

**VALLEYS TO COAST - WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME  
ACTION PLAN 2017/18**

REF	ACTION	OBJECTIVE	LEAD OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	UPDATE
<b>PLANNING AND DELIVERING SERVICES</b>					
WLS1	Ensure that the Welsh Language Scheme is considered as an integral part of the Equality Impact Assessments undertaken when developing policies, plans and strategies.	To mainstream Welsh Language issues into routine Equality Impact Assessments.	Housing Manager	During the lifetime of the Scheme	<p>We continue to work with Tai Pawb to review our Equality Impact Assessment process. This includes provision for mainstreaming the Welsh language into Equality Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Additionally, Welsh language is a standing discussion item on our quarterly Equality Group meeting agendas.</p>
WLS2	Ensure that the Welsh Language Commissioner <i>Hapus i Siarad Cymraeg</i> branded signage is clearly visible at all customer facing locations within the business.	To explicitly and unambiguously show that we welcome and value the use of the Welsh Language within our business.	Communications Officer	During the lifetime of the Scheme	<p>The <i>Hapus i Siarad</i> signage is clearly visible in all of our customer facing locations.</p>
WLS3	Carry out audit of Welsh Language skills within our customer facing partner organisations.	To be assured that customers' preference of language can be accommodated by our key partners.	Director of Property Services	<p>March 2012</p> <p>Annually thereafter.</p>	<p>Through previous audits, Valleys To Coast has established that the majority of our customer-facing partner organisations have members of staff with Welsh Language skills.</p> <p>We will be building this into our new contracts / agreements for further assurance.</p>

## DEALING WITH WELSH-SPEAKING CUSTOMERS

WLS4	Carry out regular review of Welsh Language skills within the organisation and update the central directory accordingly.	To provide staff with an up-to-date and accessible directory of Welsh Speakers within the business.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	Annually	We have a database of staff that are able to communicate in Welsh. There are currently 10 staff able to communicate in Welsh either at a business proficient level or bilingually, and this database is available to all staff along with a guide on what to do if they are on the phone to a customer wishing to converse in Welsh.
WLS5	Maintain database of customers expressing preference to do business using the Welsh Language and ensure that all bespoke and routine correspondence is sent in Welsh.	To meet the expressed needs of customers and provide outstanding customer service.	Governance and Assurance Officer	During the lifetime of the Scheme	We have 6973 individual tenants, of whom 3 (0.04%) have expressed a preference to communicate in Welsh.  Our IT systems have been configured to send out standard letters in Welsh, when requested by the customer.
WLS6	As part of the Common Housing Register project review the potential / benefit of providing bi-lingual Housing Application forms.	To improve the range of services / language options for customers.	Housing Manager	March 2013	The council administered Common Housing Register does not use application forms but relies on face to face interviews. The council operates its own Welsh Language Scheme as a public body.

## THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE ASSOCIATION

WLS7	Alter e-mail signatures for Welsh Speaking staff to show they are happy to converse in Welsh.	To promote and encourage the use of the Welsh Language when doing business with Valleys to Coast.	IT Operations Team Leader	December 2011	All of our office staff have bilingual email signatures and the email signatures of Welsh speaking staff make it clear that they welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.
WLS8	Increase the Information available on the Valleys To Coast website in Welsh by providing translations for the information accessed by the key navigation buttons (relating to Repairs, Payments, Applying for Housing and News).	To show a clear commitment to promoting the use of the Welsh Language in dealing with Valleys To Coast.	Communications Officer	March 2013	Our website is mainly bilingual, with the exception being any publications/documents that are not currently produced bilingually
WLS9	Produce in-house posters in bilingual or Welsh versions wherever possible.	To promote Valleys To Coast as a Welsh-friendly organisation to staff and the community.	Communications Officer	During the lifetime of the Scheme	Where practical the majority of posters produced in-house are bilingual.
WLS10	Ensure when securing or refurbishing office accommodation that a full bilingual identity is presented throughout the building.	To promote Valleys To Coast as a Welsh-friendly organisation to staff and the community.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	During the lifetime of the Scheme	Continuing to ensure all signage in offices is bilingual.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF THE SCHEME

WLS11	Add Welsh Language skills as a 'Desirable' component of Job Descriptions and publicise in recruitment advertisements for all customer facing staff.	To increase the number of staff able to respond to customer enquiries in Welsh.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	March 2012  During the lifetime of the Scheme	Job descriptions/Personal Specifications continue to include a requirement for Welsh language knowledge as a desirable skill.
WLS12	Support / Provide training for staff to learn or improve Welsh Language skills.	To promote the Welsh Language and show corporate commitment to the objectives of our Welsh Language Scheme.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	During the lifetime of the Scheme	<p>A 'language skill' information sheet is included at the induction of new employees to gauge any interest from staff who would like to improve their language skills and their details logged on the Welsh Language spread sheet.</p> <p>Introduction to Welsh language is incorporated in the Corporate Induction, and includes history of the language and our commitment and options for people interested in learning Welsh.</p> <p>Welsh lessons are advertised and serve as a reminder to staff that they would be supported to develop Welsh Language skills.</p>

WLS12 (cont)	Support / Provide training for staff to learn or improve Welsh Language skills.	To promote the Welsh Language and show corporate commitment to the objectives of our Welsh Language Scheme.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	During the lifetime of the Scheme	<p>Welsh taster/basic lessons were held and funded by the organisation, including supporting study time. We are in the process of reviewing our Welsh Language training for Valleys To Coast, awaiting the changes required for organisations operating in Wales.</p> <p>At the moment we are offering colleagues to undertake a 10 week Welsh eLearning course.</p> <p>We have a number of staff who have expressed an interest in the Welsh Language training and we are waiting to decide on our approach to support staff with their interest. We have been reviewing options at local learning centres/colleges.</p> <p>After consultation with our Welsh speakers we are now using Google translate.</p>
WLS13	Develop and Introduce a Welsh Language Awareness module for inclusion in the Induction Programme for new starters.	To promote the Welsh Language and show corporate commitment to the objectives of our Welsh Language Scheme.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	September 2012	<p>Welsh Language Awareness is now an integral part of corporate inductions held on a quarterly basis, attended by new staff and Board members. The Welsh Language Awareness element is approximately 20/30 minutes in duration.</p>

WLS14	Within the business promote the efforts and successes of staff members taking Welsh Lessons.	To encourage individuals taking Welsh Lessons and promote the availability and popularity of such lessons.	HR Manager & Learning & Development Business Partner	March 2011  During the lifetime of the Scheme	Congratulatory messages are communicated via the staff intranet and Yammer whenever staff have completed Welsh language courses.
WLS15	Prepare Annual Report for the Board on progress / success against the Welsh Language Scheme Action Plan.	To monitor the implementation of the Welsh Language Scheme and comply with the requirements of the Welsh Language Commissioner.	Chief Executive	March 2012  Annually	The Annual Report for the financial year 2017/2018 was presented to the Board on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2018.
WLS16	Ensure the Welsh Language Scheme and the Annual Report to the Welsh Language Commissioner are readily available to anyone seeking a copy and are clearly accessible on the Valleys To Coast website.	To promote details of, and assure compliance with, the Welsh Language Scheme.	Chief Executive	December 2011  During the lifetime of the Scheme	<p>The Welsh Language Scheme is available on the Valleys To Coast website, and has been since its adoption in March 2012.</p> <p>The annual report for 2016/17 approved by Valleys To Coast's Board in September 2017 is on the website also.</p> <p>On approval, the annual report for 2017/18 will be placed on the Valleys To Coast website.</p>