

Why use Welsh in Carmarthenshire?

Situation of the Welsh Language:

- There are 78,048 Welsh speakers according to the 2011 census. Carmarthenshire has the highest number of Welsh speakers in any of the Unitary Authorities in Wales,
- 43.9% of Carmarthenshire residents can speak Welsh,
- 56% of the children in Carmarthenshire receive Welsh medium education,
- Carmarthenshire has a unique asset in its bilingual population and a significant contribution to make towards creating a truly bilingual Wales.

Users identity and confidence:

- The Welsh language is the key to the identity of many of our population,
- Users can express their opinions and needs better in their first language,
- There are certain groups of Welsh speakers who really need to receive a service in their first language in order for their needs to be met effectively,
- It is our duty to facilitate the language choice of our users,
- According to a survey, 66% think that more should be done to promote the Welsh language – it is not only Welsh speakers who believe so.

The advantages of bilingualism:

- Research in the USA, Canada, Belgium, Catalonia and Wales shows that children who speak two languages fluently have good examination results,
- Bilingualism makes it easier to learn other languages,
- More and more of the county's employers and through Wales are looking for workers who can work comfortably in both languages,
- Research in Wales and Catalonia shows that the probability of being in employment increases between 3 and 5 per cent if you can read and write in two languages,
- The Welsh language offers unique opportunities to contribute in a unique and creative way to the family, community and workplace.

Why does the Welsh language need promoting?

- The Welsh language is an integral part of our national identity and culture. We must respect that inheritance and work to ensure that it is not lost for future generations,
- 6,148 Welsh speakers were lost in a decade, which is a decrease of 6.4% and for the first time in history, the percentage of Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire has dropped under half (43.9%). This is the biggest reduction in any part of Wales,
- The Welsh language needs to continue into the future, to ensure that we benefit from the creativity of our country's bilingualism.

The Language Standards:

- The Welsh Language Standards ask us to 'ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favorably than the English language', and specifically states that, 'Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so'.

Further information:

For the Welsh in Carmarthenshire, go to www.sirgar.llyw.cymru/trafodiaith

For the Welsh Language Standards, go to www.comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru/Pages/Croeso.aspx

Contact the council - iaithgybraeg@sirgar.gov.uk