

Cymraeg for all?: Engagement Findings

June 2025



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1. Engagement Summary

The following engagement summary offers an overview of the engagement programme design, delivery, and key findings.

Background

1. The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee is conducting an inquiry to explore the challenges and opportunities for increasing the use of the Welsh language across Wales, particularly in areas with fewer Welsh speakers.
2. The Committee wished to understand the motivations for learning Welsh, in areas with a lower density of Welsh speakers in particular. They were also interested in understanding whether there is an impact from events like the Eisteddfod on Welsh learning and if that influences motivation.
3. The Citizen Engagement Team facilitated focus groups with Welsh learners and individuals with varying abilities in the language. This report summarises the perspectives shared by the participants.

Objectives

4. The objective of the focus groups was to deepen the Committee's understanding of the issues within the inquiry's terms of reference and to explore participants' views and experiences.
5. Views were gathered to ensure that those with lived experience contributed to the evidence-gathering programme, with a specific focus on the following inquiry terms of reference:
 - Examine the key barriers and opportunities to the use of the Welsh language across Wales, but with a focus on areas with fewer Welsh speakers;
 - Understand the extent to which cultural events, such as the Eisteddfodau and Welsh language festivals, impact on language use in areas with fewer Welsh speakers



Methodology

- 6.** The Citizen Engagement Team proposed a qualitative approach to engagement, comprising a series of focus groups.
- 7.** Focus groups were conducted face-to-face or online, depending on how the group usually met.
- 8.** The format of engagement was largely comparable between sessions but varied slightly to meet participants' needs and facilitate an organic, qualitative conversation.
- 9.** The engagement comprised of:
 - **13 focus groups and one interview** in total
 - **Seven in-person and seven online** sessions
 - **Four written responses** were also received from participants who were unable to attend the focus groups but wanted to contribute their views

Participants

- 10.** The Citizen Engagement Manager contacted Welsh language course providers and local organisations such as Menter Iaith to recruit participants from areas of low-density Welsh speakers in the north and south east of Wales and the Welsh valleys in the south.
- 11.** **97 participants** contributed their views, primarily from the Senedd regions of North Wales, South Wales Central and South Wales East. However, because of the nature of online learning, some groups included participants from other regions, including some based in England.
- 12.** Participants included a mix of learners with different proficiency levels, and native Welsh speakers who were either reconnecting with the language after a prolonged period or seeking to deepen their engagement with it.

Ethical Considerations

- 13.** All interview notes were anonymised, and each focus group's output was reviewed and approved by participants for accuracy.
- 14.** All methods used in this project adhered to the standards set out in the Market Research Society Code of Conduct and complied with relevant data

protection and safeguarding legislation to ensure the ethical treatment and privacy of all participants.

Key Findings

Motivations to learn

- 15.** The main motivations to learn Welsh among the groups were varied. Many participants expressed **personal** reasons, such as wanting to communicate in Welsh with family members or children attending Welsh language schools.
- 16.** Others were motivated by **professional** aspirations, aiming to use Welsh in their workplace or to enhance their career development opportunities.
- 17.** Additionally, **cultural** factors played a significant role, with several participants mentioning feelings of shame for not speaking the language, or a deep desire to connect with their Welsh heritage through the language.

Resources

- 18.** Participants highlighted a variety of resources that they had utilised in their efforts to learn, or use more of, the Welsh language.
- 19.** These included **online platforms** such as Duolingo and "Say Something in Welsh," as well as **formal lessons** offered through educational institutions.
- 20.** Many also mentioned Welsh-language **television and radio** programs, along with Welsh **books**, as valuable tools for language acquisition.
- 21.** Local **events**, such as coffee mornings and group walks, were considered helpful for practising conversational Welsh, as were sessions like "Sesiwn Siarad."
- 22.** Some participants also noted attending Welsh **gigs**, following Welsh-language **social media** accounts and YouTube channels, or joining Welsh **choirs** and **religious groups** as effective ways to immerse themselves in the language and culture.

Barriers

- 23.** Participants had encountered many barriers to learning and using the language, but the most common were a **lack of confidence** to use Welsh in settings outside their formal learning environments, a **lack of time** to commit to exploring additional opportunities to use the language, and a **lack of opportunity** more generally to practice Welsh in their community or everyday scenarios.

24. Other barriers discussed included there not being enough **information** available about what is going on in their area, or a **lack of events** in general.

Cultural events

25. Overall, participants felt Welsh cultural events were **important** to support the Welsh language, and those who had attended an event, small or large, had enjoyed their experience.

26. Some participants **didn't feel confident** to attend an event like the Eisteddfod, or the **cost** had been a barrier for them.

27. In general, participants wanted to see **more events** local to them, and would like to see **more promotion** to non-Welsh speaking communities to encourage more engagement with the culture and language.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the programme of engagement.

2. Engagement Findings:

This section outlines the key themes and views expressed by the people interviewed.

Motivations for learning Welsh

Personal motivations

28. Many participants expressed a strong desire to learn Welsh for personal reasons. A significant number of individuals wanted to communicate with family members who are Welsh speakers.

"It's part of my heritage. I want to understand and speak Welsh with my family." Foundation course participant

29. Another common motivation was to support children who attend Welsh language schools. Parents and guardians felt that learning Welsh would help them better assist their children with schoolwork and integrate more fully into the school community.

"My children go to a Welsh medium school, so for me it's to be able to help them with their schoolwork." Entry course participant

Professional

30. Some individuals were motivated by professional reasons, such as using Welsh in the workplace or enhancing career opportunities.

"I'm lucky that I work for an organisation who are very supportive of people learning Welsh....and it felt like a good development opportunity." Entry course participant

"I'm learning Welsh because sometimes it's difficult to find Communications jobs." Foundation course participant

31. Others talked about intellectual pursuit and enjoying the process of learning the language.

"I enjoy the challenge, grammar and so on, and I use ordinary Welsh in the classroom with young children aged 3-7." 'Siawns am Sgwrs' participant

Cultural connection

32. Participants also mentioned a desire to connect with their Welsh heritage. Learning the language was seen as a way to embrace and preserve their cultural identity.

"My personal view is I should speak Welsh, being from the area and feeling that pride of speaking Welsh". Entry course participant

"I've always wanted to be able to speak my language. I feel deprived. I wasn't allowed my own language. And now I'm determined to learn." Foundation course participant

"To become a truly Welsh you have to speak Welsh, so I'm trying to claim my heritage." Proficient course participant

33. Several participants shared their experiences of reconnecting with their Welsh heritage, with some expressing how they had once spoken the language but had lost it over time due to various circumstances.

"I come from a Welsh-speaking family and I had lost the language." Proficient course participant

"I wanted to reconnect with my roots." Proficient course participant

"I come from a Welsh background, I am a Welshman, but when the family passed away, I almost entirely lost the Welsh language... If you live in Wales, you miss out on so much if you don't speak the language." First-language participant

34. Further to this, participants in almost every focus group talked about a feeling of shame at not being able to speak the language, which they were keen to address.

"Being Welsh and not speaking your language is a bit embarrassing really". Entry course participant

"To overcome the shame of not being able to talk the language of my country." Entry course participant

"Shame. Can't speak the language. Can't sing the anthem." Proficient course participant

35. Across many focus groups, it became clear that participants had heartfelt reasons and emotions tied to their experiences of learning or rediscovering the language.

"It opens up a different world. Welsh music is great, I like listening to Radio Cymru in the car and exploring new music and reading different books." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

"I feel like I am part of a special country." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

"I realised that I didn't know much about Welshness and I felt like I was missing out." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

Resources

Online tools

36. All sessions talked about the use of online tools such as *Duolingo* and *Say Something in Welsh*, although sessions with participants at the beginning of their learning journey seemed to find these tools the most useful. However, they sometimes found the difference in north and south Wales dialects confusing.

37. Participants also referenced local YouTube channels where Welsh is spoken in natural settings, which aids in developing their vocabulary.

"I'll do Duolingo and it's more of an aide memoir. It just keeps me ticking over." Entry course participant

"There's loads of digital stuff that is really valuable." Entry course participant

38. Participants who use the online resources explained they were useful as an additional tool, but emphasised the importance of real-life practice for building confidence.

*"Every methodology has its strengths, and they work best together."
Participant from North East Wales*

Welsh media

39. The majority of the groups used Welsh television and radio as a way of engaging in the language. However, some found certain programmes difficult to follow, and others were frustrated that programmes weren't available for longer on catch-up and streaming services.

"I watch a lot of sports. It's quite hard to keep track of what they're saying and just keep talking very, very fast". **Entry course participant**

"Even the kids' programmes, they speak really fast!" **Entry course participant**

40. Others talked about using Welsh social media, following different accounts such as Doctor Cymraeg and Welsh language celebrities to keep up with the language.

"I've been trying to engage with a lot more Welsh social media, so I'm trying to understand jokes and memes and videos and these little snippets that add to the more structured learning here." **Entry course participant**

Local events

41. Participants talked about local events and sessions they attend to practice their Welsh, such as coffee mornings, local walks or book clubs. Some follow Welsh music and attend gigs, others attend Welsh theatre productions.

42. There were also more online opportunities since the pandemic, for example, sessions run by the National Library of Wales.

"I enjoyed a poetry course last year and it was great to use the Welsh language to create things, to learn in another situation, it didn't feel like being in class but felt like being creative with the language. This increased my confidence to speak." **'Sesiwn Siarad' participant**

43. However, many in-person opportunities to practice spoken Welsh were influenced by the location of the group, and participants with weekday commitments often found it challenging to access such opportunities at convenient times.

44. Participants highlighted the importance of combining formal and informal settings to apply what they had learned. While immersive experiences were highly valued, many acknowledged the logistical difficulties these opportunities often presented.

Residential courses

45. Those who had experienced immersive residential experiences talked positively about courses at Glan Llyn and Nant Gwrtheyrn, and emphasised the benefit of these experiences.

"Being totally immersed [in the language] is the only answer. A full immersion on a residential weekend- we'd come out of that feeling much more confident. That's what's needed." Foundation course participant

46. Those at the start of their learning journey thought they would be valuable, but said the opportunity hadn't arisen for them to attend a course, or they felt it would be difficult for them to attend one due to the time commitment.

47. A suggestion was made for the option of immersive days rather than the weeks that are currently available, as they could be less disruptive and more cost-effective.

"If I had the written stuff that we learned, and then go apply it next week in that immersive day, I'd probably learn better that way". Entry course participant

Barriers to using the language

Confidence

48. One of the most significant barriers for many participants was a lack of confidence, particularly among new learners and those reconnecting with the language.

"I think the biggest hurdle for me with most things is just having the confidence to speak." Entry course participant

49. Many expressed difficulty in using Welsh in everyday situations, especially when engaging with fluent speakers.

"I hit a wall with talking to adults. Total lack of confidence...Some are better than others at not correcting everything." Entry course participant

50. A recurring challenge was the fear of making mistakes or being judged, which deterred participants from practicing in public.

*"I don't have the confidence to go into the shop and use Welsh."
'Sesiwn siarad' participant*

"What can happen is you start off in Welsh and then in about 30 seconds you're out of your depth." Entry course participant

51. Despite these challenges, some participants took proactive steps to build their confidence, such as initiating conversations in Welsh wherever possible. Others sought opportunities in Welsh-speaking areas or leaned on friendships and local connections.

"There's a lady on the check-out at Morrison's with a 'Siarad Cymraeg' badge, so I always try to speak to her when I go." Entry course participant

"I try and start every conversation in Welsh. There are lots of people who speak Welsh, but you might not know it." Foundation course participant

52. The role of safe spaces for practicing Welsh was emphasised, as learners often felt overwhelmed in unsupportive environments or when focused too much on grammar. Others pointed out the lack of local opportunities to engage in casual conversations in Welsh.

"Being focused on getting grammatical things right veers you away from just chatting." Foundation course participant

53. Participants also highlighted the disparity in attitudes among first-language Welsh speakers, which significantly affected their confidence. Some participants felt judged for their accents or minor errors.

*"I feel there's a lot of judgement that goes with speaking Welsh. If I don't say it quite correctly, if I've got a bit of an English accent." **First-language participant***

54. Overall, participants acknowledged that while they could read Welsh more confidently than speak it, the key to overcoming this barrier was gaining positive, consistent practice in supportive environments.

*"It's feeling confident outside the classroom." **Entry course participant***

*"I find I can read Welsh a lot better and still have no confidence in speaking it just because of the reply, you know, continuing that conversation." **Entry course participant***

Time

55. Time constraints were also a common challenge. While some participants said retirement or the lockdown during the pandemic had given them more time to focus on learning, those still in employment found it harder to commit.

*"I think that my main thing is time. I work full time. I feel like if I had more time, I could point my brain at Welsh a bit more." **Entry course participant***

56. Opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace varied—one participant explained that regular use of Welsh at work had boosted his confidence. Another explained this was his primary opportunity to use the language.

*"I practice where I can at work. People at work know I'm learning, so they speak Welsh with me." **Intermediate course participant***

*"I need to be able to speak Welsh at work, but 1) I am not confident and 2) I can't yet talk about my actual work - just social chat, which means we have to revert to English very quickly." **Intermediate course participant***

57. Participants who had the opportunity to learn during work hours noted that this arrangement was hugely beneficial, as they would struggle to dedicate personal time to learning the language.

58. Finding opportunities to practice outside of working hours was an issue for many participants.

“All the Welsh-speaking groups here are during the day, which I can't attend due to work.” Intermediate course participant

Lack of opportunities

59. A lack of opportunity to practice or use the language was raised by a number of participants.

“I hit a brick wall because I have no one to practice with.” Foundation course participant

“Even in places like North and West Wales, just speaking in shops and supermarkets, it's really hard to use it...I say thank you and the usual bits.” Foundation course participant

60. Others highlighted regional disparities in the availability of local resources, such as coffee mornings or trips. Some were able to travel long distances to take up opportunities elsewhere, but others had no choice but to miss out.

61. Participants also expressed frustration that both classes and many community events pause during the summer and school holidays, leading to extended periods with fewer opportunities to use the language.

“There'll be nothing at all unless we meet up ourselves and then we just end up talking in English. There's one barbecue in July and then there's nothing.” Intermediate course participant

Young people

62. Young people with varying abilities in the language took part in one of the focus groups. In discussing attitudes towards the language in their area, they felt that a lot of young people aren't supportive of the language.

*"A lot of young people I've spoken to feel it isn't 'cool' to use Welsh."
Young person*

63. They'd like to see English medium schools do more to promote the benefits of being able to speak Welsh. They feel young people are not interested in learning Welsh and can't wait to drop it as a subject in school.

"They feel it's pointless and is just another GCSE." Young person

64. Participants felt that the teaching of Welsh in school needs to change, suggesting there needs to be more opportunities to practise basic Welsh instead of exams.

"Welsh lessons need to be more exciting." Young person

65. They'd also like to see more opportunities to learn Welsh outside of school for those under the age of 16. They felt that there were currently no opportunities.

66. These views were echoed by some adults taking part in different groups, with some commenting that there was a lack of support for the language as a subject in some schools, and that attitudes negatively impacted how young people view the language.

"The young people think that learning Welsh is a waste of time, that it is a dead language, and their parents say there is no point in learning the language." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

Lack of information

67. A common concern was the difficulty in finding information about local events. Some participants, particularly those with lower digital literacy skills, reported difficulties in finding information about Welsh-language events and resources, and while many are advertised online, participants noted that you often need to actively search for them or rely on word of mouth.

68. This inconsistency made it challenging to discover opportunities in their own areas. Several participants suggested the need for a central website or app that could bring together events and resources for learners to improve accessibility.

"I would like to know more about them actually, because I know there are some Welsh bands and Welsh singers around who sing contemporary music, but I don't know enough about them and I don't think I'm within those circles enough to know about them."

First-language participant

69. Many participants noted that being part of the Welsh-speaking or learner community makes it easier to discover events. Those who are not actively involved in these circles often have fewer opportunities to learn about what is happening.

"But I hear about these things because I am part of the Welsh-speaking community. My friends who don't speak Welsh don't know that these things are going on." *Participant from North East Wales*

70. In North Wales, many felt that non-Welsh speakers were either unaware of the Eisteddfod in Wrexham this year or believed it wasn't meant for them.

"Not many English speakers know about the Eisteddfod. Only Welsh speakers or Welsh learners talk about the Eisteddfod. There aren't many adverts to attract non-Welsh speakers." *Participant from North East Wales*

Cultural events and their impact on the language

71. Participants were asked about their experiences of Welsh festivals or events and whether they had an impact on their use of the language.

Eisteddfodau

72. Some participants shared positive experiences of attending festivals and community gatherings, which had fostered a sense of belonging and provided opportunities to practice the language.

"When we went to the Eisteddfod, it was very welcoming and as soon as people knew you were at Entry level, they would talk at your level and use simplistic vocabulary, which was really beneficial, and it was just lovely." *Entry course participant*

"I went to the Eisteddfod with work and it made my day because I had my lines to read, but I managed to say something in Welsh off my own back so it was very good for confidence." Intermediate course participant

73. However, some participants expressed a lack of confidence in attending events like this and felt it was quite an intimidating environment with so many fluent Welsh speakers.

"I've been, but I did feel like a fish out of water." Entry course participant

"It's something that I would like to do, but I probably wouldn't have the confidence." Entry course participant

74. One participant had a negative experience during their first Eisteddfod, where they felt that people were impatient with them and insisted on responding in English. *"The first Eisteddfod was very difficult for me... I was discouraged."* However, they went back and did not encounter the same experience at subsequent Eisteddfods.

75. One group discussed how participants felt that people's attitudes towards learners were sometimes not welcoming; one mentioned hearing that you shouldn't attend the Eisteddfod if you're not fluent.

76. Some participants felt that attitudes and prices could deter people from attending the Eisteddfod, and suggested that something like the Cardiff Bay Eisteddfod, with free admission and less pressure, might open doors for people and allow them to drop in and see what's happening.

Pontypridd

77. Several participants noted that when Pontypridd hosted the Eisteddfod, there were many non-Welsh speakers in attendance and the Welsh language was much more visible and audible throughout the town. They felt the event had left a lasting impact on the presence of Welsh in the local area.

78. For most, it had been their first time attending the festival. Several mentioned that even non-Welsh-speaking friends from Pontypridd had visited and enjoyed the experience, with some inspired to begin learning Welsh as a result.

"I went to the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd last year....and I felt like at home there." Proficient course participant

"It was very important to be able to go to Pontypridd, to immerse myself in the language." Proficient course participant

"We spent the day down in Pontypridd... it was absolutely wonderful." Entry course participant

79. Participants noted that, following the Eisteddfod, local Welsh-speaking coffee mornings were noticeably busier, as more people showed interest in learning and using the language.

"People from around here probably got more inspired to take up learning Welsh, just because of how interesting it was." Foundation course participant

"The impact of this was being persuaded to keep going from Sylfaen to Canolradd - so being in this class came out of it last year!" Intermediate course participant

80. Those living in Pontypridd described a strong sense of pride and community while the Eisteddfod was in town, expressing joy at seeing the Welsh language celebrated so prominently in their hometown.

81. However, not all experiences were positive. One participant, attending as a learner, felt the festival wasn't as inclusive as it could have been for those still learning the language. Others agreed, commenting that the learners' area felt like an "afterthought" and was physically "cut off" from the rest of the Maes. They expressed a desire for greater visibility and support for learners, suggesting that normalising mistakes and celebrating progress would help create a more welcoming environment for those still developing their skills.

"I don't think it was that we weren't wanted – it was just that we were so far away from everything, when really we should be celebrated. We are the ones who are passionate. I thought it was sad that we had our own café, our own stage. I think the Eisteddfod were missing a beat because if we were integrated more with the main event, I think more people would be interested in what the learners are achieving." Intermediate course participant

*"I think if they put a spotlight on learners and people see us making mistakes, more people would want to learn Welsh and not be embarrassed to make their own mistakes." **Intermediate course participant***

Wrexham

82. Participants from the north east of Wales expressed excitement about the Eisteddfod this year, and many remembered the last Eisteddfod in Wrexham in 2011.

*"Everyone encouraged us to speak as learners. By the end of the day, I felt confident." **'Session siarad' participant***

83. One of the participants was greatly looking forward to the Eisteddfod and feeling comfortable speaking the language on the *Maes*.

*"We don't speak much Welsh at home, but once we go through the gate to the Eisteddfod, we switch to Welsh, it's great." **'Session siarad' participant***

84. Overall, the participants themselves were looking forward to the Eisteddfod, but there was a feeling that non-Welsh speakers in the area were not interested in attending or did not feel that the Eisteddfod was an event for them.

*"I am very excited because it's my first time going to the Eisteddfod. But talking to people at work, there is no mention of the Eisteddfod." **'Session siarad' participant***

85. Some felt that holding the Eisteddfod in the town centre would attract more people to the event rather than requiring them to travel to something outside the town. A comparison was made to a recent Focus Wales event, which attracted more people due to its location in the town centre and the inclusion of both Welsh and English bands.

86. Overall, participants felt that the Eisteddfod (and smaller festivals) were very important to the Welsh language and to learners. However, they wished to see more encouragement for non-Welsh-speaking communities to make it a festival that attracts and welcomes everyone, not just Welsh speakers.

Events more generally

87. Participants widely recognised Welsh festivals and events as pivotal for fostering language engagement and use. Many appreciated how these gatherings offered immersive experiences that brought the language to life.

88. One learner highlighted the value of events like Tafwyl, noting its ability to create a rare and enriching opportunity to be surrounded by Welsh. Others praised free events, such as Ffilifest, for their accessibility and welcoming nature.

“Especially if you live somewhere where you’re not exposed to Welsh all the time, having something like Tafwyl, gives people the opportunity to see how it feels to be immersed in Welsh, which I think is a really rare and lovely opportunity to have.” **Intermediate course participant**

“Ffilifest is definitely a lovely one to go to because it's a free event.” **Entry course participant**

89. For those living in areas with limited exposure to Welsh, festivals like these were seen as instrumental in nurturing interest and showcasing the vibrancy of the language. Festivals also played a significant role in demonstrating that Welsh was not distant or inaccessible but rather a thriving, everyday language.

“I think there are lots of opportunities. I think it’s getting better and better every year. It is very much a living language in the places that I go to with the Welsh language events and festivals. And that’s really positive.” **Entry course participant**

“Ar ôl mynd i Tafwyl, roedd mwy o ddiddordeb gen i yn y Gymraeg achos dangosodd Tafwyl i mi fod yr iaith yn fwy, a ddim yn bell.” **Foundation course participant**

90. While some lacked the confidence to participate or felt that such events might not be meant for them, many discovered a newfound appreciation for Welsh cultural celebrations and felt encouraged to practice their language whenever possible.

“I think before I started learning in this class, I maybe sometimes felt like they weren't for me. I could have gone, but I wouldn't have been able to engage with it in in the sort of spirit that it was meant, but I

think that having real world enjoyable opportunities to use Welsh, and be part of that community, I think is a real motivator to improve my own skills.” **Entry course participant**

“I can see a whole world of music I didn't listen to before, but also I can understand a bit of it. And maybe learn a bit through osmosis. So the Welsh language music festivals also encouraged me to go to a few gigs too.” **Entry course participant**

91. Some participants suggested that smaller gatherings, such as local reading festivals, could provide a more intimate and welcoming environment compared to larger events like the Eisteddfod. These smaller settings might help attendees gain confidence and were seen as equally important in promoting language engagement.

3. Solutions

In this section, we present a range of ideas shared by participants during the engagement sessions. These suggestions reflect diverse perspectives and aim to inspire further discussion and progression toward positive change.

More learning resources

92. Participants highlighted the need for more adult-friendly reading materials and accessible community spaces where learners could practice their Welsh language skills without fear of judgment.

"I think it'd be quite nice to have highlighted places, shops, libraries, cafes, where Welsh learners have the courage to go and just have a look." Entry course participant

Expanding classes in Welsh

93. Many participants expressed interest in seeing more leisure activities and classes conducted through the medium of Welsh, beyond conversational practice. Examples included fitness classes, art workshops, and even learning additional languages via Welsh.

"Linking it with sport would be nice, like going climbing. A Welsh-friendly evening where you're not exclusively asked to speak Welsh, but you can converse in Welsh with those who want to." First-language participant

"I would like to see more arts and crafts activities and music in the local area." Foundation course participant

Opportunities for engagement with native speakers

94. A recurring suggestion was to create more opportunities for learners to interact with native Welsh speakers. Currently, most interactions are limited to

fellow learners or second-language speakers. These conversations could boost learner confidence and foster greater acceptance of learners within first-language Welsh communities.

Local events and inclusivity

95. Participants also voiced the need for more localised events within their areas, especially in regions like north east Wales, where such opportunities were felt to be scarce.

"I want to see more events. There isn't much in the north-east. I'm happy to travel, but locally here there isn't much." Participant from North East Wales

96. More opportunities outside of working hours were a common request among all the groups.

97. There was also enthusiasm for bilingual events, as these could create a more welcoming environment for both learners and non-Welsh speakers. Such events could help integrate Welsh into broader cultural celebrations and ensure accessibility for all.

"It perpetuates this idea of Welsh being an 'other' thing. And actually, us having Welsh events and English events as opposed to events where it brings both together." Participant from North East Wales

"I felt this when I started learning. I didn't want to go to that because I couldn't really speak Welsh, and it felt a bit off-putting...I felt it was a real barrier to me when I first started learning and wanted to go to events." Participant from North East Wales

Youth-oriented opportunities

98. Many groups suggested introducing more events designed for younger people, such as weekend or evening activities outside of school or work hours.

"There are many things for children and there are many things during the day that work for retired people... It would be nice to have something for younger people." Participant from North East Wales

99. There were calls for activities that encourage children to use Welsh outside of school, paired with events for parents, such as a Welsh café at schools in the evenings.

"The children are losing confidence after leaving school in the evening, they need something else to go to in order to speak the language." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

"My husband went to the Welsh school in Wrexham, but after leaving school he has no confidence to speak Welsh. I don't want my son to feel the same way after leaving school. Maybe we need support for children leaving school and creating bridges." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

Centralised information platform

100. Participants strongly advocated for a centralised platform where information about Welsh-language events could be easily accessed. A suggestion was made to model this after platforms like awni.cymru, which promotes Welsh-language gigs. Expanding this concept to coffee mornings, plays, and other events could significantly boost engagement.

Promoting the Eisteddfod

101. While discussing the Eisteddfod, participants suggested better outreach, especially through schools, to highlight that attendance does not require fluency in Welsh. Emphasising that the Eisteddfod celebrates Welsh culture as a whole, rather than focusing solely on the language, could draw a more diverse audience.

Welsh in education

102. Increased access to Welsh-language schools was seen as a crucial step toward normalising and promoting the language in areas with a lower density of Welsh speakers.

"There isn't enough effort to help second-language speakers, that's the problem here in Wales. Why are there six schools in one town and only one Welsh medium? That's not good enough." 'Sesiwn siarad' participant

Annex 1: Focus Group Questions

The following questions served as a flexible guide for the interviewer and were not all asked of each participant.

103. The interviews were participant-led, allowing for an organic conversation flow; questions were not presented in a specific order or exact wording but were used to facilitate discussion based on the participants' responses and needs.

New Learner/Speaker

1. When did you start learning Welsh?
2. How would you describe your ability in Welsh?
3. With whom do you learn the language (Learn Welsh Provider/SaySomethinginWelsh/through work etc)? Anyone else?
4. What level are you currently at when it comes to learning? (i.e. Entry, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced)
5. What was the main reason for learning the language?
6. What kind of opportunities would you like to see in your area to use more Welsh/help you learn?
7. Have you attended any Welsh language event or festival, be it a local or national event, in the past year?
8. What events or festivals were these?
9. What was the impact of attending these events or festivals on your decision to pursue learning the language?
10. Are there enough Welsh or bilingual events or festivals to have near you? What kind of events would you like to see more of locally?
11. (If there has been a major festival in the area recently) What impact have you seen on the Welsh language in the area following your visit to this festival? Why do you say this?

A non-confident Welsh speaker

1. When was the last time you used your Welsh?
2. Do you remember with whom/where did you use Welsh?
3. Do you receive any support to boost your confidence and increase your use of Welsh? In what way?
4. How often do you use your Welsh? (e.g. daily, weekly, or less frequently.)
5. Where did you mainly learn Welsh? Eg. At home, at school, through your work...
6. What would encourage you to speak more Welsh?
7. What opportunities are there in your local area (e.g. community, village or town) to use the Welsh language that you have?
8. What kind of opportunities would you like to see in your area to allow you to use more of your Welsh/help you gain confidence?
9. Have you attended any Welsh language event or festival, whether local or national, in the past year?
10. What events or festivals were these?
11. What was the effect of attending these events or festivals on your use of Welsh?
12. Did it have any effect on your confidence? In what way?
13. (If there has been a major festival in the area recently) What impact have you seen on the Welsh language in the area following your visit to this festival? Why do you say this?
14. 22. Are there enough Welsh or bilingual events or festivals to be had near you? What kind of events would you like to see more of locally?

No or little Welsh, but a child within the Welsh-medium education system / early care

1. How would you describe your ability in Welsh?
2. (If a little Welsh) Where do you learn the little Welsh that you have?

3. (If not Welsh) What was your motivation for your child to receive early care/education through the medium of Welsh?
4. What kind of opportunities does your child have to use Welsh in your local area (e.g. community, village or town)?
5. What kind of opportunities would you like to see in your area for your children to use more Welsh on a daily basis?
6. What kind of clubs or societies, if any, are available locally for you or your child to bathe in Welsh?
7. Have you attended any Welsh language event or festival, whether local or national, in the past year?
8. What events or festivals were these?
9. What was the effect of attending these events or festivals on your sense of the language?
10. (If there has been a major festival in the area recently) What impact have you seen on the Welsh language in the area following your visit to this festival? Why do you say this?
11. Are there enough Welsh or bilingual events or festivals to have near you? What kind of events would you like to see more of locally?

Annex 2: Partner Organisations

The Citizen Engagement Team would like to thank the following organisations that supported the engagement programme.

Bangor University	The National Centre for Learning Welsh
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<i>Menter Iaith</i> Fflint a Wrecsam	
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Saith Seren, Wrexham	
<i>Senedd yr Ifanc</i> , Wrexham	

