

Plantlife Welsh Language Policy 2021

1. Background

1.1 Many indigenous languages around the world have faced severe declines over the last century, just like our wild plants and fungi. Diversity and local distinctiveness have been eroded, and like our threatened flora, linguistic and cultural heritage is vulnerable to decline and extinction.

1.2 Welsh is the indigenous language of Wales and is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, written language in Europe. Around 29% of the population now speak Welsh¹, where once the majority spoke Welsh. However, while Welsh speakers declined throughout the industrial revolution, through inward and outward migration, and through globalisation, in more recent decades, the language has been flourishing due to the growth of Welsh-medium education, the success of S4C, and legislative planning.

1.3 Welsh Government has set an ambitious target for 1 million people to speak and use Welsh by 2050. The Well-being of Future Generations Act has also included an ambition that Wales will be environmentally sustainable, culturally diverse and economically prosperous and will be a nation where the Welsh language not only survives but thrives for future generations to enjoy.

1.4 There are substantial synergies with our work as we need to protect and restore regionally distinct ecological and linguistic communities. Plantlife recognises that we have a role to play in both areas, through our work with communities in Wales in protecting plants and species we can also play our part in encouraging the growth and use of Welsh in everyday life.

2. Introduction to Plantlife and our commitment to the Welsh language

2.1 Plantlife is a charity with an international remit and we have a Devolution Policy which sets out our commitment to work in a way which recognises and respects the different needs of the plants and people in Wales, England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The policy lays out the charity's commitment to respect diversity and comply with different legislative and policy frameworks set by the different UK Governments, as they apply to the voluntary sector.

2.2 Part of that policy includes a commitment to produce material in Welsh and to ensure appropriate communications in Welsh.

2.3 This Policy further details our commitment to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh. It should also be read in conjunction with our Welsh language scheme, which sets out the services we provide in Welsh.

2.4 The Welsh language is an official language recognised in statute in the UK through the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. It is a core component of Welsh identity and

¹ The 2020 Annual Population Survey in Wales reported that 29.1% of people aged three and over are able to speak Welsh. This figure equates to 883,600 people. This proportion has been slowly rising since 2010¹.

culture. The Act introduced Welsh Language Standards and the legal requirement that the Welsh language must not be treated any less favourably than the English language. Whilst third sector organisations and the private sector are not currently named in this legislation, Plantlife wishes to be proactive in working towards achieving those Standards over time.

2.5 Many of Plantlife's partners, including the funding bodies operating in Wales, such as Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Government, Heritage Lottery and Big Lottery have Welsh speakers working for them and in accordance with the legislation, they have the right to work with us in both Welsh and English.

2.6 We also work in communities across Wales and many of our members and volunteers will be Welsh speakers and learners of the language, and they too have the right to use Welsh with us where they wish to do so.

2.7 Therefore, the aim of this policy is to set out our commitment to treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language and to facilitate and promote the use of Welsh. These are our key underlying principles:

- the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language; and
- persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

2.8 This is our ambition for how we can contribute to promoting the increasing use of Welsh in everyday life:

Wild flowers, plants and fungi light up our landscape and are a priceless part of our natural heritage. In the same way that we wish to protect and conserve diversity of plant life, we wish to play our part to encourage linguistic diversity, and we will facilitate and promote the use of Welsh to help it not just survive, but thrive for future generations to enjoy.

2.9 This policy will help communicate Plantlife's message to our audiences within Wales, by respecting their needs and wishes to use Welsh with us, and set out our ambition of being a facilitator to support greater use of Welsh in the wider community.

3. Longer-term ambition

3.1 In the longer term, Plantlife aspires to meet the Standards of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. However, we recognise that this will require substantial change and investment, and that this will take time.

3.2 We are therefore committing to a voluntary Welsh Language Scheme to begin the process of improvement and investment in order to offer services in Welsh to the people of Wales. We recognise that the development and implementation of a Welsh Language Scheme will help Plantlife deliver its work in Wales and meet the spirit of the legislation so far as is both appropriate and practicable in the circumstances.

3.3 Our Welsh Language Scheme sets out our commitment to provide a consistent and reliable service for Welsh speakers throughout Wales. The Scheme lists the services we deliver in Welsh and a summary of the main services are available below:

- Correspondence
- Telephone calls
- Meetings
- Public events
- Reports and publications
- Media and outreach
- Website, apps
- Signage
- Contracts and tenders
- Branding, marketing, and social media
- Volunteering

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 All staff throughout Plantlife have a responsibility for delivering their roles in compliance with the Policy and Scheme as it applies to their area of work. Nothing in the policy or the Welsh Language Scheme conflicts with, or compromises Plantlife's charitable objectives.

4.2 All staff will be made aware of and inducted on this Policy and the Welsh Language Scheme through Plantlife's Breathe HR system.

4.3 Strategic oversight and responsibility for this Policy and for the Scheme belongs to Plantlife as a whole, with operational issues led by the Senior Management Team. The following roles have specific responsibilities:

- **Welsh language champion.** A board member will be identified who will champion the role and importance of Welsh language within the work of the whole charity
- **Responsible person.** A named member of the Senior Management Team will be responsible for the Policy and Scheme, its delivery, review and reporting
- **Lead officer for Plantlife Cymru.** The head of the Plantlife Cymru team will have an important role in the delivery of operational matters relating to the Policy and Scheme.

5. Monitoring, Reporting and Reviewing

5.1 We monitor our compliance with this policy on an ongoing basis and will present a report on our performance and progress at least annually to Board.

5.2 The policy will be kept up to date and will be reviewed at least every 3 years, or sooner should complaints or other performance matters arise, or new policy or legislation from Welsh Government necessitate it.

5.3 We welcome feedback on our policy at any time. The following staff are the lead contacts for this Policy and the Welsh Language Scheme and can be contacted regarding implementation and feedback:

Vickie Wood
Nicola Hutchinson
Lizzie Wilberforce

Director of Fundraising & Marketing
Director of Conservation Programmes
Plantlife Cymru Lead

Vickie.Wood@plantlife.org.uk
Nicola.Hutchinson@plantlife.org.uk
Lizzie.Wilberforce@plantlife.org.uk

6 Complaints

6.1 We wish to provide high quality services when we conduct our work in Wales and therefore, we would like to hear from our stakeholders at the earliest opportunity if they are dissatisfied with our service. We will aim to resolve any matters informally and as soon as possible. In the event that there are external complaints about the Policy and Scheme and their implementation, these can be directed by email to Joanna Bromley or Nicola Hutchinson (Senior Managers, details above).

6.2 Internal concerns about the documents and their implementation should be directed to Nicola Savage (Director of Finance & Operations).