



RNIB Cymru

Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg Welsh Language Scheme

This voluntary scheme has been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Board's Guidelines under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

This revised Welsh Language Scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board on 23/07/2009.

RNIB Cymru Revised Welsh Language Scheme

Draft 2 April 2008

1. Introduction

1.1. Our vision is of a world in which blind and partially sighted people enjoy the same rights, freedom, responsibilities and quality of life as people who are fully sighted.

Our mission is to challenge blindness by empowering people who are blind or partially sighted, removing the barriers they face and helping to prevent blindness.

RNIB Cymru works in partnership to help the 100,000 people in Wales live full and independent lives. This is achieved through a combination of campaign activities and service delivery. We deliver a wide range of services including education, employment, welfare rights and bilingual transcription. We campaign for equality and inclusion of people with sight loss in the fields of education, employment, poverty, access to information and television, health and social care. We work in partnership with many organisations across Wales in delivering services and running campaigns.

RNIB Cymru is part of RNIB. Campaign and service priorities are overseen by RNIB Cymru Directorate and Trustees and are in line with the RNIB UK Corporate Business Plan.

The 2004 Welsh Language Use Survey (Beaufort 2004) states that 21.7% of the population of Wales are Welsh speakers. According to the 2001 Census there are approximately 580,000 Welsh speakers living in Wales. The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on public bodies to treat English and Welsh language on an equal basis when delivering services in Wales.

Voluntary organisations do not fall directly under the Act but most organisations acknowledge that offering a service in the chosen language of the user is an integral part of good practice and equal opportunity. RNIB Cymru is affected by the Act where we provide public services on behalf of a public body. In this context the public body can insist that suppliers meet the standard set down in their scheme.

The original RNIB Cymru Welsh Language Scheme

RNIB Cymru published its first scheme in 1999. This revised scheme is as a result of a review of bilingual services and resources and provides an opportunity for the organisation to renew its commitment to the Welsh language. RNIB Cymru has demonstrated its commitment to the Welsh language across many services and projects including:

- Establishing a centre of excellence and leading the way for providing accessible formats in Welsh
- Provision of Welsh language accessible format curriculum materials
- Internal Translation Service
- Bilingual website for Getting Accessible Information Now
- Y Geiriadur Mawr - launching the first Welsh - English Braille dictionary
- Developing a core base of bi-lingual volunteers
- Agenda and Minutes for Assembly and Committee meetings are provided in Welsh Braille and print.
- Publishing a bilingual Manifesto in all formats

RNIB Cymru adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, the English and Welsh language will be treated on a basis of equality. This scheme applies to RNIB Cymru's operations in Wales, all RNIB Cymru's trustees, staff and volunteers and to RNIB UK staff whose work focuses on Wales.

2. General Principles

- In conducting public business in Wales, RNIB Cymru will treat the Welsh and English languages on a basis of **equality**.
- Language is an essential part of a person's identity and warrants **respect**.
- RNIB's ownership of the Scheme will be **corporate**.
- The Scheme will be **incremental** and **developmental**.
- The action plan of the Scheme will be **achievable**.

- Information will be produced bilingually (i.e. in both languages in the same document) as far as is reasonably practicable, Where this is not possible English and Welsh publications will be made available.
- Materials will always be of the same professional standard whether in Welsh or in English.

Aim

RNIB Cymru has adopted the principle that it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how RNIB Cymru will give effect to that principle when providing services to the public in Wales so far as is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable. RNIB Cymru, as a corporate organisation, will demonstrate respect for the Welsh language through all its activities, and will be appropriately responsive to the linguistic needs of Welsh speakers.

Some key achievements of this scheme will include: -

- Disseminating guidelines to staff, volunteers and trustees.
- Ensuring the corporate identity is delivered in English and Welsh including signage, bilingual spokesperson for media interviews, stationery, business cards and exhibition panels.
- Publishing core publications and the annual review in Welsh and English
- Ensuring bilingual staff are available to deal with Welsh language telephone enquiries.
- Securing resources for Welsh language pages on the RNIB Cymru website.
- Working with information providers to increase the level of Welsh language information in accessible formats.

Implementation

The scheme will be an integral part of planning and implementation of service, campaign and project activities.

- Line Managers will be responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of and understand the implications of the Scheme.
- RNIB Cymru's Director will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Scheme.

3. Resources

On approval of this scheme in 2008, RNIB Cymru has nine Welsh speaking staff based in its head office in Cardiff, some of these staff are project funded which means the number will fluctuate according to funding streams. RNIB Cymru also has over forty Welsh speaking volunteers. One member of RNIB Cymru's Committee and six members of the RNIB Cymru Assembly speak Welsh. New RNIB Cymru posts are advertised as "Welsh essential/desirable" as appropriate. One administrator post and most transcription posts are designated as "Welsh essential" ensuring a consistent bilingual staff resource. The Transcription Centre Manager post is designated as "Welsh essential" and this post holder is a member of the Wales Management team. We have in house expertise for Welsh language translation and are a leader in the field of Welsh language accessible formats. RNIB Cymru developed the Welsh language Braille Code and the Welsh language Braille Exam.

3. Service Planning and Delivery

3.1. Policies and Projects

RNIB Cymru is committed to achieving equality. Underlying all our services, projects and policies is a commitment to equality in all senses. On production and implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme, we will endeavour to offer as high a quality of service in Welsh as we do in English.

Project work is an important part of the service delivery in Wales. Projects will be delivered bilingual where appropriate. All new and existing projects will be planned in accordance with

this Welsh Language Scheme. A Welsh language impact assessment tool will be used to facilitate informed decisions.

Where appropriate, all funding applications will take account of the cost of applying bilingually and delivering a bilingual service.

All contracts should reflect the true cost of translation and production in Braille/print/tape.

All RNIB Cymru staff, volunteers and Trustees will be trained and given guidance on awareness and meeting the requirements of the scheme.

RNIB UK based staff involved in service delivery will be trained and given guidance on the requirements of the scheme

3.2. Service Delivery

External communication

All written correspondence will be answered in the language of the original correspondence. Response times for both languages will be the same.

Letters received in Welsh will receive a signed reply in Welsh.

RNIB Cymru will initiate correspondence in Welsh with those who are known to prefer corresponding through the medium of Welsh. The language preference of individuals will be stored on our central data base.

Corporate Identity

The public image of RNIB Cymru will reflect a positive attitude toward the use of the Welsh Language. RNIB Cymru has adopted a bilingual corporate identity. The name of the organisation shall appear as 'RNIB Cymru'. The RNIB Cymru corporate strap line is bilingual.

The bilingual corporate identity will be constantly reinforced in all information relating to RNIB Cymru. Both languages will be equal in terms of size, format, font, quality and legibility.

Signage

All RNIB Cymru produced signage in public areas of RNIB Cymru premises in Wales will be bilingual, with the Welsh above or to the left of the English. Braille signage in English and Welsh will follow the same format.

Where separate Welsh and English signage is used the principle of equality in presentation will be respected in terms of size, format, font, quality and legibility.

Publications

The following stationery will be available in the Welsh and English language: -

- Headed paper
- Fax paper
- Business Cards
- Email signatures / footers
- Compliment slips

RNIB Cymru exhibition display boards to be provided bilingually.

RNIB Cymru Annual Report to be provided bilingually in accessible formats e.g. Braille and audio.

RNIB Cymru core brochure and key marketing materials to be provided bilingually in accessible formats.

RNIB Cymru marketing materials will include a sentence stating that the organisation operates Welsh Language Scheme.

RNIB Cymru training course information to be provided bilingually.

Published reports and documents to be provided in both languages in accordance with the Welsh Language assessment tool.

Invitations to formal events to be provided bilingually.

Website

We will continue to seek resources to provide a fully bilingual RNIB Cymru website to fulfil our obligation to the people of Wales.

Verbal Communication

Welsh speaking staff will be available to deal with Welsh language telephone enquiries. A list of those who are happy to speak Welsh will be reviewed annually and made available to all members of staff.

Telephone Communication

Telephones will be answered with a bilingual greeting which is 'Bore da, Good Morning RNIB Cymru' or 'Prynhawn da, Good afternoon RNIB Cymru' and answer-phones will carry a bilingual message.

If the caller wishes to communicate in Welsh but the officer receiving the call is not confident in Welsh, then he or she will offer the following options:

1. Offer to refer the caller to another officer who is able to speak Welsh.
2. If no one is available then offer to call the person back when a Welsh speaker is available.
3. Or, ask the caller if he or she would like to make the enquiry in writing
4. Or, continue the call in English (if possible).

All staff will be trained to provide a bilingual greeting message.

Welsh speaking staff spokesperson will be provided for Welsh language media interviews.

Meetings

Public Meetings in Wales

Notices of all RNIB Cymru public meetings in Wales will be bilingual with an invitation to those attending to make known whether they prefer to speak in Welsh or English on booking forms.

Translation needs will be assessed before any public meeting or conference is held and appropriate facilities will be provided.

Welsh speaking staff and volunteers who are willing will wear the 'iaith gwaith' badges to show that they speak or are learning Welsh and the related publicity material will be displayed.

Other Meetings in Wales

RNIB Cymru will ensure that all other face to face meetings with individuals will be offered and conducted in Welsh if possible.

Recruitment and Selection

RNIB Cymru is committed to having an adequate number of Welsh speaking staff, volunteers and carers or translation facilities to enable the appropriate implementation of the Scheme.

As posts become vacant they will be allocated a language designation, which is used in recruitment. All new posts introduced are also given a language designation.

The language designation considers the degree to which communicating in Welsh is necessary in carrying out the posts duties. In some cases the language designation may reflect funders or stakeholders requirements.

The following designations are used:

- **Welsh essential** - only candidates who define themselves to be fluent in Welsh can be short listed and interviewed. For Welsh essential posts, a short written and verbal test will be conducted as part of the interview.
- **Welsh verbal** - essential is accepted for certain posts.
- **Welsh an advantage**- where the ability to speak Welsh is given an equal priority in the interviewing process to other essential requirements but does not prevent non-Welsh speakers from being short listed or appointed. An agreement to appropriate Welsh language training can form a part of the job offer.

- **Welsh desirable** - ability to speak Welsh is considered only after other relevant factors are weighted and is used where there is little difference in other factors between candidates.

Welsh essential job descriptions and person specifications for salaried posts in Wales will be produced in Welsh and English.

If the ability to speak Welsh is an essential requirement for a salaried post then the advertisement will be in Welsh only.

If the ability to speak Welsh is not essential then recruitment advertisements in Wales will be bilingual.

3.3. Training and Development

This scheme will form an integral part of induction for new members of staff in Wales and for corporate communication staff.

Language Awareness Training will become an integral part of the induction process and sessions will be organised for existing staff and volunteers as part of ongoing training.

RNIB Cymru will implement a rolling programme to ensure the expertise is maintained to meet the commitments of the scheme.

RNIB Cymru is committed to supporting and encouraging all staff, volunteers and carers who wish to develop their Welsh language skills where financial and time resources allow, and where it is appropriate according to that post.

RNIB Cymru is specifically committed to the linguistic learning and development of staff, volunteers and carers who are increasingly required to be proficient in the use of the Welsh language within their role.

4. Finance

Delivering the scheme will be achieved by further incorporating expenditure for Welsh language resources in the core work of the organisation. A review will take place to implement the recommendations including identifying further financial resources. A programme will be developed to meet the financial resources.

Costs for providing bilingual services will be incorporated in funding applications for services and projects. The annual budget will include expenditure for meeting the commitments in the scheme.

5. Implementation and Monitoring

The Scheme will form an integral part of RNIB Cymru's planning activities. Targets will be built into the RNIB Cymru Business Plan, individual Service Plans and staff appraisals as appropriate. These are monitored through regular reviews.

The Scheme will be monitored through the regular programme of the Wales Management Team. The Director will discuss the Scheme with Trustees on an annual basis. The Director will discuss the Scheme with the Group Director responsible for Communications at a UK level, an annual report will be sent to the Welsh Language Board.

This scheme in itself will be reviewed for its appropriateness after a period of three years from approval.

RNIB Cymru will not alter this scheme without firstly consulting with the Welsh Language Board.

RNIB Cymru will publicise the Scheme in all work bases in Wales.

RNIB Cymru welcomes suggestions from the public, staff and service users for improvements to the Scheme.

Any complaints in relation to the Scheme will be dealt with by RNIB Cymru existing procedures.

Complaints should be directed to the following address:

RNIB Cymru
Trident Court
East Moors Road
Cardiff
CF24 5TD

Implementation Timetable (see Appendix A)