

# POWYS CHALLENGE

*Registered Charity No: 1091494    Company No: 4350654*

## WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Prepared under the  
Welsh Language Act 1993

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## WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

Powys Challenge has adopted the principle that in the conduct of its business in Wales, it will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality. This Scheme sets out how Powys Challenge will give effect to that principle when providing service to the public in Wales, and provides a timetable for implementation.

### INTRODUCTION

Powys Challenge is an independent, registered charity whose aim is “to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and to tackle the causes of criminal behaviour in Powys by providing a range of support services and opportunities to offenders, defendants, those at risk of offending and their families.” Powys Challenge achieves this aim through working in partnership with other agencies (in the statutory, public and voluntary sectors) and by working with a team of trained volunteers who offer support packages under the direction of professional caseworkers. Powys Challenge employs a staff team and currently has over one hundred volunteers working throughout the county.

Powys Challenge maintains an office base in each of the three Powys Shires. These bases are located in Brecon, Newtown and Llandrindod Wells. In Brecon and Newtown, Powys Challenge have independent premises housing their offices. In Llandrindod Wells, Powys Challenge has independent premises housing the Radnorshire office and the County headquarters. In addition, staff share offices with the Mid Wales Youth Offending Teams in Newtown and Brecon.

Powys Challenge currently employs 8 staff all of which are part-time.

Powys Challenge serves a population of approximately 125,000 people who live in scattered communities throughout the county. The county covers 2,000 square miles and is the most sparsely populated in England and Wales. The largest town is Newtown, with a population of 10,000; only four other towns have populations over 3,000.

It is estimated that 20% of the population of Powys are Welsh speaking. Two areas are substantially or predominantly Welsh speaking. These areas are the extreme Northwest of Montgomeryshire and the south west of Brecknockshire.

In recent years there has been a significant rise in the number of Welsh speakers amongst the younger age groups. 33% of those aged 5-15 are now able to speak Welsh.

Powys Challenge intends to provide a service to Welsh speakers within the county. Powys Challenge acknowledges, however, that it will not be possible to provide a comprehensive, bilingual service in the short term. Powys Challenge intends to actively work towards providing an acceptable bilingual service within 10 years of the implementation of this policy. Any new policies, initiatives and activities undertaken by Powys Challenge will be consistent with its Welsh Language Scheme and will liaise with the Welsh Language Board in any matter which may affect the Scheme. Such policies and initiatives will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever possible, moving the organisation closer to implementing the principle of equality.

## **POWYS CHALLENGE – PUBLIC IMAGE**

Powys Challenge believes that its public image should reflect the intention to treat Welsh and English equally and will adopt a bilingual corporate identity in the following manner.

### **Standard Information**

Powys Challenge will use and display its name in a bilingual title: -

**Her Powys  
Powys Challenge**

This title and standard information such as address and charitable registration details will be bilingual on all printed material including letter headings, compliment slips, fax cover sheets and other similar items for external use.

This information will also be bilingual on signs and permanent notices on Trust property, publications and other materials on public display. Text will be equal in size, format, quality and prominence.

### **Signs**

Any new or replaced public information signs in and outside Powys Challenge offices will be bilingual.

When Welsh and English signs are used separately, they will be equal in size, format, quality and prominence.

### **Publications**

Leaflets and posters for public distribution, such as user information for individuals and partnership organisations will be produced bilingually. Within

budget constraints, such materials will include Welsh and English versions in one document. However, in the short term, it may be necessary to produce separate Welsh and English leaflets.

Written materials for internal use, such as Newsletters will normally be produced in English but will aim, in due course, to have a bilingual content, although the extent will vary according to contributions to the Newsletter.

Where materials are primarily for distribution in England, they will normally be produced in English only.

## **Staff and Volunteer Recruitment**

Recruitment advertisements published in newspapers and other journals in Wales currently specify the desirability of a Welsh speaker. These advertisements will be issued bilingually.

Volunteer recruitment leaflets, posters and application forms will be produced bilingually.

Staff recruitment documentation will be produced bilingually. Within budget constraints, such materials will include Welsh and English versions in one document. However, in the short term, it may be necessary to produce separate Welsh and English documents.

## **Forms**

Applicants for paid and voluntary posts are required to complete paperwork. It is the intention that all relevant forms which come within the public domain will be produced bilingually.

# **SERVICE DELIVERY**

## **DEALING WITH WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC**

Powys Challenge believes in the importance of providing a high quality service and will work towards the provision of such services in both Welsh and English. Powys Challenge believes that this principle should apply to all its dealing with the public including service users, volunteers, staff, groups, communities and the public in general.

The staff team is small and support will be sought from Welsh speaking volunteers and Welsh speaking Trustees to develop the delivery of services to Welsh speakers to assist with correspondence, telephone calls and direct service delivery. The services of external translators will be engaged if in-house provision is insufficient.

## **Correspondence**

Correspondence in Welsh as well as English is welcomed. Guidance will be given to staff concerning how to deal with correspondence in Welsh.

Powys Challenge will ensure that: -

- When letters are received in Welsh, they will be acknowledged in Welsh. If a detailed written response is required, a signed reply will be sent in Welsh.
- Powys Challenge acknowledges that it will not be possible for correspondence acknowledgement and response times in Welsh to be the same as for correspondence in English initially, but that equality in time scales will be the aim.
- If, after a meeting, interview or telephone conversation in Welsh, a follow up letter is required, it will be sent in Welsh or bilingually.

## **Telephone**

Telephone calls will be welcomed in Welsh as well as English. Staff and volunteers will be given guidance concerning how to deal with Welsh calls.

Powys Challenge will ensure that: -

- Staff responding to external telephone calls will answer with a bilingual greeting, giving the name of Powys Challenge.
- If the caller wishes to speak in Welsh, the call will be directed to a Welsh speaker if one is available.
- If no Welsh speaker is available, an arrangement will be made for a Welsh speaker to phone back unless the caller wishes to continue the call in English.
- Answerphone messages will be bilingual.

## **Meetings with the public**

Those who wish to have face-to-face dealings with Powys Challenge through the medium of Welsh will be welcome to do so.

Powys Challenge acknowledges that its current staff team does not have the ability to communicate effectively in Welsh. However, Powys Challenge is able to call on the services of 4 Welsh speaking volunteers and 1 Welsh-speaking Trustee.

Powys Challenge will continue to seek to recruit Welsh speaking volunteers to meet service delivery requirements and will continue to encourage suitable Welsh speaking applicants to apply for paid posts.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

### **Welsh Language Training for Staff**

Powys Challenge wishes to strengthen its resources for operating its Welsh Language Scheme by encouraging and supporting its staff team to learn Welsh or improve their existing skills in Welsh.

Powys Challenge's aim is that as far as possible each Shire office will develop the capacity to serve the Welsh speaking public through its staff and volunteers.

Arrangements will be made to provide Welsh Awareness training for all staff.

Staff will be encouraged to learn the language to a satisfactory level of competence. Staff will be given the opportunity of joining training provided by Powys Probation Service for its own staff. The Trustees wish to record their thanks to Powys Probation Service for its support in this regard.

In deciding on training arrangements, Powys Challenge will consider the needs of the organisation as well as the degree of interest and commitment of staff. Priority for resources (including staff time) to implement training will be given to those areas where there are likely to be regular contacts and communication with Welsh speaking service users.

Powys Challenge will aim to recruit Welsh speaking volunteers to assist non-Welsh speaking Powys Challenge staff in their work, when responding to correspondence and telephone enquiries in Welsh.

Powys Challenge will also aim to recruit Welsh speaking volunteers to act as mentors for those staff who are learning the language, so providing the opportunity for practice and confidence building.

### **IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE SCHEME**

In order that Powys Challenge is equipped to provide a good quality service to Welsh speaking members of the public in Powys, Powys Challenge will need to have a complement of Welsh speaking staff. A major consideration in providing Welsh speaking staff is the degree to which an area is Welsh speaking, although it is known that there are many Welsh speakers in the more English speaking areas. It is also known that the younger age groups are increasingly bilingual throughout the county. The demand for services in Welsh is therefore likely to increase in the future.

Powys Challenge will address this by ensuring that in due course, Shire offices will either have access to Welsh speaking staff, or the assistance of Welsh speaking volunteers.

When new staff are recruited, the ability to use the Welsh language will be regarded as highly desirable and candidates demonstrating this ability in application forms will be considered favourably provided they fulfil all other essential criteria.

Any staff recruited to work in a predominantly Welsh speaking area will be expected to reflect the language needs of the area or to demonstrate a clear willingness to learn Welsh.

Regular surveys will be conducted to establish which members of staff speak Welsh, are learning Welsh, or would like to learn the language. This information will be used to identify any shortfall in the ability of Powys Challenge to fulfil its commitments to its Welsh Language Policy, and to identify training needs.

Powys Challenge will also seek to ensure that its Board of Trustees includes members who are bilingual in order that the needs of Welsh speakers are adequately represented.

Powys Challenge will monitor closely how well it is meeting the commitments of its Welsh Language Scheme. Specifically it will monitor: -

- ❑ Arrangements for dealing with the Welsh-speaking public, including the response times for correspondence.
- ❑ Use of bilingual publications showing the bilingual details of the organisation.
- ❑ Arrangements to provide Welsh speaking staff or volunteers to provide a service, including necessary training requirements.
- ❑ Recruitment of Welsh speaking volunteers to provide one-to one services to service users.
- ❑ How progress matches the agreed timetable.
- ❑ Complaints about the provision of services for Welsh language speakers.

Powys Challenge currently monitors client requirements for a Welsh language service and this will continue.

Powys Challenge's Welsh Language Scheme will be reviewed annually and amended if necessary.

An assessment of progress will be included in Powys Challenge's Annual Report and will be forwarded to the Welsh Language Board.

Powys Challenge's Chief Officer will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the scheme, monitoring development and dealing with any complaints. Any enquiries or comments should be sent to Powys Challenge's Head Office at Trafford House, Temple Street, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5HG. Tel: 01597 822400.

## SUMMARY AND TIMETABLE

1. Powys Challenge currently has 4 Welsh-speaking volunteers who are available to undertake one-to-one client based work. Powys Challenge will continue to aim to recruit Welsh speaking volunteers for this purpose and to assist staff in dealing with correspondence and telephone calls. When such volunteers are recruited and trained, an appropriate volunteer will be contacted whenever an enquiry is received in the Welsh language, and each enquiry will be dealt with individually.
2. A survey will be conducted by September 2000, to ascertain the level of knowledge of the Welsh language amongst present Powys Challenge staff and the level of interest in taking Welsh lessons. The Trustees will decide on the minimum number of Welsh speakers required to enable the satisfactory conduct of services to Welsh speaking members of the public by March 2001. Funding will then be sought, and arrangements made for training provision for those staff who have expressed an interest in learning Welsh.
3. Training will be provided for appropriate staff to enable them to answer the telephone in a both Welsh and English, and to apologise in Welsh if they are then unable to continue the conversation using Welsh. This training will also allow for bilingual answerphone messages to be in place by April 2001.
4. Written correspondence in Welsh will be acknowledged in Welsh by April 2001
5. Leaflets, publicity materials and forms will be produced either bilingually or in both Welsh and English by April 2003.
6. Annual Reports will be produced bilingually by April 2004.
7. Signs at Powys Challenge premises will be produced in a bilingual format when they are replaced or by April 2002.
8. Recruitment advertisements in Wales will be bilingual by April 2003.
9. Staff recruitment materials currently stress that Welsh Language skills are desirable. This emphasis will be maintained and will also indicate that Welsh communication ability will be viewed positively whenever candidates demonstrate competence in all other key criteria for posts.

April 2000