9 In contrast, in communities in hitherto overwhelmingly non-Welsh-speaking areas (notably Cardiff, Deeside and several communities in north east and south east Wales) recent trends suggest that the Welsh language had advanced, since there is evidence of a small growth in the total number of Welsh speakers. The advance is probably linked to the expansion in the provision in these areas of Welsh medium education since the age profile breakdowns of census and survey results reveal substantial growth in the number of school age children speaking Welsh. Whilst the growth in these areas has been modest, it has been encouraging. Nevertheless, the numbers speaking Welsh remain low in relation to the overall local population and despite apparent advances in ability to speak the language, in terms of usage Welsh is clearly far from being the everyday language of the wider community in these areas.

Age profile of Welsh language speakers

1.10 There have been contrasting trends among different age groups within the total Welsh population. The percentage of Welsh speakers among age groups up to 15 years of age has risen quite significantly since 1971. The rate of increase for the next age group, 15-24 years, is not so marked but there have been continued significant decreases in the percentages of Welsh speakers among older age groups. The following table, derived from the censuses in 1971, 1981 and 1991 (being the most extensive source), illustrates the different trends between age groups. The figures from the 2001 census are awaited; they are likely to show a growing

disparity between the different age groups, specifically between those of school age and those in the older age groups.

Table 3 - Proportion of each age group recorded as speaking Welsh at the censuses of 1971, 1981 and 1991 (persons present)

Age group		1971	1981	1991
		<i>Per cent</i>	<i>Per cent</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
3-4	-	11.3%	13.3%	16.1%
5-9	-	14.5%	17.8%	24.7%
10-14	-	17.0%	18.5%	26.9%
15-24	-	15.9%	14.9%	17.1%
25-44	-	18.3%	15.5%	14.5%
45-64	-	24.8%	20.7%	17.3%
65 and over	-	31.0%	27.4%	22.6%

Source: Office for National Statistics and the National Assembly for Wales

1.11 Increases in reported Welsh-speaking among the school age groups probably owe much to educational developments. There has been considerable surge in the demand for and supply of bilingual and Welsh medium education over the last 20 years, particularly in the more anglicised parts of Wales. The statistical impact of this development on the overall level of Welsh speakers in certain local areas is probably more evident in areas such as Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan where there would be relatively fewer Welsh speakers among the older age bands to replace.

1.12 The decline of Welsh speakers among older age groups has been attributed to several factors, but prominent among those cited are the problems of the rural economy and the attractiveness of the localities, including the price of housing, in the heartland areas of the language. A lack of economic and social opportunities for younger, economically active local born people has led to outward migration from the rural areas where the language is strongest. Many of those leaving would be Welsh speakers. Conversely there has been an inward migration of generally non-Welsh-speaking adults retiring or buying homes in these areas. The result of these trends is that as the older Welsh-speaking people die they have not been replaced (in terms of the Welsh-speaking profile) in similar numbers from the generations immediately following. The rate of decline among the age group 25-44 is particularly worrying. This is a socially influential group comprising parents, key workers and dynamic players within communities. It is this group above all others which forms and sustains the main social networks within communities. The age group 25-44 would include the parents of children who may have the chance to learn and speak Welsh in school. If those parents do not also speak Welsh, their children may have very limited opportunity to use the language at home and may lose the ability to speak Welsh once they leave full-time education. A language which is confined to the educational sector is not a living language.

Conclusion

1.13 It is clear even from a fairly basic analysis of the state of the Welsh language and its distribution across Wales that the overall picture is a complex one. The rate of decline during the 20th century was dramatic and it is clear that concerted and sustained action, underpinned by a clear-sighted long-term strategy is necessary for the language to have a viable future. But how to tackle the matter is itself not straightforward since the circumstances of the Welsh language are clearly very different, in terms of levels of penetration, linguistic infrastructure and recent trends in different parts of the country and within different sectors of the population. There is need for a concerted, vigorous national strategy for the language, but that strategy cannot afford to ignore the local and sectoral differences which clearly exist. A national strategy should seek out those differences and try to address weaknesses, build on strengths and learn from experiences. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to an approach which is national in scope, but sufficiently flexible to acknowledge, address and accommodate those differences.

The Way Forward

1.14 *Dyfodol Dwyieithog – A Bilingual Future*, published in July 2002, represented the initial statement of the Assembly Government's broad intentions in key policy areas. This Action Plan follows on from *Dyfodol Dwyieithog – A Bilingual Future* and identifies the specific actions and initiatives by which the Assembly Government will seek to increase bilingualism and strengthen the Welsh language.

1.15 The Welsh Assembly Government's strategy pursues three strands:

(i.) A National Policy Framework, with the Assembly Government setting the policy agenda and providing strategic leadership to sustain and encourage the growth of the Welsh language;

(ii.) The Language and the Community, focussing on policies and actions which promote economically and socially sustainable communities throughout Wales including those where Welsh is widely spoken within the community at large;

(iii.) The Language and Rights of the Individual, focussing on the rights and responsibilities of the individual. The Assembly Government's policies will continue to encourage individuals to learn Welsh and to facilitate and empower them to use the language in all aspects of life in Wales.

2. A National Policy Framework

Introduction

- 2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government is strongly committed to supporting and promoting the Welsh language. We consider the Welsh language to be integral to the identity of our nation and we shall continue to do all we can to promote its well being.
- 2.2 We believe that further positive action on behalf of the Welsh language is needed and justified; English, as the dominant majority language does not need such institutional support.
- 2.3 The most public expression of the Assembly Government's level of commitment is its funding totalling several million pounds annually which is made available directly and indirectly to projects and organisations which work with and for the Welsh language. Most of the funding is channelled through organisations such as the Welsh Language Board, the various education providers, cultural bodies and, increasingly, bodies promoting economic development.
- 2.4 But the problems facing the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities are complex and multi-faceted. Providing for the growth of the language in the long term and ensuring the viability of Welsh-speaking communities is not something that can be achieved through a narrow range of policies and funding schemes and the work of the Welsh Language Board alone. The Assembly Government believes that a more holistic approach to policy-making and support for the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities is needed.
- 2.5 As the Welsh Assembly Government, it is our role and our responsibility to take the lead in developing that holistic approach. We shall do so by means of a **National Policy Framework** which will set out clearly and unambiguously:
- our role in providing political and strategic leadership;
 - the goals we want to achieve and by when; and
 - the broad strategies by which we shall achieve those goals, and with whose help.

Political and strategic leadership

- 2.6 The Assembly Government is strongly committed to providing clear political leadership and strategic direction on Welsh language policy and to providing the appropriate financial support.
- 2.7 Although Welsh language issues concern all Assembly Ministers, responsibility for over-seeing and co-ordinating Welsh language policy within the Assembly Government rests with a specified Minister, who is a member of the Assembly Cabinet. The seat in Cabinet guarantees that

Welsh language issues receive their due attention and consideration in the Assembly Government's policy-making and decision-taking processes.

2.8 The Assembly Government already provides substantial material and policy support for the Welsh language. The authority to provide such support stems from the wide-ranging provision of section 32(c) of the Government of Wales Act 1998 which enables the Assembly to "do anything it considers appropriate to support the Welsh language". The Assembly Government's support for the language takes many forms and is executed in many different ways. To list but a few:

- the Assembly Government directly funds the national Welsh language planning body, the Welsh Language Board. The Board's expenditure plans and policy objectives are agreed annually with the Assembly Government;
- we work with the various education providers to ensure that they have the resources, the technical support and guidance to deliver Welsh medium and bilingual education;
- we have legal authority, within the terms of the Welsh Language Act 1993, to formally identify organisations and oblige them to draw up and implement Welsh Language Schemes;
- we fund a host of organisations - public, private and voluntary - in the cultural, leisure, social care, health and economic sectors which operate throughout Wales, often through the medium of Welsh or bilingually;
- we set the broad strategic frameworks for various national and local public bodies operating in the economic development, housing and planning sectors which have responsibility for the interpretation and implementation of policies which can have a significant effect on the well-being of the Welsh language at a local level.

2.9 These efforts achieve much, but we believe that there is scope for achieving even more. We believe that the impact of policies and initiatives for the Welsh language both direct and indirect will be that much more if they are linked to a coherent national strategy with clearly defined national goals and embracing better co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation against those national strategies and goals.

Action Plan

2.10 The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide that national strategic framework. In the Action Plan, the Assembly Government makes a public declaration of what we want to achieve for the Welsh language, what we shall do to achieve our goal and what we want and expect our partners to do to support us. In each section we list the initiatives which we and our partners are taking forward which will support the national strategy and we make clear which body is responsible and accountable for that activity.

2.11 The structure of the Action Plan will ensure that all the bodies and all the initiatives working for the Welsh language have a clearly defined role

and a clear sense of purpose in terms of their potential contribution to supporting and promoting the Welsh language. We believe that clarity of purpose and responsibility will help and inform those involved in taking forward the activities and all those concerned about the fate of the language.

2.12 We intend the Action Plan to be an evolutionary process and a live document. As initiatives develop, the situations they were designed for may change because of the impact of the initiatives. We need to be able to track such changes, extrapolate from them possible future trends and, if need be, amend our policies. By clearly setting out our policies from the outset and identifying responsibilities and the supporting administrative mechanisms, we believe that this Action Plan will enable us to respond quickly and effectively to change.

Our Goal

2.13 Our goal is a bold one. We see no purpose in setting our targets low. We are no longer concerned with merely stabilising the number and percentage of Welsh speakers. We want to see a sustained increase in both the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh.

2.14 We believe that the long-term well-being of the language is dependent on enabling as many pre-school children and young people as possible to acquire the language and as early as possible. Accordingly, we want to sustain the growth of the language which has been achieved over the past two decades among school-age children, improve the rate of language transfer from Welsh-speaking parents to their children and encourage those who have used or acquired the language at school to retain and use it once they have left.

2.15 But we want to look beyond mere numbers of people who can speak Welsh. We want Wales to be a truly bilingual nation, by which we mean a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English and where the presence of the two languages is a visible and audible source of pride and strength to us all.

2.16 The measures set out in this Action Plan are aimed at achieving the following key targets:

by 2011 -

- the percentage of people in Wales able to speak Welsh has increased by 5 percentage points from the figure which emerges from the census of 2001 (*);
- the decline in the number of communities where Welsh is spoken by over 70% of the population is arrested;
- the percentage of children receiving Welsh medium pre-school education has increased (*);

- the percentage of families where Welsh is the principal language of conversation/communication between adults and children at home has increased (*)
- more services, by public, private and voluntary organisations are able to be delivered through the medium of Welsh.

(*) see discussion at paragraphs 2.36-38 about our current statistical base

2.17 We shall also aim to bring about an increase in the use and visibility of the Welsh language in all aspects of everyday life, including work, leisure and social activities. The tools for measuring such developments would be language use surveys, which are more detailed in their level of interrogation than the censuses or other official surveys currently undertaken. We shall work with the Welsh Language Board to develop language use surveys which help inform our policy-making and measure impact.

What the Assembly Government will do

2.18 Although the majority of the activities contributing to this Action Plan will be for other bodies to implement, the Assembly Government has a vital formative role in ensuring that the framework within which the Action Plan operates is indeed both national and strategic. In recognition of that we shall reorganise our administration of Welsh language issues within the Assembly Government to ensure that in exercising our responsibilities we are clear-sighted, effective and strategic.

2.19 Responsibility for implementing the Welsh language Action Plan and monitoring and reviewing its impact will rest with the **Welsh Language Unit which will be located within the Assembly Government**. The Unit will be charged with preparing an annual report on progress with the Action Plan, which the Assembly Minister with responsibility for the Welsh language will submit to the relevant subject committee of the Assembly. The Unit will also have a leading role in providing guidance and support to Assembly Ministers and officials on how to “mainstream” Welsh language issues into policy-making and programme delivery.

2.20 The Welsh Language Unit will also take forward action arising from the Assembly Government’s own Welsh Language Scheme. The Scheme is based on the principle contained in the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Government of Wales Act 1998 that the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality. Accordingly the Scheme requires the Assembly Government’s administration to ensure that in the conduct of business and in dealing with the public and outside bodies it is truly bilingual and it sets out the services in Welsh which others can expect when they deal with us.

2.21 The Assembly Government’s Welsh Language Scheme supports and underpins our commitments in the Action Plan in respect of enabling Welsh speakers to use their language of choice in all aspects of life. The Welsh

Language Unit will be responsible for providing advice and assistance within the Assembly Government on how to put the principles into practice and will monitor and report on progress in achieving the objectives set out in the Scheme.

Mainstreaming the Welsh language into policy development

2.22 Responsibilities for policies which impact on the state of the Welsh language or have the potential to do so permeate the portfolios of all Assembly Ministers and Departments. We need to ensure that all the opportunities to work positively for the language are identified and acted upon. It is not practicable or indeed desirable for one Assembly Minister and supporting policy officials to take on such a wide-ranging responsibility. **All Assembly Ministers and their officials must share responsibility for the future of the Welsh language and take ownership for identifying and addressing Welsh language issues in their policy areas.**

2.23 Accordingly, the Assembly Government will **mainstream** consideration of the Welsh language into the policy-making processes of all Assembly Ministerial portfolios, in much the same way as has been done already with equality of opportunity, sustainable development and ICT (information and communication technology) with the *Cymru Ar-lein* strategy. The Welsh language will be a permanent cross-cutting policy and each Minister and their officials will need to consider the implications of their own policies on the language, and whether more support could be provided.

2.24 The focus of government support for the Welsh language has tended to be on cultural and educational initiatives where the link to the language has been clear. Mainstreaming means factoring linguistic impact assessment into policies in areas such as economic development, social care or health care.

2.25 Many of the policies and initiatives identified in the Action Plan are implemented by Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs) such as the Welsh Development Agency, the Wales Tourist Board, ELWa (Education and Learning Wales) and others. These bodies take forward key elements of Assembly Government policy in the economic, social, health, and cultural fields and are responsible to the Assembly Government for their funding and strategic direction. The commitment to mainstreaming Welsh language issues will extend to all ASPBs also. From December 2002 **annual remit letters to all ASPBs** will specify that mainstreaming will apply to their policy development and programme delivery mechanisms.

2.26 We shall encourage the mainstreaming of Welsh language issues in those organisations in the local government, private and voluntary sectors which work in partnership with the Assembly Government in implementing Assembly Government policies in Wales. The principles of mainstreaming should inform policy-making and the delivery of services across the range

of such organisations' responsibilities, not merely those specifically where they act in concert with the Assembly Government or as its agent.

2.27 To ensure consistency, the Welsh Language Policy Unit will prepare and issue guidance to Assembly Departments on the principles and application of mainstreaming. The guidance will be drawn up in consultation with the Welsh Language Board, the Assembly Government's Research and Development Directorate and with reference to experiences with other cross-cutting policies. The Unit and the Welsh Language Board will be on hand to provide support and advice to officials in other Assembly Departments.

2.28 It will be the responsibility of the relevant sponsoring Assembly Departments to provide guidance and support to any ASPBs for which they are responsible and to ensure that the principles enshrined in mainstreaming are put into practice by each ASPB. Departments working with external partners will ensure that funded services, activities or schemes meet the linguistic needs of the targeted community or clientele and are delivered in the spirit of the Assembly's Welsh Language Scheme. The Annual Report on progress with the Action Plan (see paragraph 2.17 above) will include a report on progress with mainstreaming in ASPBs and the Assembly Government's partner organisations in the local government, private and voluntary sectors.

The legislative framework and institutional framework

2.29 The Assembly Government has no plans at present to ask the UK Government to introduce a new Welsh Language Bill. The official status of the language is far more secure than at any point in the recent past, due to the Welsh Language Acts of 1967 and 1993. We believe that the proactive measures outlined in our Action Plan will achieve much more for the Welsh language over a shorter timescale than further legislation requiring passage through the United Kingdom Parliament.

2.30 We agree that there is scope for better-focused institutional action in support of the Welsh language, but we believe that this can be accomplished within the existing legislation. Some 200 organisations in Wales are already required to operate Welsh Language Schemes under the Welsh Language Act 1993 and we shall continue to work to identify further organisations which provide services of a public nature which can be required to operate Welsh Language Schemes. Welsh Language Schemes will become a fundamental obligation for all housing associations from April 2004. We are also currently working to bringing utilities within the ambit of the Welsh Language Act.

2.31 Schemes need to be monitored to ensure that they are effective and the principles are put into practice. They will also need to be reviewed to take account of changed circumstances. Accordingly we have decided to strengthen the Welsh Language Board's capacity to monitor and review existing Welsh Language Schemes. This will enable bodies to build on

successes and identify areas for expansion in the range of Welsh language services. It should also mean that weaknesses are spotted and acted upon before they become a problem.

2.32 Maximising the potential for legislative changes which enhance the status and use of the Welsh language extends beyond the opportunities offered by the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Assembly Government will continue to work with UK Government departments in Whitehall to identify and take advantage of opportunities afforded by the UK Government's legislative programme. We shall ensure that any advice put forward regarding UK legislative proposals will take account of and highlight any Welsh language issues so that consideration of such issues can be factored in from the outset. Of particular interest currently are proposals for reforming the criminal justice system in England and Wales. The Assembly Government supports developments which have seen increased use of Welsh in tribunals and rules of court. We consider that bilingual juries should be the next step forward in appropriate circumstances and we are pressing the UK Government for suitable measures to be brought forward.

2.33 With regard to legislation originating from the Assembly itself (ie secondary legislation) the principles of mainstreaming will ensure that Assembly Ministers and their officials take account of Welsh language issues in conceiving the policy and drafting the legislation.

2.34 We are also supporting and encouraging the Welsh Language Board in its work with other UK Government departments in Wales to increase the levels and range of services which they make available through the medium of Welsh.

2.35 The Welsh Assembly Government will assess the level of support provided for the Welsh language by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and consider whether it may be appropriate to recommend that the UK Government sign further clauses of the Charter.

National Language Planning - the role of the Welsh Language Board

2.36 The national strategic framework sets out the overall principles of our strategy – objectives, roles, responsibilities and commitments. But there is much work needed beneath that level to develop and deliver the initiatives which will help put that strategy into practice. The **Welsh Language Board** will continue to be the national language planning body for Wales and will have a central role in delivering the Assembly Government's Action Plan. The Board will continue to be one of the main delivery organisations for initiatives promoting the use of the Welsh language at the local and everyday levels, but it will also have a strengthened role in maintaining a strategic overview of Welsh language issues.

2.37 At the strategic level the Welsh Language Board will:

- help the Assembly Government in drawing up advice and guidance on mainstreaming;
- have enhanced capacity to monitor and review existing Welsh Language Schemes;
- develop its research and analysis capacity to help identify trends and inform long-term policy making;
- have enhanced resources to develop and implement initiatives which help achieve our strategic objectives;
- have a pro-active role in developing networks among delivery organisations to facilitate the exchange of information and best practice;
- have a key role in helping the Assembly Government to ensure that all the organisations involved in delivering the Action Plan do deliver;
- help to provide an overview on the “health of the language”.

2.38 As a measure of the importance we attach to the Welsh Language Board’s role in delivering key aspects of the Action Plan, the Assembly Government has allocated **an additional £16 million** (on top of the already programmed Grant In Aid) to the Board over the next three years. This will be spent on the Board’s own programmes and will also allow for the Board to make increased grants to its key partners such as the National Eisteddfod, *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin*, *Urdd Gobaith Cymru*, and the *mentrau iaith*.

2.39 With this substantial increase, the Board’s spending over the next three years will amount to over £37 million. The additional resources will enable the Board to build on the successes of its past work, and to expand into new areas of work such as language use research and data analysis, which are essential prerequisites of effective language planning.

2.40 Overall, the increases will mean that the Board can step up its work substantially in several of its key priority areas over the next three years. These include:

- enabling the Board to carry out its statutory functions more comprehensively, particularly in relation to monitoring and reviewing the implementation of Welsh Language Schemes. The Board will also be able to increase substantially the new Schemes it approves every year;
- starting the process of establishing a strong regional presence for the Board. An office will be immediately established in the North, where a

unit working on reviewing Welsh Language Schemes, amongst other duties, will be based. In 2003 an office will be opened in the South West, which will concentrate on community developments and the *Twf* project. An office will also be opened in north east Wales during 2004;

- Additional spending of over £1 million on the *Twf* project to persuade parents to speak Welsh with their children, and to choose Welsh medium education for them. This will pay for more field officers working on the project across Wales; more materials and resources; and for a national promotional campaign;
- Additional spending of over £3 million on community based initiatives and projects, including the *mentrau iaith* and nine new local action plans;
- Additional spending of over £3 million on initiatives aimed at increasing the use of Welsh, particularly in the private sector and by young people, as well as increasing language awareness and people's confidence to use Welsh. These initiatives will be based on a strategy which the Board is currently developing, and on which it will be consulting widely early in the New Year;
- Additional spending of over £1 million on research and development, data analysis and ICT strategies;
- Additional grants of over £3 million, including grants to support Welsh medium and bilingual education, to the Board's partners. The Board will be working with its partners to ensure that high priority is given to increasing opportunities to use the Welsh language. With the education grants, additional emphasis will be placed on new latecomers' centres in areas where a high proportion of the population speaks Welsh.

Delivering the Action Plan

2.41 The Action Plan is characterised by its emphasis on local delivery of a national strategy. The broad strategies laid down in the Plan will apply across Wales, but the circumstances and needs vary from one area to another. The priorities and the delivery mechanisms need to reflect those differences between areas, hence the emphasis on local delivery structures, which will involve a range of organisations, large and small, national and local.

2.42 Delivering on mainstreaming will involve not only quantitative but also qualitative assessment of what an organisation has achieved in terms of addressing Welsh language issues. The Welsh Language Board will have a significant role in providing qualitative assessment by virtue of its enhanced capacity to monitor and review Welsh Language Schemes on a regular basis. Organisations operating Schemes will be expected to demonstrate how they propose to incorporate mainstreaming Welsh

language issues into policy-making and service delivery. In due course they will have to account for their actions when their schemes are monitored and reviewed by the Board.

2.43 The Audit Commission will have a critical role in assessing the performance of local authorities and health bodies in delivering and providing services through the medium of Welsh. The various regulatory and auditing bodies which monitor the performance of public bodies and the delivery of services in Wales will also have key roles in ensuring that organisations meet their obligations in respect of mainstreaming. The relevant sponsoring Assembly Government Departments will ensure, as part of their mainstreaming responsibility, that the regulatory and auditing bodies are engaged and aware of the obligations they will be charged with monitoring.

Fforwm Iaith

2.44 *Our language: its future* (the joint report of the Assembly's Culture and Education and Lifelong Learning committees) identified a desire on the part of several organisations with an interest in language planning and the delivery of services for the establishment of a language forum which would allow for greater co-ordination between their activities and for a more regular opportunity for them to share ideas and best practice. The Assembly Government is considering possible functions and structure for the **Fforwm Iaith** and will be consulting on proposals in 2003.

Developing research and analysis capacity

2.45 The range of statistical and research data about the Welsh language currently available to policy-makers and language planners is rather limited. The 10-yearly census provides basic information about the numbers who can speak Welsh and various occasional sample surveys are staged, but more comprehensive, more targeted and more regular data are needed to enable us to view and assess the true impact of policy.

2.46 In paragraph 2.16 we have set targets of what we want to achieve by 2011. Those targets guide our policy-making and the allocation of resources. We need to be able to gauge the success of our policies by measuring impact. We will want to build on and learn from successes, identify and address as soon as possible any weaknesses and identify and project trends. As time moves on, priorities may need to be changed and targets revised and be made more challenging.

2.47 The wide-ranging and long-term strategy envisaged in this Action Plan needs to be informed by more pertinent, regular and more extensive data. The responses to questions - as used in Censuses of Population and adopted in other surveys - can only provide a broad, historical perspective. Accordingly we will provide resources to enable the Welsh Language Board, assisted by the Assembly Government's Research and Development Directorate, to **develop, compile and publish a range of**

statistical indicators about Welsh language ability levels and usage patterns, trends and projections. We also aim to develop **language use survey techniques** to gather information about levels of fluency in Welsh, visibility of the language and confidence in using the Welsh in different situations amongst other things. The increased range of data will be used to help inform policy-making and prioritisation and will enable us to target, track, evaluate and review the effect of policies and programmes.

Creating Evidence-Based Policies

2.48 However, laying strong foundations for a long-term and responsive strategy for the Welsh language is not merely a matter of providing a range of statistical indicators. A wide-ranging and fully co-ordinated approach to research and development will be needed to ensure that the Assembly Government and all its partners are supported with timely information and advice at key stages in the implementation, on-going development and review of the action plan. Progress will be monitored against targets and, where appropriate, we shall undertake research to capture and apply evidence of similar programmes, schemes and policies internationally.

Review

2.49 A thoroughgoing review of the Action Plan will be undertaken as part of this process of analysis and review during 2007.

Conclusion

2.50 We have set out in this chapter the strategic framework within which we shall take forward actions in support of the Welsh language. In the following two chapters we shall describe the various actions which comprise this Action Plan and which are the practical means by which we hope to achieve our objectives.

Actions – National Framework

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Mainstreaming	i. to ensure Welsh language issues are factored into policy development and delivery of services across all Assembly Departments and ASPBs ii to ensure remit letters to all ASPBs include mainstreaming requirement iii. to monitor progress of Action Plan, review and update as mainstreaming takes effect	Assembly Govt.
Set up Welsh Language Policy	i. facilitating implementation and monitoring of Assembly	Assembly Govt

Unit in Assembly Government administration	Government's Welsh Language Scheme.	
Legislative framework	<p>i. Assembly Government to maximise number of bodies required to prepare Welsh language schemes</p> <p>ii. Liaise with UK Government to ensure legislative proposals take account of Welsh language issues</p> <p>iii. increased monitoring of existing Welsh Language Schemes and develop and implement new ones</p>	<p>Assembly Govt.</p> <p>Assembly Govt.</p> <p>WLB</p>
Language planning strategic development measures	<p>– i. consultation on proposals for a Fforwm Iaith in 2003</p> <p>ii. develop, compile and publish range of statistical indicators and language use surveys re. use of language, levels of fluency, penetration etc</p> <p>iii. compile and issue guidance on mainstreaming</p>	<p>Assembly Govt.</p> <p>WLB/ Assembly Govt.</p> <p>Assembly Govt. /WLB</p>

3. THE COMMUNITY AND THE LANGUAGE

Introduction

3.1 There are large areas of Wales where Welsh is the main language of a majority or a substantial proportion of the inhabitants. These are the areas where the language is heard and spoken on a normal basis in a natural everyday environment. The number and strength of primarily Welsh-speaking communities has declined over recent years. The reasons for the decline are complex: a lack of employment and social opportunities for locally-raised youngsters who consequently move away; a decline of traditional industries which had a high proportion of Welsh speakers; the inward migration, primarily in more rural and coastal areas, of non-Welsh speakers and (albeit more difficult to quantify) a shift in social attitudes to speaking Welsh outside the home and school.

3.2 The decline of Welsh-speaking communities is a cause of concern to the Assembly Government, but it is part of a wider problem of economic change, population movement and social dislocation which afflicts large parts of Wales, rural and urban, and not merely Welsh-speaking areas. But we have no doubt that the dynamic health and evolution of the Welsh language will be seriously threatened if it ceases to be a language with a strong presence in the community.

3.3 The Assembly Government is clear about the crucial importance of maintaining Welsh as a living community language if the language is to thrive and flourish. A social and economic future for Welsh-speaking communities equates to a viable future for the Welsh language, and this Action Plan outlines how we intend to achieve this policy aim. The Assembly Government is similarly committed to ensuring that the language is promoted and developed in those communities experiencing growth in the number of Welsh speakers.

Promoting Economically and Socially Sustainable Communities

3.4 The Assembly Government believes that it is not appropriate to try to address the social and economic circumstances of Welsh-speaking communities in isolation. One simply cannot isolate Welsh-speaking communities from the rest of Wales: there is no uniformity of circumstance between the Welsh-speaking communities themselves and the causes of their disadvantage are as many and as varied as in other communities in Wales. The Assembly Government believes that the solution for disadvantaged Welsh-speaking communities rests within our national strategies for promoting economically and socially sustainable communities (particularly **A Winning Wales** and **Communities First**). Those strategies are given expression by promoting policies which help support and strengthen the social and economic framework of communities whilst being sensitive to local circumstances. Our aim is to enable individuals within those communities to continue to live and work there if they so wish.

3.5 Many Assembly Government, Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and Wales Tourist Board (WTB) programmes are already acting indirectly in support of the Welsh language by supporting economic development in Welsh-speaking areas. The Assembly Government acknowledges that more is needed than simply putting in place programmes which act indirectly in support of the Welsh language through supporting economic and social development in Welsh-speaking areas. Our aim is to ensure that our general programmes are tailored to respect and take account of local circumstances in the communities they are designed to benefit. Prominent among those circumstances must be the linguistic character of the community. We shall ensure that our community initiatives have an enhanced impact on the Welsh language by focussing on:

- **Mainstreaming** - the policy of mainstreaming means that the Assembly Government and its agencies are committed to considering Welsh language issues in developing their policies and delivering their programmes (see para 2.22-2.28 above). The potential impact, negative or positive, of policies and programmes will have to be taken into account in preparation stages and measured and assessed during and after implementation. For some programmes in some areas language considerations will clearly require more weighting than in others – but it will be a component in all cases;
- **Targeting** - for some areas of Wales it might be appropriate to devise and implement additional economic and social development programmes which are strongly targeted at Welsh speakers. This will require a comprehensive framework of the linkages between language and the economy and might require specific new research. Such targeted programmes might, for example, be mounted in Welsh-speaking areas where there is little in the way of indigenous business activity.

The Actions

3.6 The Assembly Government is taking forward a range of programmes and initiatives targeted at strengthening disadvantaged communities throughout Wales. For the most part these are conceived with regard to the whole of Wales, but most have relevance to the needs of Welsh-speaking communities and their impact in terms of this Action Plan can be summarized under the following headings:

- a) **economic development** – a sustainable economic base and providing business and employment opportunities are essential to creating sustainable communities;
- b) **community regeneration** – encouraging communities to take ownership of their destinies and helping them to achieve what they want for their communities;
- c) **the Welsh language as part of the community fabric** – ensuring that the Welsh language is an integral part of a Welsh-speaking community's regeneration;

- d) **population movement** - ensuring that a balance is maintained in the social and linguistic composition of a community.

(a) **Economic development**

3.7 **A Winning Wales**, the National Economic Development Strategy of the Welsh Assembly Government, provides the framework for transforming the economy of Wales, while promoting sustainable development. The strategy recognises that economic growth is not sustainable where the interests of the environment and our established communities are disregarded. The strategy identifies key drivers of the economy, such as innovation, entrepreneurship skills development and promoting information and communication technologies, and there are a range of programmes in place for promoting these throughout Wales. Welsh-speaking communities will benefit from the economic and employment opportunities that business development will bring the local population.

Generating Business and enterprise

3.8 Many of the Assembly Government's economic development programmes, although national in scope, are implemented through local intermediaries and are targeted at generating business growth sensitive to the size and character of local communities. Initiatives such as **Finance Wales plc**, the **Community Loan Fund** and the **Community Development Financial Institution** are designed to foster and sustain a more enterprising approach by providing funds, and business support to a wide variety of individuals, companies and community enterprises. The Assembly Government's ambitious innovation strategy, **Wales for Innovation**, which has recently been launched for consultation, aims to promote innovation, research and development, technology transfer and new product development thus increasing our regional competitiveness.

3.9 The effect of mainstreaming Welsh language issues will be to require managers of these programmes to take account more directly of their impact on the Welsh language and be more aware of the possibilities of linking local strategies with linguistic and cultural initiatives for the language with the aim of maximising the potential impact on the community. The programme delivery mechanisms will also have to have regard to the Welsh-speaking character of certain communities and ensure that this is taken into account in the services provided. There is also a need to maximise the commercial potential of sectors linked with the Welsh language.

3.10 Underpinning this is a need to know far more about the links between economic development and the language. The Assembly Government will work with the WDA and Menter a Busnes to develop a **framework for research and development** which will better inform the relationship between the economy and the language at strategic and operational levels.

3.11 There are already a number of schemes which target Welsh speakers and explicitly support the language. The **Potentia** programme, which is part

of the Entrepreneurship Action Plan, is aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship in under-represented groups and provides pre-start-up support for Welsh speakers (among others) from all over Wales to enter business. Potentia is also providing training and awareness raising to **Business Gateway** on how to work with under represented groups including Welsh speakers. Other initiatives include the **Enterprise Factory (Ffatri Fenter)**, which provides opportunities for young Welsh speakers to taste enterprise first hand and **Cwlwm Busnes**, an innovative web-site providing a virtual business networking facility for Welsh speakers. These will be carefully evaluated before decisions are taken on any further resources being made available.

3.12 The WDA, ELWa (Education and Learning Wales) and the WTB work closely in partnership with **Menter a Busnes**, an economic development company, to ensure that Welsh speakers fulfil their potential in the fields of business, employment and community for the benefit of the economy and the Welsh language. Menter a Busnes work towards increasing confidence and affecting a major attitudinal change amongst Welsh speakers towards business and the economy in general. They run the **Gwobrau Menter** Awards which reward Welsh speakers who succeed in business and successful businesses that promote the Welsh language and use Welsh in the workplace. The awards are designed to promote role models for other Welsh speakers. Menter a Busnes are also involved in the **Gorwelion Initiative** which is aimed at expanding the horizons of the Welsh-speaking workforce and encouraging use of the Welsh language in the workplace.

3.13 These programmes help to generate business start-ups and provide a range of support services and advice. The aim is to encourage, support and develop the business–people and their enterprises that will help create communities in Wales which have within them the means to support and sustain those people who wish to remain there.

Tourism

3.14 **Tourism** is an important industry in Wales in terms of the jobs it provides, the revenue it brings in and communities it helps to sustain. A large number of Welsh-speaking communities throughout the country depend heavily upon tourism for their economic life-blood.

- Promoting the “**Wales**” **tourism product** is important and a distinctive way of attracting more visitors, but the Assembly Government is determined that this should be done in a way which is sensitive to the needs of the communities which we hope will benefit from the influx of visitors. The Welsh language is a key factor to be taken into account – as a potential attraction in its own right and to maximise opportunities to promote and encourage use of the language throughout the tourism industry.
- The Welsh language is a powerful lead into other cultural and social aspects that makes the tourism product on offer in Wales so distinctive

and provides competitive advantage over other parts of the UK. The WTB is developing its 'Sense of Place' toolkit, as part of its **cultural tourism strategy**. This will involve finding and disseminating best practice to tourism operators on how to create a sense of place, and how to sustain and exploit it – and the Welsh language and Wales' bilingual culture will be integral parts of this. The WTB is also exploring with the various players involved in cultural tourism such as the Arts Council Wales, the National Museums and Galleries of Wales and the National Eisteddfod how different products might best be marketed.

- The WTB is also working with attraction operators in the **private sector** to provide Welsh medium interpretation and tour guides and to develop a database of accommodation establishments where Welsh is spoken and where speakers and learners will be able to use the language.
- The Assembly Government will encourage the WTB to look at ways of getting more **Welsh speakers involved in the industry** – a development which would complement the cultural tourism initiative.
- The Assembly Government is also providing funding for the WTB to develop its **Destination Management System** which will allow the tourism industry to communicate in Welsh and use Welsh as a selling point. A free Welsh translation service for businesses putting details on the system will be available in 2003.

Actions

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Finance Wales plc	Provides funds and management support for business and community enterprises	WDA
Community Development Financial Institution	Assists community enterprises and the growth of the social economy and new firm formation in areas of deprivation	Assembly Govt / WDA
Wales for Innovation	A programme to increase innovation, research and development, technology transfer and new product development-to increase regional competitiveness	Assembly Govt / WDA
Research and Development Framework	To develop a research and development framework which better informs policies which impact on the economy and the language	WDA/Assembly Govt/Menter a Busnes
Potentia (part of EAP – targeting range of groups)	Accelerating number of Welsh speakers in business.	WDA / Menter a Busnes
Ffatri Fenter	Opportunity for young people to taste business	WDA / Menter a Busnes
Cwlwm Busnes	Business networking scheme for Welsh speakers	Menter a Busnes

Gorwelion	Expand horizons of Welsh-speaking workforce and encourage use of Welsh in workplace.	Menter a Busnes / WDA / ELWa
Gwobrau menter	Annual Welsh language business awards	Menter a Busnes / WDA / WTB
Cultural Tourism strategy	To use the Welsh language and bilingual culture to help promote Wales as a distinctive tourism product in the UK	WTB/Assembly Govt
Destination Management System	To allow the tourism industry to communicate throughout Wales, in Welsh, at all levels.	WTB

(b) Community regeneration

3.15 The problems facing our disadvantaged communities are complex and a package of economic development measures are just part of the process of regenerating these areas. Our strategy for creating economically and socially sustainable communities also addresses the range of often inter-related social, economic, educational, cultural and demographic problems which afflict our most disadvantaged communities. The Assembly Government has devised a number of programmes which tackle the problems of our disadvantaged communities holistically.

3.16 The philosophy underpinning our regeneration strategy is that the solution to a community's problems essentially lies within the community itself. Our aim is to empower and enable the communities to decide for themselves what needs to be done to regenerate their areas and to involve them in developing and implementing agreed local delivery plans.

3.17 This enabling and empowering philosophy is particularly relevant for Welsh-speaking areas. It is for the community to decide the extent to which their regeneration plans assess and take account of Welsh-speaking needs for their locality. The Assembly Government and its agencies will do all it can to support, enable and encourage communities in Welsh-speaking areas to take account of Welsh language issues in their plans and in the ways they conduct their business. Ultimately, however, it is for the community to recognise that if the language is to survive at the community level, the community itself must take responsibility.

Community programmes

3.18 At the national level, the Assembly Government and its agencies have a range of programmes targeted at promoting community regeneration in urban and rural areas. The strategy of promoting regeneration through enabling and empowering communities is exemplified by **Communities First**, the Assembly Government's flagship programme, which will invest over £80 million between 2002 and 2005 in tackling poverty and social disadvantage in the most deprived areas of Wales, many of them predominantly Welsh-speaking communities. The programme is focused on the most deprived wards in Wales and involves targeting public sector funding and services at

the identified areas. Those living in the communities decide what is needed to regenerate their areas.

3.19 The Welsh Development Agency has the same philosophy for community-led regeneration. Its **Community regeneration 'tool-kit'** provides a mix of revenue and capital support to community-led projects which are based on a long-term holistic approach to regeneration.

3.20 The Assembly Government's commitment to developing and implementing economic and social policies which have regard to local circumstances will be given added weight by the development of **Sub-regional Regeneration Frameworks**, such as those being prepared by the Mid Wales Partnership and the North Wales Economic Forum. These frameworks will provide useful sub-regional context for the development of policies and will help regional fora and partnerships to plan how to improve the economic well-being of their regions and maximise opportunities within each region. The impact of social and economic policies on the Welsh language at the community level will be at the forefront of the partnerships' considerations.

Rural regeneration

3.21 The particular needs of rural communities are addressed in a range of Assembly Government programmes designed to promote rural regeneration. The long-term aims of the **Rural Community Action – Gweithred Cymunedau Gwledig** and the **Rural Development Programme** are to encourage diversification and to build local capacity by working with local grass-roots organisations to develop and implement projects and initiatives which have been identified as meeting local needs. The Assembly Government and the WDA are also involved in delivering the European Union's **LEADER+** programme, which is targeted at creating business and social opportunities in rural communities. The sum of the Assembly Government's investment in these three programmes up to 2006 will be over £15 million.

3.22 Welsh speakers are a large element of the local population in many of the rural communities targeted under these programmes and enabling those communities to become economically and socially sustainable will encourage people to stay or return there. The Welsh language will be a key theme in programme delivery and programme managers will be encouraged and supported in using the language in conducting business and delivering services.

3.23 Although a relatively small component in the overall Welsh economy, the links between farming and the Welsh language are strong. Over half of those who work in agriculture in Wales speak Welsh and farming is one of the Welsh language's strongest language domains. The Assembly Government's strategy for agriculture, **Farming for the Future** recognises this explicitly. The central aim of the strategy is to help Welsh agriculture adapt in ways which will enable as many family farms as possible to survive and emphasises the

social dimension of sustainability. The importance of farming to the Welsh language is therefore already a part of mainstream policy thinking. Within this policy framework, **Farming Connect** will continue to play a key role in helping not just farmers as individuals but farming families more generally to access the information, ideas, advice and skills that they need to make a better future for themselves. The Welsh Assembly Government will in addition include the Welsh language as a factor in assessing the overall geographical pattern of support for farming in Wales.

3.24 Two localised, but important initiatives the Assembly Government is taking forward to help sustain the viability of small communities throughout Wales are the **Rural Retail Outlets Scheme** (£1.5 million between 2002-05), which will protect shops and other businesses that supply vital services to our rural communities, and the **Post Office Development Fund** (£2 million between 2003 and 2005), which will develop the role of and services provided by post offices in deprived and/or isolated parts of Wales.

3.25 Another project which will approach the goal of tackling community regeneration whilst paying close regard to impact on the Welsh language is the **Wales Rural Observatory**, which is being established by the Assembly Government (costing £0.6 million between 2003 and 2005) to improve the depth, range and quality of available information on rural issues. The Welsh language will be one of the factors which will permeate the activities the Observatory undertakes and the advice it puts forward.

Bridging the digital divide

3.26 Significant work is being undertaken by the Assembly Government and its agencies in bridging the 'digital divide' which will also bring benefits to communities throughout Wales and the needs of Welsh speakers and Welsh-speaking communities are being taken into account:

- The Assembly Government's **Cymru Ar-lein strategy** includes the key commitments of using ICT (information and communication technology) to enhance communities, their culture and languages, to promote social inclusion and help combat the digital divide, to raise the status of the Welsh language with respect to ICT, to support the continued growth of the Welsh language and to help minimise digital exclusion due to language. Funding has been given towards providing ICT learning centres.
- Important community-focused elements within Cymru Ar-lein include the **People's Network Initiative**, **Opportunity Wales**, the **ICT Support Centres**, the WDA's **e-communities programme** and the Assembly Government's **Lifelong Learning Network** (by which all schools in Wales are now connected to the Internet). Funding has also been provided for teacher training on the new technology and plans have been agreed for the first stage of an all-Wales teacher support structure as part of an integrated e-Learning Strategy.

- Through a number of inter-related initiatives, the Assembly Government and the WDA are developing and funding programmes costing some £115 million aimed at improving access to **broadband services and technologies** for use by individuals, existing and prospective businesses and communities throughout Wales. The development of broadband will directly support the Welsh language by providing access to services and advice in Welsh, and facilitate the distance learning of Welsh through the Lifelong Learning Network.

Re-location strategies

3.27 The Assembly Government is committed to developing presences outside south east Wales. A review has been undertaken and a re-location programme will be drawn up and published shortly. Some 75% of Assembly Government staff are currently located in Cardiff. The re-location strategy will be rolled out over a number of years, but the first major re-location, which is planned for Merthyr Tydfil will take place by the end of 2004. Two other major new offices will be established, in Mid/West Wales and North Wales, between 2005 and 2007. In the meantime there are likely to be a number of smaller relocations or location of entirely new Assembly jobs outside of Cardiff. Welsh-speaking areas are likely to be among the beneficiaries. The commitment to develop regional presences also extends to the Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs). The Assembly Government will be work with the various bodies to identify proposals for new offices or relocations outside south east Wales.

3.28 Re-locating Assembly Government staff and functions to other parts of Wales will have two benefits – it will enable the Assembly Government to connect better with the people of Wales and re-location will bring jobs and investment into the local economies of the areas in which new offices are opened and so contribute to our aim of developing strong sustainable communities throughout Wales. In relocating jobs, the Assembly Government will be sensitive to the linguistic fabric of those communities where new jobs are being created.

Actions

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Communities First	Tackle poverty and social disadvantage in most deprived areas of Wales	Assembly Govt. and Communities First Partnerships
Community regeneration tool-kit	for a mix of revenue and capital support to promote community led regeneration	WDA
Sub-regional regeneration frameworks	Provide sub-regional context for developing economic and social policies	Assembly Govt / local authorities / ASPBs
Rural Community Action – Gweithred Cymunedau Gwledig	Promote integrated rural community regeneration & development	Assembly Govt. / WDA

Rural Development Plan	Promote rural regeneration, tourism & crafts in specified areas	Assembly Govt./ WDA
LEADER+	Promotion of innovative rural development	Assembly Govt / WEFO / WDA
Farming for the Future (<i>Farming Connect</i>)	To help Welsh agriculture adapt so as many family farms as possible survive, with emphasis on the social dimension of sustainability	Assembly Govt.
Rural Retail Outlet Scheme	Support for rural retail services and help sustain communities	Assembly Govt / WDA
Post Office Development Fund	Grant scheme to support and develop post offices in deprived and/or isolated communities across Wales.	Assembly Govt
Wales Rural Observatory	To help improve the depth, range and quality of analysis of rural issues and complementing / supporting the Wales Rural Partnership	Assembly Govt / the Observatory
Cymru Ar-lein	i. initiatives to help reduce the digital divide for business, schools, colleges, communities in rural Wales ii. extending broadband access across Wales	Assembly Govt / public & private sector bodies Assembly Govt.
Relocation strategies	Assembly Government and ASPBs to develop presences outside south east Wales	Assembly Govt / ASPBs

(c) The Welsh language as part of the fabric of the community

3.29 Within the compass of its economic development and community regeneration strategies, the Assembly Government is pursuing a number of initiatives which explicitly recognise the importance of the Welsh language in certain communities. These initiatives underpin the economic and social goals of the wider programmes, but a desire to boost use and awareness of the Welsh language is explicit in the conception and execution of these initiatives.

Community initiatives

3.30 The Assembly Government will provide additional support to **mentrau iaith**, the community based agencies, of which there are now 23 in Wales, whose function it is to extend and expand the use of Welsh as a medium of social, business and institutional interaction in the community. The main strength of the mentrau iaith is their potential to raise the profile of the Welsh language locally, and to promote and facilitate its use by initiating new activities and co-ordinating existing ones. There is no single model of a menter - each one reflects its local situation and responds to the social and language needs of its community. Services provided by mentrau iaith include:

- advice and support relating to the use of the language, to public, private, business and voluntary organisations
- ensuring opportunities for people, especially children and young people, to socialise through the medium of Welsh
- developing projects for tourists, for people moving into the area and for Welsh learners
- providing information and resources, such as translation equipment, or information about local Welsh lessons.

3.31 The additional support will allow existing mentrau to develop and expand their involvement in the range of local community initiatives, thereby raising the profile of Welsh language issues within those initiatives. The support will be channelled to the mentrau through the Welsh Language Board, who will use some of the funds to develop a website and other networking links for the mentrau to allow for the exchange of ideas and best practice.

3.32 The Assembly Government will provide additional support to the Welsh Language Board to enable them to expand the number of local **Language Action Plans**. These are innovative initiatives which bring together local economic, social, cultural and educational development structures in communities undergoing substantial language shift and where the language is used less and less by young people. The aim is devise local plans which use the local structures to increase and encourage awareness, visibility and use of the Welsh language in economic, social and cultural situations at the local level. There will be no uniform approach – it will be for the local partners to decide how local action plans should reflect local circumstances and needs.

Planning

3.33 The Assembly Government's **national planning policy** reinforces our commitment to recognising the importance of the Welsh language at community level. The policy expresses the principle that local planning policy formulation and therefore subsequent planning decisions are sensitive to the ability of different areas and communities to accommodate development without eroding the position of the Welsh language.

- The Assembly Government's recent publication 'Planning Policy Wales', which reinforces **Technical Advice Note 20 'The Welsh Language – Unitary Development Plans and Planning Control'**, stated that the land use planning system should take account of the needs and interests of the Welsh language and in doing so contribute to its well-being. All local planning authorities should consider whether they have communities where the use of the Welsh language is part of the social fabric, and where this is so it is appropriate that this be taken into account in the formulation of land use policies. All local planning authorities should include in the reasoned justifications to their unitary development plans (UDP) a statement on how they have taken the needs and interests of the Welsh language into account in plan preparation, and how any policies relating to the Welsh language interact with other plan policies. This policy requirement is monitored

by the Assembly through the scrutiny of emerging UDPs. Local planning authorities should thus determine planning applications for development in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- Assembly Government policy states that local planning authorities should provide for a **broad distribution and phasing of housing development** to ensure that different areas and communities can accommodate the development without eroding the position of the language.
- The Assembly Government is committed to reviewing the effectiveness of the implementation of its planning policies in relation to the Welsh language. The Assembly Government is taking part in a **Linguistic Impact Study**, a collaborative research project (set up by the local planning authorities) aimed at producing practical solutions to implementing national planning policy and advice related to the Welsh language. The study partners include thirteen local authorities, two National Park authorities and the Welsh Language Board. The study will produce a number of outcomes which should help inform policy at all stages of the plan making process.
- Planning policies for sustainable communities which take account of Welsh language issues, whilst welcome, will not in themselves sustain the communities where Welsh is the main language of communication. But linking these (and housing) policies with economic development, cultural and educational policies aimed at the same goal of sustainable communities will greatly strengthen the prospects of the communities and the language. The Assembly Government's commitment to mainstreaming Welsh language issues will ensure that awareness of and responsiveness to Welsh language issues are significant elements in the co-ordinated community strategy.

3.34 The **Wales Spatial Plan**, a commitment included in *Plan for Wales* and the *Partnership Agreement*, will outline in spatial terms what happens where. It will consider the interaction of different policies in particular places as well as the role of places, setting out a strategic framework to guide future development. In this respect it is broader than traditional land-use planning and will promote and inform consideration of the effect of spatial strategies on Welsh language issues.

Actions

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Support for Mentrau Iaith	To increase the economic, social and cultural use of the language at community level.	Assembly Govt / WLB
Local Language Action Plans	To co-ordinate efforts across a number of sectors and a range of organisations in each locality to boost use and visibility of the language	Assembly Govt / WLB
Monitor UDPs	To ensure local planning policy is consistent with Assembly Govt policies for promoting and supporting the Welsh language	Assembly Govt
Linguistic Impact Study	To produce tools to help implement national planning policy and advice related to the Welsh language	Local authorities / WLB / National Park authorities / Assembly Govt.
Wales Spatial Plan	To provide mechanism for considering interaction and impact of various Assembly Govt policies	Assembly Govt.

(d) Population movement

3.35 The Assembly Government is conscious that population changes within Welsh-speaking communities are among the factors which undermine the position of the language in those communities. In recent decades, the demographic trends in Welsh-speaking areas have been for young people to leave, to be replaced, if at all, by the in-migration of older, non-Welsh speakers. These trends have an adverse effect on the social and economic balance of the community and there are serious associated implications for the Welsh language, since the young leavers take with them the future of the language in those areas.

3.36 The Assembly Government's economic and community regeneration policies are designed to create the opportunities which would enable the prospective leavers to stay if they so wish. But we are also trying to address the immediate problems arising from population movement with a series of initiatives and policies designed to facilitate the return of those who have left, encourage newcomers to learn and use the Welsh language and deal with some of the issues which cause people to leave in the first place.

Returning home

3.37 The outward migration of young people, in search of jobs and social opportunities, is a particular issue in Welsh-speaking areas of Wales.

- As the Assembly Government takes forward its community regeneration strategies, we will be looking to the Welsh Development Agency to further develop and promote its **Llwybro project**. This is an internet service which aims to encourage young people who have left rural Wales to return

home by providing reliable and up-to-date information about new job opportunities, investment openings and positive case studies in rural Wales.

- Building on the work being done under Llwybro, the Assembly Government has undertaken an **Age Balanced Communities Study** which has looked holistically at rural communities and at people at different stages in their lives within the communities. The report will set out an action plan to increase the opportunities for young people to stay in or return to rural Wales. Welsh speakers and the circumstances of Welsh-speaking communities are targeted in the study.

Housing

3.38 The Assembly Government is conscious that a lack of **affordable housing** in rural areas is perceived to be one of the reasons for the out-migration of young people from rural and Welsh-speaking Wales. The Assembly Government has in place a number of measures which are designed to facilitate access to housing to ensure the sustainability of communities.

- The Assembly Government has increased the maximum equity loan available under the **Homebuy** low cost home ownership scheme to 50% in rural areas, where many Welsh speakers live. In addition local authorities are able to agree local residency or employment criteria for applicants with participating Registered Social landlords (eg Housing Associations) to suit local circumstances. The operation of the Homebuy scheme is currently being reviewed to ensure that it is effective in providing low cost home ownership to people in housing need. The review is likely to be completed by the end of March 2003.
- Some £56.4 million in **Social Housing Grant** is being made available to assist the provision of affordable housing in 2003-04. Responsibility for assessing priorities for using the Social Housing Grant provided by the Assembly Government rests with local authorities as strategic housing providers. In the financial year 2001-02, Local Authorities determined that just under £3 million of the Social Housing Grant, provided by the Assembly Government, should be used for Homebuy in rural areas. The allocation for 2002-03 is £4.3million, which is expected to produce around 230 Homebuy loans in rural areas.
- In July 2002, the Assembly Government raised by around 10% the **maximum purchase price** limits for properties acquired under the Homebuy scheme. The Assembly Government is prepared to consider applications above the published limits on their merits. The Assembly may also waive the limits where it can be demonstrated that no suitable properties are available within the limits in locations where the applicant could reasonably be expected to purchase. The Assembly Government is encouraging local authorities to undertake **Housing Needs Assessments** by providing 50% funding towards the costs. The assessments should

help significantly in gauging local demand for affordable housing. The Assembly Government will introduce an Assembly Order which will extend the number of rural areas where restrictions apply to sales under the Right to Acquire and re-sales under the Right to Buy in order to safeguard access to low cost housing for local people.

3.39 The Assembly Government's recently published response to its commissioned research into '**Second and Holiday Homes and the Land Use Planning System**' sets out how the recommendations made in the report about the planning system and the supply of affordable housing in rural areas are being taken forward. Many of the recommendations are already being actioned or actively considered by the Assembly Government. This includes the review of guidance on planning and housing issues, the development of planning policy, improved data collection on second homes and affordable housing and further research on a wide range of topics. The research also needs to be considered in the light of a more comprehensive programme that the Assembly Government is undertaking, covering the full complexity of issues involved in understanding how to maintain (and create) viable rural communities.

3.40 The response document is available on the Assembly's website (www.wales.gov.uk - Subject Index / Planning / Table of Contents / Planning Research).

Welcome packs

3.41 The Assembly Government is keen to increase the opportunities for newcomers and non Welsh-speaking adults in Welsh-speaking areas **to learn the language**, so they can fully participate in all aspects of life in their new community and contribute to supporting and sustaining one of the most distinctive features of that community. The Assembly Government provided one-off grant assistance in 2001-02 to the Welsh Language Board for the establishment of a web-site and associated publicity material for a pilot "**Welcome Packs**" project. People moving in to Welsh-speaking communities in Gwynedd and the Denbigh / Conwy area were provided with packs which introduced them to the linguistic profile and heritage of the area and provided details of how to learn and respect the language. The effectiveness of the manually distributed packs is being evaluated, involving consultation with the estate agents involved, some of those who received the service and the Welsh Language Board.

3.42 In the meantime the Board is pressing ahead with its web-site, which will link to estate agents throughout Wales and provide details of and links to local authorities, mentrau iaith and the range of community-based organisations active in the Welsh language. The site is designed to promote awareness of social and learning opportunities in the Welsh language and will aim to encourage newcomers to learn the language and get involved in the local Welsh-speaking community. Information will be available on:

- bilingual and Welsh-medium education;

- availability of Welsh for Adults courses;
- community events arranged by mentrau iaith, cylchoedd meithrin, Urdd Gobaith Cymru and others;
- centres for latecomers

The web-site will thus augment and help publicise the range of local and community based services and initiatives being made available to support and promote the Welsh language.

Actions

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Llwybro Routes	Monitoring the movements of individuals educated in Mid Wales and informing them about job opportunities in their home areas.	WDA
Age Balanced Communities Study	Research leading to Action Plan to increase the opportunities for young people to stay in, or return to rural Wales	Assembly Govt
Homebuy Scheme	To review operation of scheme to ensure it provides low cost home ownership to people in housing need.	Assembly Govt
Local Housing Strategies	To produce effective solutions to local housing problems by engaging all sections of the community in agreeing their local housing strategy	Assembly Govt / local authorities
Assembly Order restricting Right to Buy/ Right to Acquire in rural areas	To extend number of rural areas where restrictions apply to sales under the Right to Acquire and re-sales under the Right to Buy	Assembly Govt
Second homes research	To assess social and economic impact of second homes in communities throughout Wales	Assembly Govt
Welcome Pack website	To inform incomers to Wales about the community and culture and to encourage them to respect and learn the language and culture	WLB

4. The Individual and Language Rights

4.1 The third strand in our strategy will focus on the **right** of the individual to use the language of their choice and the **responsibility** of organisations within Welsh society to acknowledge and facilitate the individual's right to do so. The Assembly Government is committed to Wales becoming a truly bilingual country and our policies will continue to encourage individuals to learn Welsh and empower them to use the language. But the language will not flourish on the back of institutional support alone – however strong that support and commitment may be. The Assembly Government and its partners can work to create the right conditions, but individuals themselves must recognise that they too have a responsibility to the language by passing it on to their children and by having the confidence to use it in the widest possible variety of social and business settings.

4.2 The thrust of the Assembly Government's policies in this area will focus on:

- encouraging individuals to learn and use the Welsh language;
- extending access to Welsh medium education in early years and post-16 sectors;
- empowering individuals to make a genuine choice as to the language, or languages, through which they wish to live their lives;
- an entitlement for all young people to a range of support services in the language of their choice;
- actively promoting the benefits of bilingualism.

Language acquisition, education and lifelong learning

4.3 We should not forget how far the education system has already developed. Welsh is now a compulsory subject for almost all pupils aged 5 to 16. In 2001-2002 that meant that over 463,000 pupils were taught Welsh. In 1996/97 over 20% of pupils in maintained secondary schools in Wales were taught no Welsh at all; in 2001/02 this was down to 1% giving a firmer base than ever before for the future of Welsh. 18% of early years children are already in Welsh medium settings and the Welsh Assembly Government policy for extending early years places has been established with a firm commitment to supporting provision in Welsh. Representatives of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM) and the Welsh Language Board are on the Assembly Government's Early Years Advisory Panel. The availability of education through the medium of Welsh has improved in recent years with several Local Education Authorities, mainly those which previously had little or no provision, opening new Welsh medium schools. Since 1990, 14 new primary schools and 3 secondary schools have been opened, with a further secondary school due to open in Swansea in September 2003. For the future, proposals have been published for three new Welsh medium primary schools in Caerphilly and for the expansion of several schools in Rhondda Cynon Taff; and at least three other authorities are actively considering establishing additional primary or secondary schools. 20% of primary pupils are now taught in classes where Welsh is the medium of instruction for all or part of

the day. In the secondary sector the number of schools designated as Welsh-speaking has increased from 44 to 53 since 1992 and 14% of pupils study Welsh as a first language compared with 12% a decade ago. A range of measures is already in place to help improve the supply of Welsh teachers including incentive grants for all postgraduate students and further incentives on taking up posts for eligible graduates in shortage subjects. We have also introduced a Welsh Medium Incentive Supplement for students undertaking secondary initial teacher training through the medium of Welsh who need additional support in the language. Funding is now available through the Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) programme for teachers to convert to Welsh-medium teaching as well as to improve standards of teaching and learning in Welsh at all Key Stages.

4.4 Through ACCAC (the curriculum qualifications and assessment authority), we support a full range of qualifications through the medium of Welsh – GCE, GCSE, GNVQs, Key Skills. In recent years this has been extended to vocational qualifications too through both ACCAC and ELWa – National Council. Appropriate linguistic provision is being made for our new Welsh Baccalaureate qualification. Students will be able to take it through the medium of Welsh, through the medium of English or in both languages. High quality classroom materials to support the teaching of Welsh as a subject and other subjects through the medium of Welsh, and bilingual materials to support Wales-specific aspects of the curriculum (the *Curriculum Cymreig*) are commissioned through ACCAC. Over 1,100 titles have been published since 1995. Additionally, the revised Special Education Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales covers issues of Welsh-medium teaching and support for pupils with SEN. The Welsh Advisory Group on SEN maintain a close overview of provision through the medium of Welsh and is currently focusing on speech and language therapies.

4.5 The National Council - **ELWa** – Corporate and Operational Plans include proposals to meet the needs identified for post-16 Welsh medium education, Welsh for Adults, workplace Welsh, and skills training opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The Corporate Plan for 2002-2005 identifies bilingualism as one of its 4 cross-cutting themes. *Learndirect* provides learning information through Welsh on the *cyswllt dysgu learndirect* website. As regards the interests of young people, most recently, the bilingual publication ‘Opening Both Doors’ funded by the Welsh Language Board has made a valuable contribution to developing bilingual youth work. Consultation events to plan a way forward for the youth service on this issue have been enthusiastically received and it is a strand of growing importance in the context of *Extending Entitlement*.

4.6 Education and training have a crucial role to play in turning our aspirations for a bilingual Wales into a reality. If they are to be successful, issues of language acquisition need to be addressed as early as possible – and before formal education commences. We cannot rely on the 20% of the existing adult population who are fluent Welsh users to provide for the needs of the education system in Welsh. Neither can we bring a step change in Welsh provision in all levels in short order. The key areas to focus upon therefore are

practitioner supply at each level and expanding access to early years provision in particular. Many of the necessary stages are in hand but in drawing up the measures set out below we have taken and are continuing to take full account of the policy review of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, *Our Language: Its Future*.

Early Years

4.7 The Assembly Government attaches great importance to developing Welsh language provision for the **early years** (0-5 years). It is a tremendous advantage if young children can learn to speak Welsh naturally within the family and also of course if their parents speak in both languages with them from the start. For children whose parents do not speak Welsh, Welsh medium nursery education is a particularly effective means of enabling them to become bilingual. Our priorities for this age group will be to foster transfer of the language within the family and to expand access to Welsh-language nursery groups.

4.8 We see **family language transfer** as a key element of our language strategy. So many parents who are fluent in Welsh do not pass on the language to their children. There is a curious paradox here, since research shows that there is a growing appreciation of the educational, social, cultural and economic benefits of bilingualism. The Welsh Language Board has developed a successful pioneering project to stimulate and support Language Transmission in the Family, now branded as **Twf**. We shall now look to the Language Board to build on its pioneering work and we have made available additional funding of over £1 million over the next three years to employ more field officers to turn it into an all-Wales project. Funds will also be provided to produce promotional material and to evaluate the project's impact.

4.9 The long term goal for our **early years provision** is to achieve a situation in which very many more under 5s have had sufficient exposure to both the Welsh and English languages to be able to move into either Welsh-medium or effectively bilingual schools. The Assembly Government will increase the level of funding which is channelled to the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM) through the Welsh Language Board. A grant of £35,000 to MYM will provide for the appointment of a development worker to promote the work of MYM and to boost the quality of early years provision. This will encourage more Welsh-medium nursery groups to open across Wales and will allow the Language Board to improve the range of central support services and information it is able to offer in support.

4.10 Our planned review of provision covering pattern, character and demand will provide a strong evidence base for the future. The Welsh Assembly Government is looking to achieve a progressive increase in the proportion of children within Welsh medium or bilingual settings. The first priority will work on training practitioners and raising quality standards to allow increased access to Welsh medium early years provision. This is the essential preliminary in making major new improvement in Welsh-medium and bilingual provision for years to come. We will be making available an additional

£7 million between 2004 and 2006 to provide training for over 150 practitioners.

The 5 to 16 age range

4.11 The **teaching of Welsh as a subject** is firmly embedded into the National Curriculum for all pupils of statutory school age so that all pupils in maintained schools, whether they study Welsh as a first or as a second language, have the opportunity to become bilingual. This is settled policy. However, there are issues which need to be explored further. In particular, there is an apparent drift from first to second language in the transition from primary to secondary school. Entry for an external examination which, in educational and linguistic terms, is inappropriate could follow. This requires further investigation and research.

4.12 In addition, more needs to be done to drive up standards in pupils' experience of Welsh as a second language. The Assembly Government does not accept the conclusion that, in view of the disappointing levels of fluency achieved by learners by the age of 14, Welsh should be an optional subject at Key Stage 4. On the contrary, we believe that this argues for more innovative approaches to language learning in the round. Against this background, we shall be examining what measures can be taken to measure pupils' progress along the linguistic continuum, including dual assessment.

4.13 The availability of **education through the medium of Welsh** has increased steadily in recent years. It is a trend which the Welsh Assembly Government wishes to encourage. Accordingly, we shall be re-examining the guidance in relation to LEA School Organisation Plans to ensure greater coherence and consistency between them and Welsh Language Education Schemes. This will secure a clearer framework for local authorities in planning for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

4.14 Plainly, it is crucial that there are sufficient teachers available to teach through the medium of Welsh, at all levels. The General Teaching Council for Wales and the school census provide valuable information on recruitment and retention. Again, it is unlikely that any progressive growth in bilingual provision can be asked for from the existing population pool that is fluent in both languages. Accordingly the Assembly Government will introduce a pilot programme of intensive **Welsh language training for qualified teachers** by offering immersion learning in sabbaticals. The programme will cover all levels but, initially, support will be concentrated on teachers at the early years and primary level. Additionally we shall double the funds available through the Welsh Medium Incentive Supplement to £230,000 per annum from 2005-06. The Supplement is available to trainee teachers to encourage them to improve their competence so that they are able to teach through the medium of Welsh.

4.15 In addition, a number of English-medium schools are now **offering selected subjects through the medium of Welsh**. This is a trend which the Assembly Government wishes to encourage since greater exposure to the

language in these contexts can have a beneficial effect on levels of fluency. The pace and nature of these developments can only be determined locally. Support for teachers to extend their Welsh skills through sabbaticals or other training will contribute to extending this approach and we are making available additional funds of up to £1 million per annum from 2005-06 for this purpose. Definition of Welsh language provision in schools has always been difficult. Advice from the Welsh Language Board and other will be considered on the extent to which existing definitions are sufficient for statistical and other purposes and on how far such definitions could be given wider currency.

4.16 The Assembly Government remains concerned about the **relatively few entry points** into Welsh medium education. For the most part, choices are exercised either at age 3 at entry into nursery, or at age 5 at entry into primary school. In practice, once a parent or pupil has opted for the English-medium sector at one of these entry points there is almost no opportunity in most LEA areas to switch into the Welsh-medium sector (or to study some subjects through the medium of Welsh in an English-medium or bilingual setting). Using the Canadian Intensive Core French provision as a prompt, we propose to establish pilot projects which will provide opportunities for pupils at the upper end of primary school to study Welsh intensively for a set period (allied to a compacted curriculum as necessary). This should enable many more pupils to move into the Welsh-medium sector or study more subjects through the medium of Welsh in other settings than would otherwise have been the case.

4.17 Whether in the context of teaching Welsh as a subject or teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh, there will be a continuing need to develop suitable **classroom materials** and to provide opportunities for **qualifications** to be available in Welsh. This will be done in two ways: through ACCAC's existing commissioning programme, for which we are making available an additional £400,000 per annum from 2004-05, and through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) Cymru which will make available a wide range of electronically based materials in both languages.

Post 16 learning

4.18 As we set out in our strategy for the higher education sector in Wales, *Reaching Higher*, we are committed to facing up to the paucity of Welsh-medium provision in Higher Education and, indeed, in Further Education. There is no simple way to build on the 3% of HE students who received some teaching through the medium of Welsh in Higher Education Institutions in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government has commissioned work by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) on levels of supply and demand for Welsh-medium provision in **higher education**, the projected trends in demand and the steps necessary to take account of the inter-relationship between supply and increasing demand. It is only with this evidence base that future levels of provision and support can be properly planned. In taking decisions to be made on actions emanating from *Reaching Higher* we shall consider future investment in provision in the light of this work. That will include investing further to maximise the numbers of HE

teachers teaching through the medium of Welsh through training and other support including **pilot language learning sabbaticals for practitioners**.

4.19 Welsh medium and bilingual education and training for the **post-16 sector (excluding higher education)** will be developed within the strategic framework that National Council for Education and Training for Wales is establishing through a new Bilingual Learning Team. This will recognise the importance of:

- Local partnerships in identifying and responding to local needs;
- Increasing the awareness of the benefits of bilingual skills amongst learners;
- Recruitment, training and re-training of staff to teach bilingually and through the medium of Welsh in the FE sector; and
- Developing ICT to help identify the needs of Welsh speakers in the workplace, enabling learners to gain benefit from the resources available, marketing bilingual and Welsh medium provision, and disseminating good practice.

4.20 The video network which ELWa and the Further and Higher Education sectors have established and our investment in broadband offer exciting possibilities for distance learning which could help us address issues of rurality and teaching of subjects where the numbers of students are small. We must ensure that, as these developments broaden access to learning, the opportunities for extending teaching and learning through the medium of Welsh are taken fully into account.

4.21 A co-ordinated approach to the provision of **Welsh for Adults** will be developed. The National Council will review the planning and delivery, to bring it into mainstream planning and raise the profile of Welsh for Adults and improve standards.

4.22 The National Council's Bilingual Team intends to work with FENTO, the Further Education National Training Organisation, to develop a training programme for Welsh Language tutors in the adult learning and FE sectors which can then be adopted by FE institutions and other provider institutions. We will invest an additional £1 million per annum from 2005-06 to maximise the numbers of FE and other practitioners teaching through the medium of Welsh through training and other support including, if appropriate **pilot language learning sabbaticals for practitioners**.

4.23 We will look to continue to increase support for **translation of materials** in key sectors. To provide the evidence base to support changes in demand and provision the National Council will commission and pilot a diagnostic tool for assessing demand for training linked to overall fluency targets.

4.24 **Gorwelion** has been introduced to produce more extensive information from employers on posts which require Welsh language skills and the level of skill needed. This will ensure that people are aware of the value of Welsh and

are given the progressive incentive to develop or acquire the language and to continue their education through the medium of Welsh.

4.25 The Assembly Government will also require the Sector Skills Development Agency to ensure that as a condition of their licenses, **Sector Skills Councils** have Welsh Language Schemes and address Welsh language skills needs in their particular sectors.

4.26 The *athrawon bro* service, since its inception, has provided a valuable service and been a vehicle for improving the quality of teaching in respect of the Welsh language. The Assembly Government will provide additional funding, to be channelled through the Welsh Language Board, to allow for an increase in the number of *athrawon bro* to strengthen a service which offers practical assistance to teachers in the classroom as they teach Welsh to their pupils and use Welsh as a medium of instruction.

4.27 The specific aim of the funding is to support the work of 'athrawon bro' in schools by training teachers in the methodology of teaching Welsh as both a first and a second language. The 'athrawon bro' service will:

- contribute towards the implementation of county policy in respect of teaching Welsh as a first language and as a second language
- assist in achieving the requirements of the National Curriculum
- raise pupils' standards of achievement across the complete range of age and ability.
- assist in the process of ensuring continuity in the teaching of Welsh and through the medium of Welsh between the primary and secondary sectors.

4.28 Latecomers to the Welsh language, for example pupils who move into the more Welsh speaking areas of Wales in the midst of their schooling and need to catch up in the language skills, are sometimes educated for periods of time at Language Centres for Latecomers. These exist within several LEAs and are run by one or more members of the Athrawon Bro team. Teaching is based on language immersion methods and class sizes are small. The purpose of these centres is to provide intensive Welsh courses for primary pupils in order to enable them to benefit from the Welsh and bilingual education offered by local schools.

4.29 The provision for latecomers is generally welcomed by parents, governing bodies, primary teachers and headteachers alike. They are an important resource in terms of providing Welsh education to the individual pupil and supporting Welsh education as part of the local education system. The aim of the provision for latecomers will be:

- to provide intensive short courses of linguistic immersion for children who move into Welsh-speaking areas;
- to provide extension, improvers and refresher courses; and
- to enable children to return to their Welsh-speaking schools and integrate into the life of the school and community.

Actions and investment for growth

4.30 In addition to the existing support for Welsh medium provision through education and lifelong learning the following specific actions will be taken:

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
Twf- Family Language Transfer	Community project to encourage Welsh-speaking parents to pass the language on to their children.	WLB
Bilingual Nursery Education	Appoint development worker to promote bilingual provision of nursery education and ensure quality of provision	Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
Bilingual nursery education	Review early years provision in terms of scope, language provision, rurality issues and future needs. Drawing on this information establish specific target for Welsh medium or bilingual take up.	Assembly Govt with Early Years Development Partnerships
Bilingual nursery education	Increase provision to train practitioners in Welsh or those with some Welsh to move into Welsh medium provision. Support existing Welsh medium providers to raise standards and skills so that they can contribute to the extension of funded places. Over time, work for an extension of Welsh medium places and set in place the curriculum changes for the longer term for the foundation stage.	Assembly Govt through Early Years partnerships and with local authority and other providers such as Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
Defining language provision	Commission advice on definition of Welsh language provision in schools from WLB.	Assembly Gov't with WLB
Curriculum, qualification and classroom materials	Commission high quality classroom materials and extend opportunities for qualifications through Welsh	ACCAC
A second entry point to Welsh-medium study / immersion	Pilot approaches to providing pupils (in primary schools) with intensive exposure to Welsh for them to move from English-medium to Welsh-medium schools or to facilitate study of more subjects through the medium of Welsh	Assembly Govt. with WLB/ Estyn and ACCAC
Support supply of Welsh-medium teachers	Improve the operation and attraction of Welsh Medium Incentive Supplement scheme which encourages ITT students to train through medium of Welsh by increasing level of grant and improving support	Assembly Government
Language learning	For teaching staff at all stages of	Assembly Govt

sabbaticals	education from early years onwards: 100 teachers on three month sabbatical per year	
Planning of provision	Ensure that school organisation plans also take account of local authorities' Welsh Education Schemes.	Assembly Gov't
Special Educational Needs	Consider the needs for Welsh language provision in SEN; develop action plan as appropriate	Assembly Gov't
Special Educational Needs Practitioners	Provide pilot sabbaticals/ training for speech therapists	Assembly Government
HEFCW report on levels of supply and demand for Welsh medium provision in HE	Identify trends and plan future levels of provision and supply in Welsh medium HE, including possible steps to increase demand.	Assembly Govt
Support supply of Welsh medium HE staff	Pilot learning sabbaticals for practitioners	Assembly Gov't with HEFCW
Strategic approach to non HE post 116 learning	ELWa National Council for Education and training will develop a long term strategy for Welsh medium provision	ELWa
Explore the opportunities for dedicated Welsh for Adults centres	To provide opportunities for non-Welsh-speaking adults to have access to effective and consistent Welsh learning courses	Assembly Govt with ELWA NC
Gorwelion	Continue to produce information for employers and potential employees on posts which require Welsh language skills demonstrating value of Welsh, in the job market	Assembly Govt
Skills and productivity	Require the Sector Skills Development Agency to ensure that employer led sector skills councils take account of skills and productivity issues, to have Welsh Language Schemes and to address Welsh language skills needs in their sectors.	Assembly Gov't with SSSA
Electronic Educational Materials [National Grid for Learning (NGfL) Cymru]	Part of <i>Cymru Ar-lein</i> , this will identify and develop electronically based material in both Welsh and English and support the development of the Curriculum Cymreig.	Assembly Gov't through NGfL Cymru
Athrawon bro	Increase number of <i>athrawon bro</i>	WLB
Latecomers centres	To provide Welsh language courses for children moving to Welsh speaking areas	WLB

Language choice and use

4.31 Alongside policies to help individuals acquire or learn the language, the Assembly Government will work to ensure that there are opportunities to use the language in all aspects of life. In the first instance, this means safeguarding and promoting the **rights of individuals to use the Welsh language**. Welsh is one of the official languages of public life in Wales and we will expect all organisations and bodies named under the Welsh Language Act to comply with their language schemes and provide their services through the mediums of both English and Welsh. Funding for the Welsh Language Board is being increased to enable it to monitor schemes already in place and to work with organisations newly identified under the Act to draw up new schemes.

4.32 Language choice is an important component in the provision of a quality care service. The Welsh Consumer Council's report '**Welsh in the Health Service (2000)**' highlighted specific groups, namely older people, young children and people with learning difficulties or mental health problems, where it was particularly important that services were delivered in Welsh. The report stated that in these groups Welsh speakers could not be treated effectively in many instances unless it was in their first language.

4.33 The Assembly Government is determined to impress the importance of being able to deliver services in the service users' language of choice in key service areas such as health and social care, and we are working with the service delivery organisations in these areas to help them achieve this aim.

- In August 2001, the **All Wales Task Group for Welsh Language Services** was established to improve and facilitate the provision of services through the medium of Welsh in the NHS and partnership organisations in Wales. The Task Group is in the process of developing and implementing a language awareness programme for all staff and students in all NHS Trusts and Higher Education Institutes in Wales to help develop an understanding of language sensitivity as a factor in the provision of healthcare services. The Task Group is also in the process of commissioning an Awareness of Language in Healthcare Research Project, which will examine levels of language awareness across the public, private and voluntary healthcare sectors in Wales.
- The **Welsh Language Unit of NHS Wales** is charged with monitoring Welsh language policies and issues within NHS Wales. The Unit will raise the awareness, status and importance of language issues within the NHS in Wales, and the NHS Wales Department.
- The twenty two **Local Health Boards** (which will be operational by April 2003, in place of Health Authorities and Local Health Groups in Wales) are working alongside the Welsh Language Board in drafting and constituting Welsh language schemes ready for their inception in April 2003.

4.34 The Assembly Government is also conscious of the need to increase the range of **clinical services** through the medium of Welsh, particularly in terms of delivering speech therapy through the medium of Welsh.

Social care

4.35 The Assembly Government sets the policy framework in which local authorities provide and commission social services to vulnerable people, families and carers. Service providers are required to ensure that they have the capacity to respond to service users' needs in Welsh, although in many cases their locally agreed Welsh language schemes will also influence service delivery and language use.

4.36 Older people are one of the key groups of Welsh speakers that cannot be treated or cared for effectively in many instances unless it is in their first language. The **Strategy for Older People Implementation Plan** will address this issue.

4.37 Both the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales and the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales are committed to ensuring the provision of a bilingual service in relation to their regulatory functions.

Young people

4.36 The Assembly Government is acutely aware that if Welsh is to flourish young people in particular need to develop a sense of ownership for the language and to see it as their language and not simply the language of school and culture. The Assembly Government will work to ensure that we maximize the opportunities for our young people and teenagers to use the language in everyday leisure and social situations. The local Language Action Plans are focused on drawing together local people and local organisations to facilitate the use of Welsh in the community. Organisations representing young people such as local schools, youth clubs, *Urdd Gobaith Cymru* and local Young Farmers' clubs will all be among the partner organisations.

4.38 The Assembly Government has also increased the funding which it channels through the Welsh Language Board to allow *Urdd Gobaith Cymru* to develop **sports and youth projects** through the medium of Welsh in different parts of Wales, particularly in areas of disadvantage and rural disadvantage. We have also provided funding for the Welsh Language Board to appoint **marketing officers** whose specific task will be to work with young people and young people's organisations to encourage them use the Welsh language in social, leisure and work activities.

4.39 The Assembly Government's strategy for Children and Young People – Framework for Partnership, is founded on UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have established Local Children and Young People's Partnerships in each local authority area to plan and deliver services to young people from

11 - 25 years of age. The Partnerships will draw up Framework plans which will need to recognise the importance of culture and the Welsh language in local service provision and the planning and development of services.

Raising awareness and profile

4.40 Speaking Welsh is sometimes a matter of having the confidence to use the language in a range of situations. There is a surprisingly widespread notion that Welsh is not a language for business or work for example. The Assembly Government is working hard, through the Welsh Language Board, to **market and promote the language** in all aspects of Welsh life. Many organisations and businesses in the **private and voluntary sectors** already provide services in Welsh, or are taking steps to do so. Whilst we will not seek legislation to compel these sectors generally to deliver their services through the medium of Welsh, we will strongly encourage them to take it upon themselves to develop and provide bilingual services and take advantage of the Language Board's advice and expertise in this area. Providing services through the medium of Welsh should be seen as a way of providing distinctive and better quality services to customers. We shall build on the Language Board's successful first **laith Gwaith** campaign to increase use of Welsh in business and we shall encourage the Language Board to develop further campaigns. We have made available additional funding to enable the Board to develop its work in persuading, encouraging and supporting the private and voluntary sectors to make greater use of Welsh and **Welsh in the Workplace** will be actively promoted. Other marketing campaigns by the Welsh Language Board will focus on promoting and marketing the benefits of bilingualism as an important skill and business resource.

4.41 As part of the strategy of raising the profile and status of the language in the business and leisure sectors in Wales, the Welsh Language Board will continue to develop guidance and provide advice to organisations on the implications and techniques of using the Welsh language in developing design concepts. This includes the development of logos, publicity material, packaging and exhibition stands.

Language tools

4.42 A number of projects will be taken forward by the Welsh Language Board to broaden the range of services and facilities available to Welsh speakers and learners. Amongst other things, they reflect the importance of developing new opportunities to use the language and ensuring that it is promoted on the internet and in new IT packages. The projects include:

- managing and commissioning projects aimed at **standardising** terminology and place names and developing a **national database** of standardised terms
- this national database will be developed in a form which will interface with a national database of standardised translation memories, in order to delete repetitive translation. This database will interface with *Cymru Ar-lein*.

- developing, in conjunction with the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters, **a national translation strategy**, and a project to develop the Association, under the Board's oversight, into a regulatory body for the profession;
- developing **lexicographical and machine translation aids** for translators and others working with the Welsh language; as part of **Cymru Ar-lein**, developing an **ICT strategy** for increasing and facilitating the use of Welsh on the internet and in IT packages to augment the existing list of computer resources available in Welsh on the Language Board's website and the discussion forum dedicated to Welsh language and ICT issues on the Cymru Ar-lein website. The strategy will be a live document which will tackle all areas of ICT.

Culture

4.43 The Welsh language is an important element in our national culture and identity. Cultural activities strengthen and promote use of the language and help embed it in all aspects of everyday life. They also provide an avenue for expressing our creativity as a people. The Assembly Government provides support to a myriad of cultural activities.

4.44 **Urdd Gobaith Cymru** performs an important role in involving young people throughout Wales in a range of cultural, social and leisure activities through the medium of Welsh. The **National Eisteddfod** is one of the key events in Welsh cultural and social life. We will continue to channel support to both these institutions which support, promote and sustain the language.

4.45 **Broadcasting** plays an important role in reinforcing many aspects of the Government's wider language policy and underlines the status of the language. The television service provided by S4C together with BBC Radio Cymru make it possible for the language to be part of everyday life. Television in particular can be an important source of support for those learning the language. Together with film, it also provides a medium which brings Welsh language and culture to the attention of international audiences. Crucially, Welsh language broadcasting also helps to ensure that young people with creative talent are provided with a platform to develop that talent and to build their careers through the medium of Welsh, with all that that entails for the health of the language in the future.

4.46 We will use the cultural forum Cymru'n Creu to discuss with the broadcasters in Wales the scope for them to make a still greater contribution in future. This might be as an integral part of individual policy developments or in support of the Assembly Government's wider goal of bilingualism. We must also be alive to the important changes to the regulatory environment for the broadcasting and communications sector that are now underway. The Assembly Government is already taking steps to ensure that the new broadcasting regulator OFCOM will be in a position to take full account of Wales' unique broadcasting environment and of Welsh language broadcasting issues.

4.47 To further stimulate and strengthen the media sector, which has considerable potential for growth, the Assembly Government is currently developing a **Film, TV and New Media Fund for Wales**. The fund will help to attract additional investment to further develop the skills base and infrastructure of the media sector in Wales, and will include specific quotas for supporting the production of Welsh language films.

4.48 S4C and Welsh language films such as “Hedd Wyn”, “Solomon a Gaenor” and “Gadael Lenin” provide a strong and very visible representation of Welsh language filmed drama but a similar high profile vehicle is needed for live theatre. The Assembly Government has therefore decided to establish a **National Welsh Language Theatre**. The Arts Council of Wales has allocated £250,000 to start this development. This initial funding is for two Welsh language productions and to set up the company that will take this development forward and bring live drama to Welsh-speaking audiences throughout Wales. This initiative will enhance the status and profile of Welsh language theatre, encourage actors, writers and producers who want to work in the Welsh language and, not least, augment the range of social and leisure activities available to those interested in the Welsh language.

4.49 Welsh is one of the oldest written languages in Europe. Supporting the **written word** in Welsh is of crucial importance in continuing to develop and promote the use of the language and to ensure that the written word is relevant to and reflects everyday life. The Assembly Government will, through the Arts Council for Wales and the Welsh Language Board, continue to provide financial support for Welsh language magazines and *papurau bro* (Welsh language community newspapers). The Assembly Government is also increasing its support to the Welsh Books Council, which now receives its funding direct from the Assembly Government. This additional funding will enable the Council to commission authors to write additional titles, and will also ensure that publishing houses and independent booksellers receive additional support. We shall also continue to work with the Council and publishers to strengthen and develop the industry in Wales and ensure that it keeps pace with technological change.

Actions

Description	Purpose	Lead Body
NHS language awareness programme	To develop understanding of language sensitivity in provision of health care services among NHS staff and students	Assembly Govt / Task Group
NHS Welsh Language Unit	To raise awareness, status and importance of language issues within NHS Wales	Assembly Govt
Welsh language schemes for local health boards	To ensure all local health boards have approved schemes ready for April 2003	Assembly Govt
Improve social care providers capacity to deliver Welsh language services	To allow social care providers to respond to service users' needs in Welsh	Assembly Govt.

Youth workers for URDD Gobaith Cymru	To increase range of learning, social and sports/leisure activities for young people in the medium of Welsh	Assembly Govt / WLB
Marketing and promotion of Welsh language	To raise profile and use of Welsh in work, business, social and leisure situations	WLB
Develop ICT strategy for use of Welsh on internet and expand machine translation aids	To help raise awareness and facilitate use of Welsh in range of activities and organisations	Cymru Ar-lein / WLB
Develop national translation strategy	To ensure consistency and develop a standard qualification for translators	WLB
Film, TV and New Media Fund	To provide additional support for these media sectors	Assembly Govt/ Finance Wales/ Sgrin
Supporting Publishing in Wales	To provide additional support for Publishing through the Welsh Books Council	Welsh Books Council
Establishment of National Welsh Language Theatre.	To provide impetus and focus for Welsh language drama	Arts Council of Wales/ Assembly Govt

5. Conclusion

The Assembly Government will do its utmost to create the right conditions and to provide the resources which will sustain the Welsh Language and allow it to flourish.

The measures described in this Action Plan are substantial and significant. They demonstrate the extent of our commitment to the Welsh language. We believe that we are creating the right conditions in which the Welsh language can grow and flourish. The policies described in this Action Plan will greatly expand the range of opportunities to learn and use the Welsh language; our commitment to mainstreaming will ensure that consideration of Welsh language issues will permeate policy-making and programme delivery of organisations throughout Wales. We are laying the foundation stones for a long-term and a positive future for the Welsh language.

But we cannot save the language by institutional or political action alone. Sustaining the Welsh language needs to be a joint effort on the part of the Government of Wales and the people of Wales. The structures laid down in this document for taking forward the Action Plan over the coming years are no less important to the success of our strategy than the proactive measures described. Those structures are designed to share ownership and responsibility for the destiny of the Welsh language. We cannot overstate the importance of the contribution which others – local authorities, public bodies, the private and voluntary sectors - can make. But survival of the language ultimately depends on individuals taking ownership of the language. This means people getting involved in the community driven initiatives to promote the language, parents passing the language on to their children and individuals being prepared to use it in social and business settings.

We have no doubt that there is a positive future for the language if the people of Wales embrace our vision.

Working together, we can create a truly bilingual Wales.