

Bridgend County Borough Council

Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021 to 2026

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Introduction

The Welsh Language Standards places a requirement on the council to produce a five year Welsh Language Strategy. This is a statutory requirement relating to the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure passed by the National Assembly for Wales in 2011. This is our second Welsh Language Strategy and aims to build on progress made over the last five years.

Welsh Language Standard	Description of standard
Welsh Language standard 145	You must produce, and publish on your website, a five-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters) - (a) a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the five-year period concerned, and (b) a statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within five years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).
Welsh Language standard 146	Five years after publishing a strategy in accordance with standard 145 you must - (a) assess to what extent you have followed that strategy and have reached the target set by it, and (b) publish that assessment on your website, ensuring that it contains the following information - (i) the number of Welsh speakers in your area, and the age of those speakers; (ii) a list of the activities that you have arranged or funded during the previous five years in order to promote the use of the Welsh language.

The first Welsh language strategy devised six objectives, three that focussed on internal practices and three that focussed on our communities.

The three key objectives for internal practices were:

- Objective one: Identify the capacity in service areas to deliver services in Welsh
- Objective two: To provide appropriate learning and development solutions at various levels to meet identified needs within budget allocation
- Objective three: To establish arrangements in recruiting to positions where Welsh language skills are essential

The three key objectives for our communities were:

- Objective one: To raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way.
- Objective two: To increase the promotion and awareness of the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) particularly in relation to objectives one, two and four of the plan.
- Objective three: To explore (and implement where possible) any new activities which will support the use of the Welsh language more widely within the county borough, promoting these accordingly.

Progress against the objectives for 2016-2021 has been reported annually to Cabinet Committee Equalities, and annual reports are published on the BCBC website. This current strategy builds on the progress that has been made, meets the needs of the Welsh speakers and learners in the county borough, meets the legislative requirements and most importantly is meaningful, appropriate and achievable for everyone involved.

In devising this strategy, consideration has been given to the policy context and created a language profile of Bridgend County. Six overarching objectives have been developed with 28 actions and we will work with our partners to achieve these aims.

In developing this strategy consultation has been undertaken with the public, key stakeholders, schools and members. The consultation received a total of 439 completions, and the responses have been used to develop the Welsh Language Strategy 2020-2026 action plan. This means that our strategy uses established national criteria but localises the information and targets.

Policy context

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 makes Welsh an official language in Wales. This means it must be treated no less favourably than English.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to impose a statutory duty on public bodies in Wales to comply with the Welsh Language Standards. It recognises that there are two official languages in Wales- Welsh and English. The legislation enables people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh, if they choose to do so. As of 1 April 2018, the Welsh Language Standards replaced the Welsh Language Act 1993.

Welsh Language Standards

The Welsh Language Standards were published by the Welsh Language Commissioner. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) received its final Welsh Language Standards compliance notice in September 2015. This notice comprised of 171 standards, 144 required by March and a further 27 by September 2016. The Commissioner has put these into five themes.

- Service delivery
- Policy making
- Promotion
- Operational
- Record keeping

The Welsh Language Standards require an annual report to be produced which outlines compliance with the standards, progress made towards the objectives, and how, in collaboration with partners, promoted the Welsh language and facilitated the use of the Welsh language more widely in the county borough.

Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers

In 2017 Welsh Government launched Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh Speakers which outlines the aim of achieving a million Welsh speakers by the 2050. It follows on from '*A living language: a language for living 2012-2017*' and is a strategy for the whole of Wales and is a long term vision to increase the number of Welsh speakers. It recognises that to achieve this target the foundations and actions must be identified now and reflect the scale of this ambition. Welsh Government has identified three strategic themes to achieve this vision:

1. Increasing the number of Welsh speakers.
2. Increasing the use of Welsh.
3. Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and content.

The strategy also recognises the need to develop strategies that are relevant to each area of Wales. For example, in Welsh-speaking communities, the challenge is to ensure that people have good quality jobs, fulfilling careers and homes so that they can stay, or return to those communities. In other areas, promoting the use of Welsh as a language for the workplace and business will become increasingly important. The themes and aims of this strategy have informed our objectives to create actions that are of national significance but locally focussed.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals, including – 'a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.'

The Act establishes a statutory Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and also establishes Public Services Boards (PSBs) for each local authority area in

Wales. Each PSB must improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by working to achieve the well-being goals.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations (Wales) 2019

All local authorities have been required to develop a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) is currently working on the 2022 to 2032 ten year WESP which is due for Welsh Government approval on the 31 January 2022. The WESP and the Welsh Strategic Plan are closely aligned to ensure that the WESP continues to be promoted as part of the Welsh Language Strategy, and recognise the progress made within the WESP as part of the Welsh Language Strategy annual report.

Bridgend County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018 -2022

The corporate plan is a central component of the local authority business architecture, linking key elements such as policy, organisation, operational activity, governance, and performance management. BCBC's corporate plan sets out the well-being objectives and the long-term outcomes for the county borough. In formulating this corporate plan the council has considered the type of organisation it wants to be. The vision is to act as **“One Council working together to improve lives”**. This will be achieved by delivering the following well-being objectives:

- Supporting a successful sustainable economy
- Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient
- Smarter use of resources

Bridgend County Borough Welsh language profile

Devising a current language profile of BCBC supports the construction of achievable objectives and outcomes. There are different datasets which outline the number of Welsh speakers in BCBC. The most cited dataset is Census data, which gathers information from the whole population. The last census was conducted in 2011. Another dataset is the National survey for Wales which collects data from a smaller sample. The National Survey for Wales includes questions about whether people can speak Welsh, how often they do so, and their level of fluency. The questions are asked of people aged 16+. Survey estimates of the number of Welsh speakers are historically higher than those produced by the Census.

Bridgend County Borough

According to the 2011 Census, BCBC was home to 139,178 people. Mid-year population estimates in 2019 estimates the population has risen to 147,049¹. Welsh

¹ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/Local-Authority/populationestimates-by-localauthority-year>

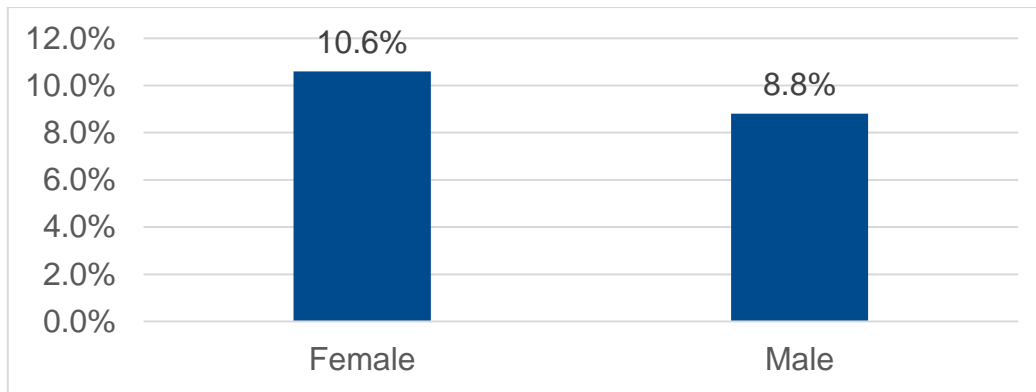
Government population predictions envisage the population of Bridgend County Borough will be 150,447 by 2026.²

The 2011 Census identified that 9.7 percent (13,103 people) aged over three living in Bridgend County Borough answered yes to the question 'can you speak Welsh?' The age range of these respondents is broken down in the table below:

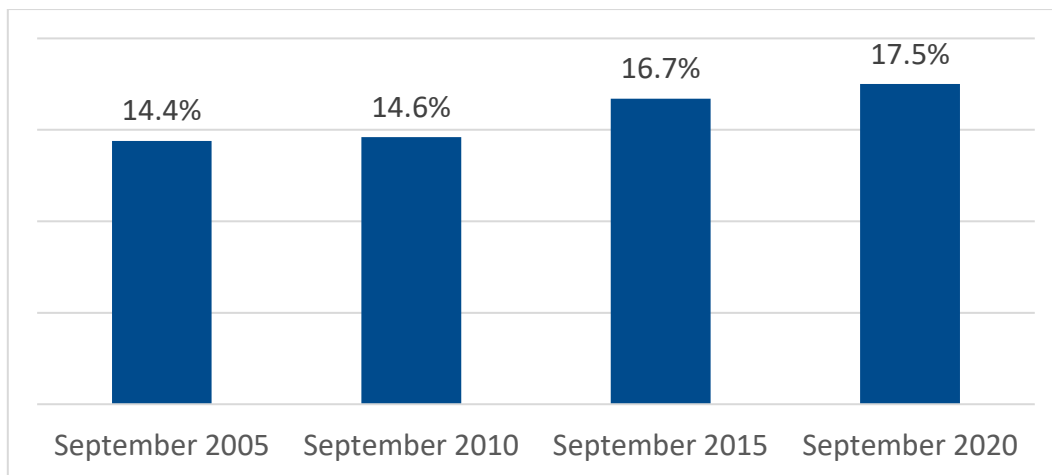
Age band	Number	% of total in band
3 – 4	473	15.3
5 – 9	1843	24.3
10 – 14	2450	29.3
15 – 19	1740	20.7
20 – 24	937	11.4
25 – 29	803	9.5
30 - 34	663	8.0
35 – 39	698	7.6
40 – 44	589	5.6
45 – 49	445	4.2
50 – 54	430	4.6
55 – 59	386	4.5
60 – 64	363	4.0
65 - 69	323	4.3
70 – 74	272	4.4
75 – 79	247	5.2
80 - 84	201	6.1
85+	240	7.9
Total	13103	-

Of those who said they could speak Welsh, 7263 were female (10 percent of female population) and 5840 were male (8.8 percent of the male population).

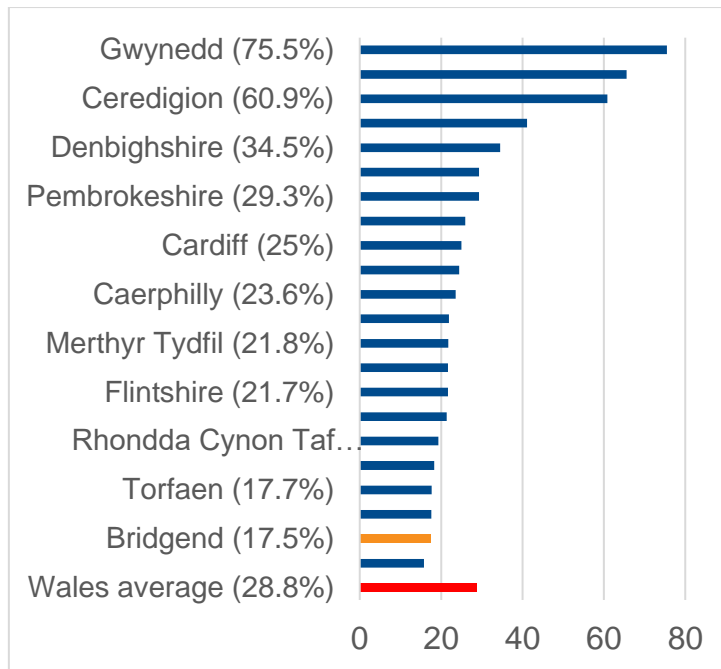
² <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/Local-Authority/2018-based/populationprojections-by-localauthority-year>



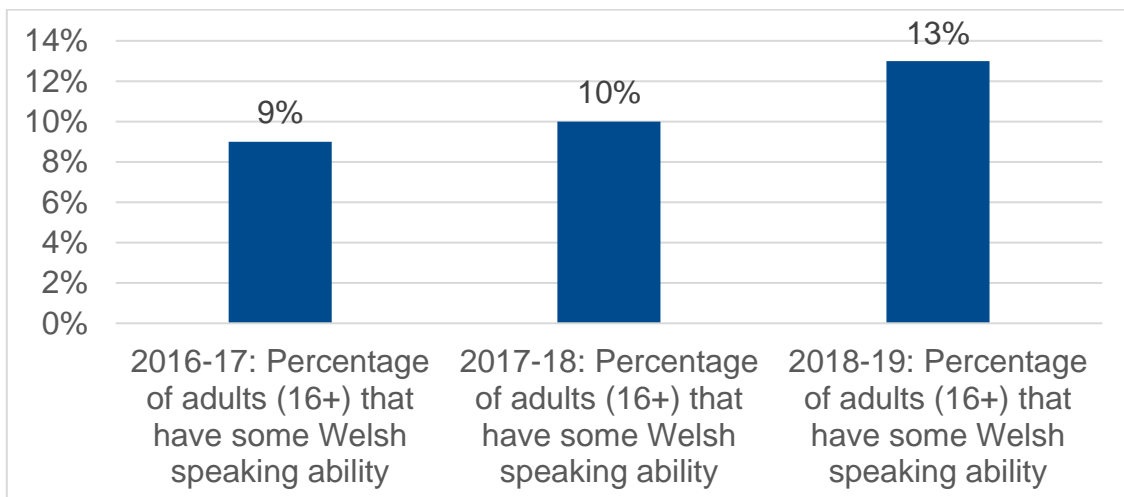
In September 2020 the National Survey for Wales identified 17.5 percent (24,100 people) living in Bridgend County Borough could speak Welsh, an increase of 3.1% from the same survey in 2005.



The National Survey for Wales (September 2020) identified the average percentage of Welsh Speakers for Wales at 28.8 percent. Out of the 22 local authorities in Wales BCBC ranks 21 for the percentage of Welsh speakers.



The National Survey for Wales also collects data on those who have some Welsh speaking ability. In 2018-2019 the percentage of adults (over 16) who has some Welsh speaking language ability in Bridgend County Borough was 13 percent. This is a 4 percent increase from the same survey in 2016-2017.

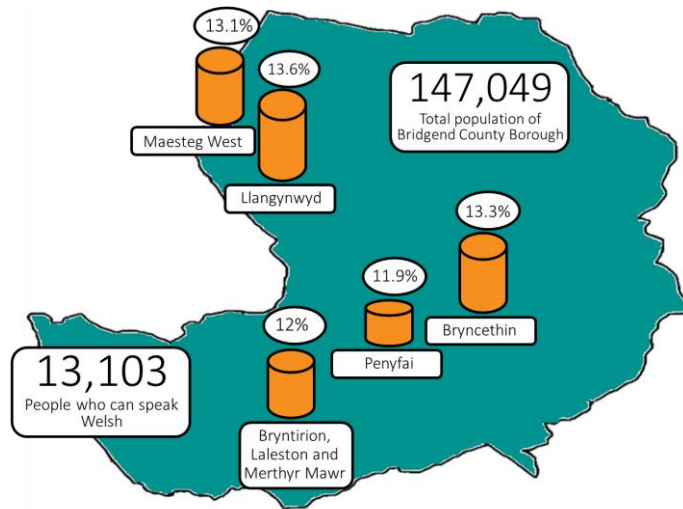


Wards within Bridgend County Borough

In addition to the number of Welsh speakers within the borough the 2011 Census also highlights Welsh speakers within each ward within the borough. There are 39 wards that make up Bridgend County Borough. The 2011 Census identified the five wards with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers are:

- Llangynwyd: 13.6 percent

- Bryncethin: 13.3 percent
- Maesteg West: 13.1 percent
- Bryntirion, Laleston and Merthyr Mawr: 12 percent
- Pen-y-fai: 11.9 percent



To see the percentage of Welsh speakers in all of the wards from the 2011 Census see appendix 1.

Bridgend County Borough Council workforce

On 31 March 2020, 4.46% of the BCBC workforce stated that they were able to speak Welsh fluently, a further 2.3% stated they could speak Welsh fairly well and 14.47% stated they could speak Welsh a little.

BCBC - as at 31.03.2020				
Welsh speaker	Male	Female	Total	%
'A little'	166	677	843	14.47%
'Fairly good'	21	113	134	2.30%
'Fluent'	44	226	270	4.64%

1.65% of the BCBC workforce stated that they were able to read Welsh fluently, a further 2.83% stated they could read Welsh fairly well and 15.21% stated they could read Welsh a little.

BCBC - as at 31.03.2020				
Welsh reader	Male	Female	Total	%
'A little'	173	713	886	15.21%
'Fairly good'	31	133	164	2.82%

'Fluent'	43	228	271	1.65%
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4.16% of the BCBC workforce stated that they were able to write Welsh fluently, a further 2.49% stated they could write Welsh fairly well and 12.62% stated they could read Welsh a little.

BCBC - as at 31.03.2020				
Welsh writer	Male	Female	Total	%
'A little'	128	607	735	12.62%
'Fairly good'	27	118	145	2.49%
'Fluent'	38	204	242	4.16%

The National Survey for Wales (2018-2019) found that:

- 80% of Welsh speakers spoke Welsh with at least some of their Welsh-speaking colleagues.
- 93% of fluent Welsh-speaking employees reported that they spoke at least some Welsh with people outside their organisation. However for those who were not fluent, only 42% spoke any Welsh with those outside the organisation.
- Just under a third of employees reported that their employer offered staff opportunities to learn Welsh.³

Bridgend County Borough schools

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd near Maesteg is Bridgend's Welsh-medium secondary school and has four feeder primary schools within the county borough: Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr in Bridgend; Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr in Cornelly; Ysgol Cynwyd Sant in Maesteg and Ysgol Gynradd Calon y Cymoedd in Bettws. There are eight English-medium secondary schools, two English-medium special schools and 46 English-medium primary schools in the county borough.

Plans are also well underway for four early years' settings in Bettws, Ogmores Valley, Porthcawl and Bridgend Town to feed current Welsh-medium primary schools in Bridgend

Objectives

The Welsh Government's strategy, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*, notes the Government's ambition of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. A

³ <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-work-place-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019>

projection for the number of Welsh speakers aged three and over up to 2050 has been produced as part of the strategy.

It is projected that there will be **666,000 people aged three and over able to speak Welsh by 2050, equivalent to around 21 per cent of the population**. This is just over 100,000 more Welsh speakers than there were in 2011 but around 334,000 short of the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

BCBC's aim therefore is for 21% of residents aged 3 and over to be able to speak Welsh by 2050. According to the 2011 census 9.7% of the population of Bridgend county borough aged 3 and over are already Welsh speakers meaning that this needs to increase by 11.3% to meet the Welsh Government target by 2050.

To reach this target, the aim is to increase Welsh speakers within the county borough by a minimum of 1.9% during the lifetime of the current strategy and each subsequent strategy period up until 2050.

Welsh Language strategy delivery periods (years)	Projected percentage of Welsh speakers
2011 (Census data)	9.7% (actual)
2021-2026	11.6%
2026-2031	13.5%
2031-2036	15.4%
2036-2041	17.3%
2041-2046	19.2%
2046-2051	21.1%

Based on the progress made with the objectives from the last five year Welsh language strategy, the feedback from the consultation, and local and national development the following overarching objectives have been developed:

- **Promote the use of the Welsh Language within the workforce:**

Increase the opportunities for staff to access the Welsh language and increase the use of Welsh in the workplace.

- **Increase awareness of the Welsh Language and opportunities to use Welsh within Bridgend County Borough Council:**

Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way and improve access to services through the medium of Welsh.

- **Support and promote the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP):**

Continue to support the use of the Welsh language in early years' settings, expand Welsh-education within the County and provide Welsh language community learning opportunities for adults. Promote all objectives of the WESP but in particular promote and monitor outcomes one, two, three, four and five.

- **Promote the use of Welsh Language and culture in town centre businesses and charities:**

Promote the advantages of using the Welsh language within business, charities, tourism, care etc. and support promotion of the availability of Welsh products and services.

- **Participation and engagement:**

Ensure that all full public consultations ask residents to feedback on how the policy or proposals may affect the use of, or impact on the Welsh language and conduct an annual public consultation (for the lifetime of the strategy) to allow feedback on Welsh language services and performance.

- **Implement the new early years' settings in Bridgend County Borough:**

Deliver early years' development plans within Bettws, Ogmores Valley, Porthcawl and Bridgend Town to support current Welsh-medium primary schools in Bridgend. Promote early years' settings and develop, alongside the WESP, a career pathway which is promoted to learners within Bridgend College and YGG Llangynwyd.

Key partners

The council cannot develop the strategy or reach any agreed targets without working in partnership with a number of other bodies and organisations in the county, the region and nationally within Wales. A concerted effort by all involved offers the chance to meet the aspirations of this strategy.

Though it is the council's duty to publish the strategy, it cannot implement and deliver all the requirements alone. By consulting with so many local partners, it also means that the strategy in its final form will be "owned" by everyone; through working closely with partners, organisations, schools, individuals and communities. The council is confident that delivering this strategy will successfully promote the Welsh language and support its continuing success in the county borough.

Menter Bro Ogwr

Menter Bro Ogwr (MBO) was established in 1993 by a few enthusiasts who wanted to ensure that the Welsh language had a voice in the county.

The intention of the initiative was to raise the profile of the language in Bro Ogwr by offering opportunities for people to use Welsh in addition to fostering confidence and increasing the number of new Welsh speakers.

The Welsh Language Initiative of Bro Ogwr promotes and furthers the use of the Welsh Language by co-operating with associations, societies, businesses, learners and schools. The Initiative's intention is to raise the profile of the Welsh Language in the county by increasing the opportunities for residents to use the Welsh Language in a variety of fields.

The council continues to work with MBO to advertise Welsh-essential jobs and MBO is working with Halo and Awen Trust to provide recreational courses through the medium of Welsh for adults in Bridgend.

University of South Wales

The University of South Wales has been the provider of our Welsh Language courses for many years and currently deliver the Cwrs Mynediad Year 1 qualification for BCBC employees. Employees are either supported to attend this course or if they wish to attend higher levels then they are supported to do so under the Welsh Language Training Protocol, so would attend courses, delivered by the UoSW, in the community.

The Urdd

The Urdd, as a Welsh-medium youth organisation, is focused on giving young people the opportunity to develop as well rounded individuals. Within Newport, the Urdd works closely with our Welsh-medium schools, offering a range of activities to pupils throughout the year. The Urdd is the principle organiser of the annual Eisteddfod, but also organises residential and sporting activities for young people.

The partnership with the Urdd has included continuing the successful development of the family 'Chwaraeon Bach' programmes which include rugby, netball and football, introducing a structured programme of Welsh-medium activities for second language schools, and supporting children and young people to access Welsh-medium provision, with leaders and coaches receiving training.

Fforwm Iaith / Welsh Language Forum

Fforwm Iaith Bro Ogwr is made up a range of key stakeholders from across the public and voluntary sectors. The group aims to create a forum for partnership working and the dissemination of good practice.

Mudiad Meithrin

Mudiad Meithrin is a voluntary organisation and the main provider of Welsh-Medium early years' care and education in the voluntary sector in Wales. Its aim is to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years' and education experiences. The organisation employs 200 staff nationally, and an additional 1500 staff work in Cylchoedd Meithrin (Welsh-Medium playgroups) throughout Wales.

Implementation and monitoring

This is the second Welsh language strategy developed by Bridgend County Borough Council in collaboration with its partners.

Progress against the objectives will be monitored annually, with accountability shared across all partners who are responsible for delivering actions.

The local authority will outline progress made annually as part of our Welsh Language Report required by Welsh Language Standards 158, 164 and 170. This will also be reported to the council's Cabinet Committee Equalities.

Appendices:

Appendix one: the percentage of Welsh speakers in all of the wards from the 2011 Census

Ward	Percentage of Welsh speakers
Llangynwyd	13.6
Bryncethin	13.3
Maesteg West	13.1
Bryntirion, Laleston and Merthyr Mawr	12.0
Pen-y-Fai	11.9
Hendre	11.6
Pontycymer	11.5
Penprysg	11.1
Felindre	10.7
Maesteg East	10.6
Cornelly	10.3
Brackla	10.0
Blaengarw	9.8
Oldcastle	9.7
Bryncoch	9.6
Caerau	9.5
Litchard	9.5
Rest Bay	9.4
Porthcawl West Central	9.3
Coychurch Lower	9.1
Pyle	9.0
Llangewydd and Brynhyfryd	8.9
Ynysawdre	8.9
Aberkenfig	8.7
Newcastle	8.6
Sarn	8.6
Morfa	8.4
Nottage	8.4

Ward	Percentage of Welsh speakers
Newton	8.3
Llangeinor	8.2
Nant-y-moel	8.2
Cefn Cribwr	8.1
Pendre	8.0
Bettws	7.8
Porthcawl East Central	7.6
Blackmill	7.5
Cefn Glas	7.4
Ogmore Vale	6.8
Coity	6.5

Appendix two: action plan

Objective one: Promote the use of the Welsh Language within the workforce.	
	Actions:
1.1	Create a network of Welsh language speakers to help promote Welsh language in the workplace
1.2	Increase opportunities for Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh within the working environment
1.3	Promote and support Welsh Language training to all employees, either through in-house provision or courses in the community
1.4	Promote the availability and use of the Welsh language spell and grammar checker for Welsh speakers
1.5	Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way with all staff

Objective two: Increase awareness of the Welsh Language and opportunities to use Welsh within Bridgend County Borough Council.	
	Actions:
2.1	Devise and action a specific communications plan to encourage more people to access online services in Welsh. Raise awareness of the Welsh language website to increase take-up and usage
2.2	Raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way within the community
2.3	Celebrate Welsh Language Rights Day annually as well as Welsh cultural events

Objective three: Support and promote the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)	
	Actions:
3.1	Continue to support use of the Welsh language in early years' settings
3.2	Continue to develop and expand Welsh-medium primary and secondary education within the county
3.3	Improve opportunities for 16+ year olds to use the Welsh language
3.4	Promote Welsh language learning opportunities for adults
3.5	Promote progress against WESP outcomes one, two, three four and five
3.6	Raise the profile of Welsh-medium education and childcare by providing parents with information on the benefits of being bi-lingual

Objective four: Promote the use of Welsh Language and culture in town centre businesses and charities

	Actions:
4.1	Promote the advantages of using the Welsh language within business, tourism, care etc.
4.2	Undertake survey to establish Welsh language skills of workers in town centre and County Borough shops/eateries/businesses
4.3	Gather information on Welsh language provision in businesses in Bridgend and share widely
4.4	Create a leaflet aimed specifically at shops and businesses in order to promote the advantages of providing services bilingually and to increase their use of Welsh
4.5	Create a Welsh directory of businesses
4.6	To raise the profile of the Welsh language, culture and local activities and events organised by the council and our partners in a structured way within the community
4.7	Promote Helo Blod to businesses

Objective Five: Participation and engagement

	Actions:
5.1	Develop an annual public consultation (for the lifetime of the strategy) to allow for formal feedback to the council and its partners/stakeholders on their Welsh language services and performance
5.2	Ensure the Equality Impact Assessment processes continues to demonstrate that due regard has been paid to the use of and impact on the Welsh language
5.3	Ensure that all full public consultations ask residents to feedback on how the policy proposals may affect the use of, or impact on the Welsh language
5.4	Encourage participation by producing Welsh language Easy Read and Youth versions of surveys where appropriate to the consultation

Objective Six: Implement the new early years' settings in Bridgend County Borough

	Actions:
6.1	Deliver early years' development plans within Bettws, Ogmores Valley, Porthcawl and Bridgend Town to feed current Welsh-medium primary schools in Bridgend
6.2	Work with providers to ensure promotion of early years' settings

Objective Six: Implement the new early years' settings in Bridgend County Borough	
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	Actions:
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6.3	Develop, alongside the WESP, a career pathway which is promoted within Bridgend College and YGG Llangynwyd
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