

Guidelines for Parishes on Implementing THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

1. All the provisions of the Scheme are in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, which stipulates that in the conduct of public business in Wales the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality, ‘so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable’. What is **appropriate** and **reasonably practicable** will vary from parish to parish, according to linguistic needs, but the spirit of the Scheme is that all parishes will do whatever they can through the medium of Welsh.
2. There are **three** minimum requirements. **First**, that all parishes make arrangements to ensure that baptism, marriage and funeral services are available in Welsh for those who ask for them. In some cases, this may well mean that assistance must be sought from the deanery or even further afield. **Second**, that, over a period of five years, as external parish notice boards are renewed, the new boards will include at least the name of the Church in Wales, the name of the diocese, the name of the parish and the names of churches within the parish in both languages. This will enhance our corporate image as a bilingual Church. Services should be listed in the language in which they are held.
3. The **third** requirement is that PCCs should meet to consider what is appropriate and practicable for them. While practice will vary, all parishes are encouraged to make as much use of the Welsh language as possible. Consideration should be given to the following areas:
 - (a) *Church services*: While parishes need to respect the wishes of parishioners with regard to the language of church services, bilingual provision is encouraged with regard, for instance, to service booklets, readings, intercessions. For those whose preferred language is Welsh, new partnerships on a deanery or cross-deanery basis may be formed, e.g. while it may be impracticable to hold a Welsh language service in a parish where there are few Welsh speakers, it may well be practicable to do so on a deanery level (weekly, monthly or quarterly).
 - (b) *Other meetings*: Parishes will arrange other church meetings according to the linguistic needs of parishioners. Notices of public meetings should include a request that a Welsh/English language preference be expressed beforehand, and if prior notice of preference is received, contributions in the Welsh language should be encouraged.
 - (c) *Special groups*: Provision in Welsh is encouraged for special groups, such as children (Sunday School, Church School, and particularly in parishes where there are Welsh-medium schools), prayer groups and Bible study groups. Again, this may mean forming new partnerships, e.g. a deanery Sunday School, Bible study group, held through the medium of Welsh.
 - (d) *Printed material and websites*: It is recommended that parochial publications, letterheads, cards and websites should include at least the name of the Church in Wales, the name of the diocese, the name of the parish and the names of the churches within the parish in both languages. While the amount of Welsh on websites and in parochial publications, e.g. parish magazines, will vary according to local linguistic needs, parishes are encouraged to make as much use of the language as possible.
 - (e) *Administration*: It is recognised that full provision in Welsh will not be available in every parish. When necessary, clerics who are unable to communicate or correspond in Welsh are advised to establish a parochial missionary team to assist them. Where this is not possible, deaneries are encouraged to set up networks that can assist.
 - (f) *Advertising*: Parishes are encouraged to promote bilingual advertising and publicity.
 - (g) *Monitoring*: The Scheme will be monitored annually by the Area Deans. The first report to the Governing Body is due in April 2008.

In general, what is expected is a **positive** and **imaginative** approach to extend the use of the Welsh language in the life of the Province.

Further advice is available from the Language Officer, 39 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF119XF, 02920 348263 gwynnapgwilym@churcheinwales.org.uk

