

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
Newyddiaduraeth Newyddion yng Nghymru / News Journalism in Wales
CWLC(5) NJW02
Ymateb gan BBC Cymru / Evidence from BBC Wales

1. What we do

BBC Cymru Wales is the primary provider of news and current affairs on television, radio and online in Wales.

On television, the BBC *Wales Today* service encompasses morning, lunchtime afternoon and late night bulletins as well as a full 30 minute programme at 1830 which is the most watched TV news programme in Wales. The 1830 programme forms part of an integrated news hour on BBC One which features world, UK and Wales news.

BBC Wales produces the '*Newyddion*' news service for S4C. The audience for the main evening programme has increased since its relaunch in 2013. The main '*Newyddion 9*' programme features Wales, UK and World news, but the main emphasis is on Welsh stories and the branding reflects the visual identity of S4C.

BBC Wales' online service in the English language forms part of the BBC News service which is delivered on the website and via a dedicated app. Significant Welsh stories are featured on the BBC's Home and UK indexes, whilst the Wales index delivers a more comprehensive Welsh news service, encompassing news, features and analysis. In the Welsh Language, the online BBC Cymru Fyw service delivers a mix of news and features and its audience has grown significantly since its launch. BBC Wales News also delivers news services on Facebook and Twitter in both English and Welsh.

News is an integral part of our two national radio stations, BBC Radio Cymru and BBC Radio Wales, featuring news bulletins and programmes throughout the day. Radio Cymru has three daily news programmes - the morning show *Post Cyntaf*, the *Taro'r Post* phone in and the evening news programme *Post Prynawn*. Radio Wales' news programmes, *Good Morning Wales* and *Good Evening Wales* are on air for five hours every weekday offering a blend of Wales, UK and world news.

Our daily news services are delivered by a range of specialist production teams and a newsgathering operation that includes specialist correspondents, a team of political correspondents and reporters as well a network of reporters working across Wales from centres in Bangor, Wrexham, Aberystwyth, Carmarthen and Swansea.

2. Audience overview

The main *BBC Wales Today* bulletin at 6.30pm each weekday has an average audience of 265,000. This is the highest audience in Wales for any news programme on any television channel or radio station, just ahead of the audience in Wales for the *Six O'Clock News* on BBC1 (260,000). The later *Wales Today* bulletin at 10.30pm has an average of 185,000 viewers each evening, with a lunchtime audience of 155,000. On S4C, the average audience for *Newyddion 9* has increased again this year to 21,000, showing the appeal of its Wales-focused agenda. The three minute reach of *Wales Today* and *Newyddion* stand at 1.5m and 65,000 viewers respectively.

On radio, Radio Wales's *Good Morning Wales* averages 62,000 listeners in its peak 8am slot, with Radio Cymru's *Post Cyntaf* at 28,000. The corresponding evening audiences (at 5pm) are 17,000 for *Good Evening Wales* and 12,000 for *Post Prynhawn*.

The key role of news from Wales on TV and radio in both languages is underlined by observing that BBC Wales's morning radio news programmes provide the weekday peak audiences for both Radio Wales and Radio Cymru, and that the audience for *Wales Today* and *Newyddion* are both higher than the average audiences across peak hours for BBC1 Wales and S4C respectively.

Online audiences are necessarily measured differently in that we report on the number of users across a week, and we cannot split out users in Wales, so these are all UK-wide figures.

BBC Wales' online news service is accessed by 2.4m unique browsers each week, with the level highly dependent on how many Wales news stories are surfaced on the BBC's main news pages. In Welsh, BBC Cymru Fyw averages 53,000 weekly unique browsers, up from 10,000 for news before its launch.

(All figures are weekly averages over the latest available 12 months)

In common with the BBC's network news audiences, BBC Wales's TV and radio news programmes appeal mainly to older viewers and listeners, with three-quarters of the viewers and listeners aged over 45. In contrast, however, almost two-thirds of the audience for BBC Wales's online news service are aged under 45, illustrating the complementary role that BBC Wales's online news plays in reaching new and growing audiences in Wales.

BBC News has an enduring and significant lead over key competitors for trust, accuracy and impartiality.

3. Our strategy

Delivering a high-quality and agenda setting news service is an integral part of the BBC's service to the Welsh audience. Recognising the key role of journalism in the delivery of its public purposes, BBC Wales increased its investment in news and current affairs over the last five years at a time when the licence fee settlement led to a real terms decrease in the BBC's income.

As part of the new charter reinvestment settlement we are seeking to further increase our investment in our news services in order to develop our specialist journalism and our ability to reach underserved audiences. We will focus our efforts on using the totality of the BBC's services in Wales, including local and network services.

The growing importance of digital platforms and our ability to reach a younger demographic through our website and social platforms has been a key area of focus in recent years. We have devoted more effort to delivering bespoke material for digital audiences and are continuing to experiment with new forms of delivering stories.

In the Welsh language, through our experience of developing services such as *Cymru Fyw* and *Newyddion*, we have learnt that audiences appreciate elements of distinctive content which complements English language services, rather than services that merely aim to mirror their English language equivalents.

4. Local journalism and partnership working

The focus of the BBC's efforts in this area will be on two key initiatives: News Hub and the Local Democracy Reporting Service. Taken together, the proposals mean an overall investment of around £8 million a year across the UK and it heralds a new and unique partnership that will support both the BBC's on-going public mission to serve local audiences, and the growth and evolution of the commercial news media sector.

4.1 News Hub

The BBC will make available its content for immediate use on the internet services of local and regional news organisations across the UK.

The News Hub would make available all pieces of BBC video and audio content produced by the BBC's nations and local news teams to other media providers. Subject to rights and further discussion with the industry we would also look to share longer versions of content not broadcast, such as sports interviews and press conferences.

Content would be easily searchable by other news organisations, making relevant material available to be downloaded or delivered by the outlets themselves, or for

them to simply embed within their own websites. Sharing of content would ensure licence fee payers get maximum value from their investment in local journalism, but it would also provide additional content to allow news organisations to strengthen their offer to audiences without additional costs. We would also continue to enhance linking out from BBC Online, building on the work of Local Live. (*BBC British Bold Creative*, <https://downloads.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/reports/pdf/futureofthebbc2015.pdf>)

Work is ongoing to finalise the technical specifications. The product is subject to procurement and the technical requirements will be put out to tender shortly.

In Wales, we would anticipate sharing our relevant content in both English and Welsh.

4.2 Local Democracy Reporting Service/other partnership initiatives

150 local reporters will be funded by the BBC and employed by qualifying local news organisations to cover local authorities and public services. The framework created envisages that this number may rise to 200 in 2019.

In Wales, we anticipate 11 roles being created – with each individual covering 2 local authority areas.

The agreement will get under way as part of the new BBC Charter in 2017 and sets out to help sustain and support plurality in the local news media, drive up the quality of services and use the expertise of both the BBC and the local commercial news sector for the benefit of all audiences.

4.3 News attribution

BBC Wales also plays an important role driving audiences to other trusted third-party news services. In March there were just over half a million external link clicks on BBC Wales online news pages, and the top destinations were the *Daily Post*, the *South Wales Argus* and *Wales Online* (source: comScore Dax).

In addition to a continuing emphasis on clearer attribution, there will be a jointly commissioned independent audit to establish the usage of local press content by the BBC on its media platforms and vice versa. The outcome of the independent audit will inform a review of the BBC's efforts to improve the linking and attribution of stories and sources.