



Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/02473/22

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

13 January 2023

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter dated 2 December, asking my opinion about a petition which calls on the Government to “*rename Wales to her original name, Cymru*”, because “*Wales was the name imposed on Wales. The original name was Cymru*”.

The question of using only Welsh names for organisations, geographic features and the name of our country itself has come to prominence several times over recent months, and is a very interesting trend from a Welsh language perspective.

Recently, Cyngor Gwynedd (Gwynedd Council) have adopted a revised Welsh language policy whereby they will only use the Welsh name ‘Cyngor Gwynedd’ in all formats when referring to the council. In mid-November, Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri (Snowdonia National Park Authority) announced that they had decided to use only the Welsh versions *Eryri* and *Yr Wyddfa* in future, having voted to stop using the forms *Snowdonia* and *Snowdon*.

These and other examples show there is a strong desire in some contexts to place the Welsh language at the heart of public life, especially in areas where there is a higher proportion of Welsh speakers. As the Minister with responsibility for the language, this is of course to be welcomed.

In particular, the work of Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri to give precedence to Welsh geographic names reflects a desire to safeguard names for future generations, and ensure that they are not displaced. This overlaps with the work of the Welsh Government, under our Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement, to safeguard Welsh language place names.

We as a Government have also supported the use of Welsh names for our national institutions, for instance in our everyday use of “Senedd” in both Welsh and English. Where appropriate, we also use Welsh names for our internal departments, with the Welsh Language Division now referred to in both languages as *Is-adran Cymraeg 2050*.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales

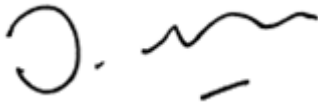
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

A number of our towns, villages and cities have bilingual names as they mean different things to different people. And we've seen when it's suggested that only one letter be changed in the name of a town, or a hyphen inserted between elements of the name, that members of the public can be very resistant to that change, feeling a strong attachment to the form or name that is most familiar to them.

The name of the country itself, of course, is relevant on a much wider scale and affects many more people. Our intention is to continue to use both Cymru and Wales, to refer to our nation in both its official languages, and to continue to promote the visibility and use of Welsh at a community and national level, reflecting our conviction that Welsh belongs to us all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg

Minister for Education and Welsh Language