



DIWYLLIANT
CONWY
CULTURE



USING WELSH IN YOUR BUSINESS

Tourism Toolkit

Tŷ Mawr Wylbrant, Conwy | © National Trust Images - Armhel de Serra



Welsh is good for business!

Over the last few years, we've seen an increased interest in the history and use of the Welsh language amongst visitors to Conwy; this ranges from questions about pronunciation and the meaning of Welsh place names, to enquiries about learning Welsh online and the best places to practise using Welsh when visitors are here.

Are there ways that you can harness this interest in the Welsh language to benefit your business?

This toolkit was produced by Conwy County Borough Council in partnership with Menter Iaith Conwy. Inside you will find information about the Welsh language in Conwy County, and tips that you may find useful when promoting your business or talking to customers.

Welsh is the heartbeat of our culture in Conwy County and we want to share it, helping new speakers and visitors to discover its magic. Creu Conwy is promoting the celebration of the Welsh language and culture in new, adventurous, playful and innovative ways.

For more information on Creu Conwy, visit: [Conwy Culture](#) | [Creu Conwy](#).

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

- Using Welsh can strengthen your brand and attract more customers as well as raising the profile of your business.
- Research shows that exposing customers to different languages can create a meaningful and memorable experience. Encountering unfamiliar words and phrases adds authenticity to the visitor experience and contributes to a sense of place. It's also a great way to deepen the connection with your customers.
- Welsh is a freely available and unique resource that adds value to your product or service by linking the heritage and cultural identity of Conwy to your customer offer.

Tourism and the Welsh language in Conwy

According to the 2021 Census Conwy County has 29,000 Welsh Speakers, which equates to 25.9% of the population, significantly higher than the national average of 17.8%.

From the creative spark that led to the establishment of an artists' colony in Betws-y-coed, through to the Victorian era which saw the growth of our seaside resorts at Llandudno, Penmaenmawr, Llanfairfechan and Colwyn Bay, tourism has been a key component of the culture and economy of Conwy County for hundreds of years.

Annually, the tourism sector in Conwy:

- contributes £900 million to the local economy
- attracts 7 million+ day visitors
- welcomes more than 2.5 million staying visitors, with a growing number from overseas
- supports more than 12,000 jobs



What can you do?

It's the simple things!

Encourage staff to wear badges or lanyards that show that they can speak Welsh, using the 'Iaith Gwaith' logo.

Cymraeg

This encourages Welsh speakers and promotes curiosity in people who are learning or who do not speak any Welsh.

Start where you are – you don't have to be fluent to use Welsh. A few simple greetings and everyday words can go a long way. Just a simple '*Diolch*' (*thank you*) is a good way to get started.

Bore da
Good morning

Prynhawn da
Good afternoon

Nos da
Goodnight

Croeso
Welcome

Su'mae / Sut wyt ti?
How are you?

Penblwydd Hapus
Happy Birthday

Hwyl
Bye

Iechyd da!
Cheers!
(Good health)

Pob lwc
Good luck



Signage

If you run a visitor attraction, bilingual information and interpretation can easily be incorporated into the visitor experience.

Don't be afraid to come up with playful and interesting ways of presenting Welsh phrases (see our box on idioms for some inspiration!). Bilingual material is usually more cost-effective than producing separate Welsh and English versions. For simple advice and guidance, visit this communications guide from the UK Government:

[2019-08-01_WEB_PUB_.pdf](#)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

IDIOMS AND PHRASES

Bwrw hen wragedd a ffyn

Literal translation:

Raining old wives
and walking sticks

Meaning:

Raining really heavily
(similar to raining cats and dogs)

Cenedl heb iaith cenedl heb galon

Meaning:

A nation without a language
is a nation without a heart

Dros ben llestri

Literal translation:

Over the dishes

Meaning:

Over the top

Siarad fel melin bupur

Literal translation:

Talking like a pepper mill

Meaning:

Talking non-stop

Translation

Helo Blod is a free, fast and friendly Welsh translation service which offers up to 10 enquiries for translation (up to 500 words in total) and text-checking per calendar month.

businesswales.gov.wales/heloblod/



Use a few Welsh words and interesting facts in your visitor information

Consider introducing a few basic Welsh words and phrases, or perhaps a glossary of common terms and Welsh-language facts, into the information you provide for visitors, such as in bedroom browsers, on noticeboards or other orientation information. This is often a good conversation starter, and you'll find that your visitors will want to ask questions and try pronouncing the words.

WORDS RELATING TO PLACE

afon – river

bach/fach – small

bryn – hill

caer – fort

carn/garn – a cairn (burial mound)

carreg – rock

castell – castle

coed/goed – tree

ffordd – road

ffynnon – well

Eryri – Snowdonia

llan – parish

llyn – lake

maen – stone

môr – sea

mawr/fawr – large

mynydd – mountain

nant – valley

penrhyn – headland or promontory

plas – hall

pont – bridge

stryd – street

traeth – beach

Many of Conwy County's visitors are cultural heritage tourists who are interested in exploring castles, churches, old buildings and ancient monuments, and they are often curious about the history of the area. Sharing facts about notable characters such as Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (c.1173-1240), prince of Wales, who is depicted in a small monument on Lancaster Square in Conwy, or Esther Lloyd Jones who managed one of the earliest bilingual guided tour businesses in the area, is a good way of engaging visitors with this cultural heritage and the Welsh language.

Did you know?

- The Welsh language developed out of another Celtic language called Brittonic around 550 AD. Which was widely spoken across Britain.
- Modern Welsh is one of the P-Celtic languages, sharing language patterns with Modern Cornish and Modern Breton.
- The oldest manuscript written in Welsh was compiled c.1250. However, it's thought that most, if not all, of the poetry and prose contained in Welsh medieval manuscripts is older than the manuscript itself.
- Initially, the Welsh language was spoken everywhere in Wales. Even during the Norman/English Conquest of Wales (1066-1283), about 90% of the population spoke Welsh.
- Industrialisation in the 19th century saw the population of Wales increase dramatically, with people moving here to work from all parts of the UK and Ireland. As a result, the percentage of Welsh speakers dropped to 49% by 1901. Now around 18% of people in Wales speak Welsh.

“ How do you say the name of this place?”

The most popular way to engage visitors with Welsh is through place names and how to pronounce them. Historical place names are an integral part of our rich history and culture. They are often descriptive and tell us about a geographical location, to whom a place belonged, who worked there, or an event during the period when the place name was given. Visitors enjoy practising the pronunciations, particularly when it comes to long place names, and finding out what they mean. See below some examples and how to break the place names down phonetically.

Betws-y-coed -

prayer house in the woods
(bet-oos-uh-coyd)

Llanrwst -

church of St Grwst (hlan-roost)

Penmaenmawr -

great stone headland
(pen-mine-mowrr)

Dwygyfylchi -

two circular forts
(dooy-guv-ulh-ee)

Llanfairfechan -

little church of Mary
(hlan-vire-veghan)

Llandudno -

church of St Tudno (hlan-did-no)

Conwy -

river of reeds (con-wee)

Carneddau -

cairns (carneth-eye)

Capelulo -

St Ulo's chapel (cappelillo)

Abergwyngregyn -

estuary of the white shells
(aber-gwin-greggin)

Caerhun -

Rhun's fort (kire-heen)

Rowen -

the white gravel (row-wen)

Labelling

Bilingual labelling on your products or as part of your menus can build a sense of place and local flavour. For example, local micro-breweries have named their brews after local features or characters. Cwrw Nant from Pentrefoelas have beers called *Tir Abad* (Abbot's Land) and *Aur y Felin* (Gold of the Mill); and the Original Welsh Candle Company have added new candle names and descriptions to their range that are relevant to Conwy County, such as "rhwng môr a mynydd" (between sea and mountain) – the traditional marketing slogan for Penmaenmawr.



NEGES@HOME

Neges@Home is an initiative to help businesses reach new customers, specifically visitors coming to the area to enjoy what North Wales has to offer. Find out more at: negesathome.co.uk

Neges@Home services include:

- market intelligence on consumer trends and expectations
- information and support on using the Welsh language
- facilitating collaboration with other businesses
- commissioning specialist support to develop food packages
- piloting food packages by working with booking agents, cottage owners, caravan sites, glamping venues
- contributing towards the costs of green packaging solutions

Conwy Tourism Ambassador programme

The Conwy Tourism Ambassador programme gives people the opportunity to learn about Conwy County's tourism offer. The online course provides people with a baseline knowledge of the area's history, heritage, cultural offer, landscape, and leisure and recreation activities in order to improve the overall visitor experience. This online course is ideal for:

- individuals working within the tourism industry who want to expand their knowledge
- individuals studying tourism courses
- businesses looking to upskill staff to improve the visitor experience
- anyone who lives in our area or has an interest in it and would like to learn more about our tourism offer

As you work your way through the course, you will receive bronze, silver and gold awards and you will also be awarded with a Conwy Tourism Ambassador badge and window sticker. These can be displayed in business premises or simply added to your personal portfolio. The programme includes a module dedicated to the practical use of the Welsh language. If you would like to find out more or enrol, then please register on the website:

conwyambassador.wales



EVENTS

You can hear Welsh being spoken at weekly markets in towns such as Llanrwst, or at local Eisteddfodau and agricultural shows throughout the summer. Traditional fairs such as the Conwy Honey Fair are other opportunities to sample the local language and culture. You may also come across Welsh-language concerts and performances in local pubs, community centres and theatres such as Venue Cymru and Theatr Colwyn.

PRACTICAL HINTS AND TIPS

- Find out what's happening locally in relation to the Welsh language (attractions, sightseeing, activities, events, food and shopping).
- Encourage and support your staff to learn or improve their Welsh.
- Introduce Welsh words into your business when refurbishing or opening new premises, replacing internal and external signage, preparing new menus, recruiting staff, developing new products and services, reprinting literature or developing your website.

CASE STUDIES

The Llanrwst sign

As part of the celebration of the National Eisteddfod in 2019, a giant sign based on the original Hollywood sign was erected above the town. Many people climbed the hill for a selfie during the event. This partnership project, led by Ffiwsar was supported by Conwy County Borough Council and the LEADER element of the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.



Penmaenmawr Museum

Situated in the heart of the pretty coastal town of Penmaenmawr, this community museum features a timeline exhibition that leads you through the area's fascinating history, from the ancient past through to 19th-century quarrying and tourism. Penmaenmawr Museum's collection comprises 4,000 objects, photographs and documents, including an extensive number of objects from local Welsh chapels.

The museum's displays, information and services are provided bilingually. Support is available for non-Welsh speakers to access Welsh-language documents in the museum's collection, by appointment. During the summer months, the museum provides a series of Welsh-language history walks and Welsh-language induction sessions for tourists. penmaenmawrmuseum.co.uk

Zip World

Zip World's dream of creating extraordinary experiences was born in North Wales and remains at the heart of the business. The local culture and environment were the catalysts for the business's growth since it started in 2013.

Zip World's work in supporting and promoting the Welsh language through its business focuses mainly on its staffing and employment policies.

On average, 70% of the Zip World team live within 5 miles of their place of work. The employment opportunities for the area have grown as the company has grown. Welsh-speaking local people have the opportunity to undertake roles with competitive salaries, with on-the-job training in their local area.

Zip World prides itself on the number of the team who are Welsh speaking. The staff wear 'Cymraeg' badges so that Welsh-speaking visitors can identify them and receive services in the language of their choice.

Donegal Tours

“ This isn’t England with a funny accent...”

The perfect option for the time-pressed tourist is a day tour of the Donegal Gaeltacht, learning and practising useful phrases throughout the tour, which are sure to impress friends and family when they return home. Most of the tour guides are fluent Irish speakers.

Website: donegaltours.ie

The Basque Country

The Basque Country (Euskadi) is an autonomous community in northern Spain and southern France with a distinct language that pre-dates many European languages. According to Lonely Planet, travellers will hear Euskara spoken throughout the region, and see the language (with its dedicated typeface) printed everywhere from train station schedules to newspapers and café menus.

Bilingual farm visits

Gareth Wyn Jones, a farmer based in Llanfairfechan, offers guided tours of his farm to groups of visitors. In addition to introducing them to the challenges and benefits facing agriculture, he takes his customers to historical sites. One of the highlights of the tour is getting visitors to instruct his faithful sheepdog – in Welsh!

FURTHER RESOURCES

County libraries and museums

There’s plenty of support out there. Conwy County has ten bilingual libraries, including the Conwy Culture Centre which also acts as the county archive. Staff are more than willing to field enquiries and signpost you to relevant sources of further information. Libraries can be found at Abergele, Cerrigydrudion, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Kinmel Bay, Llandudno, Llanfairfechan, Llanrwst, Penmaenmawr and Penrhyn Bay. The service also offers downloadable e-books, e-audiobooks, newspapers and magazines free of charge.

The county has numerous museums and galleries including Llandudno and Penmaenmawr museums, and Mostyn in Llandudno. Knowledgeable staff and volunteers are always on hand to give advice and guidance. For more information on these and other cultural sites and services in Conwy, visit: conwyculture.com

Menter Iaith Conwy

Menter Iaith Conwy, based in Llanrwst, is the county's main Welsh language body, offering advice and support on all aspects of Welsh, including bespoke courses and advice to businesses and third sector organisations. They also run events such as music and drama performances. They're always open to new ideas and working with others to encourage and enhance the use of Welsh in the area miconwy.cymru



Welsh for Visitors: A little goes a long way

Published by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch in 2018, this is a handy guide to using basic Welsh words and easy phrases that might crop up in daily conversation:

carreg-gwalch.cymru



Cynnig Cymraeg

The Welsh Offer is recognition by the Welsh Language Commissioner given to organisations with a strong plan to offer more of their services in Welsh. For more information, see:

Cynnig Cymraeg welshlanguagecommissioner.wales



UK Government Wales
Llywodraeth y DU Cymru

This toolkit was funded by the UK Government via the UK Community Renewal Fund.

The research behind this toolkit

Conwy County Borough Council commissioned a project in 2022 to examine how the Welsh language is currently used in the local tourism sector, to scope attitudes to the Welsh language amongst visitors and tourism businesses, and to find out what visitors and tourism businesses needed to know in order to work more closely with the Welsh language. The research results led to the production of this toolkit.

The survey with local businesses, visitors, Welsh-language speakers and learners revealed:

- positive attitudes towards the Welsh language and a wish to see it being used
- some of the strongest comments in favour of promoting the language came from non-Welsh speakers from outside Wales
- a small minority of visitors and businesses expressed negative views about the Welsh language
- most businesses were eager to use the Welsh language and would like more support to do so

Our survey said...

69% of non-Welsh-speaking visitors surveyed, strongly agreed or agreed that the Welsh language enriches visitors' cultural experience.

70% of all businesses surveyed stated that they use the Welsh language, including all those who completed the questionnaire in Welsh.

76% of businesses that completed the survey in English, either agreed strongly or agreed with the statement that the Welsh language enriches visitors' experience.

71% of businesses that completed the survey in English, either agreed strongly or agreed that the Welsh language was of benefit to businesses, compared to 100% of respondents who completed the business survey in Welsh.

Visitor comments...

" I love the sound of the language; it sounds warm to me"

" Love that people are keeping the language alive..."

" It should be preserved and celebrated"

Businesses...

" I use Welsh every day with anyone who wishes to speak the language..."

" Everything we do is bilingual"

" I try to say 'bore da' in the morning and have Diolch signs"