

Plantlife Welsh Language Scheme 2023

Policy Statement

Plantlife's aim is to provide a consistent and improving service for Welsh speakers, living in Wales and beyond, by whichever means they engage with us. This Scheme should be read in conjunction with our Welsh Language Policy (2021).

The strategic responsibility for the Policy and for this Scheme belongs to Plantlife as a whole, with operational issues led by the Senior Management Team.

Introduction

Wales is a bilingual country. We have created this Scheme outlining what the general public, our members and volunteers, our partner organisations and our own staff can expect from us with regard to Welsh language services.

Plantlife has prepared this **voluntary Welsh Language Scheme**, setting out how we will operate in Wales using both languages, and what those who engage with us can expect. This Welsh Language Scheme forms part of Plantlife's commitment to high quality communications within Wales and has been developed to enable Plantlife to make sustained progress towards its objectives as laid out in our **Welsh Language Policy**.

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.

1. General Principles

1.1 Equality. We will treat Welsh no less favourably than English when providing services.

1.2 Awareness. Plantlife will ensure that internally, our staff and volunteers are aware where Welsh language services can be accessed within the organisation, and how to support others to access those services. We will make our Policy and Scheme publicly available so that those who seek to engage with us can find out about our language services.

1.3 Support. We will provide training to support staff to implement our Welsh Language Policy and Scheme in a manner that is appropriate and proportionate. Plantlife will seek to ensure that enough Welsh-speaking staff are within the Plantlife Cymru team at any time to support those who wish to engage with us in Welsh. We will also encourage staff to use their Welsh language skills and where possible, help them to develop them further.

1.4 Translation. Where support from translators is required, we will use Welsh translators who are members of a relevant professional body, including Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru (the association of Welsh translators and interpreters).

2. Service Standards

This section lists the main services that we will provide in Welsh to those who engage with us.

2.1 Correspondence

- Replying to correspondence. All written correspondence (including email) will be answered in the language of the original correspondence. Plantlife's standard response times will be met in both languages. Priority will be assessed on topic and both languages will be given equal priority within that. Budget and support will be made available to allow priority translation of correspondence if the recipient member of staff is not a Welsh speaker.
- Working with people's language of choice. We will make it clear that we welcome correspondence in both languages. We will do so by, for example, introducing banners on relevant letter headed templates, email signatures and stationery, and on our website, we will state that we welcome correspondence in Welsh or English / in the correspondent's preferred language.
- Initiating correspondence. For one-to-one external correspondence initiated by staff, we will respect any recorded language preference.
- Bulk correspondence issued within (not just by) Wales will be bilingual. In this case Welsh should be above English or to the left.
- Our Welsh stationery and email footers will be bilingual and will indicate when the staff member is a Welsh speaker or learner.
- Automated correspondence for Wales e.g. out of office messages will be bilingual, with Welsh before English.

2.2. Telephone calls

- Initiating calls. Where the language preference of the person we are calling is known, every effort will be made to accommodate it.
- The UK office phonelines also serve Plantlife members in Wales, and every effort will be made to transfer callers wishing to speak Welsh to a Welsh speaking staff member (or take a message and arrange a call back). All those staffing this service will be made aware of how to do that.
- The Plantlife website will indicate which staff are Welsh speakers or learners, so that callers know what to expect when contacting individuals and can choose contacts accordingly (e.g., using standard pin badge graphics).
- If/when there is a dedicated line for Plantlife Cymru, it should have a bilingual answerphone message.

2.3. Meetings

- When organising large open public in-person meetings anticipating over 50 attendees in Wales (such as consultations, where contributions from the floor are encouraged), we will seek to provide simultaneous translation and encourage the use of Welsh at the meetings. Speakers will be supported to use the language of their choice. As a minimum the meeting must have a chair who can introduce the meeting bilingually and translate/summarise contributions from the floor in Welsh.

- For large public in person meetings (over 50 people) by invitation or booking, such as conferences, our invitations will be bilingual and we collect data on language preference in advance. When 10% or more wish to use Welsh then simultaneous translation will be provided.
- Bilingual slides are encouraged at large public meetings, recognising that for some more complex and technical subjects with word-heavy content, this may not be achievable. For smaller presentation events (e.g., talks to community groups or in partnership meetings) staff may use slides in their language of choice.
- For all non-public meetings, an assessment of language needs will be made based on the nature of the audience, community, and contributors.
- When we are organising meetings with third party speakers, we will ask what language presenters/ contributors wish to use, and translation will be made available for non-Welsh speakers if appropriate and proportionate.

2.4 Public events

When hosting or attending public events such as shows, Plantlife will endeavour to support the presence of a Welsh-speaking staff member or volunteer whenever feasible. All Wales-specific materials and display information will be produced bilingually. Materials produced for UK-wide use may be a necessary exception.

2.5 Publicity and advertising

Formal publicity and advertising within Wales will be bilingual unless required otherwise by the host platform. Platforms offering publicity and advertising in both languages will be approached.

2.6 Publications

Published material produced specifically for use in Wales will be produced bilingually in one document (especially for print). Or, where separate Welsh and English copies are published, the English copy will clearly state that a Welsh version is available and vice versa, and both Welsh and English copies will be equally distributed and displayed. Separate copies are preferred for use online. In designing bilingual publications we will follow the principles of the Welsh Language Commissioner's [bilingual design guide](#).

It may not be proportionate for publications produced for UK-wide use to be produced in both languages, but the matter will be considered early at the resource planning stage so that provision is facilitated wherever feasible. Where UK publications are produced in English it is not possible to use them in some circumstances in Wales (e.g., within the Welsh education system or sharing via Welsh Government). Welsh language content (partial) or summaries may be considered.

The following resources created within Wales will routinely be available in both languages:

- all publicly available Plantlife evidence and advocacy reports
- leaflets and posters
- Wales e-news and blogs
- all other public-facing documents (e.g., forms that people external to Plantlife complete)

Publications that are produced for UK-wide direct mailing to members (such as appeals) should also be bilingual or targeted to recorded language preferences.

Reports created primarily for in-house use (such as minutes, project plans, project reports, management plans etc.) will not usually be bilingual. Reports to funders may be written in the language choice of the author, as long as it conforms with the expectations / requirements of the funder and/or recipient.

Technical evidence reports will normally be in English but will have a Welsh language summary when relating to work in Wales.

The charity's magazine Plant Life is currently published in English only. We will explore options for introducing Welsh language in some form in the longer term.

We are aware that some of our published work can include technical terms and we want to raise awareness of and encourage their use. We will use available terminology banks to ensure appropriate use of terminology, and consider a 'graded reader' approach with terminology boxes where it might have a role in accessibility of the documents.

2.7 Media and outreach

- The media. We will provide information to the media in Wales in the language that it is standard for the outlet, or as requested.
- Social media. Where we initiate and pre-plan communication on our social media platforms, we will prepare content bilingually in Welsh and English on the Wales profiles. When we are responding to contributions to our site, we will ensure that we respond to the Welsh responses in the same time frame as we would respond to English contributions. When live-posting (e.g., from events) we will endeavour to post bilingually, but recognise that this will not always be possible. Sharing content from others will be according to the language of the third party, but we will be proactive in sharing bilingual and Welsh language content as well as English. Memes, social graphics and resources designed mainly for sharing via social media platforms should be created in both languages prior to use in Wales.
- Press releases. Press releases distributed to media outlets based within Wales will be provided bilingually.
- E-newsletters, bulletins etc. E-newsletters and other equivalent content that is Wales-specific will be produced bilingually. UK-wide e-newsletters will not be bilingual.
- Welsh should be positioned first; if necessary, a headline indicating bilingual content and to scroll down for English can be used.

2.8 Website

Content for Wales pages will be produced bilingually, and efforts made to work towards a more bilingual online service for other areas where a Welsh audience is significant. The UK-wide website will direct users to how to access Welsh content and services via Where We Work area.

We will publish our Policy and Scheme on our website.

2.9 Apps

Apps produced specifically within and for Wales will be bilingual. It may not be proportionate for apps produced for UK-wide use to be bilingual, but the matter will be considered early at the resource planning stage so that provision is facilitated wherever feasible. Existing apps that do not provide for Welsh language should be updated if possible.

2.10 Signage

- All bilingual signage we create will treat Welsh no less favourably than the English language, including in terms of font size and accuracy of language.
- All permanent signage in any future Plantlife Cymru offices, and nature reserves located in Wales will be bilingual with Welsh language appearing above or to the left of English.
- We will endeavour to produce temporary bilingual signage in all cases of their being required, but exceptions may be made where there is an overriding issue like an immediate safety concern. In such cases staff will seek to upgrade to bilingual signage as soon as reasonably practicable.

2.11 Contracts and tendering documentation

- When we procure services from suppliers, we will assess whether any Welsh language requirements need to be included e.g., publication, signage, and any Welsh language communication skills.
- Formal invitation to tender documentation for Wales should be issued bilingually.

2.12 Corporate identity and branding

Plantlife's staff and work within Wales is identified as Plantlife Cymru. Plantlife Cymru logos and name will be used on social media and in the description of our work in Wales in person or in writing. For publications, Plantlife branding guidelines will be followed.

2.13 Database of language preferences

The current customer relation management system Plantlife uses does not record language preference. This system is currently under review, and we will work towards a system that records members' language preferences and so allow us to communicate with them in their language of choice (Welsh, English or Bilingual).

Any local stakeholder databases held by staff in Wales should also record language preference although it is expected that these will become obsolete over time (with the exception of short-term purposes e.g., event attendance).

2.14 – Volunteering and Community

We will seek to increase our Welsh language offer in volunteering and educational community engagement, e.g., offering Welsh language sessions through school engagements.

3. Implementation and monitoring

3.1 Staff language skills

An initial audit of the language skills of staff will be undertaken to identify current capacity. We will also assess what the organisation needs to deliver this Scheme and Policy. Through these two steps we will identify any skills gaps and consequently, we will seek to close any gaps through developing Welsh language skills of existing staff and taking opportunities through recruitment.

3.2 Recruitment

Future posts will be advertised for Plantlife Cymru with Welsh language skills prioritised according to business need, based on level, location, function, and sufficiency (or otherwise) of Welsh language skills currently available at a team level. External recruitment packs should be bilingual and include a language skills self-assessment.

The skills audit will be repeated at least every four years to maintain an accurate record of the Welsh language skills and understanding/attitudes within the organisation.

3.3 Training and development

We encourage all staff to learn and develop their Welsh language skills in order for us to provide the services outlined in this Scheme in Welsh.

Training needs will be discussed with new staff if their role is based within Wales or where they engage with people living in Wales.

Language and cultural awareness & basic pronunciation training will be provided when it is identified as desirable within staff training needs assessments.

Welsh language skills development will be supported where relevant and proportionate to the role/contract, and identified as a gap in the business needs skills assessment carried out.

3.4 Scheme implementation and monitoring

We will monitor compliance with this Scheme on an ongoing basis and will report at least annually to the Board on this and our Welsh language policy. There is an action plan that sits alongside this Scheme which sets out the main actions we will deliver in order to implement this Scheme.