

Fact sheet



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

Who is the Welsh Language Commissioner?

Aled Roberts is the Welsh Language Commissioner. He has been in the role since 1 April 2019.

The Commissioner is appointed for a seven-year term. Aled Roberts is the second person to take up the role. Meri Huws was the first Commissioner.

A number of staff work for the Welsh Language Commissioner. We have offices across Wales - in Cardiff, Carmarthen, Caernarfon and Ruthin.

What is the Welsh Language Commissioner's job?

The post was created in 2011, the Welsh parliament passed a law saying that Welsh and English languages must be treated the same in Wales. Welsh is an official language in Wales.

The role was created to ensure that English and *Welsh* languages were *treated equally by organisations in Wales*. The role of the Welsh Language Commissioner is to set language rules on organisations to make sure that they offer services in Welsh.

Some of the rules that organisations in Wales must follow include:

- Write letters or e-mails to you in Welsh
- Create bilingual posters and signage
- Converse in Welsh on the telephone
- You can receive swimming lessons in Welsh through the Council
- Road signs in Welsh should be bilingual (new road signs should have the Welsh name above the English).

These organisations include those funded by the Welsh Government, organisations such as: Welsh Councils, National Museums, S4C, BBC, the police, universities and hospitals

You can complain to the Welsh Language Commissioner if you do not receive services in Welsh from organisations that have to follow these language rules.

Welsh

There are 562,016 Welsh speakers in Wales. The Welsh Government wants to create a million speakers by 2050.

There are many reasons why people want to speak and learn Welsh. Some reasons include:

- People see Welsh as a good skill when applying for a job in Wales. For example, if you want to be a policeman, teacher or a nurse; speaking Welsh is seen as a good skill.
- If you are bilingual it's easier to learn other languages
- More than half the world's population can speak more than one language.

How to show that you're a Welsh speaker

You may have seen people wearing orange speech bubble badges. This shows that service is available through the medium of Welsh.

Worn on a badge or lanyard, the badge is called *laith Gwaith* (translated – working Welsh) because people normally wear the badge at work.

Here is an example of a few jobs where people wear the badge: nurse or doctor, a waiter, train guard, shop worker, and some engineers also wear the badge on their helmets.

The Welsh language in your area

The Welsh language is seen everywhere in Wales. If you go for a walk to your local leisure centre or library, you will be able to see Welsh signage and information. A Welsh speaker - who wears *laith Gwaith* lanyards or badges, may also be working there.

Business

A number of high street shops and supermarkets have Welsh signage. If you go to a many café or restaurants, the menus are in Welsh.

We work with businesses to encourage them to use the Welsh language. There are many reasons why businesses should use Welsh in business, including:

- It demonstrates that the business respects the country and its culture
- It makes Welsh-speaking customers support the business by buying goods there.

Names

There are many ways to spell the name of cities, towns or villages in Wales. As you drive through your town or village, notice the spelling of a city, town or village. The Welsh language Commissioner's Place names dictionary offers how the places in Wales should be spelled. The Welsh Language Commissioner's list of place-names can be found here: www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/placenames

Contact

If you would like to contact us please do so. We love hearing from children and people across Wales about the Welsh language: post@welshlanguagecommissioner.wales