Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Welsh Language Impact Assessment reference number: 12/10/2026

Does the proposal demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language? – *Cymraeg 2050* and the related *Work Programme* for 2021-2026?

The second programme to improve the accessibility of Welsh law has a direct and substantial link with Cymraeg 2050. One of the activities that every accessibility programme must contain under the Legislation (Wales) Act 2019 is activity intended to facilitate use of the Welsh language. The programme therefore treats Welsh not simply as a language in which material is translated, but as a modern language of government, law and public administration.

The programme contributes in particular to the Cymraeg 2050 themes of increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions for the language. It will create and strengthen practical opportunities to use Welsh in legal settings by:

- producing new, modern and coherent bilingual legislation through consolidation and codification;
- continuing to establish authoritative Welsh legal terminology and publishing bilingual glossaries for every new code of Welsh law;
- improving access to up-to-date Welsh-language legislation and explanatory material;
- developing Welsh-language support within legislative drafting and digital tools;
- exploring trustworthy bilingual AI-assisted tools; and
- supporting the practical use of Welsh in the Welsh tribunals.

These activities should strengthen the linguistic infrastructure needed for Welsh to be used confidently across the justice system, public administration, education and professional practice. They also support the longer-term objective that legislation can be conceived, developed, drafted, discussed and applied through Welsh, rather than Welsh being added only at the end of an English-language process.

Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh language.

The proposal is expected to have a significant positive impact on the Welsh language. It will increase the volume, coherence, visibility and practical usability of Welsh-language law and associated legal information. It should benefit Welsh-speaking members of the public, practitioners, public bodies, the judiciary, tribunal users, students, researchers, translators, legislative drafters and Welsh learners with an interest in law and public affairs.

The positive impact is not automatic. Digital and AI-enabled projects could reproduce an English-language default if Welsh requirements are not incorporated from the outset. Welsh AI outputs may also be less reliable where training data and specialist terminology are more limited. Other potential risks include an English version being easier to find or use, inconsistent terminology, and third-party systems or suppliers providing weaker Welsh-language functionality.

These risks will need to be addressed through bilingual design and procurement requirements; equal testing of Welsh and English user journeys; publication of authoritative terminology; use of structured, reusable bilingual legislative data; appropriate involvement of Welsh-speaking users and legal specialists; and governance arrangements requiring human review of AI-assisted Welsh text. Welsh and English outputs will be treated as equally authoritative, and Welsh-language functionality will be considered throughout discovery, design, development, implementation and evaluation rather than as a final translation task.

How will the proposal affect Welsh speakers of all ages (both positive and/or adverse effects). You should include your response to the following when answering this question, and provide any other relevant information:

Welsh speakers of all ages should benefit from being better able to find, understand and use the law in Welsh. The immediate benefits are likely to be greatest for adults who encounter Welsh law through their work, education, civic participation or use of public services. However, clearer online legal information and explanatory materials may also assist younger people, families and educators to discuss rights and responsibilities through Welsh.

Consolidation and codification will replace fragmented and often English-only historic legislation with modern bilingual Acts arranged coherently by subject. Bilingual glossaries, consistent terminology and improved digital presentation should reduce practical barriers to reading and discussing law in Welsh. Welsh learners may benefit from reliable terminology and parallel Welsh and English texts, although material must be written and presented accessibly so that it does not serve only confident speakers or legal specialists.

No age group is expected to experience a direct adverse effect. The principal cross-cutting risk is digital exclusion: reliance on online or AI-enabled provision could disadvantage people who lack digital access, confidence or suitable assistive technology. Important material should therefore remain available in accessible formats, and digital provision should supplement rather than unnecessarily displace appropriate non-digital routes.

How will the proposal affect the sustainability of Welsh speaking communities[1] (both positive and/or adverse effects)?

---

[1] These can be close-knit rural communities, dispersed social networks in urban settings, and in virtual communities reaching across geographical spaces.

The programme is national and primarily concerns the legal and digital infrastructure of Wales, so it is not expected to change the demographic sustainability of any particular Welsh-speaking community directly. Nevertheless, it can make a positive contribution to the functional sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities, including geographically dispersed and virtual communities, by widening the domains in which Welsh can be used.

Welsh-speaking communities depend not only on interpersonal use of the language but also on the ability to conduct formal, professional and civic activity through Welsh. Accessible bilingual legislation, legal terminology, explanatory resources and tribunal services will help Welsh speakers use the language when dealing with public authorities, understanding legal rights and obligations, participating in consultations, studying law and delivering professional services. Digital access may be particularly valuable to dispersed networks and people living outside areas with a high density of Welsh speakers.

The likely effect is positive but modest and indirect.

How will the proposal affect Welsh medium education and Welsh learners of all ages, including adults (both positive and/or adverse effects)?

The programme does not alter education policy or the availability of Welsh-medium education, so no direct effect on school or post-16 provision is anticipated. It can, however, strengthen the resources available to teach and study Welsh law through the medium of Welsh.

Modern bilingual legislation, authoritative glossaries and clearer explanatory materials should support learners, teachers, lecturers and researchers. They may help develop Welsh-medium legal education and continuing professional development by providing coherent subject-specific terminology and reliable primary materials. The publication of glossaries through TermCymru and BydTermCymru should also make specialist vocabulary more accessible to learners and educators beyond the legal profession.

Welsh learners of all ages may benefit from bilingual navigation and improved presentation of online texts. Care will be needed to distinguish authoritative legal text from explanatory or AI-generated content, and to ensure resources are usable by people with different levels of fluency.

How will the proposal affect services[2] available in Welsh (both positive and/or adverse effects)? (e.g. health and social services, transport, housing, digital, youth, infrastructure, environment, local government etc.)

The programme should have a positive impact on Welsh-language legal and digital services. It will improve the underlying legal information used by Welsh Government, local government, tribunals and other public bodies, and should make it easier for

[2] The Cymraeg 2050 strategy aims to increase the range of services offered to Welsh speakers, and to see an increase in use of Welsh-language services.

those bodies and their users to locate and apply the law in Welsh. The intended Welsh-language interface for legislative drafting software, improved online access to Welsh legislation, bilingual glossaries and strengthened publication of tribunal decisions are particularly relevant.

Although the programme does not itself redesign services such as health, housing or transport, clearer and more accessible bilingual legislation generally can support officials and service providers to administer those services through Welsh and help people understand their entitlements and obligations in Welsh.

How will the proposal contribute to the sustainability and prosperity of the Welsh language in areas of high-density linguistic significance?

The programme has no land-use, housing or economic-development component and is therefore unlikely to affect directly the population balance or economic sustainability of areas with a high density of Welsh speakers. Its contribution is instead functional and national: it will strengthen the ability to use Welsh in law, public administration, education and professional life wherever Welsh speakers live or work.

This may be particularly beneficial in areas where Welsh is used routinely in local government, community organisations, agriculture, planning and other regulated activity. The consolidation and codification of subjects such as planning, agriculture, forestry, wildlife management and allotments will produce modern bilingual law and terminology relevant to those communities. Digital availability can also connect local expertise with wider Welsh-speaking professional and virtual networks.

How will you ensure that people know about services that are available in Welsh and are able to access and use them as easily as they can in English? What evidence / data have you used to inform your assessment, including evidence from Welsh speakers or Welsh language interest groups?

Welsh-language legal information and digital services will be made visible and accessible through bilingual publication, equally prominent Welsh and English navigation, consistent metadata, search optimisation in both languages and clear signposting between corresponding versions.

Communications about new legislation, Codes of Welsh law, glossaries and digital functions will be bilingual and should use channels that reach Welsh-speaking legal professionals, public bodies, community organisations, educators, learners and the wider public.

Evidence used for this draft assessment includes the programme itself; the statutory requirement that accessibility programmes include activities intended to facilitate use of Welsh; Cymraeg 2050; Welsh Government guidance on Welsh Language Impact Assessments and policy-making standards; experience from the first accessibility programme; and existing internal guidance on using technology and AI bilingually. The programme records the practical value of bilingual consolidation, authoritative

terminology, Welsh-language digital tools and Welsh tribunal services. It also recognises the need for trustworthy technology and human oversight.

This is an initial programme-level assessment.

What other evidence would help you to conduct a better assessment?

The assessment would be strengthened by baseline and comparative evidence on: use of Welsh and English versions of legislation and legal guidance; Welsh-language search behaviour and completion rates; user experience of legislation.gov.uk and gov.wales; and the accuracy and usability of Welsh outputs from proposed digital or AI tools.

Qualitative research would also help identify barriers that analytics alone may miss, particularly for Welsh-speaking practitioners, learners, members of the public without legal expertise, people using assistive technology, and users in both high-density and dispersed Welsh-speaking communities.

This should be taken into account if further Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken for individual activities within the programme.

How will you know if your policy is a success?

Success will mean that Welsh is embedded as an equal working language throughout the programme, with demonstrable improvements in the availability, consistency, discoverability and practical use of Welsh-language law.

Indicative measures of success include:

- consolidated and restated law (relating to allotments, wildlife, forestry and agriculture) available bilingually;
- a bilingual glossary being published for each new code of Welsh law and incorporated into authoritative terminology resources;
- Welsh-language search, navigation, drafting and other digital functions being tested with users and performing effectively;
- evidence that Welsh-language legislation, glossaries and explanatory resources are being found and used;
- positive feedback from Welsh-speaking users, including practitioners, learners and non-specialists;
- identified defects, disparities or terminology issues being corrected promptly;
- AI-assisted or machine-generated Welsh content being subject to appropriate human review and quality assurance; and
- individual projects recording how Welsh-language evidence and user feedback changed their design or delivery.

Measures should be proportionate to each activity and should compare Welsh and English outcomes where meaningful. The assessment should be revisited when material project decisions are taken, when user evidence becomes available, and if monitoring identifies a poorer experience or lower uptake in Welsh.