

A LIVING MANIFESTO

FOR

LIVING COMMUNITIES

AN ACTION PLAN FOR LANGUAGE,
WORK AND COMMUNITY

A public discussion across Wales' communities about the priorities for sustaining and developing the Welsh language in every part of Wales.

Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, July 2013

There is no doubt that the Census results highlight the crisis facing the Welsh language. There has been a drop in the number of Welsh speakers in every part of Wales. The biggest drop has been in the areas where the Welsh language is strongest.

In essence, this manifesto reiterates the call 'Dwi eisiau byw yn Gymraeg' (I want to live in Welsh) as heard in rallies all over Wales over the last few months. We believe that the fate of the language can be changed, with political will and positive, participatory campaigning. In this document, we outline a work programme that marks a starting point for changing the fate of the language – and a reversal the decline seen over the last decade – in our communities and nationally.

Thus, this manifesto contains practical, realistic ideas, that could be implemented in 2013/14 by our Government in Wales, our local authorities, and all our national and local institutions in addition to ourselves. The policies contained here are based on *Tynged yr Iaith II*, the new direction Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg set for its own activities, in the movement's fiftieth year. The message of *Tynged yr Iaith II* was that years of campaigning have ensured that

the Welsh language will survive. The question, by now, is what kind of future will it face? A language for the classroom, dry documentation, a language for signage - or - a language for our nation and our communities?

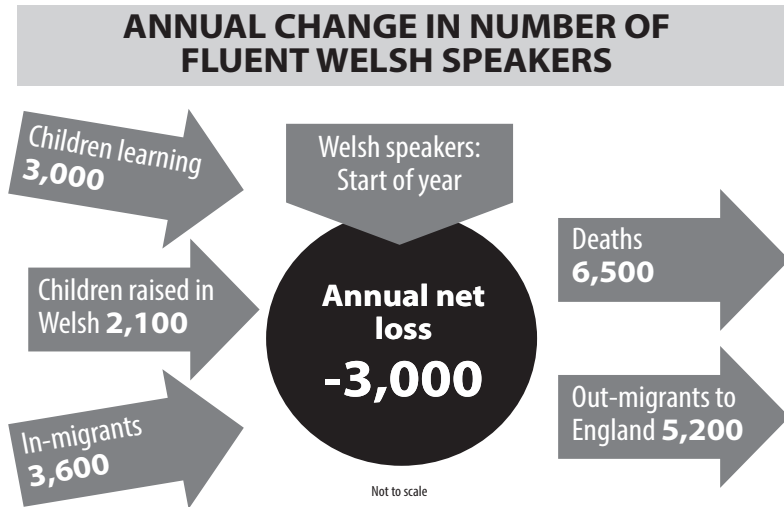
However, Cymdeithas yr Iaith does not claim to have all the answers (in line with our peaceful campaigning approach). This is why we invited people all over Wales to respond to this document.

Votes were held on amendments to the Maniffesto Byw on the basis of those responses on 8th June, 2013. We will continue to collect responses to the document and are willing to co-operate with anyone who wants to deal with the issues raised here. We call on the people of Wales to empower themselves, along with the community of which they are a part, and declare that they want to live their lives in Welsh.

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SUMMARY

The census results show that two of the main aims of the Welsh Government's previous language strategy *Iaith Pawb* were not achieved. There was a reduction, not only in the percentage of Welsh speakers, from 21% to 19%, but also in the number of wards with over 70% able to speak the language. Roughly speaking, it appears that there are around 3,000 fewer Welsh speakers every year.



These figures highlight a number of factors that influence the state of the language. It's apparent that outward migration - such as young people leaving their communities to look for work - is one of the main factors leading to the linguistic crisis. That's why the first section (1.1 - 1.11) of this manifesto concentrates on policies that would create work where it is needed and strengthen the contribution of employment policies.

We believe that the Welsh language belongs to everyone in Wales - it should not be considered an optional part of a minority culture, but rather a right for all, including non-Welsh speakers. The language standards (3.7) and education policy (4.1) should reflect this.

Here are some of the points the Government should address urgently:

- When procuring services, priority needs to be given to small and medium-sized local companies, avoiding situations such as where a company from England cuts grass on behalf of a county council, for example. (1.8)
- Housing developments like Penybanc (Carmarthenshire), Bodelwyddan (Denbighshire) and Coetmor (Gwynedd) show that the planning system endangers the Welsh language. Unsuitable developments should not be allowed again - the Government could ensure this by publishing a new version of TAN20 as soon as possible, and ensuring that it is as strong as possible (the consultation on it finished 2 years ago). They should also suspend every Unitary Development Plan until an assessment has been made of its effect on the Welsh language, ensure that councillors can reject a planning application on the basis of its effect on the language, make language impact assessments a statutory obligation, and put TAN20 on a statutory footing. (2.1)
- Increase expenditure on the Welsh language - if it followed the example of the Basque country, the government would spend 4 times as much on Welsh-language specific projects. (3.1)
- The new “language standards” should set out clear language rights, such as the right to lessons after school for children in Welsh, the right to learn Welsh and use it in the workplace, and the right of patients to receive health care in Welsh. (3.7)
- “Welsh as a second language” should be discontinued as a subject - the Government should show that the language belongs to everyone in Wales by declaring immediately that it will ensure that every pupil studies “Welsh”, with a continuum system. (4.2)
- Currently, the Welsh Government fails to show the vision, the leadership or the commitment needed to improve the position of the Welsh language. They should recognise the scale of the challenge, and adopt progressive policies urgently. They are currently failing to do so, as their reaction to the first version of this Manifesto shows. The answers, therefore, start with each one of us - we must show that we want to live our lives in Welsh, and help others to do so.

ONE: WORK

Cymdeithas yr Iaith believes that the Welsh language should be a language of the economy if it is to be used in our communities. Wales' economic poverty is one of the factors leading to the out-migration of thousands of Welsh speakers every year.

1. The Welsh Government, local authorities and other national institutions should ensure that the jobs available in regional offices include a range of work opportunities and a range of salaries. The Welsh Government, political parties, trades unions and national organisations should prepare an economic strategy that emphasises the devolution of jobs within Wales e.g. a Welsh Government Job Devolution Scheme – to reinforce and strengthen the offices in Carmarthen, Aberystwyth, Caernarfon, Llandudno Junction. We call on other public organisations to do likewise – including third sector organisations who receive public funding and media organisations such as S4C. The Government should provide support for companies to move out of growth areas to other places within Wales, and as part of the support agreement, it should ensure that a percentage of the workforce have Welsh language communication skills.



2. Due to a lack of capital in deprived areas, and a lack of networks to support enterprise, more support (financially and technically) should be given to the co-operative sector, with definite targets for job creation in those areas where the Welsh language is strongest.
3. Establish a Welsh-Medium Labour Market – work is needed urgently to monitor the need for a Welsh-medium workforce in sectors and locations across Wales as well as planning to meet the demand for a workforce with Welsh language skills, including an ambitious “Welsh in the workplace” training scheme. This should start with the major employers where the provision is most needed, such as the health service, social services and further and higher education.
4. Apprenticeships should be created through the Welsh-Medium Labour Market, and Welsh-medium skills training should be organised across Wales, specifically skills for the facilitation of enterprise and community enterprise.
5. Change the Mentrau Iaith’s terms of reference to be “Mentrau Iaith a Gwaith” (Language and Work Initiatives) with a specific responsibility and budget to promote enterprise through the medium of Welsh and promote the use of Welsh within business. Review the remit of some Mentrau to reflect examples of best practice in the field. Ensure a much more effective coherence between the Mentrau nationally by appointing a National Director and Steering Committee.
6. Welsh Government, local authorities, the health service and other public services to prepare short term action plans as a starting point for developing and promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace. This should include ensuring that more jobs are advertised with Welsh as essential, having more workplace training opportunities for learning and improving Welsh, and cross-sector language awareness courses to develop understanding and to gain support for these schemes among non-Welsh speakers. Collaboration with trades unions to prepare an equivalent programme among the unions.
7. Support and collaboration with trades unions to protect jobs and working conditions in the public sector, and develop an understanding among the public of the importance of these jobs in rural areas and Welsh language areas in particular.

8. Procurement policies of all publicly-funded bodies in Wales to give priority to companies from the area where the work is being done and to companies from Wales over companies from further afield – in order to reduce the distance travelled and to ensure that jobs are created in our communities. Small and medium-sized enterprises should also be given more opportunities to receive tenders as well as larger companies. In each case, the Welsh language provision of a company receiving a tender should be equal to or better than the provision of the public body that pays for the work.
9. Prepare an action plan to encourage the employers of Wales, including the public, private and third sectors, to promote the commercial value of using the Welsh language. Encourage the public to support businesses and services who promote the Welsh language and make an effort to use the language.
10. Support should be given to more ways of encouraging entrepreneurship in our communities. One way of doing this would be establishing a network of Welsh-medium businesses that would offer support and leadership in terms of training and starting new Welsh-medium businesses. A Co-operative Federation of Welsh-medium Businesses in Wales should be established to take advantage of the enthusiasm and the activity that already exist in the language on-line, and promote this being achieved.
11. Public bodies, including Welsh Government, should follow the example of Gwynedd Council by moving towards operating internally through the medium of Welsh. When considering the reorganisation of local government, it should be ensured that more local authorities operate internally through the medium of Welsh. A task force under the aegis of the Welsh Language Commissioner should be established to move this process forward.

TWO: HOUSING AND PLANNING

The Welsh Government's shortcomings in housing and planning since devolution have meant that Welsh language strategies across Wales have been undermined by housing developments. We are still waiting for the new Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20. Cymdeithas yr Iaith revealed that only three local authorities have undertaken Welsh language impact assessments for developments over the last 2 years, and that only 16 assessments were conducted out of 60,000 applications (0.03%). The government's current lack of commitment was again demonstrated in the Sustainability Bill white paper, where the Welsh language was not considered as part of the sustainable communities agenda.

1. The revised version of TAN 20 should be published as soon as possible. Councils as well as developers should undertake language impact assessments and give these a statutory basis by reviewing the situation annually to ensure that it is implemented. We call on the Welsh Language Commissioner to review every proposed or active Development Plan to assess the effect on the Welsh language since this is not currently done to a sufficient level by TAN 20.
2. Every planning authority to review their area plans, basing the plans on local need and on strengthening communities and the position of Welsh, scrapping current plans and replacing them with new plans when necessary. The situation should be reviewed annually.
3. Ensure that the Welsh language is central to the new Sustainable Development and Planning Bills by, among other things, including the vitality of Welsh – Wales' own language – as part of the statutory definition of sustainable development and placing language impact assessments of developments on a statutory footing through primary legislation.
4. Prepare and implement a bill to assess local need for housing before development; ensure the right to a home for a fair price (to rent or buy) in the community of the person renting or buying; priority for local people through the social housing points system; a planning system that works for the benefit of the community; ensuring that previous planning permissions are re-assessed.

5. Establish a grant scheme for first time house buyers, in order to help people to stay in their communities.
6. Give local authorities the right to tax second homes at 200%.
7. Draw up a housing strategy that puts the emphasis on renewing the current housing stock, and budget for this, in order that use can be made of the 26,000 long-term empty homes all over the country.
8. Ensure the rights of communities to be involved in the planning process and give communities and groups the right to appeal planning applications.
9. Establish a Planning Inspectorate for Wales as a completely independent body, a body responsible for appeals and inquiries into planning developments, and ensure democratic control of the Inspectorate.
10. We recognise the contribution of the agricultural community to the Welsh language and the need for the planning system to recognise the importance of the agricultural industry. Young people should be drawn more proactively into the agricultural community, including placing conditions on the single payment that would make it advantageous for older farmers to co-operate with young partners.



THREE: LANGUAGE

The Welsh language is Wales' own language. It is imperative that bilingualism works in favour of the Welsh language in each case. We believe that the Welsh language is an essential educational skill for everyone who wishes to live and work in Wales, and that no pupil should be deprived of the opportunity to learn this special skill that is also one of the nation's treasures.

1. There should be a complete review of the whole expenditure of government, by an independent body such as the Welsh Language Commissioner, and an assessment of the relationship between that expenditure and the Welsh language – measuring the linguistic footprint of the expenditure. Considering the growth seen in the number of Basque speakers in censuses since 1991, the resources given to promote the Welsh language should be increased to the levels in that country, which means quadrupling the current expenditure in Wales.
2. Target Welsh-speaking teenagers as a key group for the future of the Welsh language, including increasing substantially the investment in youth services, and particularly sport and cultural services. Review the expenditure of the Arts Council of Wales and Sport Wales, redirecting in order to ensure a substantial increase in the budget for this target group.
3. Support communities to conduct their own community censuses in order to assess the position of the Welsh language and prepare recommendations for strengthening it, starting in the communities with the highest percentages of Welsh speakers at the moment. Take action to ensure that Welsh is an official and administrative language of public life in the community and support the private sector to fulfil the same objective.
4. Prepare an individual strategy and action plan to protect and promote the Welsh language in a specific number of areas across Wales, with an annual review of the situation where a drop of 5% or more was seen in the percentage of Welsh speakers.



5. Target 6-10 areas as Welsh Language Renewal and Development Areas, and prepare comprehensive language schemes to support and develop linguistic, social and economic growth.
6. Welsh Government to launch an intensive national campaign to persuade more parents of young children to choose Welsh-medium education – e.g. increase substantially the budget for schemes such as ‘Twm’ and emphasise that one of the clearest ways of raising literacy and numeracy standards is to widen bilingual education.
7. Enforce strong and comprehensive Language Standards in order to increase the number of Welsh-medium jobs, and establish the right for

the people of Wales to use the Welsh language across the public, private and voluntary sectors, thus normalising the language in every part of life. Through the standards, clear rights should be established for ordinary people, including the right to leisure activities like swimming lessons in Welsh, the right of workers to learn the language and use it in the workplace, and the right of patients to receive healthcare in the language.

8. Every local authority should conduct research at once to measure the flow and circulation of money in different areas. Conducting such research would lead to better understanding of how exactly their expenditure and their grants affect the well-being of our communities. For example, to what extent does the benefit of public expenditure flow out, rather than circulating in the community, in order to consider which body or company receives public money. In the same way, influential bodies, such as universities, hospitals and local authorities should conduct a detailed audit to ascertain to what extent their current policies, in terms of stocking, buying and contracting, supports the local economy, drawing up a strategy in order to make use of local producers and services. Where figures already exist, they should form the basis for immediate action.
9. Communities should be empowered to control their own lives, supporting the devolution of further powers to community councils, such as power over the planning system. A kind of inclusive democracy should be introduced to that level of government. In the meantime, we call on community councils to assess the condition of the Welsh language in their communities and prepare for more powers to be transferred to them.
10. A new multi-media provider should be established that would widen the audience that listens, watches, and uses their Welsh, and provides a national Welsh-language network, taking advantage of technical convergence to offer a platform for area and community projects. More than a traditional one-way broadcaster, its purpose, without a doubt, would be to strengthen the Welsh language and its communities.

FOUR: EDUCATION

1. We call on the Government to declare immediately that the Welsh language belongs to everyone in Wales and that depriving anyone of the vital skill to be able to communicate and discuss their work in Welsh is an educational failure. No-one should be placed under such a disadvantage in the modern Wales, and we call for a timetable to be drawn up to ensure that everyone attains the skill of fluency in Welsh.
2. An immediate intention should be declared to remove “Welsh as a second language” from the curriculum, ensuring instead that every pupil studies “Welsh,” achieving various degrees of fluency. We call for an immediate move to a system where every pupil will receive a portion of their education through the medium of Welsh, so they have the opportunity to work through the medium of Welsh. In addition, opportunities should be secured for pupils to explore their personal linguistic identity in addition to their experience of the world and the community around them. We refer to “Addysg Bro” (Community Studies)” at the primary level and Physical Education as fields where progress could be made immediately. We recognise that this ideal is far from the current system, and therefore call for national standards to be established for a Welsh language Education Continuum and a methodology to ensure that every educational institution in Wales moves along the continuum, for example, that those areas where Welsh-medium primary education is the norm ensure continuity with the secondary and post-16 sectors, that 2b secondary schools move to being 2a, and that every school starts to introduce some part of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh. Plans should be made for relevant educational resources in order to achieve these developments with special attention to vocational courses.
3. It should be ensured that every trainee teacher receives an intensive course in their first year to enable them to operate through the medium of Welsh, and that significant increase is made in sabbatical periods for working teachers to train them to work through the medium of Welsh, and that this also becomes fundamental to every NVQ qualification in terms of nursery education. We expect an annual analysis of the increase in the workforce that’s able to educate in Welsh - at every level (from early years through to further education) and in every field (including classroom assistants, auxiliary staff, technicians, and the staff of companies who receive contracts.)

4. We call for revolutionising the teaching of Welsh for Adults, putting the emphasis on achieving specific aims, such as:
 1. Training people to perform their work through the medium of Welsh in fields such as - health care, public administration, youth services.
 2. Supporting parents who choose Welsh-medium education for their children
 3. Enabling people to take a full part in the life of Welsh-speaking communities, and build on best practise.
5. A strategy should be developed to ensure that schools are a resource to increase the Welshness of their communities, by maintaining them in vulnerable communities and by bridging school and community. Immediately, a fund could be established to buy “key community assets” to provide a range of services in communities where Welsh is a natural means of communication.
6. Expand the functions of the “Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol” connected to teacher training and post-16 colleges, and channel a higher proportion of funds to it from these areas.
7. The current student fees policy should be changed, offering a financial advantage for higher education students from Wales who study in Wales only, rather than giving a subsidy to those who choose to study outside Wales. Such a policy would reduce outward migration, the main factor that leads to the decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in the country. More agreements should be made in important work sectors that would keep workers in Wales, such as education and health workers, so that skills can be kept in Wales, and Welsh speakers can be kept in the country.