

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

Stage 1 – Information Gathering

NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see [Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for more information on data sources.

Proposal Name:	Housing Support Programme Strategy
Department	Community Housing / Housing Strategy and Investment
Service Director	Louise Davies/Derek James
Officer Completing the WLIA	Alex Coole
Email	Alexandra.C.Coole@rctcbc.gov.uk
Phone	07384 919314
Brief Description	<p>The Housing Support Programme Strategy sets out the approach Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC will take to continue to support our most vulnerable residents – those who are at risk of, or experience homelessness and those who need support to maintain their tenancies and live as part of their communities. The Strategy will help RCT CBC respond to the growth in demand of people who need help with housing, and with increasingly complex needs.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out the priorities of RCT CBC and partner agencies for homelessness prevention, homelessness relief and housing related support services over the coming 4 years (2022-26). It refreshes earlier priorities that were included in the Council's former Homelessness Strategy and the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Delivery Plan for 2021-22.</p>
Date	13/06/2022

**Please outline who this proposal affects?
(Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)**

Service Users, Employees, Wider Community

<p>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</p>	<p>The Housing Support Grant (HSG) forms a key element of the overall Housing Support Programme Strategy and is an early intervention grant programme to support activity, which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation. Services supported through the HSG should be person centred and address multiple problems that vulnerable people who are homeless or likely to become homeless often face (for example debt, employment, substance misuse, violence against women, domestic and sexual abuse, mental health problems and language barriers).</p> <p>Within the Strategy are key strategic priorities aimed at preventing homelessness and some of these will have a positive impact on the Welsh Language. Strategic Priority 1 aims to strengthen early intervention and prevention approaches and specialised support to prevent homelessness. We will achieve this by improving accessibility with a ‘no wrong door’ philosophy to homeless services delivered through an Assessment Centre offering a bilingual service in accordance with the Council’s Welsh Language duties. We will work with both English and Welsh medium schools and colleges to prepare children and young people for future tenancies. We will improve our marketing/promotion of Prevention and Early Intervention assistance, which will be available bilingually. Strategic Priority 2 aims at ensuring people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness can access the right home at the right time and in the right place, as part of our Rapid Rehousing approach. This will be achieved by ensuring our Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) and Local Development Plan (LDP) reflect the needs identified in the Housing Support Grant Needs Assessment. The LDP includes planning policies and site allocations which are used to determine planning applications. When determining planning applications, the local planning authority should take into account Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language. Strategic Priority 3 will provide high quality support to people who are or may become homeless, fully utilising available technology and ensuring effective cross-agency working. This will be achieved by improving security and consistency for support providers, encouraging flexibility and innovation to reduce unnecessary administration and will provide additional and consistent training for staff, including Welsh Language training. Strategic Priority 4 focuses on collaborative working to provide holistic, person-centred support with effective specialist interventions where necessary to include Welsh Language services. A multi-agency approach to overseeing the Strategy will ensure that all Services are working in accordance to Welsh Language standards.</p>
<p>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</p>	<p>Residents who are at risk of, or experience homelessness and those who need support to maintain their tenancies and live as part of their communities will benefit from this Strategy. The Strategy could therefore benefit all residents as anyone could find themselves in the position of being threatened with homelessness or require assistance to main their tenancy.</p>

	Any impact on Welsh Language groups should only be positive as the development of new homelessness services and strengthened multi-agency working will mean that the Welsh language is embedded in working practices.															
<p>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</p>	<p>Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census, a count of all people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh. The 2011 Census indicated that of the 225,555 residents living in the County Borough, 12.3% (27,779) were able to speak Welsh. This can be compared to the all-Wales showed of the 2,955,841 residents living in Wales, 19% (562,016) were able to speak Welsh.</p> <p>The Annual Population Survey for the quarter ending December 2021, reported that 20.9% of respondents living in the County Borough said they could speak Welsh, this is compared to the all-Wales percentage of 29.5% of respondents. This can be further broken down to the data contained in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="600 580 2154 810"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf</th> <th>Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Can Read Welsh</td> <td>18.9%</td> <td>25.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Write Welsh</td> <td>17.7%</td> <td>23.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can Understand Spoken Welsh</td> <td>24.5%</td> <td>33.4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Welsh Language Skills of Residents – (%)				County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales	Can Read Welsh	18.9%	25.9%	Can Write Welsh	17.7%	23.7%	Can Understand Spoken Welsh	24.5%	33.4%
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<p>Other relevant data or research</p>	Housing Support Programme Strategy and Needs Assessment 2022 – 2026, RCT’s Local Housing Market Assessment															

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found by [clicking here](#).

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</p> <p>e.g. staff, residents and visitors</p> <p>The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Positive	1.) During the Pandemic we have embraced technology in order to provide services differently and this has been an opportunity to promote the Welsh language as people accessing the Council's website and other key partners' websites have access to services in the Welsh language.	<p>1.) Number of users using online tools to access services through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>2.) Both staff and people in the community are able to engage digitally and actively have their needs met through these methods.</p>	1.) Review how we have embraced technology and provided services differently during the COVID-19 pandemic and further enhance these by ensuring we deliver information in the Welsh language.

		<p>2.) The Council will respond to service users' needs by using new technologies to unlock the ability to support people in new and responsive ways to enable them to fulfil their potential. This will provide Welsh speakers and learners an opportunity to use the Welsh language.</p> <p>3.) The Strategy aims to ensure people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness access the right home, at the right time and in the right place. This can include ensuring that Welsh speakers or learners have access to Welsh language services for example schools and colleges.</p> <p>4.) Through working collaboratively with our partners (some of whom, such as the health board, are also subject to the Welsh language standards and therefore obligated to provide services in Welsh) to</p>	<p>3.) An increase in the supply of good quality, affordable housing which has been developed in accordance with the Council's LDP. The LDP has been produced in accordance to TAN 20 and Planning Policy Wales.</p> <p>4.) New multi-agency innovative approach to planning and commissioning of services to ensure the Welsh language is promoted</p>	<p>2.) Develop digital inclusion skills across services as well as the people we are supporting – linking into Digital Communities Wales. We will work with local libraries, community groups, schools and colleges to deliver classes through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>3.) The Council will establish a healthy development programme for Social Housing Grant by assessing and prioritising schemes based on their accessibility to local facilities. This includes access to libraries, schools and colleges (and other facilities) which provide Welsh language services.</p> <p>4.) Develop training, updates and briefings to staff and providers to keep abreast of service developments, good practice, innovation and new practices via joint training sessions, HSG Planning Group,</p>
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		<p>provide holistic, person-centred support with effective specialist interventions where necessary will enable us to promote the Welsh language and have access to a larger pool of staff in order to utilise their Welsh language skills. The Outreach Health Project is a specialist team that would enable us to draw down on resources for Welsh Speakers to provide services in Welsh where required. Where an individual requests to have a meeting in Welsh, we would adhere to standards 26/26A by utilising Welsh Language resources from our key partners (where possible) or alternatively arranging for a translator to be available.</p> <p>5.) The Lead of each Housing Support Grant team will take responsibility for ensuring compliance with Welsh Language Standards to ensure that there is an understanding amongst all partners of the services that</p>		<p>and local, regional and national fora.</p>
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		<p>need to be provided in Welsh.</p> <p>6.) Training (both language and policy) will be provided as well as an assessment on whether the training should be delivered in Welsh (where there is a need to do this and resources allow).</p>		
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>1.) The Welsh Government's ambition is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using the Welsh language to reach a million by the year 2050, RCTCBC hopes to encourage this ambition by providing the conditions to facilitate an increase in the use of the Welsh language in line with the RCTCBC 5 year Welsh Language Strategy. This Strategy will support these goals by ensuring, wherever possible, that Welsh speakers/learners have access to housing in a location that affords them the opportunities to continue to use/learn the Welsh language. The Housing Allocation scheme gives</p>	<p>1.) In line with the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and our Welsh Language Standards, this strategy will ensure bilingual text (Welsh first) on all Council owned charge points used in the roll out of a charging network across the County Borough.</p> <p>2.) Increase in the number of staff and service users accessing Welsh language courses. RCTCBC will encourage staff and partners to enable staff to have access to Welsh Language courses and we will monitor this to ensure its effectiveness.</p>	<p>1.) RCTCBC will encourage its key partners to provide and promote information through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>2.) RCTCBC will review the number of new housing developments which are near a WM school.</p> <p>3.) Promote Welsh language courses to staff and service users, particularly promote free Welsh lessons for 16 – 25 year olds which will be provided by WG.</p>

		<p>priority (under Band C) to 'households who need to move to be nearer to a child's school (where the need to move to a school has been recommended by the Director of Education). All properties available for let are advertised via the Council's Choice Based Lettings scheme which enables applicants to bid on properties which meets they needs. This means that applicants are able to research the area and ensure that nearby schools offer Welsh language education.</p> <p>2.) Developing the skills of staff and service users will help to increase the numbers of Welsh speakers by ensuring training is offered in Welsh and by ensuring Welsh language courses are promoted.</p>		
<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p>	Positive	<p>1.) All promotional material to access the Homeless Prevention Service and all promotional material of its key partners is bilingual</p>	<p>1.) Reduction in youth homelessness by developing bilingual education packages and more information for young people around housing and homelessness.</p>	<p>1.) Ensure that all material is bilingual with the Welsh provide before the English</p>

<p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time</p>		<p>2.) Improved access to the Council's website and partners' website will provide an opportunity to promote the Welsh language</p>		
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Compliance with the <u>Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards</u> e.g increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Positive	<p>1.) The development of this strategy will increase the Council's ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>2.) Consideration to the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh language when dealing with the Council and for staff members who wish to use Welsh at work. The development of homeless prevention services which offers bilingual services will allow staff members to utilise the Welsh language at work.</p> <p>3.) The Council will procure Services in line with the requirements of the Welsh</p>	<p>1.) Increase in services through the medium of Welsh will be evidenced by the increase in the digitalisation of the service which will be accessible bilingually.</p> <p>2.) Increase in the number of service users accessing homeless preventions services in Welsh. The Strategy will be made available to the public in Welsh.</p> <p>3 & 4) The Council has already developed a Contract Strategy Document that includes a section on the Welsh Language Standards that officer must complete before inviting supplier</p>	<p>1.) Ensure that the all homelessness services are promoted bilingually with Welsh first.</p> <p>2.) Actively promote both Council services and services offered by key partners that are available in Welsh.</p>

		<p>Language Standards, specifically Standards 76-80 which will allow suppliers to tender for a contract in Welsh if that is their wish. Additionally all relevant standards will be listed in the Invitation to Tender document so that our suppliers - when acting on our behalf or providing a service on our behalf - comply with our statutory responsibilities. Standard 94 requires the Council to publish a policy on awarding grants – all grants the Council awards must be considered how the proposed use will impact the Welsh language.</p> <p>4.) Back-office services, such as complaints handling, correspondence, publicity, websites and phone services – where these are procured or provided directly by the Council will be available in Welsh in line with the Welsh Language Standards</p>	<p>to tender for a contract. Officers are required to list all the relevant standards in this section to ensure that suppliers are made aware of the Welsh language requirements of the contract.</p>	
Treating the Welsh language, no less	Positive	See above	See above	See above

favourably than the English language				
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Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
Review how we have embraced technology and provided services differently during the COVID-19 pandemic and further enhance these by ensuring we deliver information in the Welsh language.	TBC	TBC
Develop digital inclusion skills across services as well as the people we are supporting – linking into Digital Communities Wales. We will work with local libraries, community groups, schools and colleges to deliver classes through the medium of Welsh.	TBC	TBC
The Council will establish a healthy development programme for Social Housing Grant by assessing and prioritising schemes based on their accessibility to local facilities. This includes access to libraries, schools and colleges (and other facilities) which provide Welsh language services.	Ongoing	RCT CBC Housing Strategy
Develop training, updates and briefings to staff and providers to keep abreast of service developments, good practice, innovation and new	Ongoing	RCT CBC Housing Support Grant team

practices via joint training sessions, HSG Planning Group, and local, regional and national fora.		
RCTCBC will encourage its key partners to provide and promote information through the medium of Welsh.	Ongoing	RCTCBC Housing Support Grant team
RCTCBC will review the number of new housing developments which are near a WM school.	Ongoing	RCT CBC Housing Strategy
Promote Welsh language courses to staff and service users, particularly promote free Welsh lessons for 16 – 25 year olds which will be provided by WG.	Ongoing	RCT CBC Housing Support Grant team
Ensure that all material is bilingual with the Welsh provide before the English	Ongoing	RCT CBC Housing Support Grant team
Ensure that the all homelessness services are promoted bilingually with Welsh first.	Ongoing	RCT CBC Homelessness and Supporting People
Actively promote both Council services and services offered by key partners that are available in Welsh.	Ongoing	RCT CBC Homelessness and Supporting People
If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.		
What was identified?	Why is it not possible?	
Offering all services in accordance with Welsh Language standards	Not all of the Council's partners are required to comply with the Welsh Language Standards however we will encourage our partners to promote the Welsh language	

Offering housing in a location that affords people the opportunity to continue to use/learn the language offers them the opportunities It will be difficult to house around W catchment schools

Housing is a limited resource and there is not enough social housing available to house all applicants on our housing waiting list. If social housing is not available near a Welsh Language school then we will not be able to afford people the opportunity to continue to use/learn the language. However, we will work with our Registered Social Landlords to ensure that when they advertise a property which is available to let that the advert includes information on the nearest Welsh schools/colleges

Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
<p>This is a detailed impact assessment, which lists many of the intended positive impacts this proposal will have on the Welsh Language.</p> <p>Welsh Language Services encourage you to consider further the following -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How the new policy on Welsh language considerations when awarding grants might maximise the strategy's positive impacts on the Welsh language.- How we plan to ensure compliance with Welsh Language Standards when undertaking collaborative work.		

- How we capture linguistic/educational background of those presenting to the service in order to offer Welsh medium services from the outset, and plan Welsh medium offer for the future		
Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

The adoption of the Housing Support Programme Strategy will be accompanied by an action plan, which sets out the actions required to deliver the Strategic aims of the Strategy. The Council will monitor, steer and review progress against the HSP Strategy through the RCT HSP Planning Group which convenes on a quarterly basis. Delivery against the Strategy will be a standing agenda item at this meeting every quarter.

Whilst a formal review of progress and an evaluation of the impact of the Strategy will take place every two years as a minimum, the actions identified in this Impact Assessment will be reviewed more frequently as many are ongoing in terms of making sure updated information is available bilingually and continuous development of staff and service users’ skills.

A key area of the RCT HSP Planning Group will be to improve the information that is collected on outcomes across all strands of investment using Housing Support Grant to support all those who are or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows –

The Housing Support Programme Strategy and its aims will have a positive effect on the Welsh Language, Welsh speakers and Welsh learners, and any future Plans or developments that come from the formulation of the Strategy will comply fully with the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

The vision of the Strategy is that 'Statutory, third and private sector partners' work effectively together to make sure that people in Rhondda Cynon Taf have access to suitable housing and can stay within their local communities. The right support is available within local communities, to prevent those at risk of becoming homeless from losing their homes. We strive to secure appropriate accommodation as swiftly as possible for those that have become homeless, along with the right kind of personalised support, helping them to a secure future and optimising their wellbeing. Rhondda Cynon Taf is a place where homelessness is prevented or rare, brief and unrepeated.'

The vision will be achieved through the delivery of the Strategic aims which focus on strengthening early intervention and prevention approaches and specialised support to prevent homelessness, ensuring people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness access the right home at the right time and in the right place, as part of our Rapid Rehousing approach, providing high quality support to people who are or may become homeless, fully utilising available technology and ensuring effective cross-agency working and working collaboratively to provide holistic, person-centred support with effective specialist interventions where necessary. All of the Strategic aims will promote the delivery of homeless prevention services through the Welsh language by ensuring all information is produced bilingually and is accessible in Welsh, focusing on training and developing Welsh language skill of staff. Awareness raising of homeless prevention services and risks of homelessness will be delivered to service users through a range of different methods all of which will be available in Welsh. When offering our homeless prevention services we ensure that all specialist needs are taking into account, including how the service user request to engage with services.

Stage 7 – Sign Off			
Name of Officer completing the WLIA	Alex Coole	Service Director Name:	Derek James
Position	Housing Strategy Manager	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented with no amendments
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
Signature		Service Director Signature	
Date		Date	