A living language: have your say

Results of the consultation exercises

July 2013
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Some opinions:

“I believe that the death of the Welsh language has been greatly exaggerated.”

“People speak Welsh when they see that speaking Welsh has an economic and social purpose.” [Translation]

“People must be taught ‘why’ they should speak Welsh as well as ‘how’ to speak Welsh.” [Translation]

“A people’s native language should never be allowed to die, and everyone world-wide should have access to it.”
1. Executive summary

1.1 Participation

Participants warmly welcomed the *A living language: have your say* process and many expressed their appreciation of being afforded the opportunity to contribute to a national debate on the future of the Welsh language.

There was a general expression of goodwill towards the Welsh Government and its stated intention to take positive action in favour of the Welsh language by responding constructively to the 2011 Census results. It is also clear that the process has raised the expectations of those sympathetic to the Welsh language, in that the Government and its partners are now expected to act swiftly and decisively in order to ensure a prosperous future for the Welsh language.

The intention to continue with the process and to ensure greater public involvement in discussions about specific policy issues was also welcomed. Those who contributed to the process regarded the process as a starting point for continued long-term dialogue with the Government and calls were made for regular opportunities to contribute to the debate.

1.2 Policy areas

It was generally accepted that the Government’s strategies with regard to the Welsh language are on the right track. However, there was a firm view that more attention needs to be given to some core aspects, namely:

- the need to respond to the challenge that population mobility poses to the future of the Welsh language,
- the need to develop a better understanding of the link between language and the economy, and the need to act on that basis,
- the need to market the value of the Welsh language to the people of Wales.

Much of the debate can be summarised in terms of the reality that faces all languages, namely that a language must have an economic and social purpose in order to survive.

In terms of strategic action in favour of the Welsh language, general dissatisfaction was expressed towards the lack of vision and effective action by local authorities in Wales (Gwynedd Council excepted) in order to ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language.

1.3 Demographic mobility

There was a consensus that demographic mobility is the biggest current challenge to the viability of the Welsh language, and it was found that the solutions to that challenge involved:
• economic policies,
• housing and planning policies,
• education policies, and
• community development policies.

1.4 The economy

Economic issues were the principal priorities for action, with many people noting that the link between the Welsh language and economic issues had not yet been adequately addressed. The themes mentioned included:

• The need to include the Welsh language strategically in economic development planning.
• The significance of ensuring a strong economy in rural Wales.
• The need to consider developing economic growth areas that give priority to the Welsh language.
• The influence of bilingual workplaces on the local labour market within an economy that is largely dependent on the public sector.
• The need to consider the Welsh language as:
  o a skill for the workplace,
  o a marketing tool, and
  o an integral aspect of products and services.
• The need for employment and careers agencies to improve their efforts to promote the Welsh language as a valuable skill for employment among pupils, parents and employers.

1.5 Housing and planning

Two themes emerged constantly in discussions about housing and planning issues:

• The need to amend TAN 20 in order to strengthen the way in which the Welsh language is considered in discussions about land use developments – including effective procedures to conduct meaningful language impact assessments.
• The need to assist and support local people in their efforts to buy affordable homes for themselves and their families and to be given priority in decisions regarding social housing tenancies.

1.6 Marketing the Welsh language

There was a desire to see the Welsh Government doing much more to market the Welsh language among the general population in order to:

• withstand the huge social pressure of Anglo-American culture,
• create a contemporary image of the Welsh language as a modern and international language, and
• increase both the confidence of the people of Wales in the Welsh language and their use of the language.
1.7 Education

It is generally recognised that the education system is crucial to the survival of the Welsh language, both in terms of producing Welsh speakers and in maintaining and developing skills. The themes that emerged included the need to:

- develop and increase access to Welsh-medium education,
- ensure progression in Welsh-medium education,
- review the teaching of Welsh as a second language,
- ensure a bilingual ethos in English-medium schools,
- include ‘language awareness’ in the curriculum of all schools,
- improve the link that is made between the Welsh language and employment and careers,
- improve the quality and nature of Welsh-language educational resources,
- strengthen school-community links in terms of opportunities to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.

1.8 Opportunities to use the Welsh language

There was a great desire to ensure more opportunities to use the Welsh language:

- socially,
- at work, and
- when receiving services.

1.8.1 Socially: there was a general appreciation of the work being undertaken by traditional Welsh-language organisations. There was an emphasis on developing social opportunities for children and young people to use the Welsh language. Additionally, there was a great desire in many towns in areas where the Welsh language is less prominent to establish Welsh language centres in key market towns such as Haverfordwest and Brecon. It was felt that creating a vibrant Welsh-language social scene is essential if people of all ages were to be attracted to the Welsh language. The need to empower people to act locally in order to ensure the future of the Welsh language was noted.

1.8.2 At work: there was a desire to increase opportunities to use the Welsh language at work, and answers received in response to the survey in this vein provide a detailed model for achieving this goal (3.2.12).

1.8.3 Services: the publication of the new Standards with regard to the development of Welsh-language services was eagerly anticipated. Priority services included:

- local authority services in general,
- health and social care services,
- emergency services,
- sport and leisure services,
- youth services, and
- public libraries.
There was a strong desire to see Welsh Government departments leading by example by providing more Welsh-language services.

1.9 The family

Ensuring language socialisation within families was also a prominent theme. The work of the Twf scheme and Mudiad Meithrin was praised. The need to support parents practically to enable them to assist their children in developing their fluency in Welsh and to learn with their children was emphasised.

1.10 The media

There was a general consensus that the media, in their various forms, are absolutely essential to the survival of the Welsh language in the 21st century. Consensus was found in relation to the following:

Television and radio:

- An appreciation of the vital contribution and role of S4C and Radio Cymru was noted as well as the need to maintain and develop those services.
- The need to increase the number of Welsh-language radio and television channels in order to widen choice.
- The need to increase the use of Welsh on English-language radio and television channels, e.g. Radio Wales, BBC Wales and local commercial radio.

Information and communication technology:

- The need to ensure that the Welsh language is a standard option in common computer software.
- The need to increase the Welsh-language content available on the internet, including:
  - leisure and entertainment resources,
  - information services and journalism, and
  - educational resources.

New technology:

- The need to ensure that the Welsh language is available on all platforms and in all technological media – as far as practically possible – was noted.

Additionally, the need to promote and market current provision much more widely and effectively was identified.

It was also noted that securing and developing the role of the Welsh language in the media would be a means of retaining and including Welsh speakers (and others) from around the world in an international Welsh language community.
1.11 Welsh for Adults

Opportunities to learn Welsh as adults were also seen as a priority, with a vast number of people expressing a desire to learn Welsh but encountering various obstacles which prevented them from doing so. The themes mentioned included a desire for:

- cheaper lessons,
- lessons that focus on informal speaking skills,
- lessons associated with the workplace,
- better resources for learning Welsh, including online resources and television programmes.

1.12 Funding and resources

One general and absolutely vital theme that emerged from contributions via all communication channels was that of resources. The need for adequate resources, including adequate financial resources, in order to be able to operate effectively and deliver the desired outcomes was noted repeatedly. The Government was called upon constantly throughout the process to increase its financial investment in the Welsh language in order to ensure effective action.
2. Background

2.1 Policy background

Four key documents set the stage for the policies and activities of the Welsh Government and its partners in relation to the Welsh language:

- Welsh-medium Education Strategy (2010),
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011,
- More than just words... Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care (2012).

The Welsh-medium Education Strategy and ‘More than just words...’ set out a programme of objectives and activities for developing the Welsh language in education and in health and social care respectively.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 is the basis on which the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner was established as well as the proposed national Standards in relation to the Welsh language.

‘A living language: a language for living’ is the guiding public policy document that sets out the Welsh Government’s objectives and activities in relation to the Welsh language. The document identifies six strategic areas:

1. The family
2. Children and young people
3. The community
4. The workplace
5. Welsh-language services
6. Infrastructure

The 2011 Census results are another source of useful information that guides the Welsh Government’s policy with regard to the Welsh language. It was the publication of the 2011 Census data that sparked this process, entitled A living language: have your say.

2.2 Process background

Following the publication of the first results of the 2011 Census on the Welsh language in December 2012 and January 2013, which showed a decrease in the number and percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales, the First Minister announced a public consultation that would give the people of Wales an opportunity to voice their opinions on what should be done by the Welsh Government and others to ensure the future of the Welsh language.
It was with that intention therefore that a number of activities were held during June 2013 entitled *A living language: have your say*.

A number of consultation activities were organised to gather public opinion, including:

- 8 local discussion groups throughout Wales,
- 13 discussion groups that were drawn from among the Government’s partners,
- an opportunity for the public and for organisations to respond to an online survey, and
- various opportunities to submit comments via a number of channels, including both old and new technologies.

These activities culminated in a conference that was held at Aberystwyth University on 4 July 2013 entitled ‘Iaith fyw: Y Gynhadledd Fawr’ (A living language: The Big Conference). A total of 160 delegates gathered in the company of the First Minister to discuss the future of the Welsh language. There was also an opportunity for others to watch, listen and contribute via various media platforms.

This report provides an overview of participants’ discussions and suggestions gleaned during this process.

The process was facilitated by Welsh Government staff, Orchard Media Ltd. and IAI TH: Welsh centre for language planning.
3. Online survey

3.1 Profile of the respondents

3.1.1 The responses

A very good response was received to the online survey. A total of 2,393 people responded to the survey before 18 July 2013.

The number of people responding to each question varied, with 1,779 responding to question 1 of the survey: *What maintains and strengthens the Welsh language in your area?* Question 10 at the end of the survey attracted 615 responses. On average 1,200 responses were received to each question.

3.1.2 Place of residence of the respondents

Responses were received from across Wales and beyond but it is interesting to note that one fifth of the responses (21.1%) were submitted by individuals from Cardiff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where do you live?</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blaenau Gwent</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgend</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caerphilly</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmarthenshire</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceredigion</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conwy</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denbighshire</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flintshire</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwynedd</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglesey</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merthyr Tydfil</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouthshire</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neath Port Talbot</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembrokeshire</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powys</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhondda Cynon Taf</td>
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<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vale of Glamorgan</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torfaen</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrexham</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Wales</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Responses  | 2392 |
| Did not respond | 1 |

11
Interestingly respondents from outside Wales included individuals from countries as diverse as England, USA, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Israel, Japan and Kazakhstan.

3.1.3 Language skills of the respondents

Over half of the respondents (55.7%) described themselves as Welsh speakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of the respondent’s language skills</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a Welsh speaker</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>1324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a Welsh learner</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am non-Welsh speaking</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses 2378
Did not respond 15

3.1.4 Age of the respondents

Over half of the respondents (52.5%) were young adults aged 25-44 and 88.2% were adults aged 25-64.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-15</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>1248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses 2378
Did not respond 15

3.1.5 Nature of the responses

The vast majority of the responses were supportive of the Welsh language and offered constructive ideas for promoting and strengthening its use. However, a small minority of people opposed any effort by the state – or anyone else – to promote the language. A common view within this group of respondents was that the Welsh language should be left to its fate, that it is a drain on taxpayers’ money and that it should be accepted that the English language is a global *lingua franca* and should be recognised as the only official and public language of communication in Wales. As this process was an attempt to gather opinions regarding efforts to maintain and strengthen the Welsh language, in line with Welsh Government policy, the views summarised below are those of the vast majority of respondents who gave positive responses.
3.2 The responses

3.2.1 Question 1: What maintains and strengthens the Welsh language in your area?

The main themes that emerged were:

- the key role of traditional Welsh-language organisations and the mentrau iaith (language initiatives);
- the central role of Welsh-medium education;
- the need to ensure that the Welsh language is a normal part of the daily lives of people within local communities and networks;
- the need to ensure opportunities to use the Welsh language socially and at work;
- the need to ensure that Welsh lessons are easily available to all and that supportive mechanisms and resources are available to learners;
- the need for public organisations, and local authorities in particular, to adopt sounder policies in support of the Welsh language.

3.2.2 Question 2: What are the challenges facing the Welsh language in your area?

The four major themes highlighted in responses to this question were as follows:

- In the counties of north and west Wales, demographic mobility was by far the biggest challenge identified. The inward migration of non-Welsh speaking people into traditional Welsh-language heartlands and the outward migration of young people from those communities were constantly mentioned.

- In addition, the link between language and economy was mentioned as part and parcel of the above issue.

- In the eastern counties of Wales, the lack of opportunities to use the Welsh language and to learn Welsh were the most prominent themes.

- Across Wales, apart from Gwynedd, the lack of support by local authorities was a prominent and common theme.

The general themes identified in terms of the challenges that face the Welsh language were:

- demographic mobility;
- a lack of opportunities to use the Welsh language – especially outside the school environment;
- a lack of confidence among Welsh speakers;
- apathy and a lack of interest within the general population;
- weaknesses in the education system in terms of developing Welsh language skills effectively;
- a lack of adequate support by local authorities;
- a lack of Welsh-language services;
- the lack of economic value afforded to the Welsh language;
- a lack of support for learners to become fluent;
- a lack of Welsh language transmission within families;
- challenges relating to housing and planning policies;
• a dearth of funding.

3.2.3 Question 3: How can the use of Welsh within families be encouraged and supported?

The main themes that emerged was the need to:

• change the attitudes of the people of Wales towards the Welsh language;
• maintain and expand the Twf scheme and support Mudiad Meithrin;
• give parents practical support to encourage their children speak Welsh;
• ensure opportunities to use the Welsh language as a family;
• provide more Welsh lessons for parents – possibly free of charge;
• develop and promote Welsh-medium education;
• ensure appealing television and radio programmes, music, books and other resources;
• link the Welsh language to economic benefits.

3.2.4 Question 4 (a): How can children and young people’s use of Welsh be increased and their awareness of the value of the language strengthened through the education system?

The main themes that emerged was the need to:

• improve the quality of teaching Welsh as a subject – including the need to review Welsh as a second language;
• ensure opportunities for children and young people to use the Welsh language outside the classroom;
• increase the use of the Welsh language in English-medium schools;
• increase opportunities to receive Welsh-medium education;
• teach the history of Wales and the Welsh language more thoroughly in schools;
• teach school pupils about the benefits of bilingualism and the place of the Welsh language in the modern world;
• ensure better online resources for pupils and teachers;
• highlight the significance of the Welsh language in relation to employment and careers;
• involve parents to a greater extent in developing the skills of their children.

3.2.5 Question 4 (b): How can children and young people’s use of Welsh be increased and their awareness of the value of the language strengthened through other activities?

The main themes that emerged was the need to:

• increase social opportunities to use the Welsh language in:
  • leisure centre activities, swimming activities etc.
  • sport activities,
  • theatre and arts activities,
  • after-school activities;
• ensure the provision of appealing programmes on S4C;
• promote Welsh contemporary music and festivals;
• increase Welsh-language childcare opportunities;
• promote new Welsh-medium technology, e.g. social networks, the internet, computer games, apps etc.;
• promote exchange trips between north and south Wales;
• support Welsh-language youth organisations such as the Urdd and Wales YFC;
• improve the link with employment, e.g. the Llwyddo’n Lleol (Succeeding Locally) scheme;
• use celebrities to market the Welsh language;
• have fun and capture the imagination of young people.

3.2.6 Question 5: How can opportunities to use Welsh be increased and improved through information technology and the media, e.g. TV, radio, books and magazines, the internet, online services, mobile phones and other devices, social media, etc.?

The main themes and ideas that emerged was the need to:

• market and educate people about the Welsh-language technology that is already available;
• establish a reference website which signposts people to Welsh-language events;
• recognise that IT provides global access to the Welsh language;
• develop Welsh-language television services by:
  o improving the provision of S4C,
  o increasing the number of Welsh-language channels,
  o developing more use of Welsh on English-language channels in Wales;
• develop Welsh-language radio services by:
  o improving the provision of Radio Cymru,
  o increasing the number of Welsh-language radio channels – including local radio,
  o developing more use of Welsh on English-language channels in Wales;
• increase the presence of the Welsh language on all ICT platforms, e.g.:
  o websites,
  o social networks,
  o computer games,
  o apps,
  o mobile phones – including text prediction software;
• develop online reading materials:
  o more online journalism – including a magazine for young people,
  o develop online provision for learners,
  o e-books,
  o educational resources;
• develop the role of public libraries in promoting Welsh-language technology;
• ensure more Welsh-language content in regional newspapers.

3.2.7 Question 6: How can Welsh-language services be increased and improved for people living in your area?

The main themes and ideas that emerged in response to this question was the need to:
ensure that public bodies meet their current requirements in terms of providing Welsh-language services;
ensure that the proposed Standards strengthen that provision;
raise awareness of existing services – including the use of badges and signs that direct people to these services;
encourage Welsh speakers to use these services, e.g. via schemes such as Cymraeg yn Gyntaf (Welsh First) and Crowd-sourcing;
ensure that reception and front-line staff are bilingual;
maintain the visual status of the Welsh language;
promote opportunities to learn Welsh in the workplace – whilst promoting the concept of linguistic courtesy;
develop bilingual workplaces and Welsh-language internal administration, e.g. Ceredigion Council;
develop an app for local Welsh-language services;
establish a Welsh Civil Service College.

The following were identified as services and sectors of particular interest:

- local authority services in general,
- sport and leisure services,
- youth services,
- health and care services,
- police and emergency services,
- public libraries,
- banks and high street shops,
- the Post Office,
- children’s nurseries.

3.2.8 Question 7a: How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of the economy?

The main themes and ideas that emerged in response to this question was the need to:

- increase the value of the Welsh language within the economy as:
  - a skill for employment,
  - a marketing tool, and as
  - an integral aspect of the product and/or service;
- promote the economic benefits of the Welsh language;
- ensure a prosperous economy in rural Wales – including the agricultural sector and SMEs;
- ensure the development of bilingual workplaces and bilingual internal administration within local government;
- link local economic development plans to the Welsh language, e.g. Cardigan Castle;
- develop enterprise zones that value the Welsh language – at an area and/or high-street level;
- devolve public sector jobs to north and west Wales;
- reform the public sector’s procurement policies to include stronger language requirements;
- promote the Welsh language within tourism – as a marketing tool (USP) and as part of the product;
- pay a premium for Welsh-language skills for employment purposes;
• provide a Welsh-medium business advisory service – including the provision of grants to local businesses to develop aspects of bilingualism;
• promote enterprise among Welsh speakers;
• develop the mentrau iaith so that they become ‘language and work initiatives’;
• introduce further legislation in order to strengthen the Welsh-language services provided by private sector organisations.

3.2.9 Question 7b: How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of local services and facilities?

It seems that the meaning of this question, and its focus on the local area, was not clearly understood by every respondent. However, the main proposals received included the need to:

• establish Welsh-language social centres within towns – particularly in eastern areas of Wales – which could also act as information centres for Welsh language networks locally;
• publish directories of local bilingual and Welsh-medium businesses;
• encourage local businesses to use the Welsh language;
• support village halls;
• support community groups and organisations;
• promote simultaneous translation in local events;
• ensure the provision of Welsh-language services by supermarkets.

The public services highlighted as priority services included the following:

- primary healthcare services,
- hospitals,
- social services,
- public libraries,
- leisure services, and
- local government services in general.

3.2.10 Question 7c: How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of housing and planning policies?

The main themes and ideas that emerged in response to this question was the need to:

• amend TAN 20 guidelines;
• assess the impact of housing developments and other land use developments on the viability of the Welsh language locally;
• provide affordable housing and schemes to assist young people to buy homes, e.g. mortgage relief schemes or Section 106 requirements;
• ensure that appropriate social facilities are developed when developing large housing estates;
• give local people more say in planning matters;
• give priority to local people in decisions regarding social housing tenancies;
• restrict development in certain areas;
• raise taxes on second homes;
• place a duty on National Parks to promote the Welsh language;
- establish a Welsh Planning Inspectorate which would give priority to local housing demand over the requirements of developers;
- promote the use of Welsh names for places, streets and estates;
- introduce welcome packs for people moving into Welsh-language heartlands in order to raise awareness of the Welsh language;
- limit residential rights in caravan parks.

3.2.11 Question 7d: How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in other ways?

Some of the most original ideas in response to this question was the need to:

- enable people to act locally in terms of language planning, and the need to develop local leadership to enable people to do so;
- establish language regeneration areas;
- ensure a robust legacy following visits by the National Eisteddfod;
- develop more bilingual community festivals;
- increase the use of incidental Welsh heard in public;
- promote public pride in the Welsh language;
- be more creative in reaching out to non-Welsh speakers;
- increase the use of the Welsh language on commercial radio;
- calculate more accurately how many Welsh speakers there are throughout the United Kingdom;
- ensure greater recognition of Welsh speakers living abroad and to strengthen the links between Welsh societies around the world.

3.2.12 Question 8. How can opportunities be increased for people to use Welsh in their workplaces?

Respondents’ proposals in their responses to this question were detailed and comprehensive and included the need to:

- ensure clear policy guidance regarding the right to use Welsh at work and strong leadership from senior management to promote and encourage use of the Welsh language;
- ensure that Welsh-speaking individuals are identifiable by various visual and technological means;
- provide a training programme including:
  - language awareness training,
  - Welsh lessons – free of charge,
  - language improvement lessons,
  - support resources for learners,
  - a language mentor and buddy service,
  - social opportunities to use the Welsh language;
- ensure that the above opportunities are mainstreamed in professional development plans;
- implement a comprehensive language skills strategy to identify and plan Welsh language skills within the workforce;
- ensure the availability of Welsh-language supportive software;
- ensure a supportive translation services;
- ensure bilingual HR services within organisations;
• reward and celebrate progress;
• encourage incidental use of Welsh;
• take every opportunity to celebrate the Welsh language and Welsh culture;
• ensure that more organisations carry out their administrative work through the medium of Welsh under the proposed Standards;
• use the Welsh language in a humorous and fun way.

3.2.13 Question 9: How can more people be inspired and supported to learn Welsh and to become fluent?

The main points made in response to this question were the need to:

• ensure better provision to enable people to start learning at a young age;
• provide more informal Welsh lessons where the emphasis is on speaking Welsh;
• provide lessons which are cheaper or free of charge;
• carry out a marketing campaign and provide wide-ranging and constant encouragement;
• provide more learning materials online;
• provide more appealing television programmes for Welsh language learners;
• improve success rates after the Foundation Level;
• focus on learning in the workplace rather than in the community;
• train and advise Welsh speakers on how to support learners effectively;
• help parents to learn Welsh – and develop a more flexible provision for working parents;
• establish Welsh Language Centres in all areas where people can meet to use the Welsh language socially;
• use celebrities to encourage people – including using Derek Brockway as an ambassador for Welsh learners;
• learn lessons from other countries, e.g. the Basque Autonomous Region.

3.2.14 Question 10: Further comments

Many further comments were received, many of which supported or expanded on points made earlier in the survey.

However, it is worth noting that a significant number of participants expressed their gratitude to the Welsh Government for carrying out the survey. Many respondents wished the Government well in its task and looked forward in anticipation of seeing robust action being taken in due course.
4. Summary of the deliberations of local discussion groups

4.1 The groups

Twenty-one local discussion groups were held between 21 May and 1 July 2013 as part of the consultation process.

Guided by the staff of IAITH: Welsh centre for language planning, Welsh Government staff held sessions with groups drawn from organisational partners of the Welsh Government’s Welsh Language Unit, as follows:

- Bwrdd Syr IfanC, Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Steering Committee of the Vale of Clwyd Language Action Plan
- A Welsh for Adults group in Merthyr Tydfil
- A Welsh for Adults group in Denbigh
- Merched y Wawr, Y Sarnau
- Merthyr Tydfil Language Forum
- Executive Committee of Meirionnydd YFC
- Ceredigion Language Forum
- Management Committee of the West Carmarthenshire Language Initiative
- A group of pupils from Welsh schools in Cardiff, via Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- A community group in Brynaman, Aman Tawe Language Action Plan
- A community group in Tŷ-croes
- A group of pupils in Ysgol Gartholwg.

As requested by the Government, discussion groups were held by IAITH in the following locations with invited representatives from across a range of different social interests in each area:

- Caernarfon
- Tal-y-sarn
- Wrexham
- Machynlleth
- Fishguard
- Pontyberem
- Brecon
- Pontypool

Between 12 and 25 people attended the groups – over 400 individuals in all – and the discussions were both interesting and enthusiastic. The standard questions of the online survey were also used as a framework for the group discussions. All questions were discussed at length except for question 2.6 regarding the use of Welsh in workplaces. This concept, as it is mainly recognised by language planners and organisational managers, was considered to be rather unfamiliar and irrelevant on a local level.

4.2 The main themes

However, in terms of the main themes highlighted, it was noted that the following issues were the main challenges facing the Welsh language:
• social change and demographic mobility;
• issues relating to the economy and to housing;
• lack of confidence, fluency and use;
• the broad reach and influence of Anglo-American media-based culture;
• a lack of vision and strategic planning.

As regards what maintains and strengthens the Welsh language locally, many aspects were listed under the following themes:

• An economy that values the Welsh language.
• Welsh-medium education.
• Social opportunities to use the Welsh language.
• Situations where the Welsh language is the unquestioned and spontaneous social 'norm'.
• The attachment of individuals and groups to the Welsh language.

The consensus can be summarised briefly in the statement that the Welsh language thrives when people see that it has an economic and social purpose. Therein, according to the local discussion groups, lies the principal challenge.

4.3 What maintains and strengthens the Welsh language in your area?

4.3.1 An economy that values the Welsh language:

• The availability of employment – in particular, employment that values the Welsh language and which is diverse in nature.
• The robust language policies of Gwynedd, Bangor University and other public organisations in that area – in terms of employment, services and operational arrangements – have a noticeable effect on the viability of the Welsh language in the area.
• The public sector apart, other significant Welsh-language domains in several areas include the agricultural sector, the construction sector and self-employed tradesmen.
• Small local businesses that use the Welsh language make an impact and are influential.
• The opportunity to live and work through the medium of Welsh in various areas (e.g. the Menai area or Aberystwyth) attracts Welsh-speaking individuals from other areas to live there. Growth areas that value the Welsh language are needed in west Wales.
• Individuals who decide to live and work in ‘traditional’ Welsh-language heartlands.

4.3.2 Welsh-medium education:

• A robust Welsh-medium education policy is seen as a mainstay in every area.
• Cylchoedd Meithrin and Ti a Fi groups can provide a valuable foundation in terms of supporting parents’ choices regarding Welsh-medium education.
• Successful immersion education.
• Schools holding extracurricular events that reach out to the entire local community.
• An effective Welsh for Adults system is essential. Enthusiastic individuals who have managed to learn Welsh successfully are an inspiration.
4.3.3 Social opportunities to use the Welsh language:

- A vibrant Welsh-language social scene.
- Public use of the Welsh language in public events and local festivals.
- Opportunities are obviously increased by a larger number and higher density of Welsh speakers.
- The valuable contribution of traditional Welsh organisations in all parts of Wales – Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Merched y Wawr, Cymrodorion, cultural societies, chapels and churches etc.
- Some new and innovative social opportunities in Cardiff – a designated Welsh-language rugby club, Welsh-language pubs, Bragdy'r Beirdd (Poets' Brewery), community work by the city’s universities.
- The opportunity to use the Welsh language in a general recreational context such as a rugby club, village hall or leisure centre is key to a Welsh-medium social life.
- In eastern areas of Wales (and Pembrokeshire) there is an obvious demand for designated Welsh Language Centres (similar to Canolfan Soar and Tŷ Tawe) as sources of information and resources and as social and cultural meeting places. These centres could also provide an opportunity to operate inclusively and reach out to English-language networks.
- The YFC is highly praised in many areas for providing young people with opportunities to hold Welsh-language events and maintain Welsh-language networks that are both vibrant and strong. Additionally, the YFC undertakes effective outreach work in areas where the Welsh language is less prominent.
- Trips to the Urdd camps are appreciated by those in eastern areas of Wales.
- Visits by the National Eisteddfod stimulate considerable activity. There is a need for investment and legacy planning in parallel to a visit by the Eisteddfod.
- Sound guidance by headteachers of local schools is essential.
- The Ma’ Dy Gymraeg Di'n Grêt (Your Welsh is Great) scheme is effective locally.
- The organisation of local activities needs investment and planning.

4.3.4 The attachment of individuals and groups to the Welsh language:

- Tenacity is seen where there is pride and passion for the Welsh language as a core aspect of individual and social identity.
- Welsh-speaking households involved in Welsh-language networks maintain the social ‘norms’ in terms of use of the Welsh language.
- A family and social attachment to an area remains an asset.
- The Welsh language thrives when people see that it has an economic and social purpose.

4.4 What are the challenges facing the Welsh language in your area?

4.4.1 Social change and demographic mobility:

- Outward migration of young people from rural communities and the South Wales valleys in search of higher education, employment and careers – this leads to the loss of confident Welsh speakers and leaders.
- The inward migration of older people – many of whom have no interest in the Welsh language – weakens opportunities to speak Welsh socially at a local level.
- Significant immigration from Eastern Europe in some areas.
- Traditional local structures unravel as geographical communities face social change.
- Volunteering weakens as the pressure of work increases.
In eastern areas of Wales, geography and the low density of Welsh speakers are key challenges.
A lack of support for learners to ‘make the transition’ and become assimilated into local networks.

4.4.2 The economy and housing:

- A lack of diverse and quality employment that values the Welsh language.
- A lack of affordable housing.
- A lack of recognition for the Welsh language as a work-based skill in the private sector.

4.4.3 Lack of confidence, fluency and use:

- A lack of language transmission within families.
- Negative attitudes among young people, people who have moved into Wales and the Welsh-speaking population in general were identified as a key challenge.
- A lack of opportunities for young people to use the Welsh language outside the school environment.
- Young people’s skills weaken as they proceed through the education system.
- Schools that do not reach out to the community to support the Welsh language, and English-medium schools that do not promote the Welsh language.
- A lack of opportunities to use the Welsh language when receiving services and, consequently, a lack of confidence in attempting to use those services that are available.
- A lack of simultaneous translation equipment in local informal situations.
- Organisations changing unnecessarily from advertising in Welsh to advertising bilingually.
- The dangers of linking the Welsh language solely to a middle-class culture.

4.4.4 The Anglo-American media culture:

- Welsh-language media are competing against the international power and influence of Anglo-American media.
- Weak Welsh language and Wales-focused press.
- The absence of the Welsh language in the digital world / media / IT.
- Social norms relating to the use of the English language are very dominant.
- The Anglo-American media culture militates against values that promote individuals and communities taking responsibility for their own language and culture.

4.4.5 A lack of vision and strategic planning:

- Over-reliance on the education sector to produce speakers.
- Weak education policies are a barrier.
- Many county councils are failing to plan effectively for the Welsh language.
- A lack of action to mainstream the Welsh language across local government departments and a lack of appreciation of the impact of local authority policies and activities on the Welsh language locally.
- A lack of financial and human resources to undertake the work.
- Public procurement policies militate against Welsh companies.
- The Welsh Government needs to set an example as a public organisation.
4.5 How can the use of Welsh within families be encouraged and supported?

- The Twf scheme is absolutely vital in raising awareness of the benefits of bilingualism and in providing support – a follow-up is needed for the Twf scheme.
- Need to support parents in supporting their children:
  - through a follow-up for the Twf scheme,
  - through schools, and
  - through local mentors.
- Increase the confidence of people in their everyday language:
  - *Ma’ Dy Gymraeg Di’n Grêt* (Your Welsh is Great),
  - schemes with Welsh ‘returners’.
- The establishment of Welsh Language Centres providing information and Welsh-language activities – an opportunity to provide designated support to families.
- Need for more use of the Welsh language in family and leisure services and need to mainstream the Welsh language within schemes such as Flying Start.
- Need for more marketing of courses such as *Cymraeg i’r Teulu* (Welsh for the Family) and *Cymraeg o’r Crud* (Welsh from Birth) and need to offer language lessons free of charge to families.
- Need better and more provision of Welsh-language childcare.
- Need to market Welsh-medium education and establish more immersion centres.
- Need more Welsh-language television programmes for children.
- Need a campaign among fathers in mixed-language (Welsh / English) families.

**Specific ideas:**

- Highlight successes.
- Establish a ‘Learning Welsh Challenge’ modelled on ‘Health Challenge Wales’.
- Create an app that offers useful information for families.
- The Government to send all families a promotional magazine.
- Establish local mentors to support parents.
- Establish a *Mabwysiadu Mam-gu* (Adopt a Granny) scheme.
- Organise family outings.
- Review the impact of schemes such as Twf.
- Review the impact of the work of Welsh for Adults Centres on parents / families.

4.6 How can children and young people’s use of Welsh be increased and their awareness of the value of the language strengthened through the education system?

- Need to develop language awareness education for young people in schools.
- Need to teach language as a medium and as a cultural vehicle – it is more than an ordinary subject.
- Need to strengthen the Curriculum Cymreig and strengthen the teaching of Welsh history.
- Must teach pupils ‘Why speak Welsh’ as well as ‘How to speak Welsh’.
- Need to develop social opportunities to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.
- Maintain and develop the quality of teaching Welsh across the sector.
- Need to improve second-language provision.
- Establish a link between learning Welsh and employment.
• Improve progression through the Key Stages and beyond.
• Schools need to reach out more to the community.
• Need to standardise support for latecomers.
• The use of incidental Welsh by staff needs to be the norm in every school.
• Stop the habit of preaching and punishing pupils for not speaking Welsh – and encourage them rather to speak Welsh.
• Need to support parents to encourage their children to use Welsh at home and in the community.

Specific ideas

○ Gwynedd Schools’ Welsh Language Charter is a good model.
○ Conwy Council teaches at least 30% of subjects through the medium of Welsh across the county. This is another good model.
○ More youth workers are needed to bridge the gap between the school and the community.
○ Need to listen more to young people.
○ Need attractive reading series for 7-14 year-olds.
○ Playground games projects are needed.
○ An introductory evening for parents of Year 7 pupils at Ysgol Gyfun Maes Yr Yrfa was proposed as a model.
○ Review the impact of the PCAI project.

4.7 How can children and young people’s use of Welsh be increased and their awareness of the value of the language strengthened through other activities?

• Maintain and develop Welsh-medium youth provision.
• Develop more Welsh-medium leisure / sports / arts opportunities in mainstream provision.
• Employ youth workers to bridge the gap between the school and the community.
• Ensure appropriate training for youth / leisure / sports / arts staff in mainstream provision.
• Use young people to promote the Welsh language locally in the community.
• Use older children to promote the Welsh language to younger children.
• Ensure Welsh-language holiday provision.
• Increase the funding provided for Welsh-language youth work.
• Market the Welsh language in an attractive manner:
  • Use role models and celebs.
  • Ensure that the Welsh language is present in new technological developments.
  • Make the Welsh language fun.
  • Highlight the purpose of speaking Welsh.
  • Create an app – a what’s-on for young people.

4.8 How can opportunities to use Welsh be increased and improved through information technology and the media etc.?

• S4C – general praise for recent output, and praise for Cyw and current affairs programmes.
• Radio Cymru – more than one channel is needed to meet the diverse needs of the audience – perhaps on the internet.
• Golwg360 – positive. Need to develop a more digital press, including digital 
papurau bro (community newspapers).
• Need to increase the presence of the Welsh language in English-language media: 
BBC Wales / ITV Wales
• Local radio
• Praise for Derek Brockway
• Need to promote S4C on other channels.
• Ensure that the Welsh language is the default in standard IT.
• Welsh-language software for leisure and education purposes.
• Welsh-language services by telephone and broadband companies.
• Accurate informal Welsh-language broadcasting.
• Produce original Welsh-language television output – no dubbing.
• The use of Facebook for marketing is essential.
• Need to develop text prediction software for mobile phones.
• Increase the presence of the Welsh language on UK programmes.

Specific ideas

  o Create Welsh-language apps.
  o Create text prediction software.
  o Introduce local S4C options.
  o Develop software for learning Welsh through console games (available in other 
languages).
  o Increase the number of radio and television channels.
  o Support the .cym campaign.
  o Increase the new digital fund.
  o Support Radio Beca.
  o Use local libraries to promote Welsh-language IT.

4.9 How can Welsh-language services be increased and improved for people living 
in your area?

• Need more robust leadership by the chief officers of public organisations.
• Primary healthcare services are the priority – especially GPs.
• A feeling that the health service as a whole is also a priority, as well as the social 
care sector.
• Other services identified were: local policing, leisure, utilities, SEN, Sure Start and 
Flying Start, CAB, business training and public transport.
• Need to increase the availability and raise the standards of Welsh-language 
services and promote and encourage their use.
• Need to strengthen the provision of private sector organisations.
• An acute shortage of Welsh-language services in eastern areas of Wales.
• The Government and public organisations need to strengthen procurement 
policies and third party agreements.
• Need to ensure that public organisations keep their promises in Welsh Language 
Schemes – people still have to ask for a Welsh-language service in several 
places.
• Need to ensure that the Welsh language is more visible in places such as Merthyr 
Tydfil.
• Need to promote the concept of linguistic courtesy.
Specific ideas

- Need to develop a national ‘Workforce Development Plan’.
- Need to promote simultaneous translation in public meetings.
- Need a Welsh-language / bilingual temps service.

4.10 How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of the economy?

- Create diverse employment opportunities locally that value the Welsh language.
- Facilitate the return of people to their native areas in west Wales.
- Create a better link between skills teaching and local employment opportunities – especially with regard to County Councils.
- Promote Welsh-language enterprise and businesses.
- Untapped potential within tourism.
- Need to strengthen procurement policies to support Welsh companies.
- Regard the Welsh language as added value rather than a problem – promote the ‘Punt y Ddraig’ concept.

Specific ideas

- Need to develop a national ‘Workforce Development Plan’.
- Need a business support service to develop businesses’ use of the Welsh language.
- Develop clusters of Welsh-language businesses in an area/town, e.g. Galeri.
- Re-open the coal mines of the Gwendraeth Valley.
- Establish a Language and Economy Development Board.
- Devolve public jobs from Cardiff.
- Promote a scheme such as Llwyddo’n Lleol (Succeeding Locally) and Llwybrau (Pathways).
- Need to channel money from windmill funds more strategically.
- Develop Machynlleth Hospital as a Welsh-language / bilingual health centre.
- Impose language requirements on economic development grants.
- Establish local banks to gather and distribute local capital locally.

4:11 How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of local services and facilities?

- Create hot spots of Welsh-language services / shops / businesses.
- Need to market the Welsh language and its benefits.
- Encourage Welsh-language cooperative initiatives.
- Provide advice and grants to businesses that use the Welsh language.
- Improve the Welsh-language provision of local theatres.
- Promote local enterprise among Welsh speakers.
- Improve provision in local leisure centres.
- Develop Welsh Language Centres in English-speaking towns.
- Ensure local Welsh-language health and social care services.
- Need to establish community facilitators.
- Need to promote the concept of linguistic courtesy.
- Ensure the availability of Welsh-language self-service tills in supermarkets.
- Improve public transport in rural areas.
• Better promotion of local services and facilities.
• Strengthen the role of Community and Town Councils.
• Invest capital in the restoration of public buildings in rural areas to strengthen the local economy.
• Designate Welsh Gaeltacht areas.
• Ensure that streets have Welsh names.

4:12 How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in terms of housing and planning policies?

• Need to strengthen TAN 20.
• Need to ensure robust language impact assessments.
• Help young people to buy homes.
• Ensure that developments meet local needs.
• Impose language requirements on Section 106 developments.
• Moratorium on housing developments.
• Raise taxes on second homes.
• Facilitate and place greater emphasis on letting homes to local people rather than providing holiday homes.
• Reform the current residential regulations relating to caravan parks.
• Mitigate the impact of a free market on housing.
• Assist farming families to build homes on their land for use by family members.
• Prevent the building of speculative housing that attracts inward migration.
• Raise awareness among people moving into Wales.
• Encourage housing associations and local authorities to award contracts to local companies in order to strengthen the local economy.
• Expanding residential rights in relation to caravan parks is considered a threat.

Specific ideas

o Merge the planning authorities of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and Pembrokeshire County Council.
o Establish a Welsh Planning Inspectorate.
o Establish an independent agency to undertake language impact assessments.

4:13 How can more people be inspired and supported to learn Welsh and to become fluent?

• Need to strengthen support for learners:
  o Introduce a community mentoring scheme – using students (similar to VSO)
  o Re-establish CYD (an organisation that brought Welsh learners and speakers together)
  o Maintain and develop provision for learners on S4C
  o Empower Welsh speakers to support learners
  o Radio channel – website – podcasts for learners
  o Combine support with Welsh Language Centres such as Soar and Tŷ Tawe.
• Need to learn a language in context – work, leisure or activity.
• Need more informal and flexible courses.
• Need online courses or a Welsh learning game console for all levels – including ones for language improvement.
• Maintain and develop immersion centres.
• Develop support for Foundation Phase assistants.
• Celebrate learners, e.g. Dysgwyr y Dyffryn (Learners of the Valley) in the Nantlle Valley.
• Reduce threshold numbers for the provision of classes in rural areas.
• Cymraeg yn y Gweithle (Welsh in the Workplace) and sabbaticals.
• Better marketing of benefits and opportunities.
• Provide lessons free of charge.
• Provide comprehensive language buddy schemes.
• Second-language students offer the potential to produce new speakers – although the short course is deemed weak.
• Basic Welsh courses needed for shop and reception staff.

4:14 How can the position of the Welsh language be strengthened in your local area in other ways?

• Need to market the Welsh language and its benefits.
• Stop preaching, and encourage children in exciting ways to speak Welsh.
• Educate people about their language rights.

4:15 How can opportunities be increased for people to use Welsh in their workplaces?

• Need clear guidance from management that Welsh can be used in the workplace.
• Need to market the benefits of using Welsh in the workplace.
5. **Iaith fyw: Y Gynhadledd Fawr**

Over 160 guests attended *Iaith fyw: Y Gynhadledd Fawr* in Aberystwyth on 4 July 2013. They represented a general cross-section of different interests and stakeholders:

- Organisations promoting the Welsh language
- Pressure groups
- Public organisations
- Local authority representatives
- Students and school pupils
- Representatives from the local discussion groups
- Education representatives
- Private businesses
- Arts and sports organisations
- Voluntary and community organisations
- Welsh Government officials

Based on the priorities of the local discussion groups, the delegates were given two themes to discuss:

- **How best to support Welsh-language communities and networks:**
  - in terms of the economy, and
  - in terms of education and the local community.
- **How best to support individuals to live their lives through the medium of Welsh:**
  - in terms of increasing awareness, confidence and fluency, and
  - in terms of services for individuals.

Four films were shown on the above themes in order to stimulate discussion. The films were a collection of comments made by individuals from diverse backgrounds from Caernarfon, Aberystwyth, Pontyberem and Pontypool. Some were members of the local discussion groups and others were members of the public.

Additionally, keynote speeches on the two main themes were given by Cllr Dyfed Edwards, Welsh Local Government Association, and Owain Gruffydd, Chief Executive of Menter Bro Dinefwr. Both speeches also served to stimulate reflection and discussion.

The delegates engaged in discussion groups of 10 individuals at round tables, led by designated facilitators who took notes and reported back on the discussions. The results of those discussions are summarised below under the four themes.

### 5.1 Theme 1: Supporting Welsh-language communities and networks

**Discussion 1: The economy**

What ideas do you have to offer in terms of:
• increasing the value of the Welsh language as a skill for employment across Wales?
• strengthening the economy of the traditional Welsh-language heartlands in west Wales and increasing the economic value placed on the Welsh language?
• helping Welsh speakers to stay in or move or return to the traditional Welsh-language heartlands of west Wales?

5.1.1 Economic development

• Need for economic development policies that recognise opportunities to strengthen and use the Welsh language throughout Wales. Need to establish an economic development agency to promote both the economy of rural Wales and public transport.
• Need to create a local hub in order to plan, transfer knowledge and develop a Welsh-related economy. Furthermore, need to devolve employment to areas where the Welsh language is significant and plan in detail, e.g. the Môn Menai scheme.
• Need to raise the profile of the Welsh language within tourism. Need to package ‘the Welsh experience’ for tourists.
• Public organisations need to procure a higher percentage of their orders from Welsh (and local) businesses and include requirements relating to bilingualism. Language clauses should also be included in business grants.
• Need to promote enterprise among young people in rural areas – through the medium of Welsh.
• Improve the digital infrastructure to strengthen the rural economy.

5.1.2 Policy and the public sector

• The Welsh language must be valued in the public sector across Wales – particularly within the Welsh Government and local authorities. A strong language policy needs to be implemented in each local authority and the Welsh language needs to be mainstreamed across all portfolios. Chief officers in the public sector need to be committed to the Welsh language.
• Need to promote Welsh in the workplace to create a permissive climate. The internal administration arrangements of the Welsh Government and local authorities across Wales need to follow the example of Gwynedd Council. Assembly Members need to set an example and normalise the use of the Welsh language within the work of the Senedd.
• Need to ensure that all public sector employees receive language awareness training and the opportunity to learn Welsh in the workplace.
• The new prison in Wrexham is an opportunity to plan the inclusion of the Welsh language from the outset within the organisation.

5.1.3 Welsh as a skill for employment

• Employers need to recognise the value of Welsh language skills financially, based on the Coleg Cymraeg’s Language Skills Certificate. They also need to consider the report on ‘The Demand for Welsh Language Skills’.
• Careers Wales officers and those who teach business courses need to promote Welsh language skills in schools.
• It is essential to promote the Welsh language as a skill across all sectors in Wales. Need to create a Welsh-medium ‘labour market’. Need to use scholarships and
bursaries to encourage pupils and students to follow some careers, e.g. town and country planning.

5.1.4 The private sector

- Need a service to support bilingualism among local small businesses - and promote opportunities to use Welsh.
- Need to develop and standardise the Welsh-language services of high-street banks, supermarkets and large chain stores.
- Need to establish Welsh-language business awards.

5.1.5 Social infrastructure

- Need to support village halls and small schools in rural areas.
- Need to protect the social fabric of rural communities - pubs, shops etc.
- Need to create economically and socially vibrant areas.

5.1.6 Housing and planning

- Need to undertake language impact assessments in relation to developments and need to publish a new TAN 20 as a matter of urgency.
- Need to promote affordable housing for young people - possibly under a Section 106 scheme.
- Need to let social housing to local people.

5.2 Theme 1: Supporting Welsh-language communities and networks

Discussion 2: Education and the community

What ideas do you have to offer in terms of:

- strengthening the role of the Welsh language in education across Wales?
- increasing social activities through the medium of Welsh locally?
- strengthening local facilities and services that can contribute to the survival and development of Welsh-language communities and networks?

5.2.1 Formal education - general

- Need to promote the benefits of bilingualism among pupils.
- Need to teach the reasons ‘why’ we should speak Welsh as well as ‘how’ to speak Welsh. Need a curriculum that addresses Welshness and include language awareness courses.
- Need to create a Welsh-language / bilingual social climate within each school, e.g. Radio Bro Gwaun.
- Need to study more Welsh history in schools.
- All pupils should receive some of their education through the medium of Welsh.
- The Welsh Government should adopt the education policy of Gwynedd Council.
- All primary schools should be Welsh-medium schools.
5.2.2 Welsh as a first or second language

- Need to improve the provision for learners in English-medium schools. Second language teaching has failed - needs to be scrapped. Need a language learning continuum. We should teach Welsh - not a ‘second language’. Need a braver policy.
- Need to set aside more time for pupils to learn Welsh and they should start learning Welsh at a younger age.
- Need to promote immersion education - particularly from the Foundation Phase and in immersion centres. Also need more support for latecomers.
- Need more modern Welsh lessons - change the syllabus, e.g. learn how to create business e-mails in Welsh.
- All pupils should take GCSE as a full course.
- Need to introduce bilingualism as a key skill (rather than English or Welsh).
- There is an advantage in terms of GCSE results for pupils to switch from ‘first language’ to ‘second language’.

5.2.3 Teachers

- Need to ensure sufficient numbers of bilingual teachers.
- Need to develop the Welsh-medium teaching skills of teachers during their initial training.
- Need to set a language skills threshold for all teachers.
- Need to provide Welsh lessons free of charge for teachers.

5.2.4 Parents

- Need to promote the value of the Welsh language among parents and provide more information on what is happening within the school and on how to support their children at home.
- Cylchoedd Meithrin could also offer support services to parents.

5.2.5 Further and higher education

- Need to develop post-16 courses in Welsh, e.g. bilingual modules within BTEC, NVQ and degree courses etc., so that students have the terminology necessary for employment.
- Need to consider the needs of Wales when planning HE student numbers. Welsh students should be given priority in Welsh universities.
- Need to expand the National Eisteddfod to include Welsh-medium vocational competitions e.g. hairdressing.

5.2.6 Welsh-medium education

- Need to promote the benefits of Welsh-medium education.
- Need to respond to the demand for Welsh-medium education. Need to ensure sufficient places in Welsh-medium schools.
- Need to ensure progression in Welsh-medium education.
- Welsh-medium education should be the ‘norm’ that must be ‘opted-out’ of.
- Need to improve the provision of Welsh-medium education resources.
- Need to strengthen the use of the Welsh language in the playground.
- Need to establish a link between learning Welsh in schools and the local labour market.
• The necessity to travel to access Welsh-medium education is removing the Welsh language from its geographical community.

5.2.7 Social opportunities to use the Welsh language

• Need to ensure that community development activities tie in with activities to promote the language. Need to create a vibrant Welsh-language social scene, promote local enterprise and develop local community leaders to achieve this through 'bottom-up' approaches, e.g. Theatr Felin-fach.
• Need local Welsh-medium activity clubs – particularly for young people, e.g. youth theatres. Local authorities need to provide, and not rely so much on the Urdd and the YFC. Need to reinforce Welsh-medium education with social activities for children and young people.
• Leisure and sport is a key area. Need Welsh-speaking coaches.
• Need a building within local communities to be a focus for Welsh-medium activities (a hall, pub or centre) - and these need to be supported.
• Need a platform / medium to share good practice in terms of promoting the Welsh language locally.
• Need to include the welfare of the Welsh language as a more prominent feature within applications for European funding.
• Suggest replacing the Duke of Edinburgh Award with a Welsh Award. Create a baccalaureate to link pupils to Welsh-language activities, e.g. community newspapers, YFC, eisteddfodau etc.
• Need better collaboration between Welsh-language organisations.
• Need to ask young people what activities they would like to have through the medium of Welsh.

5.3 Theme 2: Supporting individuals to live their lives through the medium of Welsh

Discussion 3: Increasing awareness, confidence and fluency

What ideas do you have to offer in terms of:

• increasing the confidence of Welsh speakers and increasing their use of Welsh?
• increasing the number of people learning Welsh and helping them to become fluent?
• increasing awareness of the value of the Welsh language among the people of Wales and increasing their pride in the language?

5.3.1 Creating the conditions

• Need language awareness courses for everyone, particularly those who have moved into Wales and school pupils.
• Need more social opportunities to speak Welsh in order to create the cycle of Use - Fluency - Confidence.
• Promote the Welsh language as a ‘norm’ in bilingual social contexts, e.g. YFC.
• Need to create a positive, supportive climate in workplaces with sound leadership from management, e.g. North Wales Police.
• Need Welsh language centres in areas where the Welsh language is less prominent, e.g.TY Tawe, Saith Seren.
• Need better planning to ensure and maintain a legacy in areas visited by the National Eisteddfod.
• Normalise the use of translation equipment socially.
• Need to focus on changing habits.

5.3.2 Facilitators

• Need Welsh-speaking youth officers in each county.
• Need to support a vibrant youth culture.
• Need to work with former pupils of Welsh-medium schools who do not use the Welsh language.
• Need to establish local language brokers to increase confidence.

5.3.3 Marketing and promotion

• Need to employ marketing approaches to support and encourage individuals to use the Welsh language, e.g. Cymraeg yn Gyntaf (Welsh First), Defnyddia dy Gymraeg (Use your Welsh - whatever Welsh you’ve got), Ma’ Dy Gymraeg Di’n Grêt’ (Your Welsh is Great) etc. - with support and mentors.
• Need to market opportunities to use the Welsh language. This has decreased since the disappearance of the Welsh Language Board.
• Need to promote the Dwîn siarad Cymraeg (I’m a Welsh speaker) badge.
• Need a campaign to promote Cymraeg Clir (Plain Welsh).
• Welsh dialects should be celebrated.
• The Government should encourage estate agents to promote awareness of the Welsh language.

5.3.4 Welsh for Adults

• Need to provide Welsh for Adults courses free of charge to all - particularly in the workplace.
• Need more flexible Welsh for Adults courses.
• Need to develop online learning methods.
• Courses need to focus on achieving fluency and encouraging the use of the language.
• Need to offer Welsh courses free of charge to parents who choose Welsh-medium education for their children - schools and Welsh for Adults need to work together. Similarly, Welsh for the Family courses need to be provided free of charge and linked to social activities.
• Need to move from a voluntary model of learning Welsh to a compulsory model in relation to work and careers, e.g. North Wales Police.
• Welsh speakers need to support learners (Welsh speakers need training in transition techniques and supporting learners).
• Develop social learning methods and create better links between Welsh-learner classes and local Welsh-language organisations.
• Need to increase ‘year out’ and sabbatical schemes and release staff to learn Welsh.
• The badges for Welsh learners (Dwi’n dysgu Cymraeg) should be available free of charge.
• Welsh speakers should not criticise the standard of the Welsh spoken by other people.
5.3.5 Training

- Need confidence building courses such as the *Sgiliau Cymraeg i Reolwyr* (Welsh Skills for Managers) course.
- Need more courses such as the *Blas ar Gymru* (Taste of Wales) course (for those moving into Wales) and *Ma’ Dy Gymraeg di'n Grêt* (Your Welsh is Great) (for parents lacking in confidence).
- Need language improvement lessons relevant to the workplace, e.g. SWALEC.
- Training to improve spoken Welsh needs to be tailored to work-based tasks, e.g. shops.

5.3.6 New domains

- Need to promote the Welsh language in new domains.
- Ensuring that the Welsh language has a place within technology is extremely important.
- Need to expand community newspapers to different media.

5.3.7 Research

- The Census of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland needs to ask more detailed questions about Welsh language skills.
- Need to commission research into the reasons why young people regard the Welsh language as irrelevant.

5.4 Theme 2: Supporting individuals to live their lives through the medium of Welsh

**Discussion 4: Services for individuals**

What ideas do you have to offer in terms of:

- increasing the services that are available in Welsh and increasing the use of those services?
- widening the appeal of the Welsh language in the media, new technology and popular culture?
- increasing the use of Welsh in the workplace?

5.4.1 Services

- Proactively set Welsh-language services as the default mode – and ensure the need to ‘opt out’ in order to receive English-language services. The initial contact is critical. However, need flexibility between spoken and written language.
- Ensuring the quality of Welsh-language services is key.
- Need to do a lot more to promote the Welsh-language services that are already available, e.g. Cymorth.com
- Need to encourage and promote the use of services by Welsh speakers e.g. the *Cymraeg yn Gyntaf* (Welsh First) campaign.
- Need to prioritise local authority services, care services and the health sector, utilities.
• Sound recruitment policies that ensure Welsh-language services. Recognition of the Welsh language as a skill. Managers that are aware.
• Need to support ‘Welsh Language Champions’.
• Need to focus on establishing the habits of young people as service users.
• Need to be robust when including the Welsh language in procurement processes.
• The Welsh Government should model good practice in the provision of Welsh-language services.
• Need to ensure that Welsh-language services are available across Wales.
• Promote language awareness training.
• Re-establish free translation for the private sector and the community sector.
• Welsh should take precedence on signs throughout Wales.

5.4.2 Media and new technology

• Need to promote and market what is already available in Welsh.
• The Digital Fund is welcomed, more investment is needed.
• Need to develop relevant Welsh ‘apps’.
• Need to promote the Welsh language among digital social networks.
• Need to ensure that Welsh is available as a standard option in new technology.
• Need to place more content on all platforms, including ‘You-Tube’.
• Welsh should be the automatic default on every website.
• Need to develop Welsh text prediction software for mobile phones.
• Need to support companies to provide ICT advice in Welsh.
• Need to subsidise Welsh books, magazines and e-books.

5.4.3 Radio and television

• Acknowledge that Radio Cymru and S4C have to appeal to a wide range of interests and ages – this is a problem.
• Need to increase the presence of the Welsh language and Welsh affairs on English-language radio and television channels. Praise for Derek Brockway.
• Responsibility for broadcasting should be devolved to Wales.
• Need cool Welsh-language magazines, television programmes and films for young people.
• Need to promote Welsh-language bands, gigs and festivals.
• Make use of Welsh-speaking celebs.
• Need more YFC on S4C.
• Need to produce unique Welsh-language television programmes and films.
• Need a review slot on Radio Cymru similar to that on Radio 1.
• S4C does not have much to offer the 14-25 age group - research needed.
• Praise for Cyw (S4C) but progression needed - perhaps by translating foreign programmes.

5.4.4 Bilingual workplaces

• Ensure Welsh-language policies in the workplace with guidance provided from the top.
• All public organisations should install Welsh-language software automatically on computers.
• Welsh should be the language of administration within Ceredigion County Council.
5.4.5 General

- Need to promote the Welsh language and Welsh culture in general.
- Appreciated the presence of the First Minister for the whole day.

5.5 The Debate on Twitter

In addition to the 160 people who attended the conference in Aberystwyth, over 200 others watched the live broadcast of the conference online. Radio Cymru also broadcast live from the conference and there were lively discussions on news and current affairs programmes on Radio Cymru and S4C during the day.

Individuals were also provided with an opportunity to contribute to the discussion and activity by sending messages to a central address via e-mail or Twitter or by similar means. The stream of comments could be followed on the relevant technological platforms. Many of those messages were displayed on the i-wall within the conference hall, adding to the discussion there.

Over 800 contributions were made to the discussion on Twitter during the day – including direct comments, responses to comments made at the conference itself and responses to other tweets. They also sparked other discussion threads among those using Twitter.

The discussion on Twitter tended to revolve around the following themes, reinforcing many of the views expressed by the delegates in Aberystwyth:

- **Education**: Education undoubtedly sparked the most lengthy discussion. The main strands of that discussion included:
  - The need for the education system to increase the rate at which it produces new speakers.
  - The need to reform the system of teaching Welsh as a second language, including the need to consider abolishing the short course.
  - The need to strengthen progression in Welsh-medium education by limiting opportunities to leave the Welsh-language stream.
  - The need to strengthen the Welsh-language skills of teachers.
  - The need to develop more imaginative and innovative ways of teaching Welsh.
  - The need to give greater consideration to Welsh-medium FE.
  - The need to develop support for parents to learn Welsh.
  - The need to build bridges between indigenous Welsh speakers and Welsh people who are non-Welsh speakers, through language awareness.

- **Public services**: The significance of providing comprehensive Welsh-language public services, particularly by local authorities and the health and social care sector.

- **A community language**: The need to support efforts to maintain Welsh as a community language – particularly in those areas in north and west Wales facing challenges – among young people and with regard to sport and leisure.
• **Economic issues:** On economic issues, the speech given by Dyfed Edwards was warmly welcomed as well as his main point regarding holistic planning in favour of the Welsh language in terms of the economy, local housing provision and social activity. The need to develop a better understanding of the links between the Welsh language and economic issues was noted, e.g.:

  o the benefits to the Welsh language of promoting self-employment, small businesses and the agricultural sector;
  o the potential of IT in terms of developing and promoting Welsh businesses and the Welsh language in business;
  o the value of the Welsh language to the economy, including as a skill for employment.

The view was also expressed that more pressure should be put on large companies to use the Welsh language.

• **Welsh for Adults:** Concern was expressed about the effectiveness of the current Welsh for Adults system.

• **Marketing:** There was a feeling that the Welsh language needs to be marketed more energetically.

• **Media and IT:** A number of people mentioned the need to ensure an attractive television and radio provision, whilst also including the Welsh language on channels other than S4C and Radio Cymru. The need for more IT products and content in Welsh was also noted.

• **Resources:** It was noted that adequate financial resources need to be secured to meet the challenges facing the Welsh language.
6. Contributions via various other means

6.1 Contributions via e-mail, letter and telephone

Nineteen contributions were received via e-mail, and 3 items of correspondence and 3 telephone calls were received during the consultation period. The written contributions varied in terms of substance and ranged from a few concise comments to detailed position papers.

6.1.1 Strategic issues

A number of general comments were received about the importance of strategic action in favour of the Welsh language and that spending on the Welsh language will need to be increased significantly from the current sum of £8.8 million to make a difference. It was noted that the interests of the Welsh language need to be mainstreamed across the activities of the Welsh Government, with a comment also being made that attention needs to be paid as a matter of priority to halting the decline of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire.

6.1.2 Language and the economy

It was noted that the weak economy of rural Wales – including high transport costs – is a threat to the Welsh language. It was noted that a lack of varied employment opportunities in rural areas hampers the viability of the Welsh language. Efforts to strengthen the rural economy should therefore be a priority. Economic planning should make the Welsh language a key consideration, ensuring that developments strengthen rather than weaken the Welsh language.

One contributor proposed a specific idea for the Government’s attention, namely the possibility of creating a comprehensive package of business development support for small rural businesses that rewards the use of the Welsh language and Welsh-language employment locally.

A substantial paper was submitted by one of the chief officers of the mentrau iaith, entitled ‘A Welsh-Medium Labour Market Plan’. The paper outlines a socio-economic strategy to place the Welsh language on firmer foundations by:

- reducing outward migration,
- identifying the demand for Welsh-language services,
- expanding Welsh-language services,
- linking the demand to job opportunities and training, and
- identifying economic opportunities.

6.1.3 Demographic mobility

Dealing with demographic mobility and the implications of inward migration received considerable attention. Comments included the view that tighter control is needed on housing developments and the need for houses to be developed in response to local demand rather than commercial enterprise. Calls were also made for efforts to
educate and assimilate those who move into the traditional Welsh-language heartlands of west Wales.

6.1.4 Education

Comments on the education system reflected a number of points already made, e.g. investing in the language skills of teachers, increasing Welsh-medium education, calling for language awareness courses in schools, the need to teach the history of the Welsh language as part of Welsh history and the need to reform the system for teaching Welsh as a second language.

6.1.5 Welsh-medium social activities

A number of comments were made about the need to ensure Welsh-medium social, leisure and sporting activities, particularly for children and young people.

6.1.6 Welsh-language services

Several comments were made to the effect that reception services and front-line public services should be available in Welsh. A number of people suggested that badges and signs etc. should be used to identify Welsh speakers. It was also noted that Welsh speakers need to be encouraged to use Welsh-language services.

6.1.7 New speakers

One contributor was eager to challenge the First Minister to be more ambitious in terms of increasing the number of new speakers and encouraged him to learn lessons from the Basque Autonomous Region. The cost of classes was a concern for one contributor who suggested that funding should be offered to individuals who want to attend classes to learn Welsh.

One participant suggested that the Welsh for Adults Centres should be devolved to a community level, creating local ‘Welsh learner villages’ to link learning to local social activities. Another suggested that Transition Clubs should be established across Wales. Another contributor made a similar appeal to link Welsh for Adults learning to local social structures. An extensive position paper was attached for the Government’s attention, and this was presented for the attention of the Task Group on Welsh for Adults.

6.2 Online Forum

The least successful aspect of the process was the online forum. It was clear that the vast majority of those visiting the website of A living language: have your say preferred to express their opinions by completing the online survey.

The forum received 16 contributions – all under the following thread: What are the challenges facing the Welsh language in your area? There were 8 Welsh responses and 8 English responses.
The main points were:

- the need to increase social opportunities to use the Welsh language; encourage more adults to speak Welsh; and
- the need to increase efforts to integrate Welsh learners and supporters in Welsh-language activities.

There were some negative comments on the English thread including the following:

- One contributor expressed regret that efforts were being made by the state to ‘engineer’ the recovery of the Welsh language at the expense of other aspects of public life - the economy, education, health etc.

- Others were concerned that too much emphasis on the Welsh language was an economic disadvantage in terms of attracting foreign companies and professionals.

- Another felt that the Assembly needs to develop a back bone and put the language lobby in its place.