

Welsh Language Standards Annual Report

September 2019 – September 2020

Background

The National Lottery Community Fund is a UK wide non departmental public body (NDPB) responsible for the distribution of money raised by The National Lottery. We help communities achieve their ambitions by awarding grants to projects that are led by people in those communities, making them stronger and more vibrant. Over the last year, we have distributed £34 million to 882 projects in Wales. We have now been operating under our new name, The National Lottery Community Fund, since 31st January 2019, having formerly operated as the Big Lottery Fund since 2004.

How we have complied with our Welsh Language Standards

The National Lottery Community Fund is a truly bilingual organisation and we have implemented Welsh Language Standards since January 25th 2017. Prior to this we implemented a very successful Welsh Language Scheme.

Implementing the Standards within the organisation has enabled us to strengthen the bilingual service that we offer to our customers and grant holders on a day to day basis, as well as enabling us to offer and provide services in Welsh to our Welsh speaking staff members for the first time.

It has enabled our Welsh Language Team to work more closely with some of our central teams which are based outside of Wales, including our People Team, Procurement and UK Wide funding programmes teams. It has also enabled us to work more closely with external Welsh language organisations to promote our Welsh services to them and support them to make full use of these.

The National Lottery Community Fund are implementing Standards under the categories of Service Delivery, Policy Making, Operational and Record Keeping.

In order to make it clear to members of the public what services they can expect to receive from The National Lottery Community Fund in Welsh, we worked with the company Ateb in 2016/2017 to put together a Siarter Iaith/Language Charter, which explains in simple terms what the Standards mean to us as an organisation, to our customers and to our staff. Following our rebrand in January 2019, our Language Charter and other supporting documents have been updated. Our Language Charter posters are displayed in the reception areas of both our offices in Wales so that it is

clear to our customers that a bilingual service is available to them from us. The Charter's are also displayed in our offices in Birmingham and London.

We also have small A5 versions of the Charter that we share at events with projects, applicants and stakeholders.

Links to all our documents that highlight our bilingual service to our customers in Wales can be seen on the Welsh Language Standards page on our website.

How we have ensured compliance with our Welsh Language Standards under each heading:

Service Delivery Standards

- We have always been very proud of the bilingual service that we offer our customers in Wales. Our grant applicants and grant holders can work and communicate with us entirely through the medium of Welsh throughout the life of their grant, if they wish to do so. Whilst we were confident with our pre-existing Welsh Language Scheme, we took the Welsh Language Standards as an opportunity to make improvements where we could. We ensured that the reception areas of both our offices made it clear to customers that they could communicate with us in either Welsh or English.
- We have made good use of the laith Gwaith merchandise and we ensure that all our Welsh speaking members of staff and Welsh learners have the laith Gwaith logo on their business cards and lanyards. We have taken advantage of the opportunity to ensure that our new office in Newtown shows clearly that we are a bilingual organisation and that we openly welcome visitors to our office to speak to us in Welsh. We have purchased large vinyl versions of the working Welsh logo which are displayed on the door to our main office and our main meeting room.
- Last year, we launched our new UK website, which, in line with Standards 48, 51 and 52, is available fully in both Welsh and English and both languages are treated equally. This includes all our branding, knowledge insights page and programmes - which cover the whole of the UK and not only Wales, which are available in both languages.
- On January 30th 2019, we launched our new name and new branding, changing our new from the Big Lottery Fund to The National Lottery Community Fund / Cronfa Gymunedol y Loteri Genedlaethol. Our name, brand and whole identity has maintained a bilingual one throughout this change, in line with Standard 79.
- As we had such a positive experience with testing the new Welsh application form for Awards for All Wales last year, in August we tested a new application form for the Leaders with Lived Experience funding programme. Due to Covid restrictions, this was done over teams and it was a very positive experience for all. We will continue to test application forms for new funding

programmes with Welsh language groups and will continue this approach over the next year.

- For the past 4 years we have held training for our funded projects on how to work bilingually. We have held these in partnership with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Hybu team and they've been a huge success. We hoped to hold 4 sessions in partnership with The National Lottery Heritage Fund in March 2020. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 we had to postpone those sessions and they were held over teams in June. As our staff continue to work from home, regular training sessions will be held for projects over teams over the next few months.
- The first online sessions received positive feedback from Carys from the 'Building Creatively Project' which is ran by Carriageworks CIC. "Thank you for running this training. It was great to connect with people from other projects on the virtual platform. I found the session very useful and I have already implemented some of the ideas discussed on the training. The follow up information and links are very helpful and it's good to know Sian, Carys and Awel are there for extra support if needed. Diolch yn fawr!"

We continue to ensure that our customers receive the best possible service from us in both Welsh and English.

Covid - 19

- The lockdown period has been very challenging for us as for many other organisations across the Country. Despite this, we have continued to offer and provide a truly bilingual service for our customers and grant holders in the same way as usual. At the beginning of lockdown, we made quick changes to ensure that our advice line, which is usually answered in the office, continues to offer a service to our customers from home. A specific number of staff are responsible for answering the advice line number and the majority of these members of staff are Welsh speakers. We had intended to advertise for new front line staff in the Spring that would have responsibility for answering the advice line but, due to Covid-19, we will now be recruiting for these posts in the Autumn.
- We have continued to distribute grants to projects across Wales throughout the lockdown period with the first funding committee taking place on teams only a week after we started working from home. Our funding priority over the last few months has been to support projects through the Covid-19 crisis and we have distributed £17 million to 656 projects since April 2020.
- Meetings with projects on funding have continued virtually and we have also continued to offer the 'Bilingualism at Work' training with the Welsh Language Commissioner's office over the period. We held 3 sessions in June and regular sessions will be held from September onwards.
- Over the months following September 2020 we hope to be able to offer more services such as workshops etc that we would usually offer face to face in

communities bilingually, virtually to support our communities and grant holders.

- Recruitment was paused for a short period in lockdown, but we have recruited three new members of staff to the Wales Directorate over the Summer and further roles will be advertised over the next few months. Two of which are fluent Welsh language speakers
- Language improvement training sessions had been organised for our staff with Cwmni Iaith for April-July following last year's staff skills survey. These sessions will now take place virtually between October and December 2020.

Policy Making Standards

- To meet the Policy Making Standards we produced a policy that explains clearly how any research or consultation work will ensure that the Welsh Language is not treated any less favourably than the English language.
- In January 2020, we published our new policy on the Welsh language in our grant making processes. The policy has been well received by the public and our projects and can be seen here:
<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/Welsh-language-in-grants-policy.pdf?mtime=20200213123655&focal=none>
- Information about our Standards and the Fund's compliance procedures can be seen on this web page:
<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/about/customer-service/welsh-language-scheme>
- If you'd like further information about any one of our policies on the Welsh language please get in touch at:
welshlanguage.advice@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

Operational Standards

- As a UK wide organisation, with the majority of our corporate services based in offices outside Wales, this set of Standards continue to be the most challenging for us as an organisation. As a result, the deadlines for us to meet the Operational Standards were staggered over a period of 18 months to enable us to have sufficient time to meet them fully and confidently.
- We have made significant progress in the internal use of the Welsh language over the last 2 and a half years since we started implementing the Standards. All our Standards have been met within the given timescales.
- Our internal language prior to January 2017 was predominantly English and introducing Welsh as another internal language has been a positive experience for many staff, based in and outside Wales. The process has enabled our Welsh Language Team to work more closely with our People Team, Procurement and IT teams, which has been a positive experience for all.

As a result during the year our achievements include the following:

- Staff members in Wales have completed our core Workplace Essentials training in Welsh. This was rolled out for the first time in 2018;
- We have a dedicated Welsh language page on our intranet, with more and more information being made available in Welsh;
- As well as our Welsh language page on the intranet, most of our HR policies are available in Welsh and English now as well as all our Health and Safety Hub and policies.
- We published a guide for our staff titled 'Our promise to our staff' which explains which services staff can expect and ask for in Welsh from The National Lottery Community Fund. This guide is distributed to all new members of staff when they start in our Wales offices.
- An introduction to our Welsh Language service has always been an important part of our induction process to new staff in Wales. Since 2018, the Welsh language has become part of our corporate induction to all staff that join the Fund across the UK. Usually, we have bi-monthly induction sessions to new staff which are held alternatively in our Birmingham and Newcastle offices but as our offices are now closed due to Covid-19, this induction session now takes place over teams.
- When a new member of staff joins us in Wales, since March 2020, the induction session on the Welsh language and the Standards which is usually held face to face, is now held on Teams.
- Our Welsh Language Officer sends regular updates and reminders to staff on our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards throughout the year.
- Whenever we recruit new members of staff, we now ask whether applicants would prefer to be interviewed in Welsh via a question on our online application system.
- We have a procedure in place where any new online systems that are for staff use will now be procured for as bilingual systems from the outset, wherever possible, ensuring that staff can use these system in either Welsh or English in the future. Our new HR system was due to be available to staff in Welsh by mid April but, it wasn't possible for us to continue with this work when the Covid crisis hit in March. We are now aiming for the system to be available bilingually between September 2020 and March 2021, starting with the recruitment system which will be ready by the end of Autumn 2020.
- All our staff have access to Welsh Language awareness training and training to learn or improve their Welsh skills. Our Welsh language team also hold bespoke Language Awareness training for specific teams within the organisation when needed;
- We have updated our Language Skills Strategy in 2018 and will continue to update this document to ensure it helps us to maintain our required number of Welsh speaking members of staff.

- We have various guides available to our staff, which are updated regularly. These include: Email signature template and email out of office messages template and useful contact details for Welsh language information.

We continue to make excellent progress on developing a bilingual internal ethos in the organisation and we look forward to developing the Welsh language further internally within the organisation over the next year.

Record Keeping Standards

To fulfil the requirements of the record keeping standards, we keep copies of:

- Complaints that we receive relating to our compliance with Standards
- Numbers of staff who have attended training courses provided in Welsh
- Assessments which we carry out in respect of the Welsh language skills that may be needed in relation to a new or vacant post and how many roles were advertised as needing Welsh essential or Welsh desirable skills.

Numbers of Welsh Speaking staff

In Wales (as at September 2020), The National Lottery Community Fund has two offices, one in Cardiff and one in Newtown. We have 45 members of staff in the Wales Directorate and 21 of these are Welsh speakers with an additional 3 members of staff learning Welsh either at work or outside work in their community. More than half the staff in the Newtown office are Welsh speakers and we are very proud of the bilingual environment in both our offices.

In September 2020 we conducted our latest language skills audit for our staff in Wales and the results were as follows:

- 28 members of staff completed the questionnaire in English and 13 completed it in Welsh.
- From the Welsh language responses all felt that they had good reading and listening skills in Welsh but less felt that they were confident in their writing skills and less again in their confidence to speak publicly in Welsh. 4 expressed an interest in improving their Welsh skills.
- From the English responses, 1 considered themselves to be fluent in Welsh, 4 had good skills, 3 had no Welsh skills at all and the remainder use basic Welsh and can pronounce names/words correctly. The reading, listening and writing results were mixed with 15 able to read and understand basic Welsh. Nearly everyone noted that they didn't have the confidence to speak Welsh.
- In total 13 members of staff noted that they would like to receive training to learn or improve their Welsh language skills. The Welsh language team will be working with staff to ensure that appropriate courses are provided over the next few months.

Numbers of staff which attended training in Welsh, if it's available in English.

- Our Standards noted that only some training would need to be provided in Welsh, if it was provided in English. These training courses were: recruitment and interviewing; performance management; complaints and disciplinary procedures; induction; dealing with the public and health and safety. Our Health & Safety training is done via an online system annually and this is available in both Welsh and English for staff to complete. Our induction in the Wales office is usually led by the new member of staff's line manager but this can be altered depending on the individual's language preference, therefore our induction in Wales can be held in either Welsh or English. Most of the other named training courses are not currently offered in English to our staff and therefore haven't yet been made available in Welsh.
- A core part of training for all our staff is the Workplace Essentials which all staff are required to do on an annual basis. It's an online training resource and covers Code of Ethics, Anti-fraud and corruption awareness, Information security and data handling and Data Protection. In 2020 2 members of staff from the Wales Directorate completed the training wholly in Welsh and 3 completed it bilingually, doing some modules in Welsh and some in English. 42 members of staff in Wales completed the training in English.
- Our Workplace Essentials Training includes a new module on Welsh language awareness this year which has to be completed by all new members of staff in the organisation and by every staff member annually. By September 2020 366 members of staff across the UK had completed the Welsh language awareness training and 29 of these were staff from the Wales Directorate.
- Following Gloywi Iaith / Language improvement training that was held in our offices in 2018 by Cwmni Iaith, a number of our Welsh speakers are keen to have further similar sessions and 3 monthly sessions were arranged to cover the following topics: Grammar; The effective use of language, Communication and the use of Language Technology and Drafting Reports and Minutes; Preparing for the Process of interviewing and Presenting; to be held from April onwards. Due to Covid-19 these sessions have been postponed but they will now take place over teams from November onwards.
- As an organisation we are registered to take part in the Cymraeg Gwaith scheme, funded by Welsh Government and to date 4 members of staff in Wales have started the free 10 hour courses. One member of staff has also registered for a Higher Welsh course with Cardiff University for September 2020 which will take place online.
- We continuously encourage our staff to learn Welsh or at least 'have a go' at some Welsh in their working life. We send out 'Gair Cymraeg yr wythnos / Welsh Word of the week' to all staff in Wales and on Yammer that everyone in the organisation has access to. To date, we have included words beginning with the letters of the Welsh alphabet and videos of Welsh speaking members of staff saying organisational names which some non Welsh speakers may find

difficult to pronounce such as Merched y Wawr/cymdeithas. Over the lockdown period, we have been filming Welsh words from our homes and sharing with colleagues. We'll continue to do this for the foreseeable future.

Number of new roles assessed as needing Welsh essential skills, Welsh skills would be advantageous or no Welsh skills

The Fund operates a Language Skills Strategy which leads our work on ensuring that our workforce has the necessary skills to provide a bilingual service to the public in Wales.

- Since our last annual report in September 2019, we have advertised 3 roles within the Wales Directorate.
- These were a Public Affairs Officer, Communications Officer (both Welsh essential roles) and a Knowledge & Learning Officer.
- We have a low turnover of staff in Wales, and therefore we don't often need to recruit many new members of staff.

Number of complaints received by the organisation under each heading of Standards

- No complaints have been received regarding the Welsh language service provided by The National Lottery Community Fund under any of the headings of Standards given to us over the past year.

Contact details

If you would like to contact us regarding our Welsh Language Standards or the contents of this annual report, please email us at welshlanguage.advice@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk.