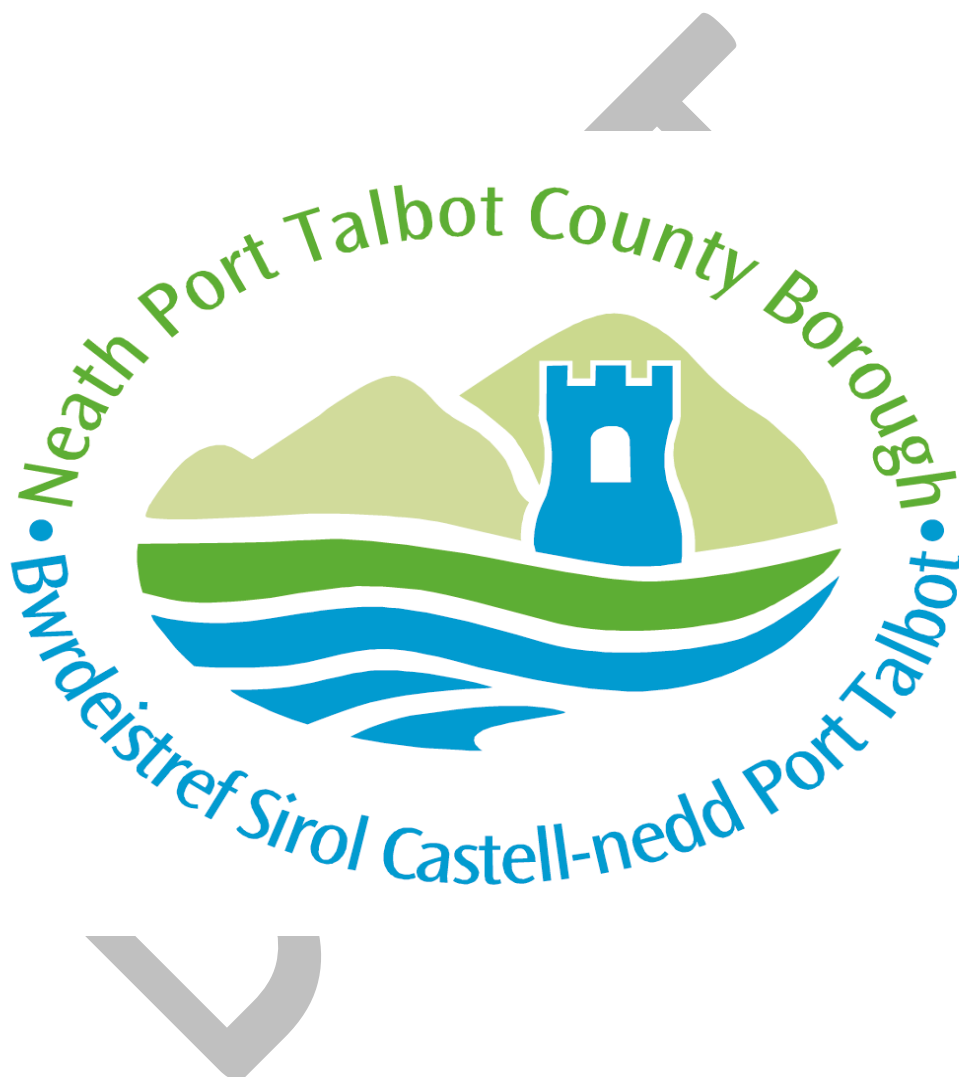


Neath Port Talbot Welsh Language Promotion Strategy



This document is also available in Welsh

Introduction

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, passed by the National Assembly for Wales, modernised the existing legal framework regarding the use of the Welsh language in the delivery of public services.

The 2011 Measure also included:

- giving the Welsh Language official status in Wales meaning that Welsh should be treated no less favourably than the English language;
- establishing the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner who has responsibility for promoting the Welsh language and improving the opportunities people have to use it;
- creating a procedure for introducing duties in the form of language standards that explain how organizations are expected to use the Welsh language and create rights for Welsh speakers;
- making provision regarding promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increasing its use in everyday life;
- making provision regarding investigating an interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language.

The Measure gives the Welsh Language Commissioner authority to impose duties on a wide range of organisations to provide services in Welsh, to mainstream the language into policy development, and to develop strategies with regard to increasing the use of Welsh at work.

The Welsh Language Commissioner issued Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, along with all other local authorities in Wales, with a Compliance Notice under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Compliance Notice contained 171 Welsh Language Standards the Council had to comply with in respect of the delivery of Welsh language services.

A range of standards relating to service delivery, policy making, operational, promotion and record keeping, were applied to the Council. Under the promotion standard 145 the Council is required to develop a Welsh language Promotion Strategy to help promote the Welsh language with the aim of increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough.

While it is not in the Council's gift alone to increase the numbers of Welsh speakers it can utilise its responsibilities to help influence this, both directly and indirectly, the across the county borough.

The Strategy has been developed taking into account the Council's own areas of responsibility, its limited resources, the support and activities of the Strategic Language Forum and other partners. The Strategy aims to be as ambitious as possible given the Council's limitations in influence, resources and the linguistic profile of the county borough. The action plan has been developed within current budgetary constraints. A number of actions have been included which are already being delivered; through the auspices of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, external grants/funding and work already being undertaken by external organisations which contribute to the aims of the Strategy.

Strategic Context

Welsh Language Measure 2011

The Measure:

- gave the Welsh Language official status in Wales meaning that Welsh should be treated no less favourably than the English language;
- established the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner who has responsibility for promoting the Welsh language and improving the opportunities people have to use it;
- created a procedure for introducing duties in the form of language standards that explain how organizations are expected to use the Welsh language and create rights for Welsh speakers;
- made provision regarding promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language and increasing its use in everyday life;
- made provision regarding investigating an interference with the freedom to use the Welsh language.

Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations 2015

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 made provision for the specification of standards of conduct in relation to the Welsh language.

The Regulations specified Welsh language standards in relation to Welsh Ministers, county and county borough councils and National Park authorities and authorised the Welsh Language Commissioner to issue a compliance notice to these bodies.

The compliance notice as applied to the Council includes service delivery, policy making, operational, promotion and record keeping standards. As a result of the requirements of the promotion standards the Council has developed its Welsh Language Promotion Strategy.

The Welsh language promotion standards impose duties on local authorities across Wales to promote the use of Welsh more widely and to support and encourage its use within the communities they serve

Standard 145 (Promotion) states that every local authority must produce, and publish on their website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how they propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in their area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters):

- a target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in the area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in the area by the end of the 5 year period concerned;
- a statement setting out how they intend to reach that target; and conduct a review of the strategy and publish a revised version on their website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

Cymraeg 2050 Strategy

This is the Welsh Ministers' strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language. The strategy supersedes A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012-17, and its associated policy statement, A living language: a language for living – Moving forward. The Cymraeg 2050 Strategy sets out the Welsh Government's long-term approach to achieving the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050

Education is central to the Welsh Government's vision with young people coming out of the education system ready and proud to use the language in all contexts. The aim of the Strategy is to reach a position where the Welsh language is an integral element of all aspects of everyday life.

Even though this is a five-year plan it should set the foundation for a long-term language strategy which will contribute to the aim of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

More than just Words

The 'More than just Words' Strategic Framework was drawn up in 2012 with the aim of strengthening Welsh language services in health, social services and social care. Central to the strategy is the challenge of developing the 'Active Offer', namely that staff members will offer Welsh language services to patients, rather than waiting for patients to request them.

The strategy was updated in 2016 with 'More than just words.... follow-on strategic framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care 2016-2019', and resources were provided to enable staff to implement it.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This Act is a means of helping the public bodies that are listed in the Act to think in the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, to try to prevent problems and follow a consistent approach in order to improve the well-being of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

One of the seven Wellbeing goals contained in the Act is a 'Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language - a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.'

Local Context

Work we have already done

Although the Welsh Language Promotion Standards are a new regulatory element, work has been conducted within the county borough for some time. The Council has supported and promoted the Welsh language through the commitments made in its Welsh Language Schemes since 1996; welcoming correspondence in Welsh, providing bilingual documentation and publications, designating posts, ensuring the website is bilingual, incorporating language requirements in the third sector grant application process, provided language and cultural awareness training for staff and social work degree students;

ensured simultaneous translation facilities have been available at scheduled Council meetings since June 2013 and supported and delivered various Welsh language/cultural events and activities through the Youth Service and partners organisations.

Recent legislation, including the Welsh Language Standards (No1) Regulations and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, has increased the prominence of Welsh language, heritage and culture and has provided a timely opportunity to reassess the Council's approach in the continuation of the work already started.

This strategy builds on the Council's previous work in supporting and promoting the language and looks to a future where the Welsh language is promoted across all sectors, where the numbers accessing Welsh medium education are increasing and Welsh is an inherent part of daily life. The Council, the local language initiative Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot, Cymraeg Byd Busnes, Cymraeg i Blant, Mudiad Meithrin, the Urdd (Welsh language youth movement) and schools all providing services and working together to promote the language in the county borough. As a result Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot along with Menter Abertawe have created a joint Strategic Language Forum, made up of organisations who are responsible for language planning within Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, and which will serve as a mechanism to develop elements of the strategy.

Welsh language profile

Council

Over recent years the financial constraints faced by the Council has resulted in a large number of staff leaving the Council through the voluntary redundancy/early retirement processes and a recruitment moratorium. As a result staff numbers have been reduced and consequently this has affected the numbers of Welsh speakers

Directorate and Division	Total employees	Total speak Welsh	%
Chief Executive (Senior Management Team)	6	2	33.33
Chief Executive's Office			
Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services	84	10	11.90
Human Resources	82	12	14.63
Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning			
Participation	388	35	9.02
Transformation	360	48	13.33

Directorate and Division	Total employees	Total speak Welsh	%
Environment			
Engineering and Transport	147	14	9.52
Planning & Public Protection	102	13	12.75
Property and Regeneration	185	20	10.81
South Wales Trunk Road Agency	168	12	7.14
Streetcare Services	521	47	9.02
Finance and Corporate Services			
Financial Services	172	7	4.07
ICT	95	4	4.21
Legal Services	94	10	10.64
Social Services Health and Housing Directorate			
Commissioning, Support & Direct Services	562	62	11.03
Social Work Services	631	65	10.30
Western Bay	29	2	6.90
Total	3626	363	10.01

Neath Port Talbot

It is important to understand the current demographic as interventions will be different depending on the linguistic make up of each area. A look at the 2011 census will allow us to understand where we sit with the language before looking at interventions.

According to the 2011 Census, around 15.3% of the county borough's population could speak Welsh, which equates to 20,698 individuals. The vast majority of these speakers lived in the top of the Swansea and Amman Valleys with some communities such as Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Cwmllynfell and Lower Brynamman amongst the highest percentage of Welsh speaking areas in Wales. However, these are the areas that saw the greatest decline in terms of percentage and numbers of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011.

As noted in the tables below, some communities such as Godre'r Graig and Ystalyfera had seen a decline of over 10% within a decade. It could be argued that the area that stretches

from Trebanos to Cwmllynfell and Rhos to Gwaun Cae Gurwen is the most important in the county borough in terms of its linguistic significance as it contains the highest numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers. This area is the county borough's linguistic axis and Menter Iaith's 'Partneriaith Aman Tawe' project does pay specific attention to this area, in terms of creating interventions to slow down the decline in numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers. Losing this natural endowment would have a huge psychological impact on the rest of the county borough and any significant growth in the number of children attending the Welsh-medium schools of that area and those adults who are learning the language voluntarily.

This is one of the reasons why the Welsh Language Board decided to establish a specific language promotion scheme in 2011 for the Aman Tawe area and appoint full time officers to promote the Welsh language in these significant areas. The table below shows the percentage change in terms of Welsh speakers in these communities between 2001 and 2011: -

Community	% of Welsh speakers (2001)	% of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change
Cwmllynfell	68.2	58.2	-9.4
Lower Brynamman	68.1	60.8	-7.3
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	67.9	55.8	-12.1
Ystalyfera	54.6	46	-8.6
Trebanos	43.4	33.6	-8.8
Godre'r Graig	41.5	30.1	-11.4
Pontardawe	37.4	31	-6.4
Alltwen	35.9	29.5	-6.4
Rhos	28.6	24.7	-3.9
Crynant	46.53	25.1	-21.43

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

Although percentages are a good reflection of the density of Welsh speakers, they can largely be misleading as a measure of language viability. Numbers on the other hand give a more detailed picture of demographic changes, and with Welsh Government's aim it seems that the shift will be towards creating greater numbers rather than increasing percentages.

The table below shows a significant drop in the number of speakers of the language over a decade within traditional Welsh communities such as Cwmllynfell, Lower Brynamman, Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Ystalyfera. Crynant would also be considered an area of significant decline and any future developments should take into account areas such as Crynant.

Community	Number of Welsh speakers (2001)	Number of Welsh speakers (2011)	Change	% Comparable change
Cwmllynfell	741	669	-72	-9.72
Lower Brynamman	861	776	-85	-9.87
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	1,860	1,5726	-288	-15.48
Ystalyfera	1,614	1,339	-275	-17.04
Trebanos	580	459	-121	-20.86
Godre'r Graig	580	473	-107	-18.45
Pontardawe	1,826	1,624	-202	-11.06
Alltwen	800	664	-136	-17.0
Rhos	692	588	-104	-15.03
Crynant	699	465	-234	-33.47

Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

Losing so many speakers in a relatively short period of time weakens the linguistic foundation of those areas and accelerates the decline in the language as the language shift undermines the confidence and willingness to use Welsh socially, as well as being a contributing factor in fewer opportunities to practice or use the language.

There are a number of reasons why linguistic erosion occurs in areas with high percentages and relatively high numbers of Welsh speakers - a feature that is common place among similar communities within the Amman and Swansea Valleys. Among the main factors that contribute to a decline in language is: -

- Lack of language transmission at home – currently identified as the key
- Out-migration / Immigration
- Negative perception of the inherent value of the language
- Lack of awareness of the advantages of bilingualism
- Lack of confidence in Welsh speakers
- The spread of English into traditional Welsh languages
- Mixed language marriages
- The power of Anglo-American influence on the interests of children and young people
- More deaths than births among Welsh-speaking families

There was a marked decline in the percentage of speakers of the language in the traditional Welsh communities as well as at county borough level. However, as it is a social and cultural medium its strength should be measured by usage, status and its visibility locally. In those areas where the intensity of Welsh speakers remains strong, Welsh holds

its own relatively successfully as a daily language for the community, although powerful factors contribute to its fate.

Less than 10% of people spoke Welsh in communities such as Glyncoirwg, Aberavon, Taibach, Baglan, Briton Ferry, Cimla, Cymmer and Neath. These are amongst the lowest percentages of Welsh speakers in the county borough. The remaining wards in Neath Port Talbot show percentages of between 10% and 17%.

On a more hopeful note, the number of children who speak Welsh at home or who are fluent but do not speak Welsh in the household has risen over recent years, as identified by Primary School Headteachers. According to the latest figures from the Welsh Government there are around 1,600 (7.7%) primary school children in the county borough who speak Welsh at home but 15.2% of all children are considered fluent in Welsh. These figures certainly reflect the commendable efforts made by the Welsh medium schools. However, it is apparent that only a low number of children from Welsh medium primary schools such as Cwmllynfell, Trebanos and Gwaun Cae Gurwen move on to Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera for their secondary education.

Many Welsh-speaking children from these primary schools go to Cwmtawe Comprehensive School to receive their education through the English language. The lack of continuity in terms of Welsh-medium education from the primary to secondary school is certainly a matter of concern regarding the future of the language and the confidence that comes from its use in different networks and areas of discussion.

Despite these trends, it is fair to note, however, that the pupil numbers at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera has increased over the past few years, and that over 1,150 are now fully educated through the medium of Welsh in the school. It is also important to note that with the south campus (Ysgol Bro Dur) there is evidence to suggest that there will be a greater uptake in Welsh medium education during the next five years as the campus will appeal to those wanting their children to access Welsh medium secondary education but put off due to having to travel.

Ward	Number of people over 3 years of age	Number of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh	% of people aged 3+ that can speak Welsh
Neath Port Talbot CBC	135,281	20,698	15.3
Aberavon	5,232	411	7.9
Aberdulais	2,305	311	13.5
Alltwen	2,251	664	29.5
Baglan	6,627	557	8.4
Blaengwrach	1,935	287	14.8
Briton Ferry (East)	2,827	242	8.6
Briton Ferry (West)	2,896	275	9.5
Bryn and Cwmavon	6,330	1,024	16.2
Bryncoch (North)	2,139	297	13.9
Bryncoch (South)	5,706	699	12.3
Cadoxton	1,647	211	12.8
Cimla	3,835	350	9.1
Coedffranc (Central)	3,870	425	11
Coedffranc (North)	2,322	265	11.4
Coedffranc (West)	2,563	316	12.3
Crynant	1,851	465	25.1
Cwmllynfell	1,137	669	58.8
Cymmer	2,714	186	6.9
Dyffryn	3,078	350	11.4
Glyncorrwg	1,054	65	6.2
Glynneath	3,320	689	20.8
Godre'r Graig	1,571	473	30.1
Gwaun-cae-gurwen	2,823	1,576	55.8
Gwynfi	1,314	92	7
Lower Brynamman	1,277	776	60.8
Margam	2,908	295	10.1
Neath (East)	6,137	497	8.1
Neath (North)	3,838	379	9.9
Neath (South)	4,789	440	9.2
Onllwyn	1,161	222	19.1
Pelenna	1,113	178	16
Pontardawe	5,232	1,624	31
Port Talbot	5,457	518	9.5
Resolven	3,044	341	11.2
Rhos	2,382	588	24.7
Sandfields (East)	6,692	504	7.5
Sandfields (West)	6,495	524	8.1
Seven Sisters	2,049	469	22.9
Taibach	4,634	354	7.6
Tonna	2,445	292	11.9
Trebanos	1,367	459	33.6
Ystalyfera	2,911	1,339	46

Source: 2011 Census

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

The aim of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to outline the Council's plans for Welsh medium education in the county borough, moving primary and secondary schools along the linguistic continuum to provide a measured and considerable increase in the level of Welsh medium education.

It is considered essential that the WESP and the promotion strategy are ambitious enough to help deliver the aim of the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy.

Welsh-medium Education in Neath Port Talbot

Early Years Provision

Mudiad Meithrin is the main provider of Welsh-medium early years education in Neath Port Talbot with:

- Cylchoedd Ti a Fi (parent and toddler groups) - Skewen, Port Talbot, Afan Valley, Glyn Neath and Seven Sisters
- Cylchoedd Meithrin (nursery groups) - Neath (in conjunction with Flying Start) and Trebanos Briton Ferry (flying start) soon to be established
- Cylch Chwarae (play group) - Pontardawe

In addition Tiddlywinks Child Care Centre in Ystalyfera has a positive impact on the Welsh language locally. Its fully bilingual activities and events reflect the character of the locality and provide a strong base for Mudiad Meithrin.

In terms of Welsh language pre-school provision there are 28 registered places and 24 children attending, the providers report they are operating at maximum capacity. There are 97 registered sessional day care places for parents seeking bilingual childcare and 159 children attending.

Primary Provision

In Neath Port Talbot there are currently 10 Welsh-medium schools, 9 Welsh medium schools out of 55 primary schools and one Welsh medium middle school, Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera, providing education for ages 3-18 years.

Currently two Welsh medium schools, Ysgol Gymraeg Castell-nedd and Ysgol Gymraeg Rhosafan, have surplus capacities less than 10%, however with an effective and ambitious Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and marketing strategy more schools should reach capacity. It is essential that plans are undertaken to ensure that Welsh medium education is promoted and that additional interest in Welsh medium education is met with the resources that allow anyone wishing to access Welsh medium education the ability to do so, without the inconvenience of added travel.

<u>Welsh medium primary school</u>	<u>Number of pupils (2017)</u>
YGG Blaendulais	104
YGG Pontardawe	352
YGG Castell-nedd	387
Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera (primary) – Previously YGG Y Wern	148
YGG Cwm Nedd	156
YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen	189
YGG Rhosafan	360
YGG Tyle'r Ynn	236
YGG Cwmllynfell	86
YGG Trebanws	104

Secondary Provision

Neath Port Talbot has one Welsh-medium comprehensive school which is split between Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera (north campus) and a new south campus at Ysgol Bro Dur.

In 2017, 1099 pupils received secondary education through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera with statistics showing that the intake has been fairly consistent over the last five years. With the new campus at Ysgol Bro Dur it is estimated that more children will continue with their education through the medium of Welsh, which in turn should stimulate interest in primary education.

Developing the Strategy

In January 2018 a cross party Task and Finish Group was established in order to develop the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. As well as looking at national and local strategies, the Group carefully considered why a strategy was needed, and concluded:

- Because it's right to have one....
- Because we want to....
- To support Welsh Government strategy
- Encourage Welsh culture
- To comply with Welsh Government legislation
- To play a part in achieving the Welsh Government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050

It was agreed by the cross-party Task and Finish group that these should be the drivers which dictate the Council's approach to achieving short term progress in line with the Welsh Government's ambitious long-term target of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Consequently the Strategy aims to:

- Put steps in place, in the short term, to slow down the percentage decrease in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough
- Increase the usage of the Welsh language in all aspects of life
- Raise awareness of the language as a component of Neath Port Talbot's heritage, culture, tourism and business sectors
- To drive and support Welsh medium education and the creation of new Welsh medium schools in particular, primary schools through an effective Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

In order to maintain and increase the number of Welsh speakers over the next five years it was acknowledged that the Council and its partners need to prioritise some key policy areas for action, which include:

- Expanding Welsh-medium education from pre-school to post-16
- Improve language transmission in the home
- Increase the number of adults learning Welsh
- Extend opportunities for children, young people and families to use Welsh in the community and in leisure activities
- Expand the use of Welsh in the workplace
-

Strategic Priorities

The Council has been careful to ensure that the Strategy has taken into account the work that has already been undertaken within the county borough, actions already planned (and in some cases already being delivered) and the current and ongoing financial position alongside more aspirational aims and actions, partnership working, support and guidance from partners including Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot and members of the Language Forum.

The Council and Menter Iaith Castell-nedd Port Talbot have worked closely together to ensure that the aims and actions are realistic. In addition, members of the Language Forum have shown their support of the Strategy by agreeing to deliver a range of actions, supported by the Council wherever possible, to help deliver the aims of the Strategy.

As a result the Strategy focuses on three Strategic Priorities:

- Children and Young People
- Adults
- The Community

Through these Strategic Priorities the Strategy has been aligned to the Council's Wellbeing Objectives (as contained in the Corporate Plan 2018-2022) as well as reflecting the aims of the Welsh Government's Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050 as demonstrated below:

Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2018-2023

Children and Young People

Adults

The Community

Corporate Plan 2018- 2022

Children and Young People

Adults

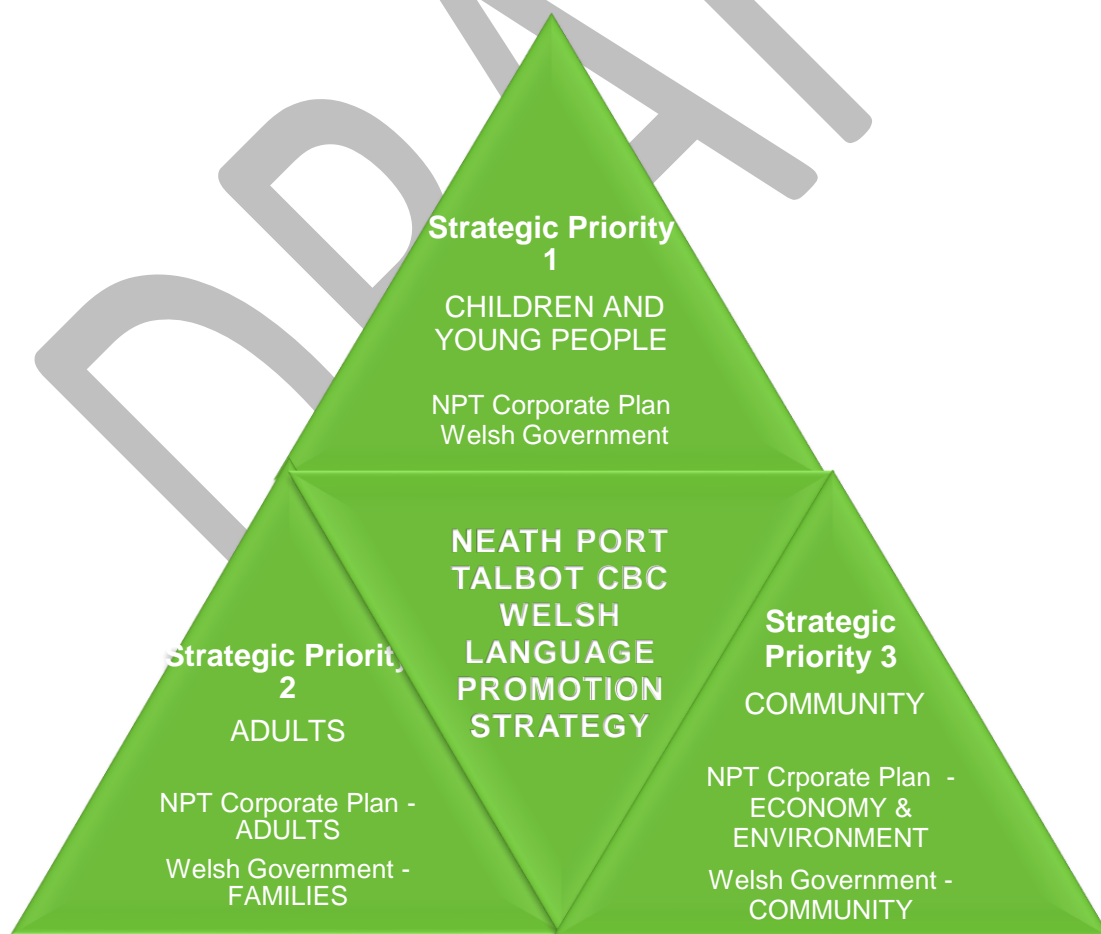
Economy and Environment

Welsh Government Strategy: Cymraeg 2050

Children and Young People

Families

The Community



Strategic Priority 1 - Influences:

- **Direct** - policy changes to children and young people's services including education and core out of school services
- **Indirect** - using contracted third parties to deliver services on behalf of local authority as part of a Service Level Agreement
- **Partnership** - co-working with language partners to promote work and feed into joint strategy

Strategic Priority 2 – Influences:

- **Direct** - internal council led schemes for staff, service users and general public
- **Indirect** - using contracted third parties to deliver services on behalf of local authority as part of a Service Level Agreement
- **Partnership** - co-working with language partners to promote work and feed into joint strategy

Strategic Priority 3 – Influences:

- **Direct** - internal council led schemes and services for staff, service users and general public as well as policy changes that include rights for members of the community.
- **Indirect** - using contracted third parties to deliver services on behalf of local authority as part of a Service Level Agreement
- **Partnership** - co-working with language partners to promote community events and feed into joint strategy

The Council has been conscious of its limitations in influencing the maintenance or increase in the number of Welsh language speakers in the area. As a consequence, the Strategy identifies actions under three specific areas of responsibility:

Council: plans, strategies and internal processes over which the Council has sole control.

Third Party: third party processes that the Council can affect with interventions but does not have outright control.

Partnerships: working in partnership with external organisations to develop a sense of place and a positive attitude towards the Welsh language and co working.

Actions identified where the Council has sole or limited responsibility, under bullet point 1 and 2 above, have been grouped together in the following action plan while actions of partner organisations and those with a remit for Welsh language support and provision outside of the responsibility of the Council have been included in a separate table.

As a result of implementing the actions to meet the aims of the Strategy it is anticipated that by 2023 the Council will have contributed to a minimum increase of 1% in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough within the current financial plan, and current levels of funding and resources.