



Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

Welsh Language Scheme: 2009

Introduction

Under the Welsh Language Act 1993 every public body providing services to the public in Wales has to prepare a scheme setting out how it will provide those services in Welsh.

This is the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board scheme and it describes how we will give effect, so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable, to the principle established by the Welsh Language Act that, in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on a basis of equality.

In this scheme, the term public means individuals, legal persons and corporate bodies. It includes the public as a whole, or a section of the public, as well as individual members of the public. The majority of our contact with the public is with those farmers and growers that pay a statutory levy to AHDB under the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Order 2008.

This scheme covers the services that we provide to the public in Wales through our sector organisations. It predominantly applies to some aspects of activity delivered by our milk sector organisation, DairyCo, which raises around 13% of its levy from Welsh dairy farmers.

Further information about the scope and purpose of Welsh language schemes can be found in the Welsh Language Board's guidelines (www.byig-wlb.org.uk).

This scheme was prepared under Section 21 of the Act - and in accordance with guidelines issued by the Welsh Language Board under Section 9 of the Act. It came into effect on 30/03/09.



Background to the organisation

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) is a Non Departmental Public Body established under the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Order 2008. It became operational on 1 April 2008

AHDB is a statutory levy-funded organisation that serves the sectors of meat and livestock (cattle, sheep and pigs) in England; commercial horticulture, milk and potatoes in Great Britain; cereals and oilseeds in the UK.

Our role is to help improve the efficiency and competitiveness of various agriculture and horticulture sectors within the UK.

Levies raised from farmers/growers in each sector can only be used to the benefit of that specific sector, and the responsibility for setting and delivering the strategies to deploy the levy income we collect is delegated to the boards of our six sector Organisations:

- Cereals and oilseeds (UK) - HGCA
- Commercial horticulture (GB) - Horticultural Development Company
- Beef and lamb(England) - EBLEX
- Milk (GB) – DairyCo
- Pigs (England) - BPEX
- Potatoes (GB) - Potato Council

AHDB and its sector organisations will be co-located in Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire by mid 2010. This process will start during Autumn 2008 and will culminate with the move into a new building on the Stoneleigh site during 2010.

Further information on AHDB can be found on its website at www.ahdb.org.uk.

Service delivery

Where we are delivering services specifically targeted at our levy payers in Wales we will ensure that as many as possible of these are available in Welsh. We will let the public know when they are available in Welsh.

Our regulatory functions – and services undertaken on our behalf by third parties

Any agreements or arrangements which we make with third parties based inside/outside Wales will be consistent with the relevant parts of this scheme, when those agreements or arrangements relate to the provision of services to the public in Wales. This will ensure that third parties provide those services in accordance with this scheme.

Standards of quality

Services provided in Welsh and English will be of equal quality and will be provided within the same timescale.

Dealing with the Welsh speaking public

Correspondence

Our normal practice will be as follows:

When someone writes to us in Welsh we will issue a reply in Welsh (if a reply is required). Our target time for replying will be the same as for replying to letters written in English (15 working days).

When we initiate correspondence with an individual or group of levy payers in Wales, we will do so in Welsh when we know that they would prefer to correspond in Welsh.

When we send out standard or circular correspondence as part of a wider GB/UK mailing, we will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Board, to help assess the need to provide bi-lingual versions for those circulated in Wales.

Standard or circular correspondence mailed solely in Wales will be bilingual.

If the Welsh and English versions of any correspondence have to be published separately, our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time.

Enclosures sent with bilingual letters will be bilingual, when available.

Enclosures sent with Welsh letters will be Welsh or bilingual, when available.

The above will apply to e-mail correspondence as well as paper correspondence.

All hard-copy Welsh correspondence that we issue will be signed.

Telephone communications

Because of our location it would not be practicable for us to conduct telephone conversations in Welsh. However, when we set up telephone help-lines, or similar facilities, to give information, services or support specifically to the public in Wales we will provide a Welsh language service. This will be advertised alongside the English language service. Both services will share the same telephone number.

Meetings with the General Public

We will provide simultaneous or consecutive translation from Welsh into English at any open meetings we hold with the General Public unless we have established that all participants are likely to use the same language.

Invitations and advertisements for public meetings will be bilingual and will invite the public to let us know in advance in which language they wish to speak.

We will let those attending public meetings know when translation facilities are available – and encourage contributions in Welsh.

Other meetings with our public in Wales

Because of our location it would not be practicable for us to normally conduct face-to-face meetings with the public through the medium of Welsh. However, where specific Wales-based projects are undertaken this may be appropriate and will be considered.

Other dealings with our public in Wales

When we undertake **public surveys** as part of wider GB/UK surveys, we will assess the need to provide bi-lingual versions for those circulated in Wales. Surveys undertaken solely in Wales will be bilingual

When we arrange **seminars, training courses** or similar events for our public in Wales, we will assess the need to provide them in Welsh. In conducting this assessment, we will consider the preferred language of those attending and the availability of Welsh speaking trainers.

Our public face

Exhibitions and advertising campaigns

The public information, exhibition and advertising material we produce to specifically target the general public in Wales will be produced fully bilingually, or as separate Welsh and English versions. If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately, both versions will be equal with regard to size, prominence and quality. Both versions will be available simultaneously and will be equally accessible.

Any advertisements placed in English language newspapers (or similar material) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or will appear as separate Welsh and English versions (with both versions appearing simultaneously, and being equal with regard to size, prominence and quality).

In Welsh language publications advertisements will be in Welsh only.

Any audio-visual displays, audio tours or interactive media that we prepare specifically for the public in Wales will be bilingual.

Publications

We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Board, to identify objectively when material should be published in Welsh – either as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal size and quality - and our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

Websites

The AHDB Corporate website and the main websites for HGCA, HDC, DairyCo and the Potato Council will include one or more introductory pages in both Welsh and English.

When designing new websites, or redeveloping our existing websites, we will take into account the Welsh Language Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards* and any other guidance issued by the Board with regard to developing websites.

Whenever we post English language publications on our websites, the Welsh versions will be posted at the same time, if available.

Forms and associated explanatory material

We will use a scoring system, to be agreed with the Board, to identify objectively when forms and associated explanatory material should be published in Welsh – either as separate Welsh and English versions or as bilingual documents.

If the Welsh and English versions have to be published separately (for instance, where a single document would be too lengthy or bulky), both versions will be of equal size and quality - and our normal practice will be to ensure that both versions are available at the same time and are equally accessible. Each version will note clearly that the material is available in the other language.

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices

Official notices, public notices and staff recruitment notices placed in English language newspapers (or similar media) distributed mainly or wholly in Wales, will be bilingual, or appear as separate Welsh and English versions. Notices will be in Welsh in Welsh language publications.

The Welsh and English versions will be equal in terms of format, size, quality and prominence – whether produced as a single bilingual version, or as separate Welsh and English notices.

In the English language media, posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential may be advertised in Welsh, with a brief description in English.

Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution will be in English, unless the post is one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English.

Any official notices, public notices or staff recruitment notices placed elsewhere in Wales will be in accordance with the above.

Implementing the scheme

Staffing

We have no offices in Wales. Even so, we will seek information about the Welsh language skills of job applicants and existing staff.

Recruitment

For any posts having extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales we will consider whether fluency in Welsh should be a desirable or essential skill – and this will be stated in job competencies and advertisements.

Language training

We will support and fund training for staff that, as part of their duties, have extensive and regular contact with the public in Wales – and who wish to learn Welsh, or improve their Welsh.

Information and Communications Technology

The need to provide information and services in Welsh, and operate in accordance with this scheme, will be catered for as we develop, design and purchase information and communications technology products and services.

As we develop or procure ICT systems we will take into account the Board's *Bilingual Software Guidelines and Standards*.

Partnership working

When we are the strategic and financial leader within a formal partnership, we will ensure that any public service aspects comply with this scheme

When we join a formal partnership which another organisation is leading, our input to the partnership will comply with this scheme and we will encourage the other partners to comply.

When we are a partner in a consortium, we will encourage the consortium to comply with this scheme. When acting in the name of the consortium, we will operate in accordance with this scheme.

The above refers only to formal partnerships dealing with services available to the public in Wales.

Internal arrangements

The measures in this scheme carry the full **authority**, support and approval of our organisation.

Operating in accordance with the scheme will be a **compliance** issue.

We will appoint a senior member of staff to **coordinate** the work required to deliver, monitor and review this scheme.

We will prepare, and regularly update, a detailed **action plan** to be agreed with the Board, setting out how we will operate in accordance with this scheme. The action plan will come into effect on the date on which the scheme comes into effect, or as soon as possible thereafter. The plan will include targets and a report on progress against each target. The overall aim of the action plan will be to help ensure that we deliver the commitments set out in this scheme within the agreed timeframes.

We will report to the Welsh Language Board on our progress in delivering this scheme, when requested by them.

The scheme will be **publicised** to our staff, and to the public in Wales. It will be published on our website in an appropriate place.

Any form of contact with the public in Wales, which is not specifically dealt with by this scheme, will be undertaken in a manner which is consistent with the general principles enshrined in this scheme.

When we release information to Welsh levy payers under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, we will do so in the language in which it exists within the organisation's files/archives.

Reviewing and amending the scheme

We will review this scheme within four years of its coming into effect.

Also, from time to time, we may need to review this scheme, or propose amendments to this scheme, because of changes to our functions, or to the circumstances in which we undertake those functions, or for any other reason.

No changes will be made to this scheme without the Welsh Language Board's approval.

Complaints and suggestions for improvement

Complaints related to this scheme, or suggestions for improvement, should be directed to:

Head of Communications
Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire
CV8 2TL

or by e.mail to info@ahdb.org.uk

We will co-operate with the Board in order to resolve complaints - and during any investigations held under Section 17 of the Welsh Language Act.

Appendix A – Main targets for scheme delivery

Target	Date of completion
Staff guidance	
Provide guidance for all staff to ensure that they are aware of the need to consider Welsh language implications in delivering their services and how to deal with Welsh correspondence and enquiries. Also build into revised conditions of service	Sept 2009
Scoring system	
Agree with the Board a scoring system for: Circular correspondence, Forms and associated explanatory material and Publications	April 2009
Staffing	
Identify workplaces and jobs where the ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable	Sept 2009
Websites	
Put in place a Welsh Language page(s) on the main AHDB website and also on the websites of sector organisations which have a GB or UK remit	Dec 2009
Internal arrangements	
Provide periodic guidance for managers to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities	May 2009
Arrange a suitably qualified translation service	April 2009