

Sport Wales Response

‘Cymraeg For All’

Written evidence for the
CCWLSIR Committee

1. Sport Wales' Response

Background:

Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical activity in Wales at both community and elite levels. We are financed by annual funding from the Welsh Government and from the National Lottery. We are the main adviser on sporting matters to the Welsh Government and are responsible for distributing Government and National Lottery funding to sport in Wales.

Sport Wales is one of the smallest public bodies in Wales and our budget is comprised of running costs, grant funding for National Governing Bodies, national partners and local authorities to deliver sport, but also community sport – investing and growing local opportunities for clubs and societies to serve the needs of their local communities.

We are one of the 56 public bodies in Wales which are subject to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act; we meet our duties under the Welsh Language Standards and care deeply about our place in Welsh society and culture. We work closely with the Older People's and Children's Commissioners and filter all our work through the lens of equality, diversity and inclusion.

We strive to be the best we can be and give the best we can offer to all people along the sporting pathway, from children starting out, to medal-winning athletes, to a diverse career path in the sporting sector, to older people staying fit, healthy and independent.

Sport Wales insight: School Sports Survey 2022

One of the world's biggest surveys of young people, the 2022 School Sport Survey, gave young people a voice on sport and wellbeing in Wales. The survey gives us and the sector a rich insight into participation levels, behaviours and attitudes.

Thanks to the hard work of schools, local authorities, and others across the sport and education sector, we were able to listen to the voices of over 116,000 pupils, and almost 950 teachers.

The depth of evidence means that we – and our partners – can make more informed decisions about future investment resources. We can analyse emerging trends and develop sport in a format that motivates children and young people today. It also allows us to examine under-represented groups and we use the evidence to tackle some of the barriers that prevent children and young people taking part.

Welsh Language findings:

In 2022, 116,038 pupils from 1,000 schools in Wales took part in the 2022 Sport Wales School Sport Survey. The below information shares the data by use of

Welsh Language, highlighting key figures and patterns. We define pupils who speak Welsh as those who self-identify as being able to speak fluently in Welsh or can talk confidently or simply in Welsh.

We've structured this around the Vision for Sport in Wales: 'An active nation where everyone can have a lifelong enjoyment of sport'. We want as many people as possible to be inspired to be active through sport, where everyone feels able to take part no matter their sporting background, in a sporting landscape that responds to the needs of people at different stages of their life, to create a wide range of positive experiences.

Active Nation

The Vision for Sport in Wales is to create an active nation. We want as many people as possible to be inspired to be active through sport. This section explores participation by frequency, setting and sports, as well as volunteering.

- Pupils who speak Welsh are more likely than pupils who do not speak Welsh to participate in sport outside of the curriculum three or more times per week (participation three times a week or more is Future Generations Indicator 38). 46% of pupils who speak Welsh participate in sport outside of the curriculum three or more times per week, compared to 35% of pupils who do not speak Welsh.
- Pupils who speak Welsh are more likely than pupils who do not speak Welsh to participate in sport in both an extracurricular and community club setting at least once a week.
- The top three sports that pupils who speak Welsh participate in at least once a week in a community club setting are football, swimming, and rugby.
- Pupils who speak Welsh are more likely to volunteer or help with sport at school or in their community than pupils who do not speak Welsh. 28% of pupils who speak Welsh volunteer or help with sport at school or in their community, compared to 21% of pupils who do not speak Welsh.

Everyone

The Vision is for everyone. From people who don't see themselves as sporty to people who win medals, across all demographics. This section explores participation within Regional Sport Partnerships.

	Welsh Speaker	Non-Welsh Speaker
South Wales	47%	36%

Mid Wales	46%	33%
West Wales	50%	35%
Gwent	45%	34%
North Wales	44%	34%

Lifelong

The Vision is for life. It responds to the needs of people at different stages of their life. This section explores demand and motivators/enablers to do more sport.

- 50% of pupils who speak Welsh have unmet demand for sport
- The top three sports in demand for pupils who speak Welsh are swimming, cycling and basketball.
- The 2022 School Sport Survey asked pupils to select responses to the question 'I would do more sport if...'. The top three selected responses from pupils who speak Welsh are 'If I had more time', 'If there were more sport opportunities that suited me' and 'If I was more confident'.

Note: Unmet demand refers to those who do not participate in sport three or more times a week, yet have a demand to do more sport.

Enjoyment

The Vision focuses on creating a wide range of positive experiences so everyone can enjoy sport. This section explores enjoyment and confidence.

- Pupils who speak Welsh enjoy sport in PE lessons 'a lot' more than they do in extracurricular or community clubs.

Table 2: Enjoyment of sport in different settings, by use of Welsh language.

Enjoyment of sport in different settings, by use of Welsh language.

	<i>Enjoyment of PE a lot</i>	<i>Enjoyment of extracurricular sport 'a lot'</i>	<i>Enjoyment of community club sport 's lot'</i>
<i>Welsh Speaker</i>	60%	44%	53%

Non-Welsh Speaker	56%	36%	42%
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- Across all settings, pupils who speak Welsh are more likely to enjoy sport than pupils who do not speak Welsh.
- Pupils who speak Welsh are more likely than pupils who do not speak Welsh to feel 'very confident' in trying new sports. 31% of pupils who speak Welsh feel 'very confident' in trying new sports, compared to 25% of pupils who do not speak Welsh.

Please note that the next school sports survey round will take place in 2026

Sport Wales and the Welsh Language:

Urdd: (TALK TO ANNABEL RE SPECIFICS)

As a key strand of our Welsh language commitment Sport Wales works in partnership with and invests in the Urdd to deliver Welsh language opportunities in sport and physical activity

A summary of some of the Urdd's achievements in 2024-25 include:

- After School provision: Opening provision into new schools as volunteer pools grow.
- Community Clubs and Holiday provision: expanding on the offer of specific community provision through including summer sport activities; Continued focus to targeted sports such as swimming and gymnastics and outcomes such as women and girls.
- Volunteers and coaches: continued training and the development of new coaches and volunteers; A new apprentice role has started to support events.
- Work with the secondary schools and further education ('FE') colleges in specific areas to create a young workforce of volunteers that can support the growth of inclusion projects.
- Welsh lessons have now commenced for the new volunteers before they are signposted into supporting community provision.
- Collaboration with the FE sector in delivering national and regional events.
- **Regional Competitions and National events:** Continue to hold several regional competitions with participation levels continuing to be very high. Schools and colleges continue to have a huge appetite for participating in inclusive, well-run competitions. Events are planned to link with high profile major sporting events.

- Supporting inclusion through partnership working to enable a programme of 1-1 pool support that then makes swimming teaching programmes fully inclusive. Training has now also been provided to staff to enable delivery of 1-1 pool support.
- Staff Development: Continue to ensure staff have relevant qualifications to deliver high standards of provision; provide coaching/leaders

URDD Apprenticeship Partnership:

Plas Menai have recently partnered with the URDD apprenticeship programme for our 2025 apprentices, enhancing our training opportunities. This new partnership allows apprentices to pursue Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in Outdoor Programmes, Leisure Management, and Essential Skills, all while offering the option to study through the medium of Welsh or learn Welsh as a new language. We are delighted to have welcomed four local Welsh-speaking trainees to our Instructor Development Programme (IDP) Apprenticeship for 2025.

Welsh Language Commissioner:

Sport Wales continues to work with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Hybu team to encourage our partners to extend their Welsh language offers and in turn to encourage more opportunities for young people to take part in sport through the medium of Welsh. Sport Wales has also revised the Capability Framework (which forms the governance base for our funded partners) to include the need to implement suitable arrangements for the appropriate provision of opportunities through the medium of Welsh.

Plas Menai

Delivery of Welsh language activities is extremely important for community engagement and impact. 60% of the Plas Menai team speak Welsh fluently, with a further 15% learning the language. Most of the programme can be delivered in Welsh, or bilingually, and the choice of language is agreed in partnership with the customer.

During 2024/2025



84 activities / courses were delivered in the medium of Welsh.



92% of swimming lessons were delivered in the medium of Welsh, or bilingually



24% of all school activity was delivered in the medium of Welsh



250+ local children took part in the Swim Safe programme, in conjunction with Gwynedd Council's Byw'n Iach team. This was delivered in the medium of Welsh.

Plas Menai has continued to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff to improve the resilience of its Welsh offer across the programme of participation and instructor courses for different sports and qualification levels.

Instructor Recruitment:

The Parkwood Leisure team have used several different approaches to increase the Welsh language skills in their workforce which include:

- Advertised posts as Welsh speaking essential roles to maximise the opportunity to increase language skills.
- Upskilling a former Plas Menai instructor who speaks Welsh to deliver instructor courses.
- A first language Welsh speaker has been recruited to join the instructor pool.
- Advertised for Welsh speaking instructors who are in the process of achieving their qualifications.
- Plas Menai has also contacted existing staff and its pool of freelance instructors to offer support for them to learn Welsh to be able to instruct in the language in future years.

. Grassroots sports investment:

Sport Wales community investment schemes such as the Be Active Wales Fund support clubs to continue to offer both sporting provisions in predominantly Welsh speaking areas, as well as investment in supporting Welsh language sporting provisions. This includes things such as accessing funding for Welsh language coach education courses.

Additionally, our A Place for Sport Fund with Crowdfunder supports a range of funding opportunities and provides a higher percentage of funding if projects identify specific impacts on Welsh language as part of their grassroots delivery.

We continue to invest in Sport Partnerships across Wales. We want Wales to be an active nation where everyone has the opportunity to have a lifelong enjoyment of sport. For some this is already the case, but despite the very best efforts of many people, others are still unable to access the same level of opportunities to take part and enjoy being physically active.

In Wales, taking part in physical activity at least 3 times a week is recognised as a national wellbeing indicator. Alarming, around half of all young people who identify as Black, Asian or from minority ethnic groups; more than half of all young people with a disability; almost 6 in 10 young people from the most deprived communities; and over half of all girls, are still participating less frequently than this.

However, a staggering 96% of young people have said that they would like to do more sport, showing a huge level of opportunity if the sporting offer is right.

How will Sport Partnerships help?

There are numerous potential benefits of Sport Partnerships, which will differ in different areas depending on each partnership and what suits them best.

Sport Partnerships will:

- Address inequalities in sport participation across Wales.
- Increase the diversity of strategic partners and delivery mechanisms within the regions.
- Assist us in ensuring there is the right support and opportunities in place for those who are not regularly physically active – with a clear focus on removing barriers for those who need the most help.
- Help us take steps to meet the high demand from those who are active but want to do much more.
- Enable a collective strength, from combining resources, learnings and expertise across each region.
- Give each region the ability to target resources toward those with the greatest need.

On top of the development of our sport partnerships, we are committed to the Welsh Government's national action plan for a bilingual Wales. We encourage our funded partners to consider and implement suitable arrangements for the appropriate provision of opportunities through the medium of Welsh.

Summary

We are happy to respond to the 'Cymraeg for All' consultation and are pleased to see the work being put into this subject by the committee. We agree that it's crucial to understand the distinct barriers to language use, how to develop confidence and changing language behaviour so that people start using more

Welsh in their everyday lives is key to the viability of the language in all communities.

Whilst there is still much work to be done, we are proud of our partnership work and how increasingly, sport and physical activity is delivered to young people in the language of their choice. We believe that partnership work is key and as stated we encourage the use and development of the Welsh language as a standard request in our investment offer letters. The development of regional Sport Partnerships will only support our partners delivery in the Welsh language by using local skills to solve local needs.