

Annual Report on the Welsh Language in Estyn 2020-2021

This report is also available in Welsh.

This ninth annual report includes a summary of progress made between March 2020 and April 2021 against the priorities that we identified in last year's report.

Priorities for 2020-2021

- 1. Continue with and develop further the process of self-assessment and peer assessment by developing greater individual responsibility within and across teams in order to analyse the extent to which we comply with the Welsh Language Standards and how we may improve our performance and services.**
- 2. To implement the ARFer toolkit from the Autumn Term 2020 onwards in order to utilise the Welsh language skills of fluent speakers and learners within the organisation and further normalise the use of the Welsh language. (See appendix 8 for definition of the ARFer project).**
- 3. To identify opportunities that improve our performance and appearance as a bilingual organisation. For example, investigating the use of technology available in Welsh and how it could improve our use of the Welsh language internally and externally.**

Introduction

Overall, we have made good progress, where practically possible, in terms of the above priorities during the year and this report is intended to reflect and exemplify that progress.

It is worth noting that the Welsh language standards are an important driver in enabling us to develop the use of Welsh in our day to day work.

- 1. Continue with and develop further a process of self-assessment and peer assessment within different corporate teams in order to analyse the extent to which we comply with the Welsh Language Standards and how we may improve our performance and Welsh language services.**

This process involves asking a member of the relevant team from the corporate services to confer with colleagues and prepare a brief analysis of how they comply with the Welsh Language Standards. During the meeting of the Welsh Language Working Group, the standards appertaining to that corporate team are displayed on the screen and the person talks through them explaining how they are interpreting the standard in their own context. This leads to questions and suggestions from other members of the group, which help to clarify any tricky issues as well as sharpening our collective understanding of the requirements of the standards. If necessary, team representatives are asked to consider issues raised and return to the next meeting after discussing them with colleagues in the same team. This process has proved beneficial to all concerned and led to an effective peer review process leading to an effective self-evaluation of our compliance with the standards.

This process is a standing item on our termly meetings.

During the reporting year three teams went through this process: Office Services, the Events Team and Secretariat.

The Office Services review led to improvements such as all members of OS staff, not only new starters, are required to complete the Work Welsh online taster courses in order to ensure consistency within the department.

The Events review was very useful in that this year engagement with stakeholders and training has been different from usual due to the pandemic. Events are now held through online digital conferencing technology. Microsoft Teams is the preferred technology of many public bodies. However, it does not at present include the facility to use simultaneous translation. The Welsh Language Commissioner has made it clear that as a public body subject to the Welsh Language Standards we are legally obliged to provide a fully bilingual service including the use of video-conferencing technology. We now pro-actively arrange simultaneous translation for all stakeholder fora rather than ask people if they wish to use Welsh and assess the demand for such a facility. Therefore, we have purchased a Zoom licence that enables us to offer such translation facilities. This, however, has led to some difficulties when delegates are unfamiliar with or unable to use Zoom and is reflected in the feedback and satisfaction rates outlined in appendix 5. It is also worth noting that his feedback suggests that the expectations of Welsh speaking delegates, that Welsh is used meaningfully in training and stakeholder sessions, appear to be increasing. We are committed to providing effective simultaneous translation and have plans to increase our use of it and to trial the use of English to Welsh simultaneous translation in the 2021-22 reporting year.

Following the peer review it was also agreed that all Events staff should also undertake the Work Welsh Meet & Greet online course if they are not Welsh speakers.

The review of the Secretariat team led to changes to our complaints policy in order to specifically refer to complaints regarding compliance with service delivery standards. In addition, the review led to us ensuring that we are more pro-active in offering Welsh language services. For example, in all meetings arranged through Secretariat we now ask external attendees beforehand, regardless if they have met with us previously, if they wish to use simultaneous translation whether the meeting is held face-to-face or online. The wording used is as follows; *‘As an organisation that operates the Welsh Language Standards, we would like to give the opportunity to use your language of choice at the meeting. If you would like to use Welsh, please could you let us know as soon as convenient in order that we can make the necessary administrative arrangements?’*

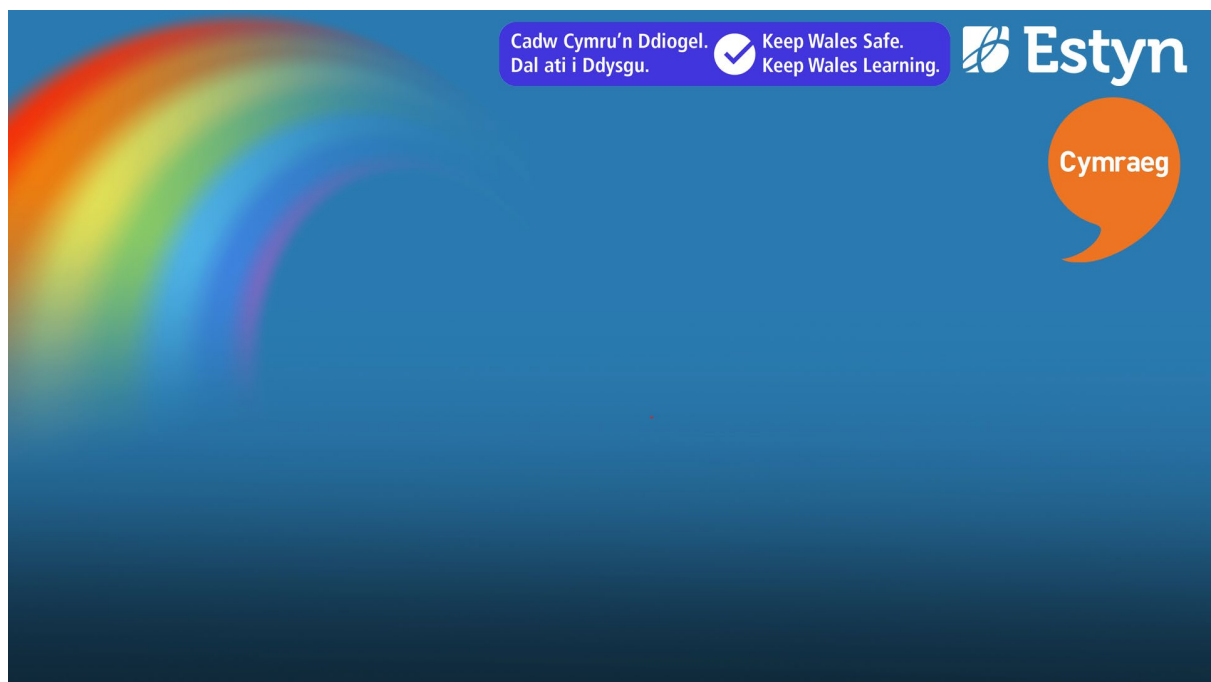
2. To implement the ARFer toolkit from the Autumn Term 2020 onwards in order to utilise the Welsh language skills of fluent speakers and learners within the organisation and further normalise the use of the Welsh language. (See appendix 8 for definition of the ARFer project).

Due to the pandemic the launching of the proposed toolkit was postponed, and a pilot undertaken in other bodies in order to refine the scheme and reflect on the impact of online working on the internal use of Welsh within public sector organisations. As a result, it was not possible to implement the toolkit internally as planned during the reporting year. However, we remain committed to doing so and will include it as a key component of our Strategic Welsh Language Plan 2021-24.

3. To identify opportunities that improve our performance and appearance as a bilingual organisation. For example, investigating the use of technology available in Welsh and how it could improve our use of the Welsh language internally and externally.

As outlined in point 1 above we have been proactive in our implementation of simultaneous translation through video-conferencing technology. We are committed to maintaining our stance that such a translation facility will be offered as our default position rather than on request or following the assessment of 'sufficient' demand as specified under Welsh Language Standard 25.

In addition, we identified the need to update our Welsh Language Policy in order to reflect the prevalence of online working. We recognise that the dynamics of engaging online is different from engaging in more traditional scenarios and that we need to encourage stakeholders and the public to use Welsh when they speak with us if they wish to do so. As a result, we have included the Work Welsh logo on our corporate video-conferencing background (see below) to identify members of our staff who are Welsh speaking. We view this as a natural extension to Welsh speaking staff using the logo on our email signatures or wearing lanyards incorporating the logo.



Record keeping

We keep a record, by following the financial year, of the number of complaints that relate to compliance with the Welsh language standards (whether the complaint is about the standards with which we have a duty to comply or not). During 2020-2021, no complaints were received about our Welsh language services.

We monitor the quality of our Welsh language services closely and keep a record of what we do to ensure that we comply with the policy-making standards. We keep a record (following an assessment of Welsh language skills) of the number of

employees who have Welsh language skills (see appendices 1 and 2 below). We also keep a record of the number and percentage of staff members who attended training courses through the medium of Welsh and/or language awareness courses (see appendix 4 below).

We keep a record of the number of vacancies where Welsh language skills are assessed as being essential, desirable, not necessary, or there is a need to learn Welsh.

Two recruitment campaigns took place during 2019-2020.

- Administrative Officer - Welsh language skills essential
- Inspection co-ordinator - Welsh language skills essential
- Recruitment of new HMI postponed due to COVID-19 – Welsh language skills desirable

However due to the pandemic the successful candidates for the administrative posts above did not commence until 2020-2021. Similarly, the HMI recruitment campaign took place in 2019-20 but due to funding issues only 1 of the successful HMI candidates commenced employment with us during the reporting period.

Therefore, during 2020-2021, 3 new permanent members of staff joined Estyn in different posts. (1 member of inspection staff and 2 corporate staff.) All 3 received the training through the medium of Welsh.

Priorities for 2021-2022

- 1. Continue with the process of self-assessment and peer assessment within different corporate teams in order to analyse the extent to which we comply with the Welsh Language Standards and how we may improve our performance and Welsh language services.**
- 2. To implement, when possible, the ARFer toolkit from 2021 onwards in order to utilise the Welsh language skills of fluent speakers and learners within the organisation and further normalise the use of the Welsh language. (See appendix 8 for definition of the ARFer project).**
- 3. To develop and incorporate the above points in an overarching Welsh Language Strategic Plan and updated Welsh Language Policy that will actively promote the concept of the 'proactive offer' rather than a reactive approach to Welsh language services. We will continue with our internal self and peer-assessment processes to measure the efficacy of our present compliance arrangements. However, we will constantly seek to improve our standards of service delivery and approach legislative compliance as the minimum baseline from which we can improve.**
- 4. To develop further our approach to assessing the impact of decision making processes and policy decisions on the Welsh language.**

Appendices

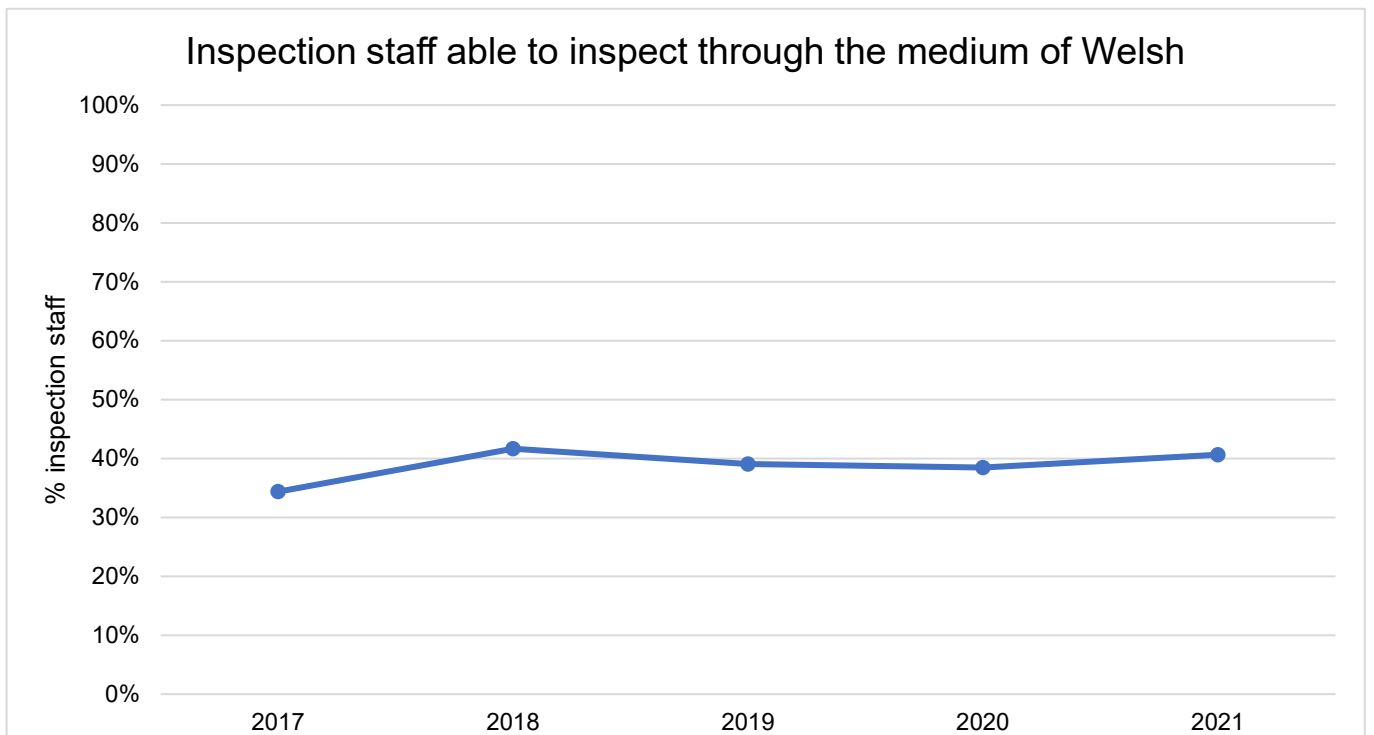
Appendix 1: Number and percentage of staff in the organisation's services who are able to speak Welsh as at 31 March 2021 (full-time equivalent)

- By department
- By job grade

Staff	Number of staff as at 31/03/2021	Number of Welsh speakers as at 31/03/2021	Percentage
HMCI	1	1	100%
Strategic Directors	2	1	50%
Inspection staff			
Assistant Directors	6	4	67%
HMIs	58	22	38%
Als (secondments)	0	0	0
Total inspection staff	64	26	41%
Corporate staff			
Director of Corporate Services	1	0	0%
Grade 7	3	2	67%
Senior Executive Officers	3	0	0%
Higher Executive Officers	6	2	33%
Executive Officers	20	7	35%
Administrative Officers	13	3	23%
Total	46	14	30%
Total Estyn staff	113	42	37% (34% in 19/20)

Appendix 2: Inspection staff able to inspect through the medium of Welsh as a percentage of all inspection staff (full-time equivalent)

	31 March 2017	31 March 2018	31 March 2019	31 March 2020	31 March 2021
Inspection staff able to inspect through the medium of Welsh	22	25	25	25	26
Total inspection staff	64	60	64	65	64
Percentage %	34%	42%	39%	38%	41%



Appendix 3: Welsh language training 2020/21

Type	Number of staff	Provider	Location	Days
Internal courses delivered online				
Entry	3	Learn Welsh Glamorgan	Virtual	25
Intermediate	5	Learn Welsh Glamorgan	Virtual	25
External courses				
Intermediate 2 (Blended Learning)	1	Learn Welsh The Vale	Virtual	1
Advanced Course (Blended Learning)	1	Learn Welsh Glamorgan	Virtual	7.5
Revision classes Foundation	1	Learn Welsh Cardiff	Virtual	2
Revision class for Advanced	1	Learn Welsh Glamorgan	Virtual	2
Foundation 1&2 (Blended Learning)	1	Learn Welsh Cardiff	Virtual	7.5

Total: 13 members of staff and 70 days

(16 members of staff and 72 days in 2019-2020)

Appendix 4: Number of staff who received Welsh language induction training and specific training through the medium of Welsh

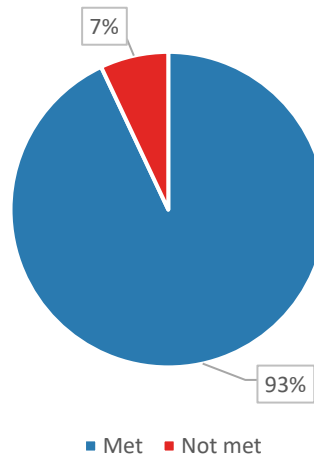
All staff, including temporary staff or agency staff, receive Welsh language awareness induction training as part of their induction programme by the HMI who is responsible for the Welsh language. This is scheduled by the human resources department as part of the induction programme for new staff. This training includes raising a broad awareness of the history of the language and its place in the history of Wales, understanding the requirements of the Welsh language standards and an understanding of the way in which Welsh can be used in the workplace.

During 2020-2021, 3 new permanent members of staff joined Estyn in different posts. (1 member of inspection staff and 2 corporate staff.) All 3 received the training through the medium of Welsh. In addition, 3 agency staff were employed and received training in English.

Appendix 5: Analysis of how external training/stakeholder engagement meets delegates' Welsh language requirements

Due to the pandemic the number of external stakeholder events was less than in previous years. 212 delegates responded in total: 198 (93%) felt that the event they attended met their language needs, which is lower than last year's figure of 98%. 14 (7%) felt that their language needs weren't met.

Meeting language needs



Of the 14 delegates who answered 'no' to this question, 6 didn't give any context to their answer. The delegates who did give context mentioned:

- 7% of delegates felt that the training didn't meet their language needs. The reasons given were:
- more Welsh should have been spoken – 2 comments
- delegate joined through browser, so no translation was available (Zoom) – 2 comments
- jumping between two languages without the interpreter was difficult via Teams – 1 comment
- issues switching to preferred audio channel (Zoom) – 1 comment
- would have liked a completely Welsh webinar – 1 comment
- delegate expected the event to be in Welsh – 1 comment

Appendix 6: Social media engagement through the medium of Welsh

Estyn communicates bilingually on social media. The charts below show the percentage who view messages in English (EstynHMI) and Welsh (EstynAEM).

According to the 2011 Census 19% of the population in Wales could speak Welsh.

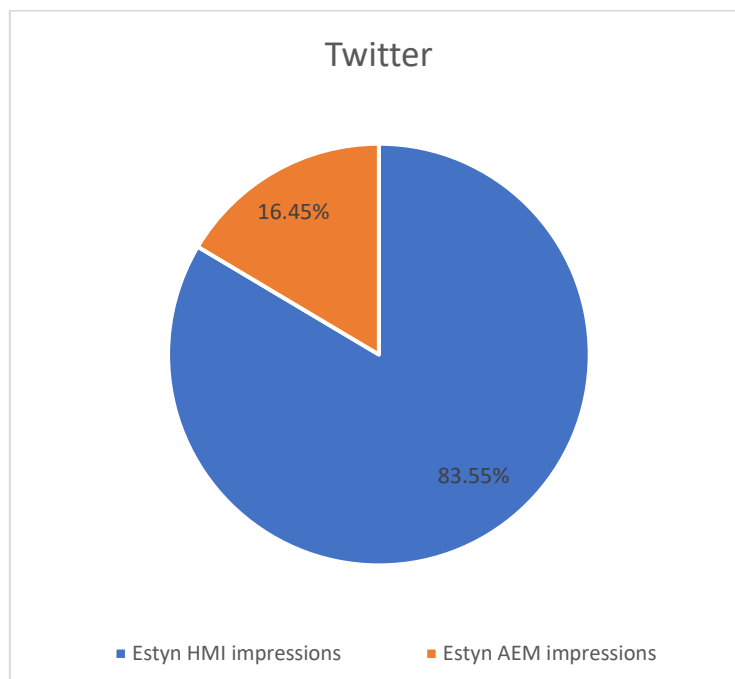
However, in the survey of Welsh Language Use in Wales 2013-15 (Welsh Government & Welsh Language Commissioner, 26 November 2015) the figures showed that 18 percent of all Welsh speakers who use Facebook used Welsh and 12 percent of all Welsh speakers who use Twitter used Welsh.

<http://www.comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru/English/Publications%20List/Adroddiad%20-%20Y%20defnydd%20o'r%20Gymraeg%20yng%20Nghymru,%202013-15%20-%20Saesneg.pdf>

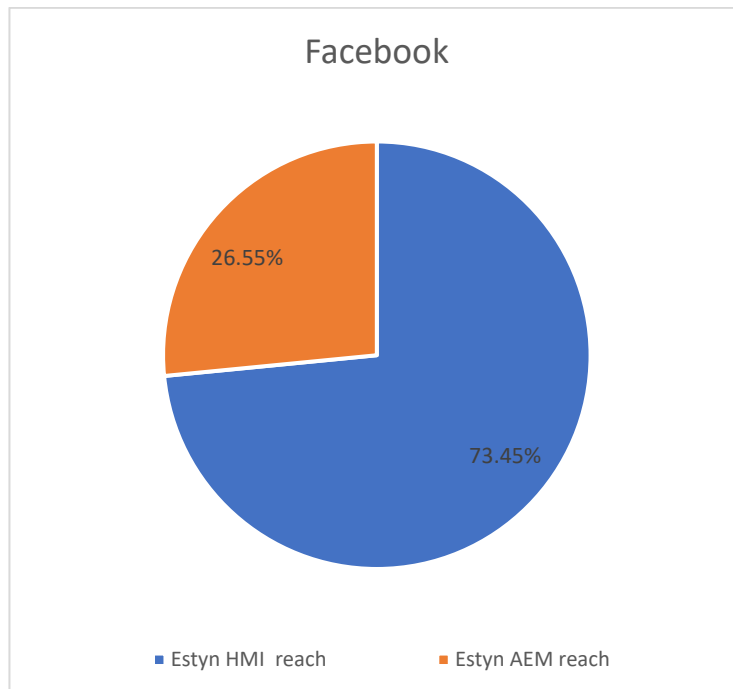
The figures below show that engagement levels with Estyn's social media is higher than the 2013-2015 figures would suggest.

During 2020-2021 the number of Welsh language Twitter impressions increased from 9.73% of total impressions to 16.45%. However, the percentage of Welsh language Facebook reach decreased from 32.77% to 26.55%.

Impressions represent views of the Twitter feed



Facebook reach represents the number of views of Estyn's Facebook page



Appendix 7: Definition of the ARFer project

Bangor University has established the ARFer project aimed at ensuring a better understanding of language use amongst co-workers in order to introduce tailor-made interventions and support to encourage the use of Welsh in a bilingual workplace

ARFer

The ARFer programme is a methodology inspired by the Aldahitz project designed by Soziolinguistika Klusterra in the Basque Country. The project is based on two principles that are rooted in the behavioural sciences: making a commitment to behaving in a certain way; capitalising on the significant influence that defaults can have on people's behaviour.

Essentially, ARFer is a programme that asks individuals to make a commitment to using Welsh as the default language with the aim of establishing the Welsh language as the norm.

The following factors are key to the scheme's success:

- investment in a programme that supports the wish of staff to use the Welsh language
- the importance of creating a context that enables staff to use Welsh
- the importance of supporting Welsh speakers (as well as learners) to use Welsh at work
- the importance of understanding patterns of language use before any attempt at influencing them

Appendix 8: Sarah Beebee – Learning Welsh in Estyn

I moved to Wales from England in 2011 and starting work in the Civil Service in Cardiff was initially a bit of a challenge. I was told on my first day I was required to answer the phone bi-lingually, and my manager wrote out phonetically for me how to pronounce “Bore da” and “Prynhawn da”. I was working with colleagues who had all studied some Welsh at school, so many knew the basics and understood pronunciation but for me this was all completely new.

I studied French and German at GCSE level and German at A Level, so I was already interested in languages but when I was offered a Taster Course through my workplace, I was keen to start to learn the basics. I attended a 6 week course where I learnt the Welsh alphabet and basic greetings plus how to describe where I work and what I do. Following this, I was offered the opportunity to attend a course specifically tailored to “Welsh in the Workplace”. Through this, I gained the knowledge and confidence to greet visitors to the office, ask them to sign in and use basic Welsh on the phone.

Estyn continued to support my Welsh learning, and in 2016 I started the Mynediad (Entry) course in the office on Friday mornings, but I also took an evening blended learning class on Thursday evenings, close to where I live. The blended learning style of course suits me perfectly: a two-hour class once a week plus online modules and homework to complete in my own time before the next class.

In Summer 2017, I passed the Mynediad exam which gave me the confidence to progress to the next level, Sylfaen (Foundation). I have taken several Sylfaen courses since, including an intensive summer revision course over 2 weeks which Estyn granted me special leave to take during our down time.

Currently, I’m studying the Canolradd (Intermediate) course on Fridays in work and Estyn is supporting me from September to begin a new blended Canolradd evening course.

Not only have the classes in work been extremely beneficial to me professionally, studying on the evening courses has been a great way to meet new friends and I often meet socially with my Welsh classmates.

I’m very grateful to Estyn for continuing to support me on my Welsh language learning. Colleagues have been very encouraging and offered to help practise with me. Gradually, I have been able to increase my use of Welsh in work and I was able a couple of years ago to speak some Welsh in a cameo at an annual staff conference. Although I still feel some way off from becoming completely fluent, I’m growing in confidence and enjoying my continued Welsh learning.