

CYNLLUN IAITH GYMRAEG

**a baratowyd yn unol â Gofynion
Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993**



WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

**prepared under the
Welsh Language Act 1993**

STATEMENT

North Wales Housing Ltd has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business it will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how North Wales Housing Ltd will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales.

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NWH – an organisation for PEOPLE

- 1. Give a little respect**
- 2. Find a better way**
- 3. We are what we do**
- 4. Be honest and open**
- 5. Open to all, closed to prejudice**
- 6. Be the best you can be**
- 7. Work hard, play hard**

8. Our values:

Respect: something we give rather than expect

Learning: finding a better way

Integrity: being honest even when there are consequences

Responsibility: we are what we do

Equality: open to all, closed to prejudice

Commitment: being the best we can be

AIMS AND CORE VALUES

The Welsh Language Scheme was prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993 (the Act) and the Regulatory Code for Housing Associations in Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, March 2006.

This Scheme originally received the approval of the Welsh Language Board under section 14(1) of the Act in August 2003.

Objectives:

- to enable everyone who uses a service or is in discussion with the organisation to do so through the medium of Welsh or English according to the personal choice of the individual;
- to ensure high quality services through the medium of Welsh;
- to promote the use of the Welsh language in the community;
- to encourage others to promote and use the Welsh language;
- to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language in the workplace.

The organisation acknowledges that members of the public can express their opinions and needs better in their chosen language. It also acknowledges that enabling the public to use the Welsh language is a matter of good practice rather than a concession, and that denying them the right to use their chosen language could place them in a disadvantaged position. The organisation will therefore offer the public the right to choose which language to use when dealing with it, in accordance with the principle above.

The exact detail of the organisation's response to the potential implications of Iaith Gwaith, which will ensure that provisions are in place to enable staff to use Welsh in the workplace if they choose, will be developed through the action plan attached to this report.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Organisation

- 1.1.1 The foundations of the organisation were laid in 1974 by local professional people who brought their skills to the Voluntary Housing Movement. It was then known as Llandudno and North Wales Housing Trust and the predominant housing need then was for accommodation for elderly people.
- 1.1.2 More than 100 new homes were developed in different coastal communities to meet this need.
- 1.1.3 Transfers from another organisation in Llandudno gave the Organisation a broader base and allowed it to develop improvement schemes in the early 1980s in other villages for different family needs. A sister company (L. & N. W. Housing Society Ltd.) was also formed to develop 'shared ownership' and 'leasehold elderly' schemes.
- 1.1.4 In 1987 the 'Trust' was changed to its present name and its policies began to be related to different housing needs such as accommodation for families, single people, special needs and homelessness in different communities along the North Wales coast. It now has a housing stock of around 2,300 homes.

1.2 Financing

- 1.2.1 The organisation, as a Registered Social Landlord, utilises grants, which are allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition, private finance is secured from banks, building societies and other financial institutions to support the development of new schemes and properties.

1.3 Board of Management

- 1.3.1 The Board of Management is elected each year by the shareholding members of the organisation and may consist of up to 12 full members and co-optees.

1.4 Operational Area

- 1.4.1 The Organisation operates primarily in three local authority areas. These are:
 - i) Conwy
 - ii) Gwynedd
 - iii) Ynys Môn

In linguistic terms, the operational area varies considerably, from small rural villages where Welsh is predominantly spoken, to anglicised coastal towns, where the percentage of Welsh speakers is very small. Overall, throughout the three local authority areas, the 2001 census recorded that over 50% of the population were Welsh speaking, with the highest percentage being 69% in Gwynedd.

- 1.4.2 From local authorities' statistics, the distribution pattern of the Welsh speaking population in the organisation's operational area is a complex structure. However, irrespective of the geographical distribution of Welsh speakers, this language scheme aims to provide a consistent standard of service suitable for the linguistic variation within the organisation's operational areas.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.5 Offices

1.5.1 The Organisation's Head Office is located at Llandudno Junction, with an Area Office in Bangor.

1.6 Workplace

1.6.1 The organisation employs 130 permanent staff of which 33 are fluent in Welsh.

1.6.2 The organisation works closely and in partnership with local authorities. It has daily contact with the public, tenants, contractors, consultants, financiers and various agencies.

1.7 Senior Staffing Structure

1.7.1 The existing Senior Staffing Structure is set out at Appendix 1.

2 SERVICE DELIVERY

2.1 New Policies, Procedures and Initiatives

- 2.1.1 In formulating new policies, procedures and initiatives affecting the provision of services to its clients and to the public in Wales, North Wales Housing will assess the linguistic consequences in relation to the use of the Welsh and English languages, and will ensure that such new policies, procedures and initiatives conform with the commitments given in this scheme.
- 2.1.2 New policies, procedures and initiatives will seek to promote and facilitate a bilingual service, which will move the Association closer to implementing the principle of equality at every opportunity.
- 2.1.3 The measures contained in this scheme will be applied to new policies, procedures and initiatives when they are implemented. Members of staff and others engaged in framing and implementing them will be made aware of this scheme and the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993 - any policy proposals affecting the scheme will be referred to the Welsh Language Board for consultation and agreement prior to implementation.
- 2.1.4 Mainstreaming is the term used to describe the work carried out under this measure. The organisation operates in accordance with the Assembly Government's definition of mainstreaming the Welsh language, namely:
"To consider the Welsh language in all aspects of your work and in everything you do, with the aim of ensuring that every opportunity is taken to promote and support the Welsh language; to contribute towards the Government's vision of a truly bilingual Wales; and to plan, provide and evaluate services in Welsh and in English".
- 2.1.5 In formulating new policies and initiatives, or in amending policies, the organisation will assess their linguistic impact and make sure they are consistent with this Language Scheme and will ensure that the measures in the Scheme are implemented when new policies and initiatives are implemented.
- 2.1.6 The Association will consult the Board beforehand regarding any proposal that would directly affect this Language Scheme. This Scheme will not be amended without the prior agreement of the Board.
- 2.1.7 We will ensure that whoever is involved in the formulation of policies is aware of the Scheme and of the organisation's responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993 and any other relevant pieces of legislation or guidance.
- 2.1.8 Housing associations can contribute towards the development of the Welsh language on a local or community level and we will aim to ensure that the organisation's new policies and initiatives promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language whenever possible.

2.2 Delivery of Service

- 2.2.1 It will be our standard practice to ensure that our services are available to the public in Welsh and in English and we will inform the public that those services are available in both languages.

2 SERVICE DELIVERY

2.2.2 Such arrangements as appropriate to departmental and organisational functions may include:

- Organising the service team so that Welsh-speaking staff are able to deal with the Welsh speaking public and clients
- Welsh speaking officers in one workplace being made available to assist another workplace when required
- Employing professional external translators for public meetings e.g. AGM
- Raising awareness among the Association's staff of the Language Scheme;
- Considering the need to increase the availability of Welsh language skills by means of training and recruitment.

2.3 The Standards of Service in Welsh

2.3.1 North Wales Housing is committed to delivering an equally high quality of service in Welsh and English. This principle will be stated in key documents such as business plans, corporate plans and annual reviews.

2.3.2 The organisation's Board of Management will monitor the standard of its Welsh Language Service as part of its regular monitoring and evaluation of services provided.

3 DEALING WITH WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

3.1 Correspondence

3.1.1 NWAHA welcomes correspondence equally in either Welsh or English.

- A standard phrase or symbol will be incorporated into all official notepaper and compliment slips indicating that communication with the Association is welcomed in both languages.
- Correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and will be signed.
- The response time for correspondence in Welsh will be the same as the response time for correspondence in English.
- If a preference for Welsh has been expressed orally or in writing by a person(s) or it is known that the person normally uses Welsh or prefers to do so, we will develop systems to ensure that future correspondence with that person will be through the medium of Welsh.
- Standard letters will be issued in bilingual form.
- Tenants and applicants preferred language of communication will be recorded in our systems.
- All staff will be provided with guidance on language equality in relation to written communication.
- When we commence correspondence with an individual, group or organisation, we will do so bilingually unless we know that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh or in English only.
- When we send out standard correspondence or a circular to a wide audience, it will be bilingual unless we know that every recipient would prefer to receive it in Welsh or in English only.
- If a separate Welsh and English language version of any correspondence must be published, our standard practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and for the same price (if relevant).
- Materials enclosed with bilingual correspondence will be bilingual.
- We will agree arrangements for correspondence and for arranging translation.

3.2 Telephone Communication

3.2.1 Anyone contacting the organisation by telephone should be able and welcome to do so through the medium of Welsh or English

3.2.2 All incoming calls will be answered with a bilingual greeting with the Welsh first. Staff whose duties include answering incoming telephone calls will be trained to use a bilingual greeting.

3.2.3 If no bilingual member of staff is available to deal with a person who wishes to speak Welsh, the offer will be made to arrange for a Welsh speaker to phone back as soon as possible. If this proves impossible, the caller may be offered the option of either continuing the call in English, or to write to the Association in Welsh.

3.2.4 The use of bilingual greetings will also extend to answer phones, with the Welsh message first.

3.2.5 In order to achieve the aim of treating the Welsh and English languages on an equal basis, we will take the following steps to enable Welsh speakers to deal with the Association in Welsh over the telephone:

3 DEALING WITH WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

- support the development of language skills for officers in switchboard or reception roles, by means of training/recruitment
- provide an internal directory of Welsh speakers to whom calls can be transferred
- provide staff with guidelines on how to deal with telephone calls from Welsh speakers and ensure that they are familiar with the arrangements

3.3 Public Meetings

- 3.3.1 When arranging public meetings, consideration will be given to what practical arrangements are necessary to enable every person to contribute through the medium of Welsh or English.
- 3.3.2 Any notices, agendas or other publicity material will let the public know that they are welcome to contribute in Welsh or English, and will invite those proposing to attend to let the organisation know their language preference.
- 3.3.3 Where translation facilities are provided, they will be by simultaneous interpretation.
- 3.3.4 A Welsh speaking member of staff will be present to welcome the public and deal with their queries on arrival.
- 3.3.5 When public meetings are held by the organisation, including conferences and other similar events, we will explain to those present that they will be welcome to contribute through the medium of Welsh or English.
- 3.3.6 We will adopt a method of establishing the language of choice in making the arrangements for public meetings. We will follow the following procedure:
- Public advertisements, invitations and other papers noting the arrangements for these events will make clear that the public will be welcome to contribute in Welsh or in English
 - We will invite attendees to inform the organisers whether they wish to use Welsh or English
 - The organiser will assess whether translation facilities are needed. As well as considering whether the organisation has been informed of the chosen language of the attendees, he/she will consider the location of the event, who is likely to be present, and the subject in question.
- 3.3.7 When there are Welsh speakers among those invited to attend, or if it is known that Welsh speakers intend to be present, meetings should be held bilingually.
- 3.3.8 If it is known at the beginning of a meeting that all present are Welsh speakers, the meeting will be held in Welsh.
- 3.3.9 Our standard practice will be to provide any written materials such as leaflets or other documents used at public meetings, in bilingual form.
- 3.3.10 As well as translation equipment, we will assess the need for members of staff who speak Welsh to be present to welcome the public and to deal with their inquiries.

3 DEALING WITH WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

3.3.11 Our staff will make their language abilities evident at meetings, for example, by greeting people bilingually and using the Welsh Language Board's "Iaith Gwaith" badges.

3.3.12 In order to ensure that every unit and individual in the organisation is aware of the requirements in organising and holding public meetings in Welsh or bilingually, we will provide guidelines for the administration of such meetings.

3.4 Other Meetings

3.4.1 Interviews and other face to face dealings with members of the public, applicants or tenants will be offered and conducted in either Welsh or English, according to their preference. The organisation welcomes meetings with the public in Welsh or in English and makes sure that arrangements are made to enable any member of the public who desires to do so, to discuss matters in Welsh.

3.4.2 Where this is not possible, the non-Welsh speaking employee shall explain to the member of public, applicant or tenant that he/she is unable to speak Welsh and ask whether the person concerned wishes to talk to a Welsh speaker. If the person wishes to conduct the conversation in Welsh, a bilingual employee shall be sought to deal with the matter. When we arrange or attend a face to face meeting with the public, we will find out their chosen language at the first opportunity and we will ensure that a qualified member of staff who speaks Welsh deals with those who note that their chosen language is Welsh.

3.4.3 When such meetings are being arranged, consideration shall be given to what arrangements need to be implemented to ensure that those attending will be able to speak Welsh at the meeting, should they wish.

3.4.4 If it is obvious that there is a consistent demand for face to face meetings through the medium of Welsh, and that we are failing to meet that demand, we will consider taking action such as training or appointing bilingual staff or locating Welsh speaking staff in workplaces where Welsh speaking members of the public often desire to discuss matters with the organisation.

3.5 Communicating with the public in other ways

3.5.1 We will consider the best ways of meeting the needs of Welsh speakers in whichever way we deal with the public.

3.5.2 The organisation is committed to enabling the public to deal with us in Welsh through electronic communication, on line or other media.

3.5.3 In order to develop information technology systems that treat Welsh and English on an equal basis, we will adopt the Welsh Language Board's Information Technology standards and look to build compliance with these into our systems.

4 THE ASSOCIATION'S PUBLIC FACE

4.1 Corporate Identity

- 4.1.1 The organisation's corporate identity will be entirely bilingual.
- 4.1.2 In ensuring that Welsh and English languages are given equal prominence the following items will always be produced bilingually.

- The organisation's address
- Logo
- Standard information used on items such as:
 - ❖ Letter headings
 - ❖ Publications
 - ❖ Signs
 - ❖ Buildings
 - ❖ Business cards
 - ❖ Compliment slips
 - ❖ Fax cover sheets
 - ❖ E-mail signatures

4.2 Signs

- 4.2.1 All information signs within the curtilage of the organisation's properties, including internal areas where members of the public have access, will be fully bilingual. On occasions when the organisation is allowed to propose names for new estates and streets then the Welsh speaking Board Members will reflect the linguistic nature of the area
- 4.2.2 Other signs such as public information signs for which the organisation is responsible, will be fully bilingual.
- 4.2.3 On bilingual signage the nature, size, quality, legibility and prominence of the text will observe the principle of equality.
- 4.2.4 There are processes in place to ensure the accuracy of text, and we will co-ordinate and review this carefully, especially when work is contracted out.

4.3 Publishing and Printing Material

- 4.3.1 All published material aimed at the public will be produced bilingually, with the Welsh and English version together in one document, either back to back or side by side. If published separately, the Welsh and English version of any document will be issued simultaneously and be equally accessible. They will also be equally as readily available and both versions will include a message noting that a version is available in the other language.
- 4.3.2 Where any document published by the organisation is sold, the price of a bilingual document will not be greater than that of a single language format.
- 4.3.3 Guidance will be issued to staff on bilingual design. This will be made available to designers, publishers and consultants (where relevant).
- 4.3.4 We will ensure that staff and those with responsibility for printing are aware of the policy and procedures for publication.

4 THE ASSOCIATION'S PUBLIC FACE

- 4.3.5 The organisation will explore opportunities to co-operate with other bodies in producing work for publication that is similar or the same.
- 4.3.6 All the information to be published on the organisation's public website will be bilingual, and material will be available in both languages at the same time.
- 4.3.7 We will ensure that Welsh text in our publications is of a high standard and that the tone is appropriate for the target audience.

4.4 Forms

- 4.4.1 All forms, questionnaires and associated material issued to the public in Wales will be fully bilingual. If it is necessary to produce forms separately they will appear simultaneously with each version including the message that the form is available in the other language. This includes any formats of any legal and financial documentation.
- 4.4.2 If it is necessary to produce separate versions, they will be made available simultaneously and be equally available in offices and other distribution points. In such cases, the Welsh and English versions should:
- be published at the same time;
 - be equally as easy to obtain in offices and other distribution centres;
 - be distributed together; and
 - include a message which confirms that the form is also available in the other language.
- 4.4.3 The organisation will try to establish the chosen language of members of the public by including a "language choice" question on the first form in a series. Once the chosen language of an individual is known, we will look to develop systems which enable us to distribute material in Welsh, English, or bilingually from then on, as appropriate.
- 4.4.4 We will ensure that consistency of terms is a regular practice in the preparation of forms.
- 4.4.5 Any development to establish electronic provision for filling in forms will ensure equality for the Welsh language.

4.5 Press Notices

- 4.5.1 Press releases are a prominent part of the organisation's public face and we will therefore publish them bilingually as usual, but in Welsh only when using Welsh-language publications.

4.6 Publicity Campaign

- 4.6.1 Publicity activities are a very public part of the organisation's function. Therefore, when these activities are being undertaken, the organisation will ensure that Welsh and English are treated on a basis of equality.
- 4.6.2 When planning and implementing advertising and publicity campaigns, including production of pamphlets, audio materials, organising exhibitions and seminars,

4 THE ASSOCIATION'S PUBLIC FACE

advertising campaigns and market research, the organisation will ensure the following :

- All publicity literature for to be produced in Welsh and English.
- Press advertising campaigns to be run in Welsh and English.
- Television and radio publicity campaigns and information bulletins to be broadcast to the public in Wales to be produced in Welsh and English.
- Advertising on posters and hoardings via World Wide Web and e-mail messages to be in Welsh and English.
- Response mechanisms linked to advertising and publicity activities to be able to provide services through the medium of Welsh .
- Exhibitions in Wales to be bilingual.
- Conduct public surveys bilingually, whether through the post or face to face.
- Conduct direct marketing campaigns in Welsh or in English.
- Set up bilingual exhibitions and information stalls.

Some of the activities above will be conducted only in Welsh in specific Welsh medium events such as an Eisteddfod.

4.7 Official Notices, Public Notices, Staff Recruitment

- 4.7.1 Official notices, public notices and recruitment adverts will normally appear with Welsh and English versions shown together. They will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence.
- 4.7.2 Where the organisation is dealing with a single party, e.g. conveyances, leases etc, the language of the other party's choice will be used.
- 4.7.3 Recruitment advertisements will be published bilingually and will clearly state whether the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable.
- 4.7.4 Information packs, such as job descriptions and person specifications will be prepared in Welsh and in English for all our posts.
- 4.7.5 Where we use the Welsh language press to advertise, our advertisements in those publications will appear in Welsh only.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.1 Staffing

- 5.1.1 The organisation will ensure that workplaces which have contact with the public seek access to sufficient and appropriately skilled Welsh speakers to enable those workplaces to deliver a service through the medium of Welsh. NWH has developed a Linguistic Skills Strategy.
- 5.1.2 The organisation has identified desired Welsh language skills levels for all posts and has assessed current staff skill levels against them to identify where the biggest gaps exist. This knowledge is used to inform the identification and prioritisation of Welsh language training. Welsh language desired skill levels will be included within role profiles and person specifications, with a minimum Level 1 standard agreed for all staff across the organisation. New appointments will be tested against basic courtesy within the recruitment process and will be required to complete our Level 1 course within their six month probationary period.
- 5.1.3 Whenever a post becomes vacant for whatever reason or a new post is created, the linguistic needs of such a post will be carefully assessed in the light of this Welsh Language Scheme and its commitment to the public under the Welsh Language Act 1993.
- 5.1.4 We will increase resources for implementing the Language Scheme in a sensitive way by encouraging and supporting all staff members to take part. We will develop skills in the language as well as a supportive attitude towards providing bilingual services. Non-Welsh speaking staff should not feel under threat, and those wishing to learn Welsh should not be prevented from practising it. We will treat language skills in a similar way to any other skills that need to be developed in the workplace.
- 5.1.5 We will encourage staff to strengthen their Welsh language skills by taking every opportunity to use the Welsh language in the workplace.
- 5.1.6 When it is desirable or essential that an applicant should possess skills in the Welsh language, this will be noted clearly in the qualifications section of the post and in advertisements.
- 5.1.7 Where a suitable candidate with skills in the Welsh language is not appointed to a post where Welsh is desirable, the person appointed will be encouraged to learn Welsh to an agreed level.
- 5.1.8 If an applicant who cannot speak Welsh is appointed to a post where the ability to speak Welsh is considered essential then the ability to learn the language up to a specific level of skill, within a reasonable period of time to be agreed, will be one of the conditions of appointment. Progress towards the target will be monitored and tested regularly.

5.2 Welsh Language Training

- 5.2.1 We will support this Language Scheme by encouraging and supporting members of staff to learn Welsh or to improve their skills in Welsh.
- 5.2.2 We will plan our training programme carefully and concentrate resources on those parts of our service where there is frequent communication with Welsh speakers, or where there are linguistic requirements to the post.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

- 5.2.3 It is useful that learners know of colleagues who can speak Welsh and we will encourage staff to try to help those who are learning.
- 5.2.4 Human resources managers and officers who are responsible for training will encourage staff to go on language courses if appropriate. Progress as a result of training will be measured as part of the organisation's personal development arrangements.
- 5.2.5 Dictionaries and electronic material will be available to help members of staff who are learning Welsh.
- 5.2.6 The organisation will also provide awareness training for staff with regard to the requirements of this Scheme. Our standard practice will be to include such training in the induction of new staff.
- 5.2.7 Human resources managers and staff who have responsibility for training will assess the need for specific Welsh language vocational training for staff.
- 5.2.8 We will develop the ability of our staff who can speak Welsh to offer service though the medium of Welsh by providing vocational training in Welsh, whenever practical.
- 5.2.9 If there are currently no courses available in Welsh in a specific field, we will consider arranging seminars and working groups ourselves, or network with other establishments.

5.3 Administrative Arrangements

- 5.3.1 This Welsh Language Scheme was first approved by the Board of Management of North Wales Housing Association Ltd on 14th September 2000. It's implementation carries the full authority of the organisation.
- 5.3.2 The Senior Officer chiefly responsible for ensuring the implementation of this scheme by the organisation is the Chief Executive. Each member of the Corporate Management Team will be responsible for implementing those measures relevant to their department or sections. In addition, members of the Corporate Management Team will ensure that all aspects of their services involving the Welsh language are made an integral and central part of the administrative process of those services.
- 5.3.3 All staff will be made aware of the contents of this scheme. To ensure consistency and quality on the application of this scheme throughout the organisation, guidelines and instructions will be issued to all staff.
- 5.3.4 In arranging translation facilities, the organisation will ensure that the service is provided by suitably qualified translators.
- 5.3.5 The following senior officer has responsibility for monitoring and reviewing this Scheme: the Chief Executive, although the Head of Business Improvement will take day to day responsibility for implementation.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.3.6 Monitoring this Scheme will be a continuous and structured activity. This will include monitoring the following fields:

- compliance with the Scheme;
- quality of service – to look at complaints and at the front line service;
- management and administration;
- adequacy of linguistic skills;
- mainstreaming.

5.3.7 We will seek the opinions of Welsh speakers regarding the range and standard of services provided by the organisation through the medium of Welsh.

5.3.8 We will use the organisation's standard complaints procedure to record and deal with complaints about this Scheme and will ensure that it will be possible to monitor specific complaints about the Scheme.

5.3.9 The organisation welcomes and records recommendations on how to improve the service.

5.4 Services Delivered on Behalf of the Organisation by Other Parties

5.4.1 Any arrangement(s) made with third parties that relate to the provision of services to the public will be consistent with the terms of this scheme. This includes (without limitation) services which are contracted out.

5.4.2 The organisation will ensure, by means of contractual arrangement, that external bodies which operate on its behalf or under its supervision implement any relevant elements of this Welsh Language Scheme when dealing with the public in Wales.

5.4.3 Implementation of this particular aspect of external bodies will need to be monitored by each department and regular performance reports will be required and incorporated within the organisation's own scheme monitoring process.

5.5 Regulatory Functions and Third Party Services

5.5.1 Any contracts or arrangements made with a third party will be consistent with relevant sections of this Scheme. Our aim is to ensure that third party bodies understand the requirements and operate as necessary in order to meet the requirements of the Language Scheme.

5.5.2 In letting a contract, the relevant Director will be responsible for ensuring that the agency or company undertaking the work on behalf of the organisation complies with the relevant sections of the Scheme.

5.5.3 This will be done by including relevant details about the requirements of the Scheme in the tendering documents, contracts and conditions sent to the relevant agency or company.

5.5.4 The organisation will encourage others in the community, including voluntary bodies and companies, to make use of the Welsh language.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.6 Grants

5.6.1 When we allocate grants, we will include conditions with regard to the use of the Welsh language in the activity where appropriate. In doing so, we will consider the Welsh Language Board's guidelines on allocation of grants and loans.

5.7 Partnerships

5.7.1 The organisation works in partnership with public bodies, organisations from the voluntary sector and other agencies. The organisation operates on many levels when working with others:

- When the organisation is the strategic and financial leader within a partnership, it will ensure that the public service provision is compliant with the Language Scheme;
- When the organisation joins a partnership led by another body, the organisation's input to the partnership will comply with the Language Scheme and the organisation will encourage other parties to comply;
- When the organisation is a partner in a consortium, it will encourage the consortium to adopt a language policy. When acting publicly in the name of the consortium, the organisation will act in accordance with the Language Scheme.

5.7.2 When the organisation joins or forms a partnership, it will ask prospective partners about their Welsh language schemes, language policies or the means by which they will operate bilingually. Within any partnership, the organisation will offer advice and support to the other partner organisations.

5.7.3 The organisation will ensure that officers are aware of the requirements of the Language Scheme when operating in partnership.

5.8 Quality Standards

5.8.1 Services provided in Welsh and in English will be equal in quality and they will be provided within the same timetable.

5.8.2 The organisation will highlight this central principle in key documents such as corporate plans and annual reports. It should be outlined also in other situations where statements are made regarding equal opportunity and standard of service.

5.9 Monitoring the Scheme

5.9.1 The organisation shall continually monitor and review the implementation of this Welsh Language Scheme. The monitoring function shall have a definitive structure, extending to those who provide or administer services on behalf of the organisation.

5.9.2 The officer responsible for the monitoring function shall be:

The Chief Executive
North Wales Housing Organisation Ltd
Plas Blodwel, Broad Street
Llandudno Junction, Conwy
LL31 9HL

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.9.3 The continuous monitoring shall involve all aspects of the implementation of this scheme.

5.9.4 A monitoring report on the implementation of the Language Scheme will be submitted annually to NWH's Board of Management and the Welsh Language Board.

5.9.5 The following items will be included in the monitoring process:

- forward planning and procurement; ensuring the new policies or procedures, or new publications and computer programmes, will be compatible with the delivery of bilingual services on a basis of equality;
- organising and delivering services; monitoring the implementation of arrangements made to deliver the organisation's services in Welsh, and their effectiveness; monitoring how well the organisation is encouraging and facilitating the use of Welsh by other parties;
- dealing with the Welsh speaking public; monitoring response times for Welsh correspondence; monitoring the quality of simultaneous translation services; monitoring the arrangements for meetings;
- involving Welsh speaking customers in reviews of the services provided by NWH. We will actively encourage suggestions for improvement and will inform the public about how they can make their views known;
- the organisation's public face; monitoring implementation of the organisation's corporate image; monitoring the introduction of bilingual publications, forms, signs, notices and other published material;
- staffing; monitoring the implementation of staffing and training issues set out in the Scheme;
- agents and contractors; monitoring the provision and administration of services by the organisation's agents and contractors to ensure compliance with the Welsh language terms of their agreements or arrangements;
- timetable; monitoring achievement against the timetable in the Scheme;
- grievances; monitoring the incidence and nature of complaints relating to the organisation's language service.

5.10 Targets

5.10.1 Development of implementation will be measured against target dates provided in the Appendix.

5.10.2 Processing of Welsh Language communication will be assessed against the organisation's existing commitment to standard, and compared with records for corresponding English communication.

5.10.3 The availability of Welsh speaking staff to support the Scheme in all operational areas will be monitored.

5. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME

5.11 Published Information

5.11.1 Information comparing performance against standards and targets set will be included in general performance reviews and the organisation's Annual Review. The published information shall include such matters as:

- the percentage of publications issued bilingually, and compared against the criteria in the scheme;
- the percentage of Welsh speakers in post where the ability to speak Welsh is specified as desirable;
- the number and percentage of posts in reception roles filled by bilingual staff;
- the number and percentage of staff who have received training in Welsh to a specific level of competence;
- the number and percentage of staff who have received language awareness training;
- the number and percentage of the organisation's staff who can speak Welsh, by department and workplace or office;
- the number of complaints received regarding the implementation of the Language Scheme and percentage of complaints dealt with in accordance with the organisation's corporate standards.

5.11.2 If published standards are not being met, the organisation will explain the reasons why, and explain what steps it will take to put matters right.

5.12 Publicity

5.12.1 To ensure publicity for the scheme the organisation will place notices in the press advertising the publication of this scheme. All clients, organisation employees and organisation agents, and contractors will be sent an explanatory leaflet explaining the contents of the scheme, including information on Complaint Procedure.

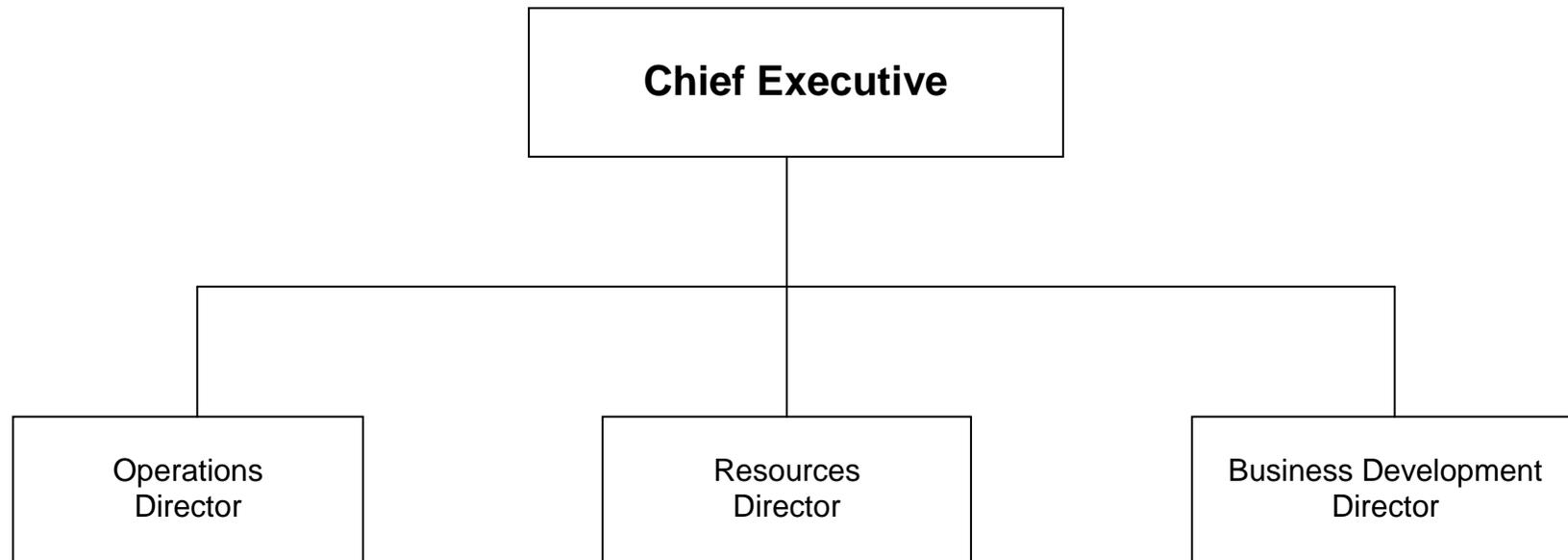
5.12.2 A bilingual poster will be displayed prominently in public areas of each office, drawing attention to the bilingual nature of the services offered.

5.12.3 Copies of the scheme shall be distributed to other organisations and individuals interested in the organisation's policy on the Welsh language.

5.12.4 Our methods of publicising the Scheme and its contents will follow our usual corporate publicity arrangements, and will include ensuring that the Scheme is published in a prominent location on our website.

5.13 Timetable (see Appendix 2)

**SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
(Corporate Management Team)**



Welsh Language Action Plan

Objective 1	Action Required	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Develop and implement a clear approach to Welsh language training to support and encourage skill development across the organisation				
1.1	<i>Produce a Welsh policy for training and recruitment, which appropriately documents decisions by Board in reports submitted to them through 2010</i>	HBI	31-Jan-11	Clear policy documenting the provision and support which will be provided for learners. Clarity of approach, including when Welsh language expectations cannot be met immediately, for recruitment
1.2	<i>Review and develop Level 1 and Level 2 training scripts</i>	SHO (Viv)	17-Dec-10	Fire and Rescue Service scripts reviewed and adapted for a Housing Association
1.3	<i>Work with Llysfasi College to develop CDs and supporting materials</i>	PM	28-Feb-11	Training materials developed and available for use across the organisation
1.4	<i>Ensure all current staff are Level 1 certificated</i>	PM	31-Jul-11	All staff certificated to Level 1 standard
1.5	<i>Identify suitable and willing Welsh speakers to offer support to people who need it to attain Level 1</i>	Viv Perry M Lynne Williams Katy Bakewell Linda Meikle	Already Identified	Support mechanisms in place to assist any member of staff who struggles with the pronunciation required for Level 1. Evidence that those staff are making themselves available to help when requested

Objective 1 (cont...)	Action Required	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Develop and implement a clear approach to Welsh language training to support and encourage skill development across the organisation				
1.6	<i>Working with Llysfasi College, develop a programme of Level 2 training for identified, prioritised staff</i>	PM/HF	30-Apr-11	One trial session of Level 2 training held (3-4 day course). Attendees certificated to Level 2 standard
1.7	<i>Evaluate and plan the way forward</i>	HF	31-Jul-11	Lessons learned from the Level 2 course evaluated and a clear programme of prioritised training developed to roll out
1.8	<i>Re-test skill levels across the organisation</i>	PM	31-Mar-11	An approach for testing agreed with Llysfasi College to ensure that it is sufficiently robust to give an accurate impression of skill levels. All staff tested, with levels recorded
1.9	<i>Ensure that there are ongoing mechanisms in place to support the Chief Executive and Operations Director to develop their Welsh language skills</i>	CE/OD	31-Jan-11	Evidence of progress through regular skill level assessments by Llysfasi College, with evidence of an ongoing commitment from each of them between intensive courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn
1.10	<i>Publish and track the Chief Executive's progress in Front Door</i>	CE	30-Jun-11	Incorporation of a regular Welsh language progress blog within the staff magazine tracking the challenges and successes of the Chief Executive's efforts to learn and use Welsh
1.11	<i>Identify key learners for 2011-12</i>	WLG	31-Jan-11	Key learners for 2011-12 identified on a prioritised based, with their and their line manager's agreement received

Objective 1 (cont...)	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Develop and implement a clear approach to Welsh language training to support and encourage skill development across the organisation				
1.12	<i>Carry out baseline assessments for each key learner</i>	PM	15-Mar-11	Assessments carried out by Llysfasi College to document the current skill level prior to undertaking intensive training
1.13	<i>Develop and agree an intense training approach for each key learner with upfront agreement of their ongoing approach to learning, tailored to individual learning styles and preferences</i>	Line manager + 1 from WLG	31-Mar-11	Clear approach documented and resourced for each learner.
1.14	<i>Put in place an ongoing approach for assessment of progress by key learners</i>	PM	30-Jun-11	Regular testing sessions in place for intensive learners through Llysfasi College, perhaps quarterly
1.15	<i>Identify learners who are receiving support to improve their Welsh language skills in their own time i.e. through Wlpan, Popeth Cymraeg etc.</i>	PM	31-Jan-11	All staff emailed and accurate records compiled to identify all staff currently committed to formal learning to improve their Welsh language skills
1.16	<i>Develop and implement an approach to support lapsed Welsh speakers to begin using their skills again</i>	PMG/ Supervisors	31-Mar-11	Relevant staff identified and their use of the Welsh language discussed with them. Where required for the role, or where the individual agrees, approach developed and resourced to support and encourage them to use and develop their skills

Objective 1 (cont...)	Action Required	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Develop and implement a clear approach to Welsh language training to support and encourage skill development across the organisation				
1.17	<i>Develop a pilot approach to support conversational Welsh speakers to make the transition to fluency/business use</i>	SLCHOA (Mlynne)	31-Mar-11	Pilot approach developed through Llysfasi College and implemented initially working with one member of staff, tailored to the specific requirements of their role. Progress monitored and evaluated quarterly

Objective 2	Action Required	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Ensure that Welsh language requirements are considered and incorporated systematically into recruitment procedures				
2.1	<i>Review job profiles to include a Welsh language requirement for all staff, including agency and temporary staff</i>	PM	Completed	PM, HoF, HBI suggestions discussed and agreed by PMG
2.2	<i>Add scripts and CDs to website to support applicants to prepare</i>	HBI	28-Feb-11	Readily available for download and incorporated as standard as a clear part of the recruitment process for all jobs
2.3	<i>Develop and implement an approach for appropriate skill testing within the recruitment process</i>	PM/PO Relevant Panel Lead	31-Mar-11	Documented within policy with evidence that this is being implemented systematically in management, including where language requirements and agreed standards are not being met

Objective 3	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Ensure that a standard approach is adopted consistently across the organisation to bilingual communication and that all staff know how to respond to requests to speak Welsh or to receive a service in Welsh				
3.1	<i>Review and re-launch the standard script used for answering the phone and on answer machines</i>	SHO	31-Jan-11	Appropriate response/message developed and agreed
3.2	<i>Roll out across the organisation, providing support to those who need it to record their message</i>	PMG	28-Feb-11	Message recorded by all staff
3.3	<i>Look at adding the greeting to the desktop in English and Welsh, including phonetically</i>	HBI	31-Jan-11	Functionality added as standard to desktops to support staff to use the greeting when answering the phone
3.4	<i>Ensure arrangements are in place to direct requests to speak in Welsh to Welsh speakers when it is requested: -</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Plas Blodwel</i> - <i>Bangor Office</i> - <i>outlying sites</i> - <i>Armchair</i> - <i>Arrears Talk</i> 	PMG	31-Mar-11	Arrangements agreed with all staff confirming that they know what to do if they receive a request to speak Welsh

Objective 3 (cont...)	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Ensure that a standard approach is adopted consistently across the organisation to bilingual communication and that all staff know how to respond to requests to speak Welsh or to receive a service in Welsh				
3.5	<i>Evaluate the extent to which all written external communication is currently being issued bilingually</i>	CMT	31-Jan-11	Audit of current publication processes carried out identifying weaknesses in approach if they exist. Remedial action taken, with evidence that this is being applied consistently by all staff across the organisation
3.6	<i>Evaluate the extent to which we are responding to written correspondence received in Welsh, in Welsh? Do we have the same response time? Is information tailored to the individual's expressed preference?</i>	CMT	TBD	Audit of current approaches carried out with weaknesses identified, and a procedure to developed to ensure that we can demonstrate that people communicating with NWH in Welsh can expect the same standard of service and response as those communicating in English
3.7	<i>Review and re-issue guidelines for staff on bilingual design – ensuring that these are also made available to designers, publishers and consultants as appropriate</i>	CMT	TBD	Guidelines produced and communicated, with evidence that they are being applied by staff and external agencies consistently and appropriately
3.8	<i>Ensure that notices, agendas and related publicity materials for public meetings are published bilingually and attendees are asked to notify the organisation of their language of preference</i>	CMT	31-Mar-11	Evidence that a bilingual approach is adopted consistently, with simultaneous translation provision accommodated as standards

Objective 3 (cont...)	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Ensure that a standard approach is adopted consistently across the organisation to bilingual communication and that all staff know how to respond to requests to speak Welsh or to receive a service in Welsh				
3.9	<i>Prepare guidelines for staff on the administration of public meetings</i>	CMT	TBD	Promoted and communicated through Welsh language sessions for all staff
3.10	<i>Roll out the new version Cysgair</i>	TSO (David)	31-Dec-10	Latest version of Cysgair purchased and installed on the PCs of all staff who request it
3.11	<i>Provision of the staff magazine, Front Door bilingually</i>	CE	31-Feb-11	Evidence that the staff newsletter is published bilingually, with the Welsh edition circulated at the same time as the English

Objective 4	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Raise awareness of the legal obligations of Welsh Language implications in all staff and ensure that these are reflected in policy development and ongoing review				
4.1	<i>Build a Welsh language element into the corporate induction process</i>	PM/HBI	10-Dec-10	Clear approach in place to ensure that all staff are aware of our Welsh language obligations and policies from the outset
4.2	<i>Hold awareness raising sessions for all staff on the Welsh Language Scheme</i>	HBI (plus others?)	31-Mar-11	Refresher sessions held for all staff. Post session surveys indicate that staff understand our corporate obligations and the impact personally for them in their role

Objective 4 (cont...)	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Raise awareness of the legal obligations of Welsh Language implications in all staff and ensure that these are reflected in policy development and ongoing review				
4.3	<i>Consider how to build consideration of WL implications into policy preparation/review arrangements</i>	CMT	31-Jan-11	Trigger included within policy guidelines to ensure that language implications are considered as standard in the development or review of policies
4.4	<i>Check that Welsh language issues are built into the Rownd a Round plan going forward</i>	HSM	31-Jan-11	Consideration given to this, with a clear approach documented and built into R&R plans going forward
4.5	<i>Review IBS for holding information on language preference accurately for tenants</i>	HBI	31-Mar-11	That reports can be printed off IBS with reliable/accurate information. Ability to send literature to tenants in a language of their choice.
4.6	<i>Build evaluation of the quality and equality of WL service into new regulation and self-assessment arrangements</i>	HBI/BIO	31-Mar-11	Evidence that part of our annual self-assessment submitted to the regulator, fairly evaluates our efforts to develop our Welsh language skills as an organisation, but also outcomes, in terms of our ability to deliver frontline services equally through the mediums of Welsh and English

Objective 5	<i>Action Required</i>	Lead Officer	Deadline	Success Criteria
Objective: Ensure that appropriate consideration is given to Welsh language implications for contractors in receipt of public money through NWH exceeding £400k				
5.1	<p><i>Identify private sector contractors who are in indirect receipt of >£400k public money through NWH.</i></p> <p><i>Develop an approach to the Welsh language with them which is compliant with the terms of our Welsh Language Scheme</i></p>	<p>HF</p> <p>PMG</p>	<p>31-Jan-11</p> <p>31-Mar-11</p>	<p>Approach agreed and implemented with contractors and their employees. Evidence that the approach is being implemented with an evaluation of outcomes</p>
5.2	<p><i>Following the pilot phase of the venture, ensure that new employees of NWH's DLO are incorporated into the wider Welsh language training approach, with due regard to the business nature of their roles</i></p>	PM/HAM	31-May-11	<p>Approach agreed with appropriate consideration of the need for the tradesman to be largely available Monday-Friday 8.30-5.00 to make the venture financially viable and to provide an efficient repairs service to our tenants. Evidence that the approach is being implemented with an evaluation of outcomes</p>

Key:

BIO	Business Improvement Officer
CE	Chief Executive
CMT	Corporate Management Team
HBI	Head of Business Improvement
HAM	Head of Asset Management
HF	Head of Finance
HSM	Housing Services Manager
OD	Operations Director
PMG	Performance Management Group
PM	Personnel Manager
SHO	Senior Housing Officer
SLCHOA	Sales and Low Cost Home Ownership Administrator
TSO	Technical Support Officer
WLG	Welsh Language Group