

CFA03 Unigolyn 02

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol |
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Cymraeg i bawb? | Cymraeg for all?

Ymateb gan: Unigolyn 02 | Evidence from: Individual 02

1. What are the main barriers that prevent wider use of the Welsh language in areas with fewer Welsh speakers, and what might help to change this?

- Opportunities to use Welsh in daily scenarios such as shops, cafes, pharmacies, beauty salons etc.
- People to practice with
- Making it natural to use Welsh in daily life

2. What sort of spaces and opportunities might encourage greater use of, and increase confidence in, the use of the language in areas where day-to-day use of the language is limited?

I think knowing where Welsh can be used is crucial. I am currently working on a scheme across local businesses (shops, pharmacies, cafes, salons etc) where there is a sticker or indicator that Welsh can be used, maybe a list of useful simple words/phrases for workers. Then creating a network of local businesses so Welsh speakers and learners know where they can use their Welsh. In addition, the more Welsh is seen and heard, the more it is used.

3. Can you share examples of successful initiatives or activities that have encouraged Welsh language use in areas where use of the language is limited?

When a Welsh language play or performance takes place at the local art centre, Welsh speakers from across the area attend. I personally find theatre and concerts a great way to use my Welsh and would relish more opportunity to attend in my local area. Similarly, events like Gwyl Fach y Fro and Welsh language gigs.

4. What sort of spaces and opportunities might encourage greater use of, and increase confidence in, the use of the language in areas where day-to-day use of the language is limited?

I am aware of numerous coffee morning / sgwrs sessions running in my area during the week. However due to my working hours, I am unable to attend day time drop-in style events. I am also not aware of any specific bars or restaurants in my area where I could use my Welsh. It would be good to have regular evening ‘coffee morning’ / sgwrs type event for people who work during the day or who aren’t interested in family/children events.

5. What impact, in your view, do cultural events such as national Eisteddfodau or Welsh language festivals have on Welsh language use, particularly in areas with fewer Welsh speakers?

I believe cultural events have a huge impact on Welsh language use. In our area, Gwyl Fach y Fro attracts thousands of people, most of whom are Welsh speakers as well as showcasing Welsh music. This can be eye-opening for non-Welsh speakers who are not necessarily aware that there is this entire world of music, art and culture existing under their noses! Cultural events show the language is alive, desired, and thriving –they are critical to the promotion and use of the Welsh language.

6. How might these events (whether large or small in size) be adapted or improved to better serve communities with fewer Welsh speakers?

As a learner, I was a little worried going to the Urdd Eisteddfod in 2023, Eisteddfod Genedlaethol last year, and Gwyl Fach y Fro the last three years, but every person I spoke to in my slight pigeon Welsh was more than happy to try and understand, and converse with me in Welsh. I have found that Welsh speakers are incredibly welcoming to learners with an ethos of ‘give it a go’ or ‘use what you can’. Emphasising this could be useful for communities with fewer Welsh speakers – come along even if you haven’t got much Welsh, you’ll be welcomed and encouraged anyway.

7. Are there any other matters you would like to draw to the Committees attention about the Welsh Government’s approach to supporting the Welsh language in areas with fewer Welsh speakers?
