

Cross Party Group on Intergenerational Solidarity

11 November 2024: 11:05 – 12:35 on Microsoft Teams

Attendees

- Delyth Jewell MS, **Chair**, Senedd Cymru
- Rhys Jackson, Older People's Commissioner for Wales
- Rhian Bowen Davies, Older People's Commissioner for Wales
- Rachel Bowen, Older People's Commissioner for Wales
- Sion Wyn Evans, Older People's Commissioner for Wales
- Mark Drakeford, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language
- Gethin Edwards, Welsh Government
- Jeremy Evas, Welsh Government
- Nia Webb, Welsh Government
- Merryn Thomas, Swansea University
- Sharon Ford, National Museum Wales
- Heather Ferguson, Age Cymru
- Phoebe Brown, Repair Café Wales
- Mirian Llwyd Roberts, Gwynedd Council
- Steffan Wiliam, Welsh Language Interpreter
- Catrin Hedd Jones, Worcester University
- Dr. Alan Hatton-Yeo MBE, Volunteering Matters Wales
- Ifan Rhys, Welsh Language Commissioner
- Katherine Evans, Care and Repair
- Sue Egersdorff, Ready Generations
- Dr Deborah Morgan, Swansea University
- Carole Maddock, Swansea University
- Aaron Morris, Menter Iaith Mon
- Ioan Bellin, Office of Delyth Jewell MS
- Deio Owen, NUS Wales President
- Stephanie Green, Swansea University
- Steven Crane-Jenkins, BASW Cymru

Apologies

- Neil Williams, Care and Repair

Actions

1. The CPG will write to the Cabinet Secretary with any further questions.
2. Members of the CPG to think about what work the group can do in the future to highlight work being done by generations other than 'older' and 'younger' generations.
3. Videos from the Ein Hanes Ni project will be shared with the CPG.

Welcome and Introductions – Minutes of Last Meeting

There were no issues with minutes from the last meeting.

Annual General Meeting - Nomination of Chair and Secretariat

Rhys Jackson (RJ) nominated Delyth Jewell (DJ) as Chair of the Cross-Party Group – this was approved by the Group with no objections. Janet Finch-Saunders, Peredur Owen Griffiths, Julie Morgan and Altaf Hussain were nominated as Vice Chairs of the CPG by Delyth Jewell – this was approved by the group with no objections.

Delyth Jewell nominated the office of the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales as secretariat of the Cross-Party Group – this was approved by the group with no objections.

Welsh Language in Care Homes - Heather Ferguson

Heather Ferguson (HF) talked about the development of a new toolkit, funded by Welsh Government, which is about person-centred care, and will be distributed to every care home in Wales. She highlighted the importance of using a person’s first language in care homes, calling it central to person-centred care. She said there is a particular importance for those with dementia. She highlighted that there are multiple health and wellbeing issues linked to the inability to communicate and live in one’s first language, leading to issues such as social isolation and a loss of identity.

HF talked about the current landscape of provision, including the Welsh Government’s ‘More than Just Words’ Framework and its active offer, which ensures service providers ask about Welsh language provision at the first point of contact. She provided some examples of intergenerational activity around Welsh language in care homes, including staff being supported in both social care and further education to learn Welsh.

HF spoke about some ideas that could help encourage Welsh language in care homes, including providing Welsh language culture and entertainment, day visits by Welsh speaking schools, and visits from Welsh-speaking volunteer groups such as

Merched Y Wawr. HF said she will send the CPG links to videos from the projects she mentioned of older people singing. She finished by highlighting Age Cymru's '[This is Older](#)' project which provides age-positive, realistic images of older people.

Deb Morgan (DM) said she will link HF to a PhD student she knows who is looking at the impact of Welsh language on care.

Catrin Hedd-Jones (CHJ) thanked HF for her work in care homes, and asked how a national transition can be encouraged to increase the use of Welsh language in care homes. HF reiterated work on the toolkit and noted conversations with care home about how they support their residents. She noted this is ongoing work and that a significant part of this is to encourage care homes to look around for the resources that already exist.

Rachel Bowen (RB) noted the importance of recognising examples of intergenerational work from middle-aged generations, as opposed to both ends of the spectrum, and said the CPG could look at this broader understanding of intergenerationally. Deio Owen (DO) spoke on the importance of supporting older people in the community who are outside of care homes to encourage and support them to use the Welsh language.

Delyth Jewell called on members of the CPG to share experiences of intergenerational work from outside the confines of traditional settings of 'older people' and 'younger people' that could be looked at in a future meeting of the group.

Cymraeg 2050 - Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language, Mark Drakeford MS

DJ welcomed Mark Drakeford, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language (MD) to the meeting. MD spoke about his experiences of growing up with the Welsh language and how the growth of English as the language of the 'future' historically has hurt the use of Welsh. He talked about how many students spoke both languages when he was in school, while Welsh was looked down upon by teachers

and staff. He argued that this thinking is very different now in society and that we are much keener to use the Welsh language in as many ways as possible.

MD argued that there is a broad national consensus on the importance of the Welsh language, which is important for the goal of a million language speakers by 2050. DJ highlighted HF's presentation on Welsh in care homes and asked whether getting more adults confident in using the language is the hardest aspect of this. MD said there is a number of problems with adults using Welsh, such as a lot of people not feeling confident in using Welsh in their everyday lives. He argued that we must encourage such people to use Welsh more as this is the best way to encourage the use of the language.

Deio Owen (DO) asked about the effect and implication of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill on personal education and additional needs to ensure people are supported to live their lives through Welsh. MD said people who have education through the medium of Welsh are confident to use the language and that we need to draw more on this system. He argued the Bill helps us to focus on the experiences of people to be more confident and able to have a standard of language where they can take part in the lives of people who do speak Welsh. Regarding additional learning needs, he said that the Welsh Government is keen to bring in as many people as possible from many different parts of society and communities, which he said the Bill will help with.

Mirian Llwyd Roberts (MLR) said that for many Welsh speakers there is a lack of opportunity to speak Welsh, which impacts their confidence. She raised the importance of the social element of learning Welsh, which can make learners more comfortable to use the language in a less formalised, educational setting. She also raised a recent conversation she had with two new 80-year old Welsh learners in Tywyn who argued speaking to children in local schools was the best way of learning the language. MD agreed with this, noting that he hears of many learners that complain about a lack of opportunity to use their Welsh language skills.

CHJ asked whether it would be possible for the Welsh Government to ensure that a member of staff on every rota, in every care home could have Welsh language skills. MD highlighted the challenge of getting Welsh speakers as staff in care homes. He

said that there will need to be investment into a number of areas such as HR to grow this group of people.

Rhian Bowen-Davies (RBD) spoke about the importance for older people to receive services and information through the medium of Welsh. She highlighted the importance of this in health and social services, and to ensure that infrastructure is there to receive this information, not just digitally, but in a way that best suits the individual. MD argued that technology is not the answer to everything but that it does provide opportunities that were previously not available.

The Cabinet Secretary also highlighted the importance of emphasising that speaking Welsh will help younger people when looking for employment.

MD was happy for the CPG to write to his office with any more questions.

Ein Hanes Ni – Aaron Morris

Aaron Morris (AM) highlighted the work of Menter Iaith Môn work on Ynys Môn to encourage new relationships between younger and older people in the community, which involves creating a short film chronicling the history of various communities. Once the film has been created it is then shared via an event for the community. He said the project also uses a newsletter that provides more information about the local area, with further information that is not included in the film. He said the project encourages people to visit local community hubs, something that is important following concerns about isolation and the lack of opportunity to use the Welsh language that came about during the Covid-19 pandemic. He said the central part of the Ein Hanes Ni project is bringing generations together to share stories within the community to ensure locals 'own' their own history.

He said the project is focusing on 12 communities in Ynys Môn and 12 communities in Gwynedd. DJ agreed upon the importance of sharing such stories for the local identity.

RB recommended the Ein Hanes Ni videos to the group – a link will be shared with the CPG.

Intergenerational work and the Welsh Language

MLR argued that the Welsh language brings people together and talked about research undertaken across Wales that found tradition was a big reason for people coming together. She highlighted that some local idioms and words are being lost in communities, and that events which bring generations together are a good opportunity to share such culture and history. She said that Wales is working well towards this space, noting the important role the new curriculum plays for this.

MLR also spoke about the Intergenerational Steering Group whose intention is to move the agenda forward in Wales. They work with other UK countries to learn from them about the work being undertaken in Wales. MLR encouraged anyone interested in this group to get in touch with her. She finished by highlighting Global Intergenerational Week in April, asking anyone from the CPG who would like to become the new point of contact for Wales for the Week, as she is leaving her role. DJ asked any member of the CPG who is interested in being this contact to get in touch with MLR.

Future Work Plan

RB suggested Lifelong Learning as the focus on the next meeting. Attendees were happy with this.

Matters Arising – General Discussion Space

CHJ encouraged the Vice-Chairs to attend the upcoming meetings of the CPG.

The new Older People's Commissioner for Wales, Rhian Bowen-Davies, was welcomed to the group by DJ.

Any Other Business

DJ highlighted that CADR is facing the loss of its funding, which she said would be devastating to its intergenerational work. She said she would like to write to the Welsh Government about this and there was general agreement from the group.

DJ agreed to speak about this in the Senedd and asked anyone else who would like her to raise it in the Senedd to let her know.

Close

Date of Next Meeting: TBC