



Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers 2021 - 2026

Evidence Paper on the Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers strategy during the sixth Senedd (2021–2026)

February 2026

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Introduction

Context—Cymraeg 2050

The purpose of this Evidence Paper is to provide the Senedd’s Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee with an overview of Welsh Government’s delivery and achievements against the Cymraeg 2050 strategy during the sixth Senedd.

Our journey towards a million Welsh speakers and increasing the daily use of our language by 2050 has moved from setting a visionary strategy into a phase of robust action, underpinned by legislative change. This period has been defined by a collective determination to ensure the Welsh language belongs to us all in Wales, however much we speak, and wherever we live.

While Census 2021 presented challenges, recording 538,300 speakers (17.8% of the population), there are also positive indicators: the schools census shows that the percentage of Year 1 pupils studying through the medium of Welsh has been increasing generally over the last decade, and there are more adults taking Welsh language courses than ever before. There has been an increase in the status of the Welsh language and the enthusiasm and energy that can be felt in our schools, communities and workplaces provide confidence in our shared linguistic mission. Cymraeg belongs to us all in Wales—so does the responsibility for its future.

We know that growing Cymraeg requires practical interventions alongside strategic policy changes, including legislation.

The Welsh Government’s programme of work over the last five years has encompassed creative and innovative measures that have delivered for the people of Wales. It has also included ground-breaking work, including the first Act we have drafted in the Welsh language: the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025—designed to provide Cymraeg with a firm foundation for future generations.

The Committee has recognised the Welsh Government’s commitment to Cymraeg, and the Committee’s work has contributed vital scrutiny, challenge and fresh thinking to our work. We will provide a full response to the Committee’s recent Report on its Inquiry, ‘Cymraeg i Bawb?’ within the normal timeframe.

Cross-cutting strategies and policies

This Evidence Paper provides the Committee with a breakdown of our key activities and achievements against the headings of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

We start with a summary of some of the strategic and long-term legislative and policy changes introduced during this Senedd to underpin the sustained, systemic and ongoing growth of our language from now to 2050. These are bold and far-reaching programmes of work, including:

Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025

We delivered our Programme for Government, and Co-operation Agreement commitment to introduce a Welsh Language Education Bill during the sixth Senedd. The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill was laid before the Senedd on 15 July 2024 and was passed unanimously in the Senedd on 13 May 2025 following the Senedd’s scrutiny process, followed by Royal Assent on 7 July 2025.

The Act provides a statutory basis for the target of a million speakers and ensures that clear targets for the planning of Welsh language education are set at a national, local and school level. It establishes a new method for people of all ages to describe their ability in Welsh based on the Council of Europe’s Common Framework of Reference for Languages (henceforth, the ‘CEFR’). Each school will have a Welsh learning goal to aim towards, with that goal corresponding to the CEFR levels appropriate to the school category. A statutory body will be established, the National Institute for learning Welsh (the Athrofa) by August 2027. The Athrofa will co-ordinate the support of learning Welsh across the education system, the workplace and the community. It will provide training, resources, and support to the workforce and learners of all ages.

We’re already at work implementing the Act. This includes an intensive programme of internal and external engagement in preparation for consultation in the Autumn of 2026 on a refreshed Cymraeg 2050 strategy, a draft National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh and on a draft Code to Describe Welsh language ability. We held a joint conference on 4 December 2025 with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, which was attended by over 200 participants. This was an opportunity to highlight how the CEFR is used in international contexts.

The impact of the Act goes beyond education. It’s about culture, identity and community. It makes our language a part of everyday life by empowering every child, young person and adult to use it. Fully realised, the Act establishes the framework through which we reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050, and through which Cymraeg is sustained as a living language in our communities.

Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities

The use of the Welsh language varies considerably from one part of Wales to the other, from community to community. Only by understanding these spatial and cultural challenges—and responding structurally and systematically to them—will we grow our language across Wales.

In 2022 we established the independent Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities to look at the challenges facing the language within its traditional heartlands. The Commission published its report ‘Empowering communities, strengthening the Welsh language’ in August 2024. We responded to the report’s findings and recommendations in May 2025. Work is ongoing on the implementation of the recommendations we’ve accepted. We’ve also accepted in principle the recommendations on designation of areas of higher density linguistic

significance. We've held discussions with stakeholders, including local authorities and community groups which have a significant role to play in future designation processes. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language will make a statement on a proposed pathway to designating areas based on linguistic characteristics on 24 February .

Each area in Wales is on its own journey with Cymraeg. So, in August 2024 the First Minister launched the second phase of the Commission's work, which is currently looking at the future of the Welsh language as a community language in other parts of Wales and beyond. The Commission will publish its Phase 2 report shortly and we look forward to its findings.

Both reports combine to provide the Welsh Government with an in-depth and comprehensive review of the Welsh language at community and grass-roots level complemented by Prosiect BRO, a detailed sociolinguistic survey which we're funding—and a firm evidence-base to develop policy and legislation in the coming years.

These crucially important strategic programmes underline our enthusiasm for and commitment to Cymraeg, the results of which will be felt over the next decades, and beyond.

The next section of the Evidence Paper provides a summary of our direct delivery priorities, activities and achievements.

Theme 1: Increasing the number of Welsh speakers

1. Language transmission in the family

Our policy on Welsh language transmission and use in families commits to behavioural science-led interventions to help parents who have Welsh language skills to use their Cymraeg with their children. The main delivery agent for the policy is Mudiad Meithrin. We fund them to manage the Cymraeg i Blant programme, which supports families to introduce and use Welsh at home. This is done by working with midwives and health visitors and through parent and child activities such as yoga and baby massage to support early language acquisition. During 2024/2025, 3,392 Cymraeg i Blant sessions were held with 27,664 parents and 27,818 children supported. Alongside this work, a pilot behavioural science project—which we run jointly with Mudiad Meithrin and independent behavioural scientists—analyses how toys, music, and information can help prompt the use of Welsh in families who may not, for many reasons, use the Cymraeg that they have with their children. This work will conclude at the end of 2025/26 and we're currently working on plans for dissemination.

2. The early years

Cymraeg 2050 also supports Welsh-medium early years education through the Cymraeg i Blant programme, as well as initiatives like Sefydlu a Symud (Set up and Succeed). Mudiad Meithrin support the aims of Cymraeg 2050 by expanding provision, training the workforce, and helping families use Welsh at home, as outlined previously. Through the support of Mudiad Meithrin, over 400 Cylchoedd Meithrin and 45 Private Nurseries provide Welsh-

medium early years care and education to around 22,000 children in Wales every week - children from varying linguistic backgrounds.

The Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru committed to ‘expanding free childcare to all two-year-olds with a particular focus on providing and strengthening Welsh-medium childcare.’

Our Cymraeg 2050 strategy set a target to open or expand 150 Welsh-medium childcare provisions by 2027/28 and the target of supporting 60 provisions during the current term of the Senedd has already been met. The Sefydlu a Symud programme, now in its eighth year, has already supported 101 Welsh-language childcare provisions by either opening new, or expanding current provisions to increase their capacity to accept more children, with an additional 11 currently being supported.

In 2022, we announced that the Flying Start programme would be expanded to 2,500 more children under the age of four as part of the first phase of the extension of childcare to all two-year olds in Wales, in line with the Programme for Government. Cylchoedd Meithrin are contributing to the expansion with over 2,500 children receiving Flying Start provision in 2024/25. This represents 22% of children who attend Cylchoedd Meithrin across Wales. Almost half of the provisions supported through the Sefydlu a Symud programme deliver Flying Start.

In addition to this, we allocated further funding of £3.787m to Cwlwm over a three-year period (2022-23: £0.903m, 2023-24: £1.706m, 2024-25: £1.178m) to support the delivery of the commitments in the Programme for Government and the Co-operation Agreement relating to the expansion of Welsh-medium activities. We awarded part of this funding to Mudiad Meithrin to deliver Welsh-medium childcare qualifications at levels 3 and 5 through their Cam wrth Gam programme. We awarded further funding again during 2025-26 and following a competitive grant process, Mudiad Meithrin will continue to deliver Cam wrth Gam for a further 3 years from 2026-27. The programme has been awarded ‘Direct Claim Status’—a quality assurance standard by City & Guilds and WJEC examination boards for providing these qualifications.

There has been a steady increase in the number of children attending Cylchoedd Meithrin across Wales over the past five years following the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024–25, 11,360 children (of the 22,000 children catered for by Mudiad Meithrin through its combined activities) attended Cylchoedd Meithrin, a figure that is now in line with pre-COVID-19 levels. The total sum of weekly care hours provided by Cylchoedd Meithrin has increased annually over the past 10 years, with 9,276 care hours provided during 2024/25 compared to 6,180 in 2015/16. The increase over the years reflects that more Cylchoedd are providing full day care rather than sessional care.

3. Statutory education

Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) have been operational since September 2022. These ten-year plans outline how local authorities will drive change, growth and improvement in their provision of Welsh-medium education. All authorities have committed to ambitious targets, aligned with Cymraeg 2050, for increasing the amount of Welsh taught and studied in their schools. There are commitments in the WESPs to open 23 new Welsh-medium primary schools and expand at least 25 Welsh-medium primary schools across Wales over the coming decade. Since 2022, 56 capital projects to increase Welsh-medium provision across Wales have already been completed. These include opening or relocation of 17 new schools to increase their capacity to accept more learners, and the completion of 39 capital projects to expand Welsh-medium provision, including childcare projects, additional learning needs projects and late immersion centres.

In 2021, we consulted on and published non-statutory guidance in relation to ‘school categories according to Welsh-medium provision.’ The categorisation policy is a key mechanism for several local authorities to meet their WESP target. Eight local authorities committed to move up to 42 schools along the continuum within their ten-year WESPs, with others committing to adopting the new arrangements as they expand Welsh-medium education provision in new areas within the county. Since 2022, there have been consultations to change the language category of 8 schools across Wales. A further 3 local authorities have pipeline proposals to change the language category of schools, but no further consultations are currently ‘live.’

Changes to the PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) arrangements to include the new categories were completed in the autumn term of 2023 and by 2024, all schools were assigned to a language category.

With a strategic outlook across seven key outcomes—from early years and primary provision to immersion, language category changes, capital projects, secondary and additional learning needs provision, and the teaching workforce—these plans bring together the strands needed to drive change across the sector. Against a challenging backdrop of falling birth rates more generally, we’ve continued to see that most authorities are broadly maintaining their percentages of learners in Welsh-medium education as well as laying the groundwork for sustained growth by the end of the plans.

14 local authorities have reported an increase in the numbers and/or percentages of 3-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh. The expansion of Welsh-medium Flying Start provision has been particularly successful, with nine local authorities reporting an increase in the number of Flying Start settings, and 17 local authorities reporting a rise in the provision and uptake of Welsh-medium Flying Start places.

The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 provides a firm legislative foundation for future Welsh language education planning in Wales, including a National Framework for Welsh Education, Local Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (which will replace the WESPs) and school-level Welsh Language Education Delivery Plans.

Late Immersion Programme

The Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme for 2021-2026 and the Programme for Government include our commitment to expand the Late Immersion Programme to ensure that everyone has access to a Welsh-medium education when they need it and wherever they are on their Welsh language journey.

During 2021, an Initial investment of £2.2m was announced to support Welsh learners undertaking late immersion in schools, and to support the progression of learners in the Welsh language following the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, we've invested a further £8.8m during this Senedd term in late immersion to support the continuation as well as establishment of new late immersion provisions in all local authorities. Since the grant was established in 2021, over 9,000 learners have benefited from late immersion programmes—nearly half of whom were completely new to the language. The funding also covers intensive support for learners who need to reinforce their Welsh language skills. It also supports over 60 specialist staff across Wales. Late immersion funding increased to £3m during 2024-25 and 2025-26 and now forms part of the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG).

We established and continue to facilitate Wales' first National late immersion network in 2023 where over 40 late immersion practitioners, local authority staff, and researchers meet to share best practice, academic research and support the ongoing development of late immersion education across Wales. Working with the Network, we've begun developing our first late immersion guidance, fulfilling an Estyn recommendation from its 2022 Thematic report 'Welsh Immersion Education – Strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners'.

e-sgol

To enable learners to access a wider curriculum through the medium of Welsh at GCSE and A-level, we continued to fund the e-sgol project which has been expanding year on year since it first launched in 2018. By now, the number of courses offered through the hybrid learning model has reached to over 150 and the number of pupils increasing to over 1,500.

In March 2021, 'Carlam Courses' were introduced as part of the e-sgol project, a series of free, virtual sessions through the medium of Welsh and English to support pupils in years 11, 12 and 13 across Wales. Carlam review sessions continue to be offered, and to date, the scheme has produced over 1,000 videos of sessions which have been viewed over 100,000 times. The videos are now also available via the Carlam Cymru app.

During 2023-24, e-sgol expanded into the primary sector, with pupils across Wales taking advantage of the provision. A range of different projects and provision have developed since then, including offering international languages and creative writing sessions for more able pupils. Primary provision will continue to expand during 2026-27.

Cymraeg i Bawb

In 2023, we supported the South East Wales Welsh-medium Education Promotion Partnership (which includes the region’s Local Authorities, Mentrau Iaith, Cymraeg i Blant, Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg and the Welsh Government) to deliver a pilot Cymraeg i Bawb campaign to work collaboratively to promote Welsh-medium education.

The programme has strengthened knowledge and awareness within local authorities through shared best practice, and supported schools to develop more inclusive, community-focused approaches to engagement. It has also introduced a more streamlined, consistent way of presenting Welsh-medium education options to parents.

Following the success of the pilot, Mentrau Iaith Cymru was appointed to expand Cymraeg i Bawb across Wales, supported by a new grant scheme enabling Welsh-medium schools to actively promote their provision within their communities. The grant has been exceptionally well received by partners, prompting the allocation of additional funding to meet demand.

4. Post-compulsory education and training

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Our Cymraeg 2050 strategy is focused on creating more opportunities for young people to learn and train through the medium of Welsh so that more young people enter the workplace able to work bilingually.

During this Senedd, the role of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol has been expanded to cover Further Education, and work-based learning. The Welsh Ministers have also designated the Coleg as a statutory advisor to Medr in relation to its duties relating to the Welsh language across the entire tertiary sector.

As the body now responsible for funding and overseeing post-16 education and research, Medr has a vital role in expanding the Welsh-medium and bilingual offer in tertiary education. Medr is working with the Coleg and other stakeholders from across the tertiary sector on a new National Plan for the Welsh Language, which it aims to publish by August 2026. To support the delivery its National Plan, Medr is also developing a regulatory condition for the Welsh Language, which is set to take effect from August 2027.

The Coleg is driving initiatives to increase Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across vocational learning. This includes supporting provider capacity, offering scholarships, and ensuring learners have opportunities to develop and use Welsh in both education and the workplace.

The Coleg’s annual funding has increased by over £3 million since the start of this Senedd term and, because of this investment, over 20 percent of activities in colleges and over 40 percent of work-based learning activities now involve an element of Welsh or bilingual delivery. However, there’s more ground to be gained, particularly across vocational pathways.

In the higher education sector, the Coleg continues to implement its latest Higher Education Academic Plan (2022), as well as working with the providers to ensure that students have access to Welsh-medium learning experiences as part of their studies.

National Centre for Learning Welsh

Providing opportunities and encouragement for young people and adults to learn Welsh and continue to develop their Welsh language skills is a key part of our Cymraeg 2050 strategy. We've invested record amounts in the work of the National Centre for Learning Welsh during this Senedd Term, and the latest data shows that over 18,300 learners are learning Welsh each year.

Since 2022, the Welsh Government has provided additional funding to the National Centre to deliver the Ymlaen gyda'r Dysgu scheme, which offers free Welsh lessons to 16 to 25-year-olds. Provisional data for 2024-25 shows that 980 learners completed one of the National Centre's bespoke courses for 16 to 18-year-olds, with a further 776 learners aged 18-25 following mainstream courses for free in community settings. 198 learners also followed one of the Centre's courses tailored for the HE sector.

The National Centre has also expanded its role supporting schools and now provides free Learn Welsh training to the education workforce. This is supported by an annual grant of £1.1 million from us.

In February 2023 the National Centre for Learning Welsh started to work with the regional consortia, local authorities and sabbatical scheme providers, to plan and develop a programme for practitioners to learn Welsh. Since September 2024, 2,000 practitioners have enrolled in either online, self-taught or face-to-face courses to develop their Welsh skills.

Learning Welsh in the workplace helps to strengthen employees' confidence to use Cymraeg in everyday situations. The National Centre's Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) continues to thrive and is supported by an annual grant of over £2.6 million.

As we've already outlined, the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 establishes the National Institute for Learning Welsh ('the Athrofa'), which will start operating on 1 August 2027. The Athrofa will take over the functions of the National Centre and will support lifelong Welsh language learning, helping more people to learn and use Welsh every day, and giving everyone the chance to progress along their language journey.

In January 2026, we announced that Llinos Roberts would be Chair of the Athrofa.

5. The education workforce, resources and qualifications

Welsh in Education Workforce Plan

Our Welsh in Education Workforce Plan has been implemented since 2022 and includes a number of initiatives led by the Welsh Government and partners to attract, retain and upskill more practitioners who can teach through the medium of Welsh. Under the plan, the Cynllun

Pontio conversion scheme has enabled around 100 primary teachers to transfer into secondary settings. The Retention Bursary offers £5,000 to teachers in their fourth year of teaching to encourage them to remain in Welsh-medium education. The Workforce Capacity Building Grant directly helps schools to undertake projects and professional learning to improve in targeted areas of the curriculum.

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol promotes studying Welsh at A Level, and targets undergraduates to become teachers through Dysgu'r Dyfodol. We've made improvements to Welsh language provision in ITE and offer the Iaith Athrawon Yfory incentive scheme to encourage new entrants. The National Centre for Learning Welsh supports the development of teachers' Welsh language skills through a range of bespoke programmes, including intensive courses through the Sabbatical Scheme, dedicated tutors working within local authority areas, and a range of other methods of delivery including self-study, virtual, face-to-face, and residential.

Adnodd

We established Adnodd on 1 April 2023 as a company limited by guarantee, marking a significant milestone in the reform of educational resource provision in Wales. The 2023–24 financial year represented a transition phase, during which Adnodd appointed its Board, Chair and Chief Executive, and began building organisational capacity.

While Adnodd was in its early stages, we ensured continuity of provision through existing contracts and grants. This included further investment in Welsh-medium textbooks, resources reflecting diversity and Welsh history, and materials to support learners with additional learning needs. Work also continued on long term programmes such as Ein Llais Ni, focused on oracy, confidence and wellbeing through the medium of Welsh.

Adnodd launched its first Strategy (2025–2028), setting out a clear vision for equitable access to high quality bilingual resources and aligning its work with Welsh Government priorities, including literacy, numeracy, wellbeing and Welsh history. A substantial volume of new and updated bilingual resources was made freely available to schools, with a particular emphasis on supporting new GCSEs. Significant investment was also made in books and digital resources, including accessible formats for learners who are blind or partially sighted, immersive digital tools, and resources supporting Welsh language acquisition across age ranges.

Adnodd expanded support for innovation and collaboration across the sector, including targeted funding for projects focused on equity, anti-racism, literacy and well-being, and professional learning programmes for practitioners.

Theme 2: Increasing the use of Welsh

6. The workplace

Cymraeg Gwaith

The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 strengthens our approach to supporting Cymraeg in the workplace—including through the development of a consistent new approach to measuring Welsh language skills and the establishment of the National Institute for learning Welsh.

Our current grant funding for the National Centre supports the Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) scheme, which offers varied and flexible training to strengthen Welsh language skills in the workplace. The scheme has expanded over this Senedd term to offer to offer sector-specific provision including provision tailored for the education workforce, the health and social care and childcare sectors.

Since 2022, the Welsh Government has provided additional funding to the National Centre to deliver a programme of support for the health and social care sector, in support of the Welsh Government’s Mwy na Geiriau (More than Just Words) Plan.

Between 2023 and 2025, around 1,500 staff enrolled on the National Centre’s ‘cysiau Codi Hyder’ (Confidence-building courses), with around 6,000 workers taking part in the wider Learn Welsh programme for the Health and Social Care sector. The programme is being expanded in 2025-26 to include specifically tailored courses for the Neurodiversity, and Dementia Care workforce.

The National Centre also provides a programme of support for Welsh Government staff, to support our ambition to increase the use of Welsh within our internal operations and therefore helping to build a confident bilingual workforce. This is one of the elements that support our Cymraeg: It belongs to us all strategy which aims for us to be a truly bilingual workplace by 2050. Early progress has shown a substantial increase in the numbers of our staff learning Cymraeg, from 73 in 2020 to 653 in 2025 (an increase of 795%).

Organisational development and Cymraeg—Leading in a Bilingual Country behaviour change programme

Our Leading in a Bilingual Country programme works with senior leaders to increase the use of Cymraeg in organisational culture. Rooted in organisational change methodology, it complements other language policy work and advocates for positive, inclusive communication and leadership that fosters gradual, celebrated increases in Cymraeg. Three cohorts of leaders have taken part in the programme since 2021, a fourth is underway, and we’ve conducted many day-long or ‘taster’ sessions. We’re currently examining ways of expanding the programme.

ARFer

We've invested in the research and development of **ARFer**, a language pledges in the workplace project which aims to increase the use of the Welsh language, now available in **app** form. Teams within the Welsh Government and other organisations have trialled the app and, out of 704 responses, 82% of users reported that ARFer had increased their Welsh language use.

7. Services

Welsh language Standards

We've worked through the Welsh language Standards (referred to as 'Standards' below) work programme as set out in our Programme for Government. Standards serve as an important contribution to our Cymraeg 2050 strategy by increasing the provision of Welsh language services and enabling people more opportunities to use the Welsh language in their daily lives. Standards also introduce duties on bodies to provide more Welsh language services to their employees and help bodies increase the use of Welsh in their administration.

During this Senedd term, we've made Welsh Language Standards Regulations ('Standards Regulations') for healthcare regulators and for water and sewerage companies who provide services to members of the public in Wales. In March 2025, we added additional public bodies to existing Standards Regulations, and Standards Regulations for housing associations were laid at the Senedd on 10 February with a debate scheduled for 24 March.

In addition, we sought opportunities to add new public bodies to existing Standards Regulations through legislation. For example, we used primary legislation establishing the Corporate Joint Committees, Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care and the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research to add these bodies to existing Regulations.

There was also a commitment to implement Standards for public sector. There changes afoot in the public transport sector. This includes the establishment of GBR (Great British Railways) to coordinate rail travel across England and Wales in 2026, and the Bus Services Act which recently received Royal Assent. To ensure that they are fit for purpose, Standards Regulations for public transport providers will not be finalised until these policy developments have been completed.

8. Social use of Welsh

Community-based delivery

The work of our grant recipients continues to provide invaluable spaces for people to use the Welsh language socially.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru delivers a wide programme of extracurricular opportunities for children and young people. Its cultural, sporting and social activities give members practical, enjoyable ways to strengthen their Welsh-language skills and to use the language confidently in informal settings. The Urdd's cultural offer has grown again this year with the

reestablishment of Y Cwmni, the Urdd's national youth theatre. With our funding, the theatre has already staged several plays and is currently planning for a large-scale production in the Wales Millennium Centre this Summer. The Urdd Eisteddfod is attracting more and more competitors year on year. The 2025 Urdd Eisteddfod achieved a record 119,593 registered competitors across around 400 competitions, alongside a 43% increase in the number of new young Welsh speakers taking part compared with the previous year.

The National Eisteddfod is far more than just a week-long festival. Their offering provides multi-year engagement and participation projects with a focus on increasing the use of Welsh within communities. The Eisteddfod plays an important role in bringing communities together and creating new opportunities for people to learn and use Welsh. We'll soon launch a strategic legacy framework in partnership with the National Eisteddfod to fully embed this way of working. In recent years, as with the Urdd Eisteddfod, we've helped the Eisteddfod broaden its reach by providing free tickets to low-income families, improving access to the festival. This support is built into the event's core funding, making the approach sustainable for the future. We are also supporting the National Eisteddfod to mark the Eisteddfod's 850th anniversary this year.

The network of **mentrau iaith** have an important role in developing community-based projects and have recently provided more emphasis on community empowerment. All the mentrau iaith prepare local language profiles that enable them to understand the linguistic needs of the communities they serve. These are valuable tools to help inform and develop projects and campaigns. We also provide funding to Mentrau Iaith Cymru, which is an umbrella organisation for the mentrau iaith and support the network in a wide range of key issues, including training, marketing, HR and staff development.

Wales' Young Farmers Clubs give young people a social space to meet while developing a broad mix of skills—including increased confidence in using Welsh. In recent years there has been notable growth in participation from members and clubs that previously used less Welsh, with more young people taking part in Welsh-medium activities such as the National YFC Eisteddfod, public speaking competitions and Welsh-language residential. The funding has enabled several county federations to plan and promote Welsh-language activities more strategically and to encourage their members to use the language more frequently.

In 2025, **Dydd Miwsig Cymru** celebrated its 10th anniversary. More than 40 community gigs took place across Wales, giving thousands of school pupils the chance to experience Welsh music live. The day also led to a substantial rise in the streaming of Welsh-language songs, with levels remaining higher than before—clear evidence of its growing impact year on year and its role in strengthening the Welsh language through music and community participation.

Dydd Miwsig Cymru continues to attract significant media attention, including coverage from major UK outlets such as The One Show and The Guardian, as well as Welsh platforms including ITV Cymru, Wales Online and the Western Mail. This visibility helps to showcase the

vibrancy of the Welsh language and culture, while raising awareness of Wales and Welsh music across the UK.

A number of case studies have shown that Dydd Miwsig Cymru has inspired people not only to begin learning Welsh but also to connect more deeply with the Welsh-language music scene. This, in turn, encourages greater everyday use of the language. Promoters across Wales now see the celebration as a catalyst for organising events in areas where Welsh-language gigs have traditionally been less common, creating new cultural opportunities and helping to build social capital within Welsh-speaking spaces.

Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions—infrastructure and context

9. Community and economy

Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan

In 2022 we created the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan with the aim of bringing housing, economic development, community development and language planning policy areas together to support Welsh-speaking communities with high numbers of second homes. The plan included a numerous intervention which includes:

- The Perthyn Project which provides a bespoke advice and support service to community groups.
- The Perthyn Grant Scheme providing early intervention financial support to help communities to develop their ideas into viable social enterprises and community led housing schemes.
- A Cultural Ambassadors Network that raises individuals' awareness of the Welsh language and help them share key information about the language and promote its use within the community.
- The Fair Chance Scheme that supports property sellers wishing to prioritise local buyers by taking some practical steps.

The Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan is currently being evaluated. This evaluation will help inform the way the plan and its interventions are implemented in the future.

Second Homes and Affordability

We've also worked across-government on a package of interventions to address affordability and the negative impacts linked to high numbers of second homes. The Dwyfor Second Homes and Affordability Pilot is also trialling several interventions that aim to reduce the effects high concentration of second homes can have on the long-term sustainability of communities.

ARFOR programme

£11m was made available for phase 2 of the ARFOR programme (as part of the Co-operation Agreement) to support a small number of strategic interventions aimed at supporting the economy and Welsh language in the ARFOR region—comprising of Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. The programme—delivered as a grant to Cyngor Gwynedd on behalf of the 4 local authorities—aimed at piloting approaches to support the economy and Welsh language has been delivered via several contracted services, as well as some elements of direct delivery via the local authorities themselves. The programme has focussed on several key elements including having as its core helping communities flourish economically while also strengthening the Welsh language. It does this by encouraging young people to stay or return to their home regions, supporting local businesses, and promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace and community.

We commissioned Wavehill Consulting Ltd to provide an ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Programme. Funding for the ARFOR 2 programme came to an end at the end of March 2025. For this financial year, £500k has been made available to continue aspects of the ARFOR programme—and to ‘pause and reflect’ on the lessons learnt / best practice from ARFOR 1 and 2, the independent evaluation by Wavehill, opportunities for mainstreaming and help inform the Government’s response to elements of the Commission for Welsh-speaking communities’ report.

10. Culture and media

We’re working across various sectors and policy areas to implement Cymraeg 2050. In this respect, all our arm’s length bodies in the culture and sport sector are committed to supporting our target to increase language use and reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050. We want to see and hear the Welsh language widely used in popular culture in all its forms, in arts, media and literature, and in theatre, film and television. The use of Welsh by role models such as sportsmen and women, musicians, actors, and other prominent figures and organisations is a means of raising the status of the Welsh language as a living language.

Our Priorities for Culture, published in May 2025, include an ambition to ensure culture supports and promotes the Welsh language and reflects Wales as a bilingual and multilingual nation.

Additionally, the creative industries continue to play a central role in promoting the Welsh language. S4C remains a cornerstone of Welsh-language broadcasting, while high-end drama and global streaming platforms such as Netflix and Disney+ have expanded the international reach of Welsh stories and culture. This enhanced visibility is helping to normalise the Welsh language on screen and raise awareness of contemporary Welsh identity with global audiences.

Creative Wales has invested strategically in Welsh language content creation, sustaining jobs in Welsh-speaking communities and supporting Welsh businesses. Between 2020-21 and 2024-25 alone, Creative Wales’ Production Funding mechanism supported 10 Welsh

language productions, including productions such as *Hafiach*, *Cleddau/The One That Got Away*, and *Golau/The Light in the Hall*. On film, the co-funding of *Effie yn Blaenau* marks the first Welsh language feature film developed in partnership with S4C. The Sinema Cymru fund has further accelerated the development of ambitious, Welsh language cinema, supporting a new wave of projects, from literary adaptations like *Llyfr Glas Nebo* to original screenplays such as *MOGI* and *Cwlwm*, showcasing the depth and diversity of Welsh language storytelling.

Through close collaboration with Creative Wales, in 2024-25 the Books Council of Wales supported more than 138 Welsh-language books, 14 magazines and the Golwg360 digital news service, while expanding provision for learners and improving representation through targeted publishing initiatives. Collectively, these achievements demonstrate the breadth of Welsh-language media provision and its central role in delivering Cymraeg 2050 objectives.

11. Wales and the wider world

We've continued to place the Welsh language at the heart of our work in implementing our International Strategy for Wales. The Welsh Government was part of the UK's formal delegation to Mondiacult—UNESCO's World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development—in Barcelona for the first time in 2025, reflecting Wales's growing profile and ambition in international cultural engagement.

Language-based cooperation is a central feature of our international work, including through our bilateral agreements with international governments such as Ireland, where culture, language and heritage are explicit areas of collaboration, and with the Basque Country, Catalonia, Flanders and Brittany, where language policy is identified as a key shared priority.

We're also a full member of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity. The NPLD is a Europe-wide network working in the field of language policy and planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small State Languages throughout Europe. The primary aim of the NPLD is to raise awareness at European level of the importance of linguistic diversity. Another aim is to facilitate the exchange of best practice among governments, policy makers, practitioners, researchers and experts from across Europe.

We continue to chair the British-Irish Council's Indigenous, Minority and Lesser Used Languages work group, and continue to take advantage of this forum to share good practice and expertise with people from different backgrounds.

12. Technology and the Welsh language

We're proud of our ground-breaking and innovative work to ensure that the Welsh language is at the forefront of new technological developments, including artificial intelligence. Our work is recognised for being world-leading, with the Cymraeg approach often adopted by other countries and organisations, including UNESCO, as a model for other multilingual and minority-language situations.

Our focus at the start of the Senedd term was to continue to deliver the **Welsh Language Technology Action Plan** (2018-2024) which prioritised developing and openly sharing new infrastructure for our language which, in its launch in 2018, set the Welsh Government ahead of the curve in responding to emerging trends by looking specifically at artificial intelligence (AI). As part of that Plan, ChatGPT was improved and used within Bangor University’s chatbot **Macsen**, and we **announced a partnership with OpenAI** to openly share Welsh language resources. We made **Cysgliad**, a suite of Welsh language grammar checking and spellchecking tools available free of charge to individuals, the education and third sectors and to organisations with 10 members of staff or fewer—over 15,000 have accessed Cysgliad for free as a result. We also funded Bangor University’s openly available bilingual synthetic voices, used in their **Transcriber**. These improvements in turn fed into their voice banking service, **Lleisiwr**, which enables people with Motor Neurone Disease for example to use a **synthetic personalised version of their voice in Welsh** after they lose the ability to speak. Our work with Tobii Dynavox, a leading communications company, also led to **TD Snap Express Cymraeg**, software that supports children and adults who have difficulty speaking. All of these components are available on our **Helo Blod list of Welsh language tools and resources**, which we regularly update.

We published our new **priorities for Welsh language technology and AI** in January 2025. These include making sure that everyone can access Welsh language technology. With this in mind, we support and work with the technology sector to ensure use of the language technology components we’ve funded and openly shared. As part of our partnership with Microsoft, we’ve shared resources and collaborated to create a **simultaneous interpretation facility in Microsoft Teams** meetings for example. This facility is provided at no additional cost to Microsoft 365 license users. Work continues with Microsoft to further develop this facility, as well as Copilot in Welsh (ahead of many of the world’s larger languages) and bilingual transcription and captions in Microsoft Teams (we believe this is the first case of bilingual transcription available in Teams), aiding bilingual working. We’ve also recently published ‘Cymraeg mewn Clic’, a one click app on our corporate network that reduces friction to using Welsh in technology, making it easier for more of our staff to have a full Welsh language experience using Microsoft on their work laptops. In the current financial year, we’re investing £402,150 into our work in technology, with £406,400 earmarked for 2026-27.

We hope that this will lead to the creation of similar and new resources for languages spoken around the world, based on our work here in Wales. We also continue to work with other global companies and organisations such as The Government of Catalonia on their **AINA project**, and with UNESCO as part of their Decade of Indigenous Languages, so that our work on this can help multilingual communities around the world.

13. Linguistic infrastructure

Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy

Towards the beginning of this Senedd term, we held a consultation on a draft policy for linguistic infrastructure (i.e. the things that help us to use Welsh in everyday life, like dictionaries, terminology resources, linguistic corpora, and research and standardisation work) aimed at making it easier for people of all walks of life to use Welsh.

We published our **Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy** in 2023, and our priorities in this area continue to be those set out in the policy. Our work has included launching the **GetWelshWords** web pages. These pages offer easy access to the main Welsh dictionaries and termbases, along with user notes to help people choose the right one for them and were developed following input by the Centre for Digital Public Services to better understand the requirements of different audiences and ensure they have the best possible experience.

We fund several key linguistic infrastructure projects and bodies, including Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru (the historic, academic dictionary of the Welsh language), Y Termiadur Addysg (Education Terminology dictionary) and Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru (the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters). Given the high level of expertise that exists in Wales, we've worked consistently with partners to further develop relationships with and between key stakeholders, seeking new opportunities to collaborate, and forging new connections.

In 2021 we reinstated a panel to address a number of Welsh language orthography issues, under the chairmanship of Dr Dylan Foster Evans of Cardiff University. The Panel's decisions are mainstreamed into the primary dictionaries and termbases. The Panel is now preparing its second programme of work. Also during the first half of the Senedd term, a work group was set up to standardise **terms in relation to race and ethnicity**, chaired by Delyth Prys of Bangor University. This group consulted with key stakeholders and individuals to create an up-to-date list of terms to help people discuss anti-racism in Welsh in both work and personal contexts.

Welsh place names

We've continued work to safeguard Welsh language place names across Wales in collaboration with key partners, including Cadw, which holds responsibility for historic place names, and the Welsh Language Commissioner, who standardises Welsh place names for cities, towns, and villages through a **publicly available online database**.

We've safeguarded Welsh language place names through commitments in the Programme for Government and the Co-operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru. We set out our initial steps during this period in our **Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan**, which we published in October 2022, and **Welsh Linguistic Infrastructure Policy**, published in June 2023, both of which identified the need for stronger evidence to inform future policy interventions.

To address this, we commissioned research to better understand where, how, and why place names are changing in Wales. We published the findings in ***Place name changes in Wales: research on current trends*** on 6 June 2025. Based on the report's findings, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Welsh Language made an **Oral Statement** in September 2025 setting out our priorities for Welsh place names.

Recording and data collection remain central to safeguarding place names for future generations. The statutory [List of Historic Place Names of Wales](#), maintained by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government, continues to expand. Established in 2017, the List now contains over 700,000 names, with thousands of additional entries added in the past year alone. To complement this, the Welsh Government has launched a [Place Names Recording Tool](#) via DataMapWales, enabling members of the public to record Welsh and historic place names that are not currently shown on digital maps. This supports wider data sharing with partners such as [Mapio Cymru / OpenStreetMap](#) and [Welsh Wikipedia](#), with the aim of increasing the visibility of Welsh place names on digital mapping platforms and strengthening the evidence base for continued use of Welsh place names.

Officials have continued to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. We've established a Local Authority Welsh Place Names Forum with participation from Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Sir Gâr local authorities to share best practice and learn about pressures as they arise. Building on this work, engagement with officers from all 22 Welsh local authorities is being expanded through existing forums.

Place names remains a challenging area of work, and while the research report we mentioned above focused on property names, business names, and street names, it also highlighted the need for further research into topographical names—especially those used by tourism and outdoor pursuits communities and later adopted locally and online, and which by their very nature are more elusive. We continue to explore avenues for this second phase of research.

14. Language planning

In essence all elements of this paper cover our language planning efforts. However, below we've focused on our approach to mainstreaming *Cymraeg 2050* and language planning across the Welsh public sector.

Over the last five years, we've significantly strengthened Wales's language planning capacity across national, regional and local levels. This has included building a clearer understanding of language planning principles across government and partner organisations and increasing both leaders' and staffs' language planning capability. The introduction of Leading in a Bilingual Country has helped increase public organisations' focus on bilingual working more consistently. This has enabled leaders across the public sector to contribute to implementing our national Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

We've also helped senior leaders across government to articulate the role of *Cymraeg 2050* within wider government priorities, helping to ensure that the conditions needed for the language to thrive—socially, economically and culturally—are considered more consistently in decision making. Continuing to build on this momentum remains a key priority.

15. Research, evaluation and statistics

Over the last five years, we've continued to develop the evidence base underpinning Cymraeg 2050 by planning, commissioning and delivering research, analysis and evaluation, and by expanding collaboration with the wider research community.

We published the **first results from Census 2021 about the Welsh language** in December 2022. This was followed by **publications analysing Welsh language ability by various characteristics**, including an analysis of Welsh language transmission within the household. Following the publication of these statistics, we published a **joint work plan with the Office for National Statistics on the coherence of Welsh language statistics**, with the aim of improving our understanding of the main survey and administrative data sources used to produce statistics about the Welsh language. We also published data from the **Welsh language use survey 2019-20 by several topics** including Welsh language use in the workplace, which provided a snapshot of Welsh language use in the nine months prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also continued to publish **quarterly updates of Welsh language statistics from the Annual Population Survey** and **data from the National Survey for Wales**.

A significant development is Prosiect BRO: a three-year sociolinguistic study launched in 2023 that explores Welsh language use and linguistic change at a granular, community level using mixed research methods. The project is led by researchers from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, the University of the Highlands and Islands, and Jesus College Oxford, and is supported by Welsh Government grant funding. Its first output—a compendium analysing census data at local authority and LSOA level—was published as part of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities' first phase report. The research team has undertaken community surveys and ethnographic observation in Welsh-speaking communities, and emerging findings are already being shared. The project aims to generate practical policy recommendations and tools to support these communities.

We've commissioned several research and evaluation projects to inform our work in a range of areas. As noted above, an evaluation is underway to assess the implementation and impact of the Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan. We've commissioned research to examine the contribution of the Sefydli a Symud programme in expanding Welsh-medium childcare and early years provision. We've published several research reports on immersion education, including an **evidence assessment of effective approaches and methods in immersion education**; a **map of Welsh-medium late immersion education**; and a **scoping review of late immersion and intensive language provision**.

An important recent development has been the publication of the **Cymraeg 2050 Areas of Research Interest (ARI)**. This document communicates to the research community—in Wales and beyond—the types of evidence that will be most valuable in informing policy decisions linked to *Cymraeg 2050*. Covering areas such as the early years, education and training, health and social care, the economy and community regeneration, its purpose is to

support knowledge exchange, stimulate new research aligned to *Cymraeg 2050* priorities, and encourage increased investment in research relating to the Welsh language. Publication of the ARI follows publication of a **Cymraeg 2050 Research and Evaluation Framework** in 2022, which provides guidance on the methodological considerations, context, assumptions, risks, and data sources relevant to research and evaluation relating to *Cymraeg 2050*.

Conclusion

This Evidence Paper provides an overview of work to deliver the Cymraeg 2050 strategy—including Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement priorities—during the sixth Senedd.

We've implemented wide-ranging activities on the journey to achieving 1 million speakers and to increase the daily use of Cymraeg, from work to encourage early-years transmission of the language to lifelong opportunities to learn and use Cymraeg in our communities. Firm foundations are also in place, through the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 in particular, to underpin our long-term vision with the infrastructure required to achieve our goals.

We look forward to responding formally to the Committee's recent recommendations in the coming weeks.