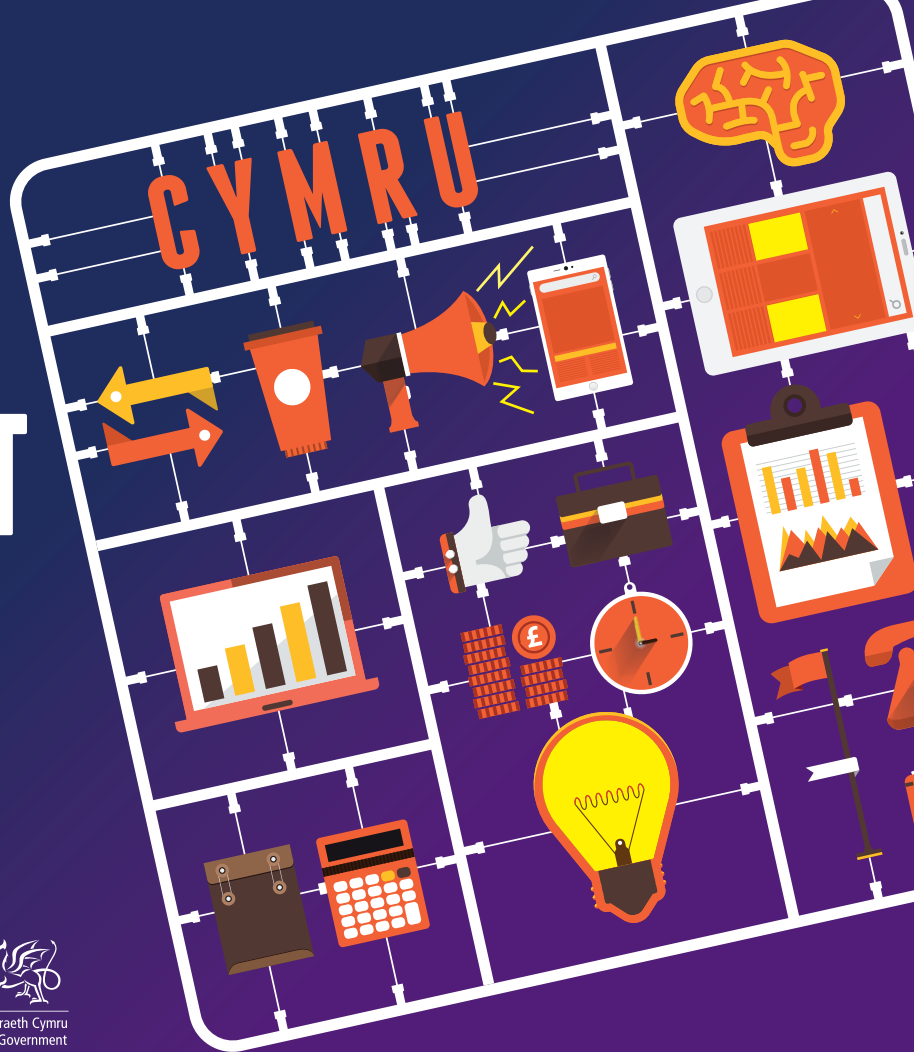


BILINGUAL WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT PACK

Cynog Prys
Elen Bonner
Rhian Hodges
2024



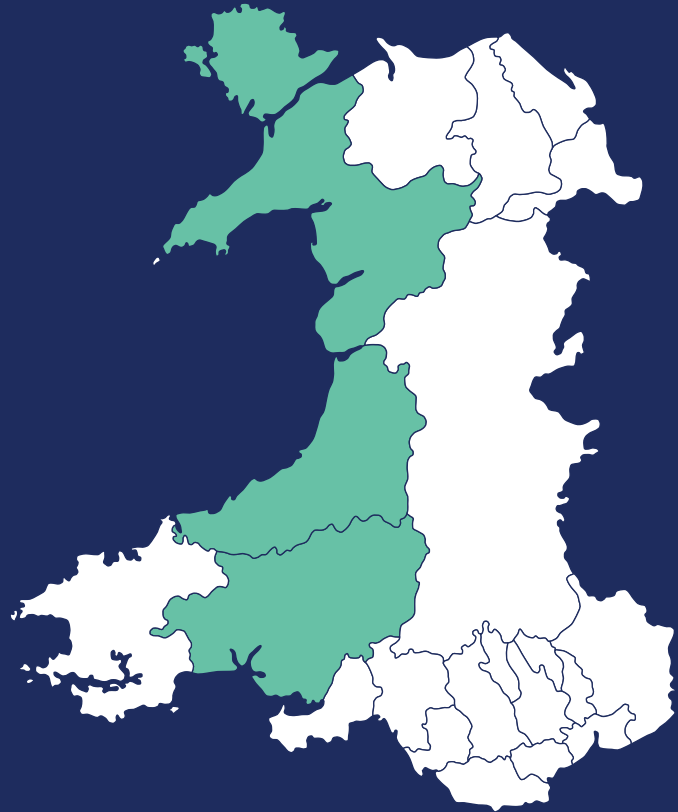
ARFOR
CREU GWAITH - CEFNOGI'R IAITH



WHAT IS ARFOR?

Arfor is a socio-economic programme that aims to promote the local economy in regions where the Welsh language is widely spoken. The programme targets four counties – Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Anglesey – with the aim of creating sustainable jobs, supporting local businesses, and encouraging young people to stay in these areas or return to them. The ARFOR Programme offers various funds and grants for schemes aligned with these objectives, helping to protect the Welsh language and culture whilst at the same time nurturing economic growth.

This project has been specifically funded by the Arfor Challenge Fund. The aim of the fund is to explore solutions that strengthen the relationship between language and economy.



CONTENTS

Executive summary	4
Introduction	9
Methodology	10
Why focus on young adults?	11
Why do employers need Welsh language skills?	12
The challenge - Key themes from the research	14
● Good practice toolkit	17
● Typology of Welsh speakers' migration decisions	39
One-day event for employers discussion panels	56
Recommendations	57
Acknowledgements	59
School of History, Law and Social Sciences	60
A note about the authors	61

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This practical resource aims to offer advice and guidance to employers seeking to address the challenges of recruiting a bilingual workforce. Specifically, this resource has been targeted at companies and organizations that wish to recruit staff with Welsh language skills.

It introduces:

1. A **toolkit** which includes examples of good practice collected during the research as employers shared effective ways of increasing the linguistic capacity of their workforce through recruitment, and
2. **Typology**, a means of classifying people into different groups which helps employers to identify and target audiences when conducting a recruitment process.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods were used in collecting the data of this research project.

The data is based on:

- i) 40 interviews with employers from the public, private and third sectors in the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Anglesey; and
- ii) 80 interviews with young adults brought up in the same counties; and
- iii) 4 co-production workshops with employers in the four counties.

These are the 4 counties with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales, namely the counties of the Arfor scheme.

The aim of these interviews was to understand more about the recruitment of bilingual staff, to identify and gather good practice, and to develop recommendations for employers to address recruitment challenges.

KEY FINDINGS

This research study has led to evidence showing that many employers face challenges when recruiting staff with Welsh language skills. Additionally, we found that the challenges of recruiting a workforce with Welsh language skills are more intense in some sectors (e.g. care) or specific specialist areas (e.g. information technology). These challenges are thought to be part of a wider picture of recruitment as a whole.

A number of key themes have emerged:

The recruitment process: The data shows that there are practical challenges relating to the recruitment process such as complex and unclear job descriptions. For example, this can include a misinterpretation that “Welsh essential” means a need for expert written Welsh language skills, although it is spoken Welsh that is actually required to carry out some posts.

Welsh language skills: Some employers believed that there was inconsistency in the language categories used across organizations and that this caused confusion for applicants. Some interviewees believed that Welsh language skills were not valued as an employability asset by all employers and applicants.

Welsh language and confidence: A clear theme emerging from the data was the perception that lack of confidence in their Welsh language skills prevented some applicants from applying for posts where Welsh language skills were needed.

Welsh workplaces: A number of employers and young adults believe that offering a workplace where they can work through the medium of Welsh appeals to Welsh speakers and is a way of attracting them to apply for jobs.

Careers, Contracts and Salaries: A number of employers and young adults believe that a lack of career development opportunities, fixed term contracts, and low pay were limiting the ability of young adults to stay locally. Some employers also noted that young adults do not appreciate the importance of transferable skills to develop a career in the areas in question.

Image: There was a perception among employers and young people that a negative image and damaging messages about lack of career opportunities in the Arfor areas was encouraging young adults to leave. A number of employers in the public sector also believed that the sector did not have a good image among this group.

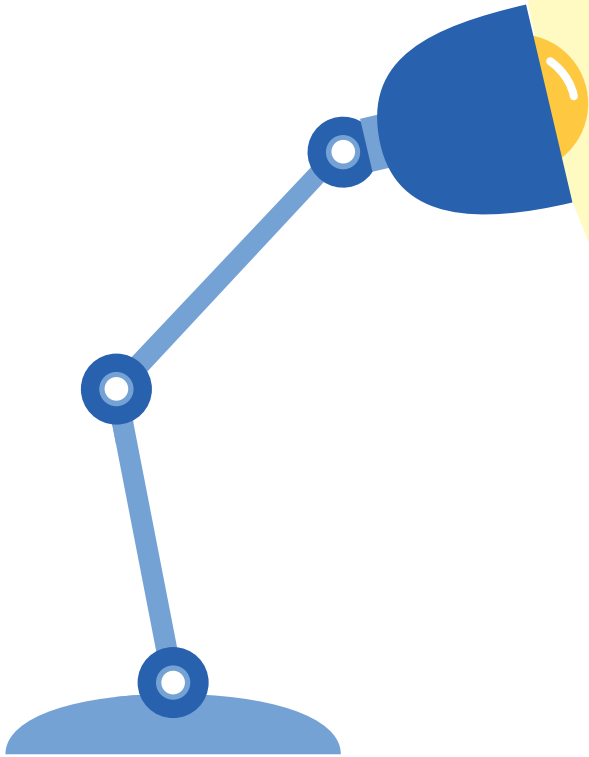
RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Bilingual Workforce Recruitment Good Practice Toolkit

It introduces 10 “good practices” which employers can adapt, where appropriate, to address the challenges of recruiting applicants with Welsh language skills. Good practice is supported by quotes from employers working at grassroots level to address these challenges.

Typology of Welsh Speakers' Migration Decisions

Typology is a way of classifying groups or individuals based on specific characteristics to understand and analyse social and cultural patterns. In this case, people have been categorised into 12 different groups according to what they prioritise when deciding to stay, leave or return to the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Anglesey. This information can help employers identify and target audiences when conducting a recruitment process.



WIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS WISHING TO RECRUIT APPLICANTS WITH WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Based on the data from this study, which includes interviews with employers and young adults, the following recommendations are presented to employers.

Whilst some recommendations are practical and achievable for a large number of employers, others require a more ambitious vision and longer-term investment in recruiting staff with Welsh language skills.

1. Good jobs with competitive salaries need to be secured in the Arfor areas. For example, this could be achieved by locating national organizations in these areas and continuing to invest in growth sectors.
2. A higher pay offer could be piloted for applicants with Welsh language skills in sectors where staff with those skills are sorely needed.

3. Schemes could be developed for employees to re-train in the workplace without losing pay. This may include supporting staff to learn Welsh in the workplace, and supporting staff who already have Welsh language skills to retrain to undertake new roles.
4. Purposeful plans should be developed which will lead to promotion in order to develop the career of the individual with Welsh language skills. For example, secondment opportunities could be offered across sectors.
5. Ways should be developed to reach young adults who have moved from the Arfor counties in order to promote employment opportunities to them.
6. In order to adopt successful methods of recruitment, feedback should be collected on applicants' experiences of the application process that are sufficiently detailed and fit for purpose.
7. The working relationship needs to be strengthened between workplaces and schools and further and higher education establishments. In particular, collaboration should be undertaken with schools and further and higher education establishments to emphasise the importance of Welsh language skills and other transferable skills in developing careers locally.
8. It is essential to improve the image of the Arfor areas and to reject negative messages about lack of employment and work opportunities. This is particularly relevant to the public sector.
9. In order to improve the social experience of young staff, there is a need to work together to establish social networks within and across companies.
10. Financial packages should be offered and advertised for the relocation of prospective staff who need to relocate in order to take up the post.

INTRODUCTION

“The biggest problem with recruiting a Welsh speaker is that there aren’t enough Welsh speakers. That’s the bottom line of it.”

(Private sector – Gwynedd and Anglesey)

“We’re reaching a point now where we’re really looking for needles in haystacks, and if I’m honest it’s quite a challenge.”

(Private sector / Anglesey)

According to a number of employers it is difficult to recruit staff who can work in Welsh, as well as in English. This pack will provide examples of good practice that will help in attracting bilingual applicants to posts. To address this challenge this pack contains two practical elements, namely:

A **toolkit** which includes examples of good practice collected during the research as employers shared effective ways of increasing the linguistic capacity of their workforce through recruitment.



Typology, namely a means of classifying people into different groups which enables employers to identify and target audiences when conducting a recruitment process.



This resource is for employers who want to recruit individuals with Welsh language skills, but who are struggling to do so. As a result, the aim of this resource is to offer advice and guidance to employers seeking to get to grips with this challenge. This resource includes practical ideas for public, private and third sector employers as they seek to develop their bilingual workforce.

Its content is based on comprehensive research data undertaken as part of the Welsh Government's Arfor Challenge Fund. The work was carried out by a team of researchers from Bangor University.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods were used in collecting the data of this research project. The aim was to provide opportunities for individuals to share their views and experiences in order to gather rich and meaningful data on challenges and good practice in relation to recruiting a bilingual workforce. This resource was funded by the Arfor project which focuses on the economy and sustainability of Welsh speaking communities. The fieldwork was undertaken between January and September 2024.

The data is based on 40 interviews with employers and 80 interviews with young adults, who are based, or were brought up in the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Anglesey, namely the 4 counties in Wales with the highest percentages of Welsh speakers.

This resource was co-produced with key stakeholders in the Arfor areas including 60 public, private and third sector employers. This was done through a series of co-production workshops in the four counties to gain input from employers and discuss and exchange key ideas. This was to ensure that the resource met the needs identified on the ground and to develop new, practical ways of recruiting bilingual staff.

Although this resource has been created for the Arfor project, the challenges and good practice contained within it may be relevant to employers across Wales, as well as similar linguistic communities around the world.



WHY FOCUS ON YOUNG ADULTS?

We know that one of the main reasons the number of Welsh speakers is falling in the heartlands is that families and young people are leaving these areas. As a result, this cohort is strategically important to the objectives of the Arfor Programme. In addition, there is evidence that employment opportunities are one important consideration amongst others as young adults decide to stay, leave or return to these areas. By attracting young adults with Welsh language skills to apply for jobs, employers can contribute to encouraging this cohort to stay or return to the area.

For more information, follow the link to the website of the **Arfor** Programme.

WHY DO EMPLOYERS NEED WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS?

The Welsh language has official status in Wales. As a result, Welsh is considered an important skill in modern bilingual Wales. Employers across Wales are looking for staff who can work and provide Welsh language services to the public.

Many employers have statutory obligations to offer services to the public in Welsh. However, although it is not always a statutory requirement, the ability to offer services in Welsh is often seen as good practice and is a means of offering a service that meets the needs of the public. The Welsh Language Commissioner officially acknowledges employers in these sectors who take pride in the Welsh language and are willing to use it by denoting the Cynnig Cymraeg (Welsh Offer)'. More information is available [here](#).

Public sector: All bodies implementing the Standards as part of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 need to assess the need for Welsh language skills when advertising new posts. As a result, there are a number of public sector posts where staff are required to have Welsh language skills. The ability of the organizations to offer all their services in accordance with the requirements of the Standards depends on their ability to have sufficient Welsh speakers in the workforce.

Private sector: Providing services in Welsh in the private sector is seen as good practice. A number of studies suggest that Welsh-speaking customers appreciate being able to speak Welsh with private sector companies.

Third Sector: The third sector is doing important work in communities across Wales. Welsh is the natural language of everyday life in many of these communities. Research suggests that the public are more likely to support organizations that use the Welsh language. In addition, a number of third sector organizations work in partnership with the Welsh Government, and as a result come under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.



The Welsh Language Commissioner is an independent body established under the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh. It has produced guidelines offering practical advice on how to use more Welsh in organizations of all kinds. Follow [**this link**](#) to learn more.

Bear in mind: Wales is not unusual as a country that is administered in more than one language. Employers worldwide are planning to provide services multilingually to their communities. For a flavour of the recruitment situation in the context of other minority languages, please follow [**this link**](#).

THE CHALLENGE - KEY THEMES FROM THE RESEARCH

Recruitment (general)

- Recruitment of staff with Welsh language skills was a particular challenge according to many employers.
- However, employers believed that general recruitment challenges were an issue, and recruiting staff with Welsh language skills is just one element of this challenge.
- A number of employers said that the challenges of recruiting a workforce with Welsh language skills were more intense in some sectors (e.g. care) or specific specialist areas (e.g. information technology).

The recruitment process

- In general, employers and young adults believed job descriptions could be complex or unclear.
- A number of employers noted that the lack of a sufficient budget to advertise posts was a particular challenge.
- A number of employers noted that it was difficult to reach potential applicants who had moved out the area or from Wales.
- It appears that many employers do not collect useful feedback on the recruitment process (e.g. where exactly the job advertisement was seen).

Welsh language skills

- Some employers believed that there was inconsistency in the language categories used across organizations and that this left applicants confused.
- Some respondents believed that Welsh language skills were not valued as an employability asset by all employers and applicants.

- There was a common perception that some applicants were not aware of the value of their Welsh language skills (e.g. not specifying their language skills on a CV).

Confidence and the Welsh language

- A clear theme emerging from the data was the perception that lack of confidence in their Welsh language skills prevented some applicants from applying for specific Welsh language posts.
- A number of participants believed that applicants who were less confident in Welsh were under-reporting their language skills.
- Employers believe some applicants were misinterpreting that “Welsh essential” means a need for expert written Welsh language skills, although it is spoken Welsh that is actually required to carry out some posts. This misunderstanding can be particularly relevant to less confident Welsh speakers.

Welsh workplaces

- A number of employers and young adults believed that offering a workplace where they could work through the medium of Welsh appealed to Welsh speakers and was a way of attracting them to apply for jobs.
- However, others explained that Welsh workplaces may act as a barrier to less confident Welsh speakers.
- For some respondents, who were keen to improve their Welsh language skills, workplaces where the Welsh language was used as a working language offered access to a series of resources and opportunities to use Welsh regularly.

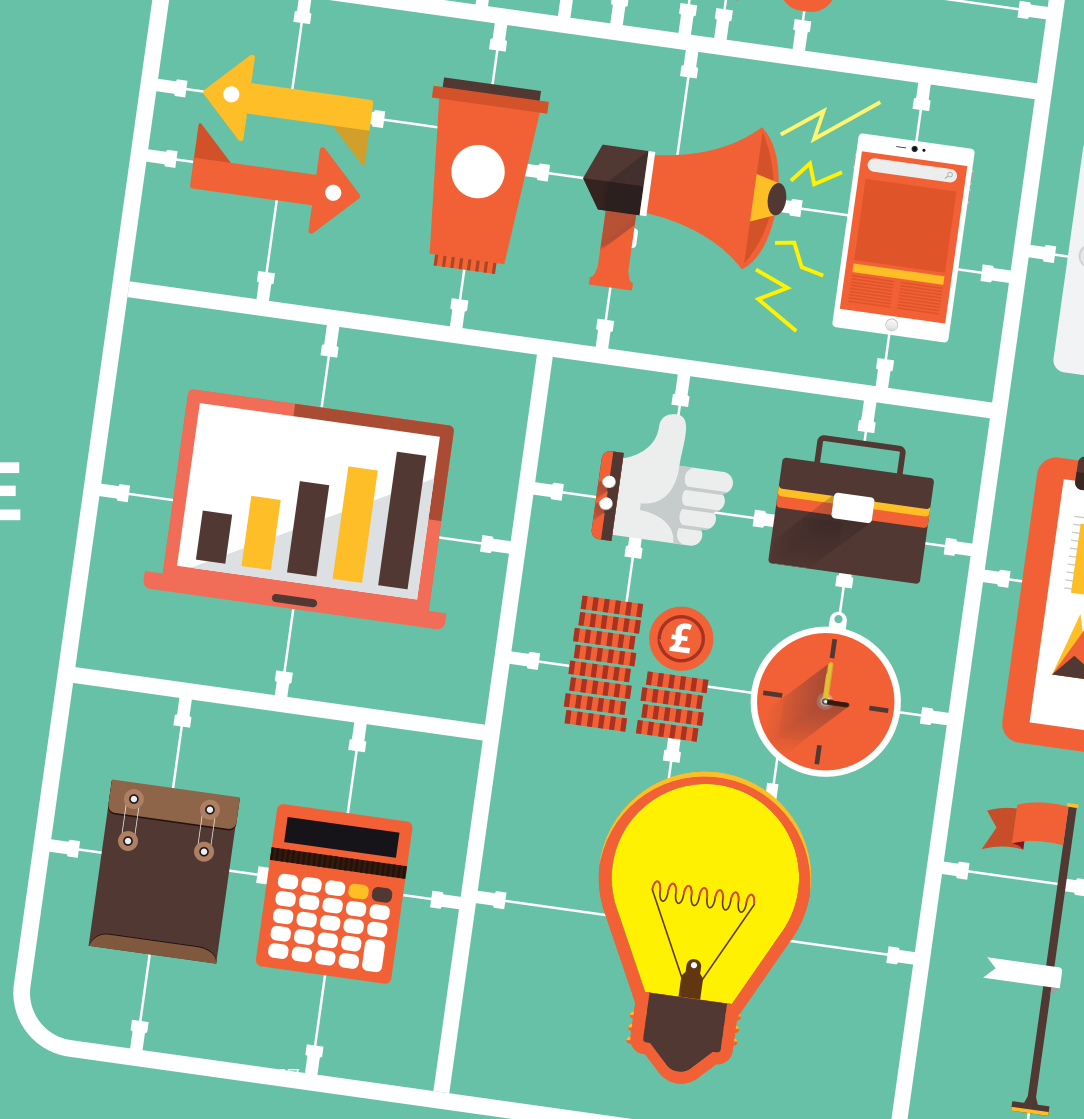
Careers, Contracts and Salaries

- Some employers and young adults believed that a lack of career development opportunities, was limiting the ability of young adults to stay local.
- Employers and young adults alike believed that the nature of fixed term contracts may act as a barrier when trying to attract applicants to a job and maintaining that workforce going forward.
- A prominent theme among employers and young adults was criticism of low wages in the areas in question.
- Some employers believe that young adults do not appreciate the importance of transferable skills in terms of developing a career in the areas in question.

Image

- There was a perception among employers and young adults that a negative image and harmful messages were being emphasised about a lack of opportunities for people to stay local and develop a career in the Arfor areas. The result of this was that leaving was being presented as common sense to young adults.
- A number of employers from the public sector also believed that the sector did not have a good image among young adults.

GOOD PRACTICE TOOLKIT



GOOD PRACTICE TOOLKIT – 10 GOOD PRACTICES

The 10 good practices below represent what has been effective for employers in seeking to recruit applicants with varying Welsh language skills to their posts. The situation of each employer varies of course, so we encourage you to choose the most appropriate good practices for the task and adapt to your own circumstances.

Some good practices relate specifically to the Welsh language. However, the relevance of the Welsh language is less obvious in others. It must be borne in mind that it is not only the Welsh language that influences the decisions of their speakers, and therefore employers need to respond to the wider needs and aspirations of the prospective bilingual workforce.

We recommend that you browse through the good practices below and consider their relevance to your situation and whether they can be implemented when recruiting bilingual staff.

1

When recruiting, the language skills required for the post should be clearly communicated

2

When recruiting, there is a need to plan how to reach the target audience

3

The Welsh language should be used in advertising

4

The recruitment process should support applicants who are less confident in the Welsh language

5

Workplaces that are attractive to Welsh speakers should be created

6

When recruiting, the support given to staff to develop Welsh language skills at work should be demonstrated

7

Opportunities should be created to develop staff who already have Welsh language skills

8

Awareness should be raised of potential careers available locally

9

When recruiting, the good image and values of the employer should be shared

10

When recruiting, the benefits and additional support of the post should be demonstrated

GOOD PRACTICE 1

WHEN RECRUITING, THE LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE POST SHOULD BE CLEARLY COMMUNICATED

The Welsh language skills required are likely to vary from post to post. For example, a translator may need very specific Welsh language skills (e.g. written Welsh of high standard). On the other hand, it is possible that it is informal, spoken Welsh that would be required for other posts (e.g. carers or community workers). Employers need to consider carefully what linguistic skills are needed to carry out the specific post and communicate these skills in a clear and intelligible way to applicants. This can encourage more Welsh speakers, with varying Welsh language skills, to apply for posts where Welsh is required or desirable.

“The Welsh language is essential for all posts, the question is, at what level”.
(Public sector / Gwynedd)

“We encourage our staff not to overemphasise the (linguistic) skills that are needed”.
(Public / National)



Language Requirements

The internal process of determining the language requirements of posts is important if a workplace is to commit itself to developing a bilingual workforce.

It is important to remember that a number of employers, particularly in the public sector, fall under the Welsh Language Standards where they are required to determine the language requirements of posts. More information is available [here](#).

Do you need help in thinking about the language requirements of a post? The Care Council for Wales provides an example of a flow chart to help identify the language requirements of posts. This can be useful as you think about determining the language of posts in your organization. More information is available [here](#).

ACTION POINT:

Job descriptions and job advertisements should specify the exact Welsh language skills required to carry out the post. This may mean that spoken Welsh is sufficient for some posts, and that there is also an opportunity for staff to develop their Welsh language skills in the workforce. This is to encourage applicants to be confident that their Welsh language skills match what is required to carry out the post.



GOOD PRACTICE 2

WHEN RECRUITING, THERE IS A NEED TO PLAN HOW TO REACH THE TARGET AUDIENCE

“Our conclusions are broadly that there is more chance of us being able to find our market through the Welsh and Welsh-language media – so we sometimes use [Welsh-medium recruitment platforms], [Welsh-medium magazines]. We use our own website. Our own social accounts. There are more local things too. You’re looking for carers in a particular community, more old-fashioned approaches do work, real advertising in the community, almost in a shop window, like”.

(Public sector / Gwynedd)

When trying to recruit staff with Welsh language skills, employers need to plan ways of reaching their target audience. This may mean targeting specific locations where Welsh-speaking individuals are looking for jobs. These methods can vary by sector and nature of the work, but it is important to consider who your target audience is and how to reach it.

“The [organization] is also now trying to encourage managers to go and create a mini film to put on social media [...] talking a little bit about the job rather than just giving the job details in writing. Get someone to talk about the job and explain what the job is. That’s perhaps a way of encouraging and attracting... and if you’re doing so in Welsh, you obviously attract Welsh speakers more than [...] Seeing this, saying – “Their language is similar to mine and so I could look at that job”.

(Public sector / Ceredigion)

A number of employers also noted the need to be creative when trying to recruit Welsh speaking staff, and to use various ways of advertising, including the use of social media. This can encourage Welsh speakers from diverse backgrounds to apply for Welsh language posts.

A number of commercial companies specialise in recruiting staff to posts where Welsh language skills are needed. Using these services can be a way of targeting staff with Welsh language skills.

ACTION POINT:

Employers should think strategically about how to reach Welsh speakers. This may include advertising in specific places on Welsh language job platforms, using the services of recruiters, attending careers fairs or thinking about various ways of reaching this particular audience.



GOOD PRACTICE 3

THE WELSH LANGUAGE SHOULD BE USED IN ADVERTISING

It is a legal requirement for some employers to advertise in Welsh (e.g. public bodies). However, it is important that employers of all kinds use Welsh when advertising opportunities for posts requiring Welsh language skills. That reflects the organization's Welsh language ethos and is welcoming to Welsh speakers.

"We've had it said to us, from jobseekers, where they've seen our adverts on Facebook or something and they've been for a Welsh speaker written in Welsh "Oh we've come to you, we've seen it advertised elsewhere, but we've come to you because you'd actually taken the time to write it in Welsh. So, it does make a difference".

(Private sector – Gwynedd and Anglesey)

However, careful consideration needs to be given to what type of Welsh is used. It is important that the Welsh is suitable for the post in question. This may include considering the use of less formal language or avoiding the use of Welsh translations that are not natural Welsh:

“What we try or do is not translate word-for-word and recognise that saying something in Welsh is sometimes going to be different than it is in English. We want to avoid exact word-for-word translation. Say that you write it in Welsh, you do write it in Welsh - not take the English first and then translate. I think that’s important because the nuances are different.”
(Third sector / Gwynedd)



ACTION POINT:

Employers in all sectors should be encouraged to use the Welsh language when advertising in recognition of the value and importance of the Welsh language in the workplace. In addition, appropriate and natural Welsh should be used.

Hello Blod offers businesses a free text check and translation service. More information is available [**here**](#).

The Welsh Language Commissioner’s website offers examples of Welsh language advertisements. Follow [**this link**](#) to learn more.

Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University, offers guidance regarding how to use [**Cymraeg Clir**](#).

GOOD PRACTICE 4

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS SHOULD SUPPORT APPLICANTS WHO ARE LESS CONFIDENT IN THE WELSH LANGUAGE

It is possible to make the application process more supportive of applicants who are less confident in Welsh. This could mean being flexible in terms of the use of Welsh on the application form or in the job interview (depending on the language level of the post). There should also be enthusiasm in understanding what linguistic skills the individual has and emphasising the support available to encourage and develop these skills further.

“This is an interesting one because if we say that the Welsh language is essential, we expect the interview to be in Welsh. So, if someone comes back and says oh no, I’m more confident to do it in English, we say fine, ok, but we want to assess the level of your Welsh, so we’ll ask one or two questions through the medium of Welsh. You can reply in Welsh to begin with, if you are struggling you can turn to English. So, we try to be as accommodating as we can”.

(Public sector / Ceredigion)

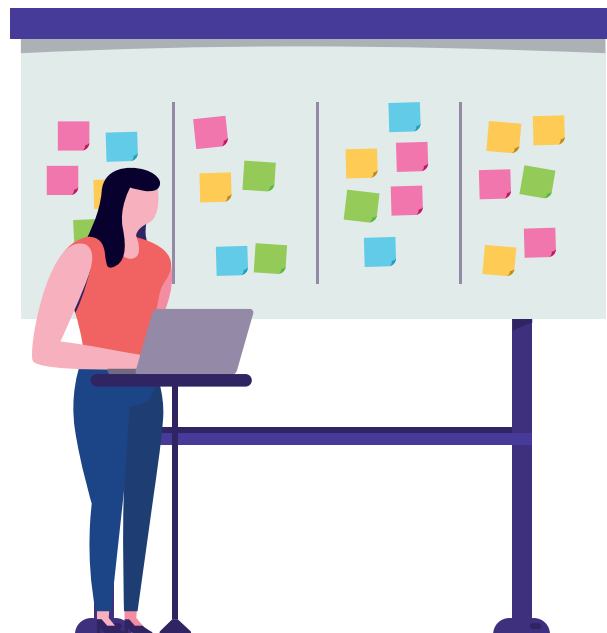
However, this process should not take place at the expense of assessing that individuals have the appropriate skills required to undertake a post in Welsh.

ACTION POINT:

Depending on the language level of a post, the job application process (e.g. application form and interview) should be flexible and recognise the varied Welsh language skills of applicants. This is particularly important in encouraging less confident Welsh speakers to apply for posts.

In a recent report by Iaith: The Language Planning Centre, they emphasise the need to offer a positive recruitment experience in Welsh to all applicants.

Follow [**the link**](#) to read more.



GOOD PRACTICE 5

WORKPLACES THAT ARE ATTRACTIVE TO WELSH SPEAKERS SHOULD BE CREATED

Creating a workplace that is attractive to Welsh speakers is a way of attracting Welsh speakers to work for your organization. Although this can be easier for organizations with many Welsh speakers, workplaces can emphasise that there are opportunities to work in Welsh and to speak Welsh at work every day. If your organization does not have many Welsh speakers, it is possible for an employer to emphasise its Welsh ethos, and the welcome to Welsh speakers, on social media or when advertising.

"[...] the fact that we are an organization that operates through the medium of Welsh is a lure for people who want to come here to do so. I'll talk about myself, use me as an example. That was something that was important to me when I joined the [organization], well, I wanted to work on a daily basis through the medium of Welsh".

(Public sector / Gwynedd)

"So, we've tried to be just a bit more Welsh. Make sure some of our Welsh essential jobs are in Welsh. Make sure we mention Welsh on the website. Make sure that we've got bilingual business cards for example. Making an effort really".

(Private sector – Gwynedd and Anglesey)

ACTION POINT:

As part of the recruitment process it should be emphasised that your workplace is welcoming to Welsh speakers and individuals with various Welsh language skills.



GOOD PRACTICE **6**

WHEN RECRUITING, THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO STAFF TO DEVELOP WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS AT WORK SHOULD BE DEMONSTRATED

When recruiting, there is a need to ensure that applicants have confidence that they will receive support to develop and practice their Welsh language skills as part of their job. Employers need to be proactive, offering formal support in the form of Welsh lessons, as well as wider opportunities to practice their Welsh in the workplace and in less formal work contexts. This may be an effective way of recruiting and is an effective strategy to increase the Welsh language capacity of your workforce.

“From time to time, especially with some jobs, it’s really difficult to get people who speak Welsh. We therefore employ people who do not speak Welsh but we provide them with Welsh lessons in [the workplace]. So, they don’t have to go anywhere to get a Welsh lesson, they don’t have to do it outside their working hours. It takes place within working hours. Someone comes here and they have a Welsh lesson every morning”.
(Private sector / Carmarthenshire)

“Doing things socially outside work so that they speak Welsh more often. Especially if they get into a routine of speaking Welsh with their colleagues. For example, we went last week to ten pin bowling, well, you had staff there who didn’t speak Welsh with each other outside work, but because they were with people from work, they carried on speaking Welsh with them, but in a more social situation”.
(Private sector – Gwynedd)

ACTION POINT:

When recruiting, employers should advertise that support will be available to develop and practice their Welsh language skills as part of their job. Planning the bilingual workforce should be proactive and strategic in order to increase the Welsh language capacity of the workplace.

Working Welsh is an example of free provision for staff to strengthen Welsh language skills and increase the Welsh language capacity of the workplace. Follow [**this link**](#) for more information.

The Welsh Language Commissioner offers advice to organizations wishing to develop their internal use of the Welsh language. Follow [**this link**](#) for more information.

ARFer is an example of behavioural change methodology based on methodology by Soziolinguistika Klusterra from the Basque Country. ARFer is intended to change linguistic practices and promote the use of Welsh in the workplace. Follow [**this link**](#) for more information.



GOOD PRACTICE **7**

OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD BE CREATED TO DEVELOP STAFF WHO ALREADY HAVE WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Whilst it is possible to develop the Welsh language skills of staff, it is also possible to develop the other professional skills of the workforce who already have Welsh language skills. It is important that employers wishing to develop a Welsh language workforce offer opportunities for staff to develop skills and gain experience that will lead to career development. Whilst career development is an attractive characteristic for job seekers, it may also enable employers to fill a skills gap existing in specific workplaces. It may also provide a means of retaining staff with Welsh language skills and maintaining a strong local bilingual workforce.

“I’m delighted to say we have a fast-track internal recruitment. We have the ability for people [...] to actually build a career within our organization and do within role on the job training. So they may come in at a quite a junior level but then they can sort of work their way through as they build up their experience”.

(Third sector / Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire)

“...we appoint people and expect them to learn Welsh. So, they have the skills for the post but they don’t have the language skills and then we go on to give them the language skills. Sometimes, I think, almost, that we need to look at the way we do that. Whether we appoint someone who does not have the skills for the post but has the language skills, that in a way, we provide them with the training to reach the level of skills we want, not the language level. You swop it around”.

(Public sector / Ceredigion)

ACTION POINT:

When recruiting, employers should emphasise the opportunities for staff to develop new skills and develop a career. This may involve employing staff who already have Welsh language skills and developing specific job skills to meet the specific needs of the workplace.



GOOD PRACTICE 8

AWARENESS SHOULD BE RAISED OF POTENTIAL CAREERS AVAILABLE LOCALLY

Employers can develop their bilingual workforce by encouraging young adults to develop careers locally. As a result, employers have a role to play in communicating the opportunities available so that young adults with Welsh language skills are aware that attractive careers are available to them locally. Employers can raise awareness of their company or organization locally by collaborating with education establishments, offering work experience or sharing jobs in an attractive way on social media.

“Creating early links between your young people and your employers are important [...] so that they come to understand the economy and dynamics of an area. [...] If we could create the connection with the economy and the businesses in the area, and they had something to come back to, and that they understood their role within that economy. Develop their economic literacy. So that they see themselves as part of the area’s future. We need to strengthen that”.

(Third sector – Gwynedd and Anglesey)

“We have like Instagram takeovers with different members of staff so that it gives people a taste of the sort of work we do”.

(Third sector / National)

ACTION POINT:

Employers should contribute towards raising awareness of the opportunities available in their company or organization and in the wider sector to highlight attractive careers that are available locally.

Some Useful Contacts

The following schemes offer services to support young people to learn more about careers:

Careers Wales
Profi



GOOD PRACTICE 9

WHEN RECRUITING, THE GOOD IMAGE AND VALUES OF THE EMPLOYER SHOULD BE SHARED

The good image of an employer (including their Welsh language principles) is important in attracting applicants to posts. In seeking to recruit young adults with Welsh language skills it is important to communicate the values of the employer clearly to applicants. Employers should emphasise the value of specific posts and emphasise how exciting the job is and how it contributes to society.

“I think younger people also want to feel like they work for an organization that has good values etc. And I think the Welsh language has a stake in that mix in terms of making an organization responsible and so we want to attract people to work in it.”
(Private sector – Gwynedd)

“We always say to employers, walk your brand, walk your own brand. So, you know, how are you coming across? To put yourselves in the shoes of the job seekers and how are you coming across from looking at your website, looking at your social channels, be asking people in the street about you or finding reviews wherever they can. And it’s making sure that that brand comes across”.
(Private sector – Gwynedd and Anglesey)

ACTION POINT:

When recruiting, employers should highlight the values of the organization and how jobs contribute to a society that is attractive to young adults applying for a job.



GOOD PRACTICE 10

WHEN RECRUITING, THE BENEFITS AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OF THE POST SHOULD BE DEMONSTRATED

When recruiting an employer needs to take into account the aspirations and needs of staff. Whilst pay remains an important consideration for applicants, the accompanying benefits package is also important (e.g. flexible working hours, ability to purchase additional holiday leave, childcare). What employers from particular sectors are able to offer can vary but it is important to emphasise the benefits that are relevant to your organization and the target audience, in trying to recruit staff with Welsh language skills.

“One of the things we’ve learnt recently is these benefits. Flexibility, the more social opportunities. It sounds odd saying this, but you don’t get lost here [...] So we’ve tried packaging that. When we talk about the benefits of working for a small company”.

(Private sector / Anglesey)

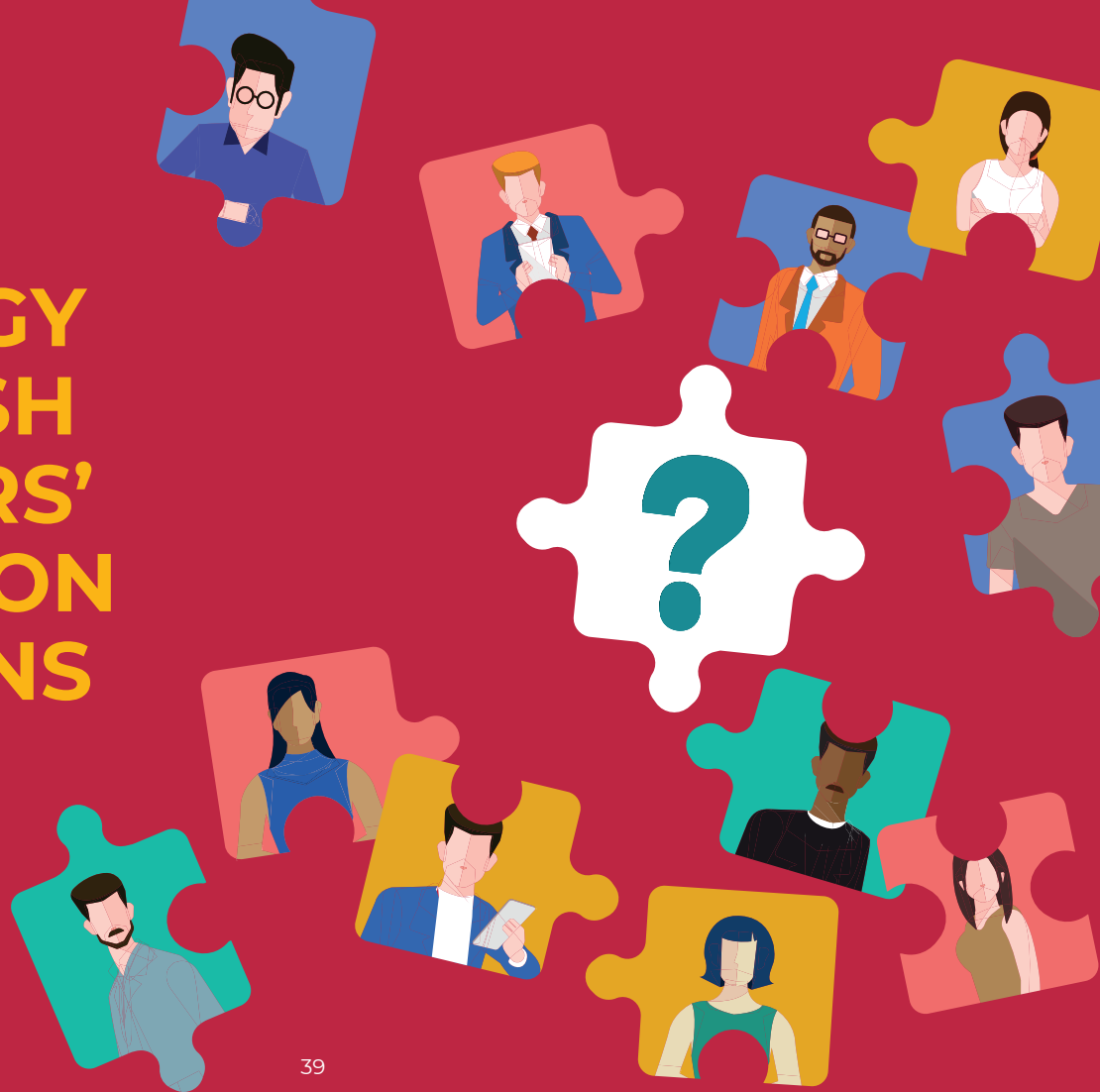
“It’s not all to do with wages now for lots of people. It’s about the bigger package around it. [...] A lot of young people now think, is a career break an option. You know, because they start a job... and I could take a year out and come back”.

(Public sector / Carmarthenshire).

ACTION POINT:

Develop and raise awareness of the package of workplace benefits and support that will appeal to the needs of the applicants you are targeting.

TYOLOGY OF WELSH SPEAKERS' MIGRATION DECISIONS



TYOLOGY OF WELSH SPEAKERS' MIGRATION DECISIONS

"I think we have to do more specific things. The days of trying to appeal to young people in a wide-ranging campaign that appeals to everyone is not going to work anymore. We need to recognise that you have a particular cluster of people you are trying to appeal to with some kind of specific job and you work on that for a period of time rather than trying to tell everyone everything".
(Public sector / Carmarthenshire)

As the quote above suggests, it is important to identify your target audience when recruiting. Appealing to the aspirations and needs of those living in our communities, together with those with the potential to return, is vital in order to widen the pool of potential applicants for posts where Welsh language skills are required.

Typology is a way of classifying groups or individuals based on specific characteristics in order to understand and analyse social and cultural patterns. In this case, people have been categorised into 12 groups according to what influences their decision to stay, to leave or to return to the areas where they were brought up.

This understanding may help employers attract potential applicants with Welsh language skills to their workplaces, and it offers practical ideas in terms of:

- i) How to reach them with the job details; and
- ii) The messages to emphasise in order to spark their interest to apply.

Not all employers may have what is needed to attract everyone from each of the typology groups. **However, this is an opportunity for you to identify your strengths as an employer, and what you can offer potential members of staff, when trying to attract applicants with Welsh language skills.**

This is particularly relevant if you are having difficulty recruiting staff to fill specific posts.

This typology is based on the academic work of Bonner et al. (2024). The original typology was adapted for this resource, moving it from the academic to the practical. As a result, the most relevant groups are being prioritised here. Follow [**this link**](#) to view the original typology.

TYOLOGY OF WELSH SPEAKERS' MIGRATION DECISIONS

The typology is divided into 3 main sections, namely:

Stayers

These people have decided to remain in the areas where they were brought up. In terms of recruitment, this is the easiest cohort to reach, but they should not be taken for granted.

Leavers

These people have left the areas where they were brought up. In terms of recruitment, these are the hardest to reach groups and consideration must be given to what is likely to attract them back.

Returners

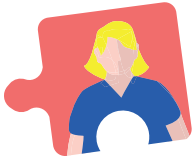
These people have decided to return to the areas where they were brought up. In the context of this resource, targeting these groups as they make a decision to return can confirm their decision to come back. They can also be targeted on their return.



STAYERS



1.
Flagbearers



2.
Those wanting
to build
confidence



3.
Those with
a plan



4.
Those who
do not see an
opportunity

LEAVERS



5.
Those who
are reluctant
to leave



6.
Those
wanting new
experiences



7.
Those wanting
to socialise



8.
Those that are
happy to go
with the flow

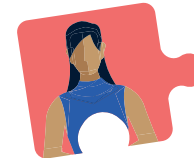
RETURNERS



9.
Those
needing
support



10.
Those
seeing an
opportunity



11.
Those
returning
to raise a
family



12.
Those with
a longing
for home

STAYERS

1. Flagbearers

Rooted in the community due to strong social networks. Want to stay local voluntarily or due to a sense of duty. Welsh language skills are often an asset when seeking employment locally.

How to reach this group:

- Take advantage of platforms that specifically promote Welsh language jobs
- Attendance at Welsh language job fairs.
- Promote opportunities through schools and further and higher education establishments.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Acknowledge the contribution made by this group to the sustainability of Welsh speaking communities.
- Communicate the importance of the Welsh language and culture to the organization.
- Emphasise the opportunities to work in Welsh.



STAYERS

2. Those wanting to build confidence

Lack of self-confidence has led them to stay because they are unsure what else to do, or they doubt their decision to stay.



How to reach this group:

- Pro-active outreach through advertising in the community.
- Invite individuals to undertake work experience.
- Make it easier for young adults to initiate conversations with potential employers informally (e.g. by texting to discuss the job).
- Facilitate the application process by allowing applications less formally than by means of an application form e.g. by submitting a letter and CV only.
- Help the applicant in an interview to make the best possible impression.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- That the Welsh language skills they have are an asset.
- No specific skills or expertise are required to undertake the post.
- That there is support for staff to learn on the job.
- Have a good image of a friendly and supportive workplace on social media.

STAYERS

3. Those with a plan

Prefer to stay local and want a good career. Confident and demonstrate the ability to carry out forward planning. Risk of losing these if there are no opportunities available.

How to reach this group:

- Ensure that the employer has a prominent profile locally and offers work experience opportunities to school pupils and university students.
- Share case studies of young adults who have been successful in the company or organization.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Highlight opportunities and career pathways in the sector that will lead to higher wages in the future.
- Emphasise what the employer is doing to allow a good work / life balance.



STAYERS

4. Those who do not see an opportunity

Want to stay but there is a perception that there are no suitable housing or employment opportunities for them.

How to reach this group:

- Promote case studies of young adults currently developing careers locally.
- Ensure attendance at careers fairs to raise awareness of the opportunities available locally.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Offer an attractive package that goes beyond pay e.g. opportunities for compressed hours working, travel opportunities, variety within the job.



LEAVERS

5. Those who are reluctant to leave

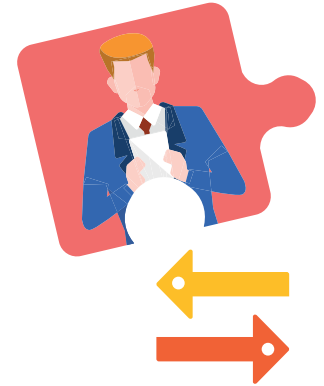
Want to stay local but the opportunities available are not in line with their qualifications/work experience.

How to reach this group:

- Reach this group early by liaising with schools and careers programmes to ensure they qualify in an area that will allow them to stay or return at a later date.
- Advertise that there are attractive opportunities to re-qualify and train in the workplace.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Highlight skills gaps and emphasise the opportunities presented by this.
- Offer fast track opportunities to re-qualify on the job.
- That a successful career can be developed in the organization or the wider sector locally.



LEAVERS

6. Those wanting new experiences

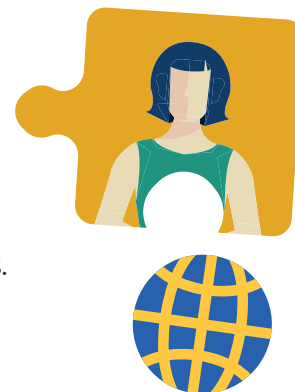
Want to leave to experience new adventures, and employment/education offering the opportunity to do this. Feel comfortable with changes in their lives.

How to reach this group:

- Maintain contact with this group as they are likely to be open to return later on (e.g. by developing an attractive on-line profile for potential staff who do not live locally).
- Collaborate with recruitment agencies targeting young adults who have left Wales.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Emphasise the exciting and dynamic elements of the post and its contribution to society.
- Emphasise the exciting and dynamic elements of living in the Arfor counties.
- Emphasise the flexibility of the post to allow them to pursue their interests outside working hours e.g. purchasing holidays, 35-hour week, compressed hours etc.



LEAVERS

7. Those wanting to socialise

Want a social life and feel lonely without networks of friends who share interests and opportunities to meet a partner.

How to reach this group:

- The usual channels reach this group effectively; the challenge is to emphasise the opportunities to socialise in and outside the workplace.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- The social nature of the workplace and highlight opportunities to socialise outside work.
- Offer benefits for local clubs, restaurants or bars.
- Emphasise the flexibility of the post to allow them to socialise outside working hours e.g. purchasing holidays, 35-hour week, compressed hours etc.



LEAVERS

8. Those that are happy to go with the flow

Tend to follow the crowd and leave the area. Peer influence is important and the desire to be part of a group is their priority.

How to reach this group:

- Use on-line young people's networks to share short videos that share information about careers and jobs.
- Use role models to influence perceptions of staying local.
- Use your current workforce to signpost their friends e.g. "Bring your friend to work" Day.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- That there are opportunities to work with peers.
- That there is an opportunity to join a group staying local to take advantage of a range of opportunities.



RETURNERS

9. Those needing support

Returned to a safe place in order to receive support.
Family providing a safety net.

How to reach this group:

- Promote opportunities in professional networks and local communities.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Encourage applicants by being less formal and offering a supportive interview process.
- The work/life balance that is possible.
- Benefits package e.g. flexibility for those with caring duties, counselling.
- The social atmosphere in the workplace.



RETURNERS

10. Those seeing an opportunity

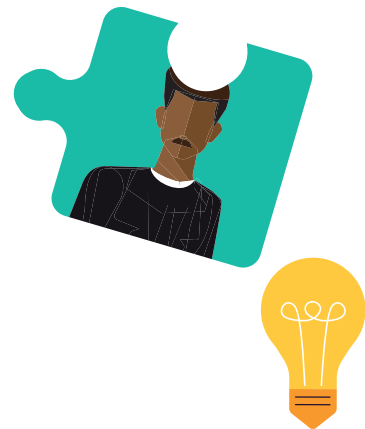
Returned against expectations as a result of the offer of an attractive post.

How to reach this group:

- These individuals have obtained a post locally, however they will want to develop their career and seek the next opportunity.
- The usual channels reach this group effectively; the challenge is to retain them in the face of career development opportunities available beyond the area.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Demonstrate that there are opportunities for career development locally either within the organization or across the sector.
- Highlight the pleasant characteristics of the area e.g. landscape, standard of living, culture and language.



RETURNERS

11. Those returning to raise a family

Returned to bring up a family through the medium of Welsh.

How to reach this group:

- This group needs to be reached while they are weighing up their decision to return.
- Take advantage of platforms that specifically promote Welsh language posts. These may be posts in any area where there is a requirement for various Welsh language skills.
- Use local and personal networks – encourage employees to become Ambassadors for the company or organization.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Emphasise the elements of the benefits package that benefit families e.g. flexible hours, maternity terms etc.
- Emphasise opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace.
- Provide information about the support available locally to family members who wish to develop their Welsh language skills.
- Highlight the pleasant characteristics of the local area that benefit children e.g. fresh air.



RETURNERS

12. Those with a longing for home

Returned in response to feeling a longing (hiraeth). They have well-developed social networks and a strong sense of belonging to their community.



How to reach this group:

- This group needs to be reached while they are weighing up their decision to return.
- Ensure your company or organization has a prominent and attractive digital profile that would appeal to potential applicants.
- Use professional and personal networks to share information and enquire about potential applicants.

Messages to emphasise to this group:

- Emphasise the relevance of transferable skills and experiences, including any opportunities to re-qualify or train as part of the job.
- Emphasise the support and opportunities to reconnect with the Welsh language again and to use Welsh in the workplace.

ONE-DAY EVENT DISCUSSION PANELS FOR EMPLOYERS

The discussion panels below were recorded as part of this resource's launch event. Listen to the discussions by following the links below.



DISCUSSION PANEL 1

How to attract candidates? Insight from young adults

Ffion Davies, Sioned Raymond and Buddug Roberts

Chaired by **Elen Bonner**



DISCUSSION PANEL 2

What is good practice? Insight from employers

Non Davies, Ceredigion County Council; Elen ap Robert, Llofft; Emily Roberts, M-Sparc; Iwan Thomas, Planed

Chaired byn **Dr Rhian Hodges**



DISCUSSION PANEL 3

How to increase bilingual workplace capacity?

Insight from experts in the field

Aitor Zuberogoitia Espilla, Mondragon; Oihan Zubizarreta Iribecampos, EMUN; Arwel Williams, ARFer, Bangor University

Chairing by **Dr Cynog Prys**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Argymhellion ehangach i gyflogwyr sydd eisiau recriwtio ymgeiswyr sydd â sgiliau iaith Gymraeg.

Ar sail data'r astudiaeth hon, sy'n cynnwys y cyfweiliadau gyda chyflogwyr ac oedolion ifanc, mae'r argymhellion canlynol hyn yn cael eu cyflwyno i gyflogwyr.

Tra bod rhai argymhellion yn rhai ymarferol a chyraeddadwy i nifer fawr o gyflogwyr, mae argymhellion eraill yn gofyn am weledigaeth fwy uchelgeisiol a buddsoddiad mwy hirdymor mewn recriwtio staff â sgiliau iaith Gymraeg.

1. Good jobs with competitive salaries need to be secured in the Arfor areas. For example, this could be achieved by locating national organizations in these areas and continuing to invest in growth sectors.
2. A higher pay offer could be piloted for applicants with Welsh language skills in sectors where staff with those skills are sorely needed.
3. Schemes could be developed for employees to re-train in the workplace without losing pay. This may include supporting staff to learn Welsh in the workplace, and supporting staff who already have Welsh language skills to retrain to undertake new roles.
4. Purposeful plans should be developed which will lead to promotion in order to develop the career of the individual with Welsh language skills. For example, secondment opportunities could be offered across sectors.
5. Ways should be developed to reach young adults who have moved from the Arfor counties in order to promote employment opportunities to them.

6. In order to adopt successful methods of recruitment, feedback should be collected on applicants' experiences of the application process that are sufficiently detailed and fit for purpose.
7. The working relationship needs to be strengthened between workplaces and schools and further and higher education establishments. In particular, collaboration should be undertaken with schools and further and higher education establishments to emphasise the importance of Welsh language skills and other transferable skills in developing careers locally.
8. It is essential to improve the image of the Arfor areas and to reject negative messages about lack of employment and work opportunities. This is particularly relevant to the public sector.
9. In order to improve the social experience of young staff, there is a need to work together to establish social networks within and across companies.
10. Financial packages should be offered and advertised for the relocation of prospective staff who need to relocate in order to take up the post.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Elen Bonner's doctorate was supported by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

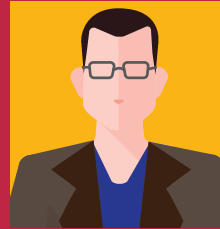


SCHOOL OF HISTORY, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Bangor University is an innovator in providing higher education through the medium of Welsh. The School of History, Law and Social Sciences offers a range of bilingual degrees, including a Sociology with Social Policy Degree which is available entirely through the medium of Welsh. Follow [**this link**](#) to learn more.

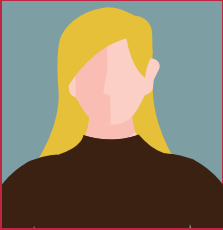
The School of History, Law and Social Sciences also leads on the M.A. in Language Policy and Planning which offers an effective overview of language planning in Wales and internationally. Follow [**this link**](#) to learn more.

NODYN AM YR AWDURON



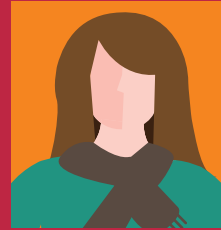
Dr Cynog Prys

Dr Prys is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the School of History, Law and Social Sciences at Bangor University where he specialises in teaching sociology through the medium of Welsh. He is an expert in language planning and his current research interests include the sociology of language and bilingualism, specialising in the use of Welsh in civil society and the third sector in Wales. He is also interested in the study of the use of Welsh in everyday life, including the Welsh language in the digital world.



Dr Rhian Hodges

Dr Rhian Hodges is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Social Policy at the School of History, Law and Social Sciences, Bangor University. She is Director of the M.A. in Language Policy and Planning and specialises in the area of language policy and planning in Wales and beyond, including Welsh-medium education, social use of the Welsh language and new speakers of minority languages. Dr Hodges has worked on various research projects relating to the social use of the Welsh language and the identity of new Welsh speakers.



Elen Bonner

Elen Bonner is a PhD Researcher at Bangor University with particular expertise in studying the relationship between the economy, migration and the Welsh language. She holds the Martin Rhisiart Scholarship through the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. As part of her PhD work, she conducted a systematic review of what is known about the impact of various dimensions of the economy on the Welsh language as well as developing a unique typology conveying what drives the language speakers' decisions in relation to migration. Elen contributes to the University's teaching provision as a Welsh medium Sociology tutor and is an Associate Lecturer of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.



ARFOR
CREU GWAITH - CEFNOGI'R IAITH

