PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT

April 2024 – March 2025

This report is also available in Welsh

We can also provide this report in alternative formats on request. Please contact:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 sets out a legal framework which imposes a duty on all local authorities and National Park Authorities in Wales, together with the Welsh Ministers, to comply with the Standards relating to the Welsh Language.

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority is fully committed to the principle of enabling and supporting Welsh speakers to use their language in all aspects of their lives and recognises its responsibility to facilitate and promote this use.

The Authority's aim is to enable our stakeholders to use the language (Welsh or English) that they are most comfortable with. The Welsh Language Standards set the legal framework and this report sets out how the Authority is complying with the Standards required under that Measure. The Authority recognises that it has made progress but there are improvements still to be made.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The Welsh Language Standards mean that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority should not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, and should promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language to make it easier for people to use it in their day-to-day lives.

1.2 The Standards fall into five broad areas:

- **Service Delivery**, which focus on providing services, procurement, corporate identity
- **Policy Making**, which focus on carrying out an impact assessment of the Welsh language when making policy decisions, and taking positive action to promote use of the Welsh language
- **Operational**, which focus on promoting and facilitating the Welsh language in relation to the Authority's staff and internal activities
- **Promotion**, which focus on promoting or facilitating the use of the Welsh language more widely and
- **Record Keeping**, which focus on keeping records on how the Authority complies with the Standards imposed.

1.3 A total of 170 Standards have been imposed on the Authority, with an initial implementation date of the 30th March 2016. A full list of the Standards with which the Authority is required to comply is available on our website and on our intranet for staff.

1.4 Standards 158, 164 and 170 stipulate that the Authority must produce an annual report by the 30th June in relation to each preceding financial year. This is the tenth annual report since the introduction of the Standards and the report focuses on the period from the 01 April 2024 to the 31 March 2025.

1.5 This report has been considered by the Authority's Management Team and presented to the National Park Authority for approval.

2. MATTERS ARISING DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

2.1 The Authority has received three enquiries from the Welsh Language Commissioner during the course of the year. The first related to a body which is separate from the Authority, and in the other two cases, the response provided by the Authority meant that no further investigation was undertaken.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS (STANDARDS 1 – 87)

3.1 To ensure that all staff are aware of the Service Delivery Standards, we have distributed guidance on the delivery of Welsh language services. All Team Leaders and Managers have a duty to ensure that their services comply with the requirements.

3.2 Correspondence and Answering the telephone (Standards 1 – 22)

3.2.1 Correspondence is replied to in the language in which it was received, while correspondence sent to individuals for the first time is bilingual. The Authority's letterhead contains a statement that "We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh and will respond to any correspondence in Welsh. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay".

3.2.2 Calls to the Authority's main telephone number, and its centres, are answered bilingually and dealt with in Welsh, if that is the person's wish, wherever possible. It is stated on the Authority's Website that calls in Welsh are welcomed.

3.2.3 Since undertaking language training last year, the Customer Service team has become more confident in incorporating more Welsh into daily interactions resulting in enquiries through the medium of Welsh being managed more effectively.

3.3 Meetings (Standards 24 – 36)

3.3.1 The Authority's short-term sickness absence policy has been reviewed and now specifically states that the Authority will provide a translation service at meetings if necessary, to allow employees to use the Welsh language.

3.3.2 A number of online engagement events have been held in respect of the Partnership Plan and Camping and Caravan Development, together with planning training for Town and Community Councils. Where these were public events, simultaneous translation was available, however where a bilingual invitation was sent to individuals, they were asked to respond prior to the meeting to request Welsh language translation. No such requests were made during the reporting period.

3.3.3 In person events were held regarding designation of a Conservation Area at Cresswell Quay, the Partnership Plan and Camping and Caravan development and Welsh speakers were present at each event.

3.3.4 The Authority holds its Authority/Committee meetings either online or as multi-location meetings (in accordance with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021). During the reporting period the Authority has continued to hold some of its meetings bilingually with the assistance of simultaneous translation. Consideration will be given to holding more bilingual meetings, although it is an established principle that any member of the public who requests it can address the Authority's Development

Management Committee (the only meeting where public speaking is allowed) through the medium of Welsh.

3.4   Documents, Forms and Publicity Material (Standards 37 – 51)

3.4.1   The Authority's Coast to Coast newspaper was published bilingually following a finding from the Welsh Language Commissioner that the Authority was not complying with Standard 37.

3.4.2   All of the public facing communication regarding volunteering is bilingual as is the newsletter for the Roots for Recovery project which is a partnership project with MIND working with those who identify as having poor mental health.

3.4.3   All policies and strategies are published bilingually on the Authority's website, as are press statements.

3.5   Website, apps and social media (Standards 52 and 55 – 59)

3.5.1   Users of the Authority's website are able to choose their preferred language by clicking on a toggle button. Figures for web page views are provided in the table below which shows an increase on 2023/24.

Web page views by year	Welsh	English
2024/25	13,333	1,460,825
2023/24	10,698	1,340,919
2022/23	4,064	936,413
2021/22	5,583	1,096,366
2020/21	12,328	802,982

3.6   Signage and Notices (Standards 61 – 63 and 69 – 70)

3.6.1   A signage audit was undertaken in August 2024. As a result some signage which was not bilingual has been replaced. More work is needed to follow up on other instances.

3.7   Reception services (Standards 64 – 70)

3.7.1   Of the four staff (2.6 full-time equivalents) in the Authority's main reception area, two are entry level, one is a fluent Welsh speaker, while one has undertaken Welsh language courses to an intermediate level. If staff have been unable to deal with a call themselves, they have referred the caller to another Welsh-speaking colleague without delay.

3.7.2   Iaith Gwaith posters are displayed in all reception areas and employees who speak Welsh either wear Iaith Gwaith lanyards or badges to inform the public that a Welsh language service is available. Welsh learners wear lanyards with "Dw i yn dysgu Cymraeg" on them.

3.8   Grants and Tenders (Standards 71 – 80)

3.8.1   The Authority administers the Sustainable Development Fund, the Greening Agriculture Fund and Connecting the Coast Scheme. Guidance notes and the application form for these are available bilingually or in both Welsh and

English, and correspondence is responded to in the applicant's language of choice. Any promotional material is available either bilingually or in both Welsh and English languages and are treated equally in terms of font, size, format, etc. Any application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application submitted in English.

3.8.2   Invitations to tender are inputted bilingually on the Sell2Wales website, with the following wording included: "Tenders are welcomed in English or Welsh. A tender submitted in Welsh will be treated no less favourably than a tender submitted in English".

3.9   **Education courses (Standards 84 and 86)**
3.9.1   The Authority does not run education courses *per se*. The activities and events programme for 2024/25 provides for activities/events through the medium of Welsh and all schools/groups who take part are able to do so through their preferred language.

3.9.2   281 sessions were undertaken with schools during the reporting period (this includes Duke of Edinburgh Award, Further Education and University sessions), 56 of which (18.8%) were carried out through the medium of Welsh; an increase of 1.8% on the previous reporting period. 1,837 children and young people attended these sessions; a 27% increase on the previous reporting period. 22 bilingual sessions were undertaken with schools, with 629 participants, and most education sessions incorporate incidental Welsh.

3.9.3   1,583 activities and events (including volunteering sessions) were held during the reporting period, 424 of which (27%) were carried out through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. These included Welsh Language Walk at Carningli, Wesh Language Walk for Croesgoch Chapel, a Wesh Language Walk at Craig Talfynydd, talk to a Merched y Wawr Group and volunteering sessions. 29,727 people attended these sessions; these mainly related to Experience the Iron Age at Castell Henllys. There was also a dark sky storytelling event.

3.9.4   Castell Henllys have continued to host Can i Plant Benfro in their tipi. .

4.   POLICY MAKING STANDARDS (STANDARDS 88 – 97)

4.1   **Policy formulation, review or revision (Standards 88 – 90)**
4.1.1   The Special Qualities of the National Park were identified in the National Park Management Plan. The Management Plan (now Partnership Plan) for 2025-2030 was adopted in March 2025. Following public consultation in early 2024, the special qualities of the National Park have been updated and include a greater emphasis on Welsh language and dialects.

4.1.2   In September 2024, the Authority conducted a review of its Local Development Plan, culminating in the publication of the LDP Review Report in March 2025. Policy 13 of the current Plan protects against developments

which would have a significant effect on the Welsh Language. The Plan identifies 18 Town and Community Council Areas as 'Welsh-language – Sensitive Areas' where Welsh speakers constitute 19.2 per cent of the population as identified in the 2011 Census and seeks to protect the Welsh Language in these areas as one of the National Park's special qualities. The Review Report identified that the most up-to-date Census statistical data relating to the percentage of Welsh-speaking population in the National Park will need to be reviewed to determine if the existing Welsh Language-Sensitive Areas require amendment and consideration given to whether the development thresholds require revision.

4.2 Public consultation (Standards 91 – 93)

4.2.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessments have been carried out on the draft Partnership Plan / National Park Management Plan before it went to consultation (stage1 assessment) and then reviewed (stage 2 assessment) before the Partnership Plan / National Park Management Plan was presented to the National Park Authority for approval in March 2025.

4.2.3 Welsh Language Impact Assessments as a section within an Integrated Assessment were completed for

- Article 4 Direction 28-day Permitted Development: Stage 1 Assessment - before consultation. Stage 2 Assessment - after consultation.
- Cresswell Quay Conservation Area: Stage 1 - before consultation, Stage 2 - after consultation. Stage 3 - Cresswell Quay Management Plan.
- Equality Plan: Stage 1 - before consultation. Stage 2 - after consultation.
- Enforcement Policy.

4.2.4 As part of each public consultation specific questions were asked seeking views on the issues identified as part of the Welsh Language Impact Assessments.

4.3 Policy on Awarding Grants (Standard 94)

4.3.1 The grants policy was approved by the National Park Authority in July 2024 and this includes a requirement to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language as part of the grant awarding criteria. An additional question has been added to the Sustainable Development Fund application form asking what effect the project will have on the Welsh Language.

4.4 Policy research (Standards 95 – 97)

4.4.1 Work on options for Camping and Caravan Development in advance of consultation on an Article 4 Direction in respect of 28 Day Permitted Development included an assessment of the implications of implementation for the Welsh Language.

5. OPERATIONAL STANDARDS (STANDARDS 98 – 144)

5.1   Human resources policies (Standards 105 – 111)
5.1.1   Work is currently ongoing to update a number of the Authority's policies, however all staffing policies covered by the Standards are available bilingually.

5.2   Intranet (Standards 122 – 126)
5.2.1   A new intranet has been introduced during the reporting period. The text on the home page of the Authority's intranet is bilingual.

5.2.2   Work has begun to create a Welsh Hub where all Information and policies on the Welsh Language can be found.

5.3   Assessing staff's Welsh language skills (Standard 127)
5.3.1   All staff have been asked to input their Welsh language skills on the Authority's HR system. The skills levels now used are based on the Welsh language skills competence framework (CEFR):

Level
- Entry
- Foundation
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Proficient

5.3.2   On the 31 March 2025 the Authority employed 187 staff. 88.7% (an increase of 41.1%) have completed their language skills data:

Level	Number	Percentage
Entry	105	63.25
Foundation	16	9.64
Intermediate	14	8.43
Advanced	12	7.23
Proficient	19	11.45

5.3.3   It is considered that, on the whole, the Authority is able to fulfil its obligations to the public in terms of providing a bilingual service. The Authority generally has a low turnover of staff and, when posts become vacant, they are assessed with regard to linguistic requirements (see paragraph 5.5). In the meantime, staff are encouraged to enrol on Welsh language courses to develop or improve their Welsh language skills.

5.3.4   A Welsh Language skills audit to identify the language needs and skills of each team has been undertaken and this will further strengthen the Authority's language planning strategy.

5.3.5   18 Members serve on the National Park Authority, and they have self-assessed their Welsh Language skills as follows:

Level	Number	Percentage
Entry	1	5.56
Foundation	4	22.22
Intermediate	1	5.56
Advanced	1	5.56
Proficient	3	16.67
No skills	8	44.44

5.4   Welsh language courses (Standards 130 – 133)

5.4.1   Wellbeing and Development reviews are undertaken with all staff, where the need (or opportunity) to learn Welsh is identified. Any staff wishing to attend a Welsh language course during work time is supported. A number of staff have received training to develop their language skills, including introduction of a 10-week taster course. As a result of this, 12 staff have signed up for the next two modules (2 hours per week in work time for 20 weeks).

5.4.2   Welsh language awareness training is provided to all new employees as part of their induction, and 19.25% of staff have completed online Work Welsh language courses during the reporting period.

5.4.3   Support will be given during the 6-month probation period to assist staff attain the required Welsh language skills

5.5   Assessing linguistic requirements for all vacant posts (Standard 136)

5.5.1   Whenever a job description is prepared or amended, managers will be required to assess the linguistic requirements of the post using the Authority's adopted language framework. The following factors are used, together with the language framework, to set the level of skills required for the post:

(a) Will the postholder work in a Service area that requires the service to be delivered through the medium of Welsh?
(b) Is the Authority currently able to deliver this Service in Welsh?

5.5.2   If the answer to (b) is 'yes', the manager must explain how the Authority currently delivers through the medium of Welsh. If the answer to (a) is 'yes' and (b) is 'no', the post must be advertised as 'Welsh essential' with an indication of the skills level required.

5.5.3   The requirements are recorded in the Request to Fill a Post form which is submitted to the Authority's Senior Leadership Team for approval.

5.5.4   39 posts were advertised during the reporting period. 3 were categorised as Welsh essential, 27 as Welsh desirable or advantageous.

5.5.5   The Authority has collaborated with other public sector employers to share best practice in respect of recruiting fluent Welsh speakers. We now indicate

in the job description specific detail of the Welsh language skill required e.g. meet and greet, spoken Welsh essential rather than being ambiguous so that candidates were under the impression that written Welsh language skills were also needed.

5.6   **Application forms (Standards 137A – 140)**
5.6.1   The Authority has introduced an online application process which is available in Welsh and English. The form asks individuals to note whether they wish to use the Welsh language in the interview process. Two such requests were made during the reporting period.

5.6.2   If the candidate wishes to be interviewed in Welsh, the interview panel will either be made up of Welsh speaking officers or simultaneous translation facilities will be provided. If the advertised post asks for Welsh language skills but the candidate – although indicating that s/he can speak Welsh – does not wish to be interviewed in Welsh, a procedure has been put in place to test the conversational level of the candidate prior to interview.

5.7   **Signs displayed in the workplace (Standards 141 – 143)**
5.7.1   The Authority's policy is to ensure that all signs are bilingual, with the Welsh text inserted in such a way that it is likely to be read first. Reception/Centre managers have received guidance on ensuring that they comply with these Standards. A signage audit was undertaken in the reporting period to identify any sign which needs to be replaced.

6.   PROMOTION STANDARDS (STANDARDS 145 – 146)

6.1   **5-year Welsh Language Strategy**
6.1.1   The Authority has produced an **Assessment of Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022** and adopted a **Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-2028**. An Action Plan to implement actions to be undertaken in the coming year has been agreed and actions set out within it are monitored by the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee. The following update was provided for the end of Q4:

Develop and deliver a programme of opportunities supporting people to use Welsh and develop their Welsh Language Skills – Centres and Events Programme	**Progress Status:** In Progress / On Track The teams continue to offer Welsh language and learners events and activities. Planning for 2025 has included 'uniquely Welsh' activities which include Welsh learners walks, and bilingual events. These are advertised online and in Coast to Coast.
Develop and deliver a programme of opportunities supporting people to use Welsh and develop their Welsh Language Skills – Community and life long	**Progress Status:** In Progress / On Track Opportunities for people to engage with the National Park and our services in Welsh are provided in all areas of our engagement and community work including the Rangers and Your Park social media channels but take

learning opportunities and Authority's outreach and inclusion work	up varies according to audience and location.

7. RECORD KEEPING STANDARDS (STANDARDS 147 – 154)

7.1 Complaints received (Standards 147 – 149)

7.1.1 One complaint was received by the Authority during the reporting period, regarding advertisement of vacancies. Investigation of the matter highlighted some actions which could improve the visibility of the statement promoting the ability to apply for jobs in Welsh and highlighting competence requirements in Welsh to potential job applicants.

7.2 Welsh language skills (Standard 151)

7.2.1 All staff have been asked to input their Welsh language skills on the Authority's HR system (see 5.3 above). As noted in paragraph 5.3.4, a Welsh Language Skills Audit was undertaken during the reporting period and actions have been identified to encourage staff to develop their language skills further.

7.3 Training courses (Standards 152)

7.3.1 All staff are actively encouraged to learn Welsh and 19.25% of staff have completed online Work Welsh language courses during the reporting period. Completion of the basic module is now mandatory for all new starters to the Authority.

7.4 Welsh language assessments for new or vacant posts (Standard 153)

7.4.1 All requests to fill new or vacant posts have to be considered by the Authority's Senior Leadership Team (see 5.5 above). The statistics are recorded on the Authority's performance management system and reported to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and Operational Review Committee.

7.5 Categorisation of new and vacant posts (Standard 154)

7.5.1 Statistics relating to the categorisation of new or vacant posts can be found in paragraph 5.5.4.

8. SUPPLEMENTARY STANDARDS (STANDARDS 155 – 175)

8.1 A copy of the Compliance Notice issued to the Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner is available on the Authority's website.

8.2 A document entitled "**Welsh Language Standards: Comments and Complaints**" is available on the Authority's website. This document sets out all the Standards with which the Authority has to comply, together with the

process that will be adhered to should someone make a complaint to the Authority if it fails in that duty.

9. MONITORING COMPLIANCE

9.1   Ultimate responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Welsh Language Standards lies with the Authority's Chief Executive. However, any actions concerning the Standards on a day-to-day basis has been delegated to the Democratic Services Manager. In addition, every Director, Head of Service and Team Leader are fully aware of the obligations of the Standards and promoting the Welsh Language has been identified as a cross-cutting outcome throughout the Authority's Delivery Plans.

9.2   The Annual Monitoring Report is submitted to the Authority for approval prior to submission to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

9.3   Actions to be undertaken during the year:

Action	Output/Target	Timescales
Increase numbers of staff able to deliver services through the medium of Welsh by upskilling/increasing the confidence of existing staff and recruitment as vacancies arise	30% of staff assess their Welsh Language skills as being intermediate or above % posts recruited in accordance with linguistic requirements	By end of 2025/26
Working with partners, develop and deliver a programme of opportunities, supporting people to use Welsh and develop their Welsh Language Skills	Programme of activities in place. # participants in Welsh Language activities and sessions Case Studies and Feedback from opportunities.	Development activity in 2025/26 ready for delivery onwards
Member training session on Welsh Language Sensitive Areas (Policy 13) and use of rural communities local lettings policies on rural exceptions sites.	Delivery of Training. Members decisions.	By end of 2025/26