



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

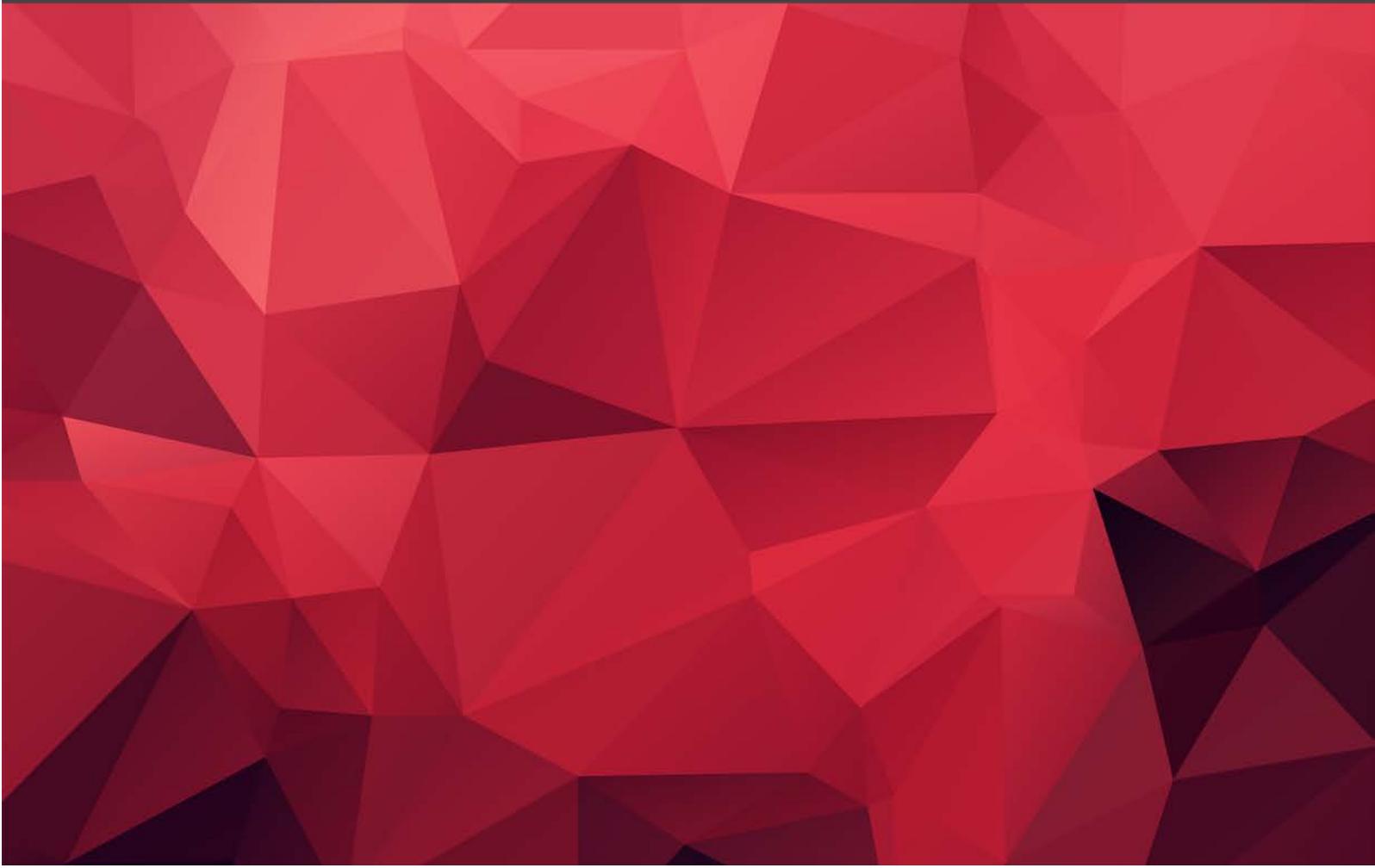
Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# Annual Report on the Welsh Language

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[infoofficer@audit.wales](mailto:infoofficer@audit.wales).

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

# Detailed report

## Introduction

- 1 This annual report on the Welsh language is the first we have published since we received our compliance notice in July 2016 where the imposition date for many standards fell in January 2017. The Commissioner has varied the compliance date for some standards to later dates.
- 2 We are required as part of the standards to publish an annual report on how we have complied with specific standards and in general during the previous financial year. As our first compliance date was 25 January 2017, we only have two months to report on, and so this report will therefore mainly discuss the transition from our Welsh Language Scheme to the standards, our arrangements to ensure compliance and other work we have done during 2016-17 to promote the language.
- 3 During 2016-17, the focus of our work on the Welsh language has revolved around compliance with the standards. Even though the primary function of this report is for compliance, we see it as a good exercise in checking the health of the language within the organisation. It is also an opportunity to reflect on what we have done to promote the use and awareness of the Welsh language during the previous year.
- 4 The standards have brought with them a positive change in culture around the Welsh language within the Wales Audit Office as staff come to better understand the significance of the language and the things they can change to support the language.
- 5 The Wales Audit Office and the Auditor General for Wales have both received separate compliance notices. This annual report will report on both sets of standards and will be shared via our social media platforms and be made available on our website and all our offices.

## Standards compliance

### General management

- 6 We outline our [arrangements for complying with the standards on our website](#). The Wales Audit Office employs a full time Welsh Language Officer who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the standards and promoting the Welsh language internally. Following a secondment opportunity, the previous Welsh language officer left his role in January 2017 with a new Welsh language officer in post from the beginning of March 2017. A Director is responsible for the strategic overview of the Welsh language in the organisation and the Director of Corporate Services is responsible for any corporate governance matters relating to the Welsh language.
- 7 During the period leading up to our first compliance dates with the standards, a Welsh Language Task and Finish Group was in place, chaired by the Director

responsible for the Welsh language. The Group existed to assist with strategic decisions regarding planning and developing staff language skills, and towards compliance with the standards. This Group has since been disbanded with the aim of creating a new group with new aims and objectives as we turn towards continued compliance with the standards and with more emphasis on the promotion of the language.

- 8 Prior to our first dates for compliance, we challenged three future duties under section 54 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. We have outlined these appeals in [Table 1](#) along with their outcome.

**Table 1: appeals made against future duties**

An outline of the appeals made to future duties including which standard it relates to, the reasons for the appeal, and the outcome.

Standard	Reason	Outcome
20 – ‘When a person contacts you on a direct line number... you must ensure that, when greeting the person, the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language’.	The imposition date for this standard poses an unreasonable period of time to train all staff to comply with this requirement and for a significant change in behaviour. An imposition date of 25 July 2018 was therefore requested.	The Commissioner gave clarification on their interpretation of this standard and an imposition date of 25 November 2017 was given to take account of the appeal process.
60 – ‘Any reception service you make available in English must also be available in Welsh, and any person who requires a Welsh language reception service must not be treated less favourably than a person who requires an English language reception service’.	The implications of upskilling our reception staff from non-Welsh speaking to an advanced level would put a tremendous amount of undue pressure on the team. We also hold a principle that ‘no member of staff’s employment would be adversely affected by Welsh Language Policies’.	Following a consultation process, the Commissioner agreed that our request for a compliance date of 25 July 2019 would be reasonable and proportionate.
72 – ‘Any invitations to tender for a contract that you publish must be published in Welsh, and you must not treat a Welsh language version of any invitation less favourably than an English language version’.	Translating all invitations to tender, and all parts of the invitation, would pose a disproportionate burden on us. We therefore requested the notice to be amended with caveats that aligned with other public organisations that are required to comply with this standard.	The Commissioner agreed to amend the standard to include the requested caveats.

- 9 During the 2016-17 reporting year, the Wales Audit Office received one complaint from an audited body unable to use the Welsh language while dealing with an audit supplier working on the Auditor General’s behalf. As part of the quality assurance

review of the audit supplier, we looked at their Welsh language service provision to seek that the issues raised don't happen again.

## Communicating standards with staff

- 10 To ensure staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the standards, a lot of work has been done to promote the standards and their relevance to staff's work. Staff received information from directors through all-staff emails and our intranet. We also used posters, screens and our internal social media, Yammer, to promote the start date of the standards. All new staff receive a dedicated induction session where they are introduced to the standards and their relevance to their work and employment with us.
- 11 We have provided staff with numerous tools and guidance on the standards that impact on the way they work. For example, we provided guidance and templates for email signatures and out of office emails, including a comprehensive list of job titles. A suite of Welsh language technologies is also available to staff upon request that includes Cysill and Cysgeir, Welsh Language Microsoft Office spell check and To Bach.
- 12 Our policy on using the Welsh language internally, as we are required to produce under standard 94, outlines the relevant standards that have an impact on our staff's day-to-day responsibilities. These include answering calls and correspondence, respecting the language preferences of our clients, and when displaying posters and signage around our offices. The policy also outlines the new rights staff have under the standards such as the availability of Welsh language technologies, their access to Welsh language training and training through the medium of Welsh. It also highlights their rights to have disciplinary and grievance meetings and HR documents in Welsh.

## Recruitment

- 13 When recruiting within the audit teams, recruiting managers review the Welsh language capabilities of the whole team and take into consideration the percentage of Welsh speakers already within the team, and the responses from bodies to our triennial language preference survey.
- 14 When a new or vacant post arises, the recruiting manager must fill out a business case and return it to the HR department. A section within it asks for the required Welsh language skills for that role based on our [Welsh Language Matrix](#). We ask for the reasoning behind any change in the skills required for a vacant role.
- 15 Between January and March 2017 we advertised 13 new and vacant roles. Three of these roles specified that Welsh language skills were essential for the role and ten roles specified that Welsh language skills would be desirable.

## Welsh language skills and training

16 The Welsh language skills of the Wales Audit Office at the end of the 2016-17 financial year is outlined in [Table 2](#). We have not seen a change in the overall number of those who self-report that they have Welsh language skills since 2015-16. However, we have seen an increase in the proficiency of the Welsh language skills they have. This is because new staff have started in the organisation, Welsh speaking staff have left, and staff are learning or developing their Welsh language skills.

**Table 2: Welsh language skills of all Wales Audit Office staff**

The number of Wales Audit Office staff at awareness, entry, foundation, intermediate, advanced or proficiency level of listening, reading, speaking and writing Welsh.

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	199	203	203	204
1 – Entry	6	5	7	8
2 – Foundation	10	7	5	4
3 – Intermediate	7	6	9	7
4 – Advanced	11	15	1	6
5 – Proficiency	17	14	25	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>

17 We also provide a breakdown of the Welsh language skills of the different work streams of the Wales Audit Office.

**Table 3: Welsh language skills of Corporate Enabler staff**

The number of Corporate Enabler staff at awareness, entry, foundation, intermediate, advanced or proficiency level of listening, reading, speaking and writing Welsh.

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	34	35	35	37
1 – Entry	2	3	3	3
2 – Foundation	4	3	3	1
3 – Intermediate	2	1	1	1
4 – Advanced	0	0	0	0
5 – Proficiency	4	4	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>

**Table 4: Welsh language skills of Financial Audit staff**

The number of Financial Audit staff at awareness, entry, foundation, intermediate, advanced or proficiency level of listening, reading, speaking and writing Welsh.

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	106	107	108	107
1 – Entry	3	2	3	4
2 – Foundation	4	2	1	2
3 – Intermediate	1	3	3	2
4 – Advanced	6	10	0	3
5 – Proficiency	9	5	14	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>129</b>

**Table 5: Welsh language skills of Performance Audit staff**

The number of Performance Audit staff at awareness, entry, foundation intermediate, advanced or proficiency level of listening, reading, speaking and writing Welsh.

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
0 – Awareness	59	61	60	60
1 – Entry	1	0	1	1
2 – Foundation	2	2	1	1
3 – Intermediate	4	2	5	4
4 – Advanced	5	5	1	3
5 – Proficiency	4	5	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>

- 18 During 2016-17, 15 members of staff attended Welsh language training organised by the Wales Audit Office or through Welsh for Adults courses, as shown in **Table 6**. One member of staff has committed to three years' of attending weekly Welsh language classes. An additional two members of staff started to learn Welsh, but shortly afterwards left the organisation.
- 19 To acknowledge the commitment needed for a member of staff to learn a new language, in June 2016 new procedures on time and financial commitments were agreed at management level. It stated that any courses would be fully funded by the Wales Audit Office, staff can use up to 5 days (50%) of their allocated training time budget for learning Welsh, and that any time provided by the Wales Audit

Office must be matched by the individual's own time. The procedure also outlined that any staff member whose Welsh language requirement for their role is upgraded is exempt from matching the Wales Audit Office's time with their own.

**Table 6: Welsh language training**

The Welsh language training provided for staff during 2016-17

Table heading	Dates	Delegates	Total learning hours
Welsh language awareness induction	Various dates April 2016 – March 2017	17	8.5
Meet and Greet	September 2016	6	30
Intensive course	June 2016 August 2016 March 2017	2	105
Weekly classes	September 2015 – June 2016	1	60
	September 2016 – June 2017	3	180
	January 2017 – June 2020	1	250



Wales Audit Office  
24 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone.: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: [info@audit.wales](mailto:info@audit.wales)

Website: [www.audit.wales](http://www.audit.wales)

Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru  
24 Heol y Gadeirlan  
Caerdydd CF11 9LJ

Ffôn: 029 2032 0500

Ffacs: 029 2032 0600

Ffôn testun: 029 2032 0660

E-bost: [post@archwilio.cymru](mailto:post@archwilio.cymru)

Gwefan: [www.archwilio.cymru](http://www.archwilio.cymru)