

Mark Drakeford AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MDFWL/00371/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

28 July 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your correspondence as chair of the Petitions Committee regarding petition P-06-1539 which relates to the use of English before (or instead of) Welsh in important public messaging in Wales.

Wales is a bilingual nation and we are committed to ensuring that people can access services in Welsh should they prefer. Welsh Government's *Cymraeg 2050* strategy focuses on increasing the number of speakers, encouraging everyday use of Welsh, and creating supportive conditions for the language to thrive across all areas of life.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 ('Measure') provides official status to the Welsh language in Wales, and introduces a system of Welsh language duties, the Welsh Language Standards ('standards'), on public bodies. The aim of standards is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language and to ensure that it is not treated less favourably than the English language. Standards make provision in relation to the Welsh language only; they do not make provision for any other languages, including English. Unless a standard provides otherwise, there is nothing to prevent a body from providing information or services in Welsh only or bilingually - that is, in English as well as Welsh.

In addition to the general principles set under the Measure, several of the standards impose a specific requirement not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, with some standards, relating to signs for example, imposing a specific requirement to place Welsh text so that it is likely to be read first. This may mean placing Welsh text to the left or above the corresponding English text. This is not intended to disadvantage those who do not speak or understand Welsh. Rather, the intention is to support and encourage those who understand Welsh or are learning the language to use it. Placing English text before Welsh text would likely mean that people are not going to read or hear Welsh.

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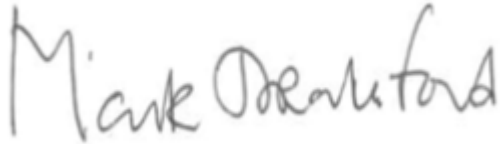
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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.

In relation to safety concerns, it is important to note that Wales is not unique in its bilingual status. Bilingual services and signs are considered the norm in several European countries, with no known evidence to suggest an increase in road accidents in those countries, for example.

I trust this response will be of assistance as you formally consider the petition in question.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

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