

WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993

This scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board under Section 14 of the Act. It came into effect on 02/04/2007

ABOUT BRITISH WATERWAYS

British Waterways (BW) is a public corporation, accountable to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in England and Wales, and the Scottish Executive in Scotland. It also works closely with the Welsh Assembly Government.

BW manages a 2,200-mile long, 200-year-old, network of canals and rivers. As well as being governed by the normal accounting, employment, environmental, planning and safety legislation that affects any modern organization, BW is specifically governed by the Transport Acts of 1962 and 1968 as well as many of the original canal enabling Acts.

BW's ambition is that by 2012 it will have created an expanded, vibrant, largely self-sufficient waterway network used by twice as many people as in 2002. It will be regarded as one of the nation's most important and valued national assets. Visitors will be delighted with the quality of the experience and as a consequence many will become active participants.

Website Details

www.britishwaterways.co.uk for corporate information

www.waterscape.com for leisure information

1 Introduction

Under the Welsh Language Act 1993 every public body providing services to the public in Wales has to prepare a scheme setting out how it will provide those services in Welsh.

This is our scheme.

It describes how British Waterways (BW) will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act that, in the conduct of public business in Wales, the Welsh and English languages will be treated on a basis of equality.

This scheme sets out how BW will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales, and is fully supported by the BW Board, Chief Executive and Directors.

2 Policies, services and initiatives

2.1 Our policies, services and initiatives will be consistent with this scheme. They will support the use of Welsh and we will take advantage of every opportunity to ensure that they help the public in Wales use Welsh as part of their day to day lives.

2.2 When contributing to the development or delivery of policies, initiatives or services led by other organisations, we will do so in a way which is consistent with this scheme.

2.3 We will ensure that all staff involved in formulating policies and initiatives – and delivering services to the public in Wales - are aware of the requirements of this Scheme.

3 Legal documents and agreements

3.1 Legal documents and legal agreements with individuals, organisations or groups will be offered in the recipient's preferred language. Maps and other inserts in such agreements which are borrowed or used under licence will appear in the language of the original source.

4 Delivering Services

4.1 We will ensure that as many as possible of our services are available in Welsh – and we will let the public know when they are.

5 Standards of service in Welsh

5.1 Services provided in Welsh and English will be of equal quality and will be provided within the same timescale.

6 DEALING WITH THE WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

6.1 Written communication

6.1.1 BW welcomes correspondence in Welsh and English.

6.1.2 Correspondence received in Welsh will receive a reply in Welsh unless it is requested otherwise. The time for replying will be the same as for replying to letters written in English.

6.1.3 Every letter sent out in Welsh, or bilingually will be signed

6.1.4 Correspondence initiated by BW following a telephone or face-to-face conversation in Welsh will be in Welsh, unless it is requested otherwise.

6.1.5 When we initiate correspondence with an individual, group or organisation, we will do so in Welsh when we know that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh

6.1.6 Subject to the scoring system referred to below, when we send standard or circular correspondence to several recipients in Wales, it will be bilingual unless we know that all recipients would prefer to receive it in Welsh or English only.

6.1.7 We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Board, to identify objectively any standard or circular correspondence which need not be published in Welsh, or bilingually (for instance, when the correspondence is very technical or lengthy).

6.1.8 If the Welsh and English versions of any correspondence have to be published separately, our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time.

6.1.9 Any enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, where available.

6.1.10 Any enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, where available.

6.1.11 The above will apply to e-mail correspondence as well as paper correspondence.

6.2 Telephone communication

6.2.1 Because of the location of BW's main office it would not be practicable for staff located at that office to conduct telephone conversations in Welsh. However, when setting up telephone help lines, or similar facilities, to give information to the public in Wales, a Welsh Language service will be provided. This will be advertised alongside the English Language Service. Both Services will share the same telephone number.

6.2.2 BW will encourage staff based in Wales to answer the telephone with a bilingual greeting and use bilingual messages on their personal answer phones.

6.2.3 If a caller rings a direct line to an office in Wales and wishes to speak Welsh, but the person taking the call cannot do so, the caller will be given the choice, as appropriate, of having a Welsh speaker phone back at an agreed time, continuing the call in English or submitting their query in Welsh, by letter or email.

7 Public and other meetings in Wales

7.1 Contributions in Welsh will be welcomed at public meetings or meetings attended by invitation, that are arranged by BW in Wales.

7.2 Invitations and notices publicising a public meeting in Wales will be bilingual and invite those attending who wish to speak Welsh to let us know in advance of the date, so that simultaneous or consecutive translation facilities can be arranged.

7.3 Information, publicity and reports concerning public meetings in Wales will be bilingual, where available.

7.4 If arranging face to face meetings with the public in Wales, BW will establish their language preference at the earliest opportunity, and ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh member of staff is available to deal with those whose preferred language is Welsh.

7.5 If no suitably qualified Welsh speakers are available BW will offer the choice of continuing the meeting in English, or dealing with the subject by corresponding in Welsh.

7.6 Because of their location it would not be practicable for staff in our offices outside Wales to conduct face-to-face meetings with the public through the medium of Welsh.

BRITISH WATERWAYS' PUBLIC FACE

8 Corporate identity in Wales

8.1 All BW corporate identity features throughout Wales will be bilingual. The information on BW printed stationery which will be used in Wales, or used from England where the recipient is in Wales, will be bilingual. This includes material such as business cards, passes, tickets, complement slips, invitations and vehicles.

9 Publications and printed material

9.1.1 BW publications or printed material intended for distribution, sale or use in Wales will be published bilingually, subject to the scoring system referred to below. Normally, both languages will be produced within the same cover. If English and Welsh versions have to be printed separately, they will be of equal size and quality, published and launched on the same date and distributed and displayed together in Wales. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

9.1.2 If not available free of charge, the price of a bilingual document will not be greater than that of a single language publication – and the price of separate Welsh and English versions will be the same.

9.1.3 BW will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, to identify objectively corporate documents which need to be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

9.1.4 BW will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, setting out how we will increase the availability of bilingual publications, over time.

9.2 Forms and associated explanatory material

9.2.1 We will ensure that all forms and associated explanatory material for use by the public in Wales will be fully bilingual, subject to the scoring system referred to below. Normally, both languages will be produced within the same cover. If English and Welsh versions have to be printed separately, they will be of equal size and quality, published and launched on the same date and distributed and displayed together in Wales. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

9.2.2 We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Board, to identify objectively when forms should be published as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

9.2.3 We will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, to increase the number of forms available bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions.

10 Website

10.1 Our websites will include pages in both Welsh and English.

10.2 BW will prepare a programme, to be agreed with the Welsh Language Board, setting out how they will increase the Welsh language content of the website, over time.

10.3 When designing new websites, or redeveloping our existing websites, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards* and any other guidance issued by the Board with regard to developing websites

10.4 Whenever we post English language publications on our websites, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time, if available.

11 Press Notices

11.1 Press notices issued specifically to the Welsh language media in Wales will be produced in Welsh where deadlines permit.

12 Publicity activities

12.1 All of the publicity, public information, exhibition, awareness campaigns and advertising material we use in Wales (in order to target the general public) will be produced fully bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, both versions will be equal with regard

to size, prominence and quality. Both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible.

12.2 Advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, where deadlines permit, will be bilingual, or as separate Welsh and English versions.

12.3 All temporary and permanent exhibitions, show stands and information boards produced for display in Wales will be bilingual.

12.4 Market research or customer surveys carried out by or on behalf of BW in Wales, will use bilingual forms, and the interviewee will be offered the choice of being interviewed in either Welsh or English.

12.5 When exhibiting at exhibitions or events in Wales, it will be normal practice to have a suitably qualified Welsh speaker available, as required.

13 Signage

13.1 BW will ensure that any permanent and temporary signage, information boards, warning notices and legal notices will be bilingual in Wales. Any new items will be produced bilingually, any old items will be replaced with bilingual ones as they need replacing.

13.2 Within buildings in Wales, all official signs and notices will be bilingual.

13.3 On all signs and notices in Wales, Welsh and English text will be treated equally with regard to size, quality, legibility and prominence.

14 Official, Public and Recruitment Notices

14.1 Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English versions.

14.2 Notices in Welsh language publications will be in Welsh.

14.3 The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence - whether produced as a single bilingual version or as separate Welsh and English notices.

14.4 Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution may be in English only, unless the ability to speak Welsh is an essential requirement of the post being advertised, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English.

IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME

15 Staffing

15.1 We will identify those workplaces and jobs where the ability to speak Welsh is desirable or essential. This requirement may be defined as a component of a workplace or team, or it may be attached to a particular job.

15.2 From time to time, we will undertake audits to establish the number, ability level and location of staff that can speak, read and write Welsh (including staff that are learning Welsh). We will also identify staff who wish to learn Welsh.

15.3 The results of these two exercises will be compared to identify workplaces where there is a shortage of Welsh speaking staff.

15.4 We will respond to any shortages through our recruitment and training activities.

16 Recruitment

16.1 When fluency in Welsh is considered to be desirable or essential this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements.

16.2 When no suitable Welsh speaking candidates can be found for a post where Welsh is desirable, the person appointed will be encouraged to learn Welsh.

16.3 A candidate unable to speak Welsh may be appointed to a post for which Welsh is considered essential, but where time can be allowed to learn the language. In these cases, learning the language to the required level of competence, within a reasonable agreed period, will be a condition of employment.

16.4 For our offices outside Wales, for any posts having extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales we will consider whether fluency in Welsh should be a desirable or essential skill – and this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements.

17 Staff training and opportunities

17.1 BW will support the implementation of this scheme by encouraging and supporting members of staff who wish to learn Welsh or improve their ability to speak Welsh. Priority will be given to staff who as part of their regular duties have extensive and regular contact with Welsh speakers as part of their work.

18 Translation

18.1 BW will use the services of qualified professional translators or interpreters to help with the delivery of this scheme.

19 Information and Communications Technology

19.1 The need to provide information and services in Welsh, and operate in accordance with this scheme, will be catered for as we develop, design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

19.2 As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards*.

20 Partnership Working

The below refers only to partnerships dealing with services available to the public in Wales.

20.1 If BW are leading within a partnership in Wales, we will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme.

20.2 When joining a partnership in Wales led by another organisation, our input will comply with this scheme.

21 Internal arrangements

21.1 The measures in this scheme carry the full authority, support and approval of the British Waterways Board.

21.2 The Marketing, Communications & Service Director will be responsible for implementation, coordination and monitoring of the scheme. Directors and managers will be responsible for implementing those aspects of the scheme relevant to their departments and teams.

21.3 An action plan will be prepared and continuously updated, showing how BW is operating in accordance with this scheme. The action plan, which will be agreed with the Board, will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect, or as soon as possible thereafter. The plan will include targets, deadlines and a report on progress against each target.

21.4 The scheme will be publicised to all BW staff, and to the public in Wales. A link to the scheme will be available via the following websites:

www.britishwaterways.co.uk.

www.welsh-language-board.org.uk

21.5 BW will arrange briefing sessions for those staff whose day to day work may be affected by the scheme.

21.6 Any form of contact with the public in Wales, which is not specifically dealt with by this scheme, will be undertaken in a manner which is consistent with the general principles contained within this scheme.

22 Monitoring and Reporting Progress

22.1 BW will monitor progress in delivering the scheme continually to ensure that commitment to language equality and the targets set out in the accompanying action plan are being met.

22.2 As and when requested by the Welsh Language Board, BW will provide reports outlining progress in the delivery of the scheme.

22.3 An annual report on the monitoring process will be produced by the Marketing, Communications and Service Director, and a summary of the performance of BW in the implementation of this scheme will be included in its statutory annual report.

23 Reviews and Amendments

23.1 The Scheme will be reviewed every four years from the date of implementation.

23.2 From time to time BW may need to review the scheme, or propose amendments, because of changes within the organisation, or for any other reason.

23.3 No changes will be made to the scheme without the approval of the Welsh Language Board.

24 Comments and Complaints

24.1 Comments and/or complaints relating to this scheme should be directed to:

British Waterways
Customer Service Centre
64 Clarendon Road
Watford
WD17 1DA

T 01923 201120
F 01923 201300

Email: enquiries.hq@britishwaterways.co.uk