

Dewch i
siarad RhCT
Let's talk
RCT

Let's Talk

Welsh

Language Consultation

November 2021



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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SUMMARY

- This section provides a summary of the main findings of the Let's Talk Welsh Language consultation on the development of a new Welsh Language strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- The consultation was conducted using the Council's consultation and engagement website, [Let's Talk RCT](#). This site is available in both English and Welsh ([Dewch i Siarad RhCT](#)).
- The consultation ran from 5th September to 5th October 2021. The web page provided visitors with links to existing Welsh Language plan/ strategy documents as well as asking visitors to take part in either the survey or the interactive map tool provided. A video featuring presenter, author and illustrator Siôn Thomas Owen was also presented to encourage participation (available in [Welsh](#) and [English](#)).
- Alongside the online consultation, 3 face-to-face sessions were held in libraries across the county.
- 178 responses were received to the survey, and 14 contributions were made to the online map tool, which had the prompt "*Where in Rhondda Cynon Taf would you like to see more Welsh language services?*".
- In response to the question "*Where do you use the Welsh Language?*" over half of respondents stated that they speak Welsh at home and/ or at work.
- The most frequent answer to "*What could help you use your Welsh language more?*" was "more opportunities to use it", at 55.6% of respondents.
- "*Where would you most like to see additional Welsh language services provided?*" was most often answered with Youth Services (65.2%), Early Years (59.6) and Tourism & Parks (59.6%).
- When asked "*Based on your previous answer, what area(s) of RCT do you feel would best benefit from these services?*" the most common themes amongst answers were education, celebration of Welsh heritage and culture and increased social spaces dedicated to encouraging Welsh language use.
- "*Do you feel there's been more awareness of the Welsh language over the past five years and more people are speaking it in our area?*" prompted a wide range of comments, from very positive to very negative.
- Many different suggestions were made when asked "*How do you feel we can increase the number of Welsh speakers in Rhondda Cynon Taf?*", ranging from free or low-cost learning to greater Welsh language provision in key services and ways for private sector staff to identify their language skills and invite Welsh conversation.

- Overall, 175 visitors engaged directly with the tools on the Let's Talk and Dewch i Siarad sites during this consultation. A further 345 people were informed (viewed documents and multiple pages on the sites) and 788 were made aware (visited the sites).

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the Let's Talk Welsh Language consultation on the development of a new Welsh Language strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines some brief background to the consultation process.
- 1.3 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.4 Section 4 provides the key findings.
- 1.5 Please note that the results from the English language Let's Talk site have been combined with the results from the Welsh language Dewch i Siarad site unless stated otherwise.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is developing a new Welsh Language Promotion Strategy for 2022-27, following on from that for 2016-21.
- 2.2 This Strategy will link to the national Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers strategy set out by the Welsh Government, and ensure the Council upholds the Standards set out within the national strategy.
- 2.3 Following an independent review in July 2021 of the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2016-21, which concluded that RCT had met standards 145 and 146 of the Welsh Language Standards, this public consultation has taken place to inform the development of a new five-year plan. The consultation asked residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf to share how and where they use the Welsh language, whether they have noticed increased Welsh language use in the county, what they think would further increase the Welsh language usage across the county and how they believe the Council could improve its use and provision of Welsh language resources.

3. METHODOLOGY



- 3.1 Two interactive tools were included on the site to gather feedback from visitors. The first, a survey, asked visitors about their experiences using the Welsh language, their thoughts on awareness of the Welsh language and how they think the Council could change or improve Welsh language services across the county.
- 3.2 The second tool allowed visitors to add pins to an online map in response to the prompt “*Where in Rhondda Cynon Taf would you like to see more Welsh language services?*”, along with a comment for each pin.

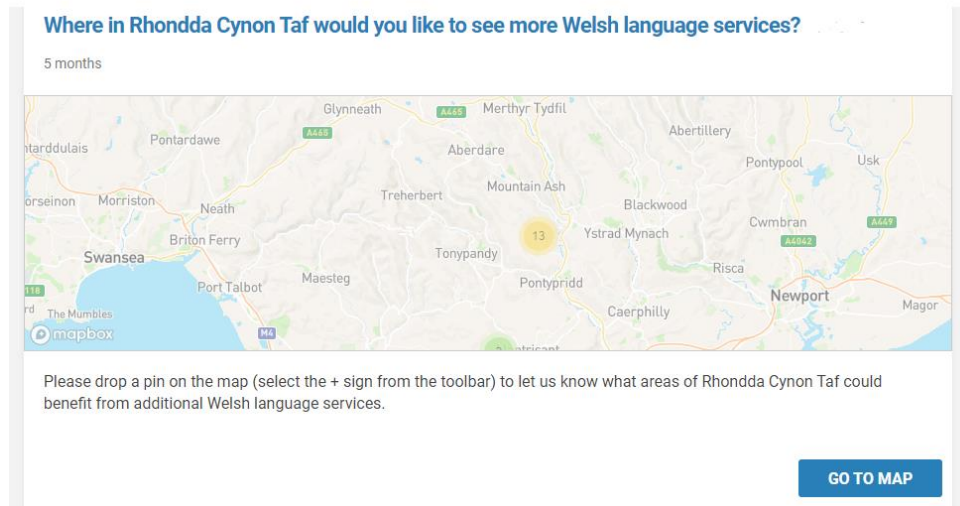


Figure 1 – Interactive Map tool, inviting visitors to place pins and make comments

- 3.2 Overall, 175 visitors engaged directly with the tools on the Let's Talk and Dewch i Siarad sites during this consultation. A further 345 people were informed (viewed documents and multiple pages on the sites) and 788 were made aware (visited the sites).

4. KEY FINDINGS

Survey

4.1 A short survey was added to the consultation site for feedback from visitors. In total, 178 responses were collected.

4.2.1 *Where do you use the Welsh Language?*

53.4% of respondents stated that they use Welsh at home, and 50% at work. A low number of respondents (18.5%) stated that they use Welsh language at school, which may be more reflective of the age profile of respondents. Demographic data was not gathered in this survey, however.

26.4% answered “none of the above”.

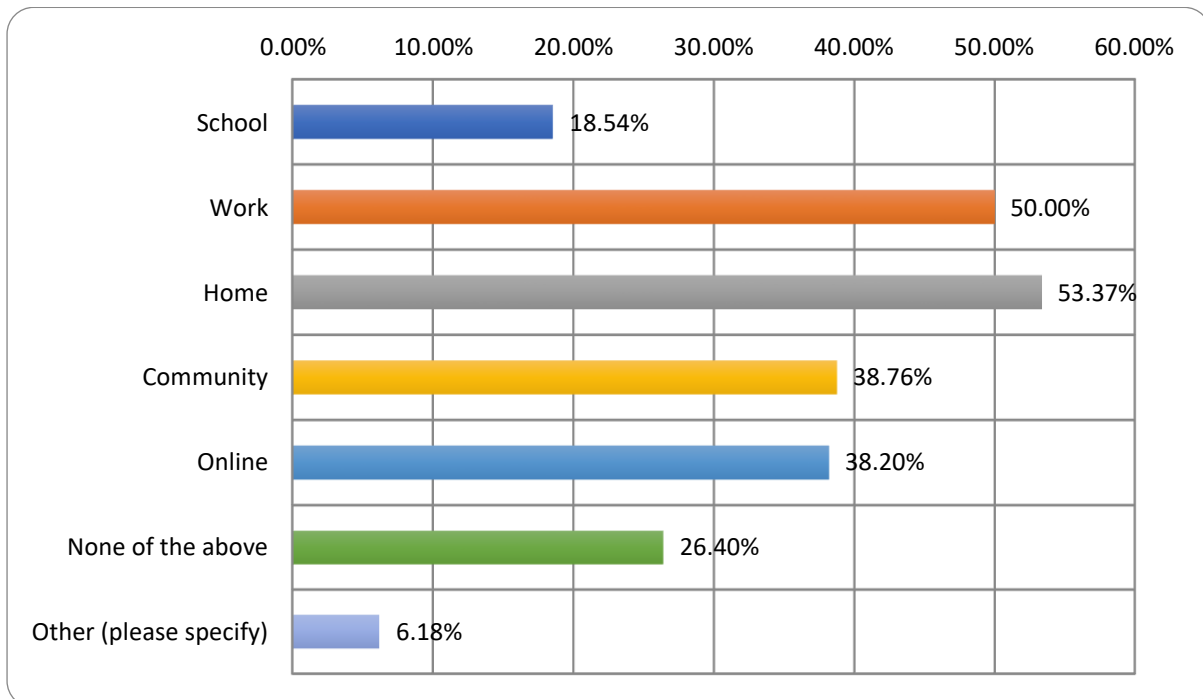


Figure 2 – “Where do you use the Welsh Language?”

Other areas of use listed in the free-text option by respondents include “with friends”, “shopping”, “Uni” and “listen to Welsh music”.

4.2.2 *What could help you use your Welsh language more?*

By far the most common answer was “more opportunities to use it”, with 55.6% of respondents selecting this answer. A further 15.7% of respondents stated that “an opportunity to learn” would help them to use the Welsh language more, and 10.7% selected “more confidence”.

15.2% of respondents selected “none of the above”.

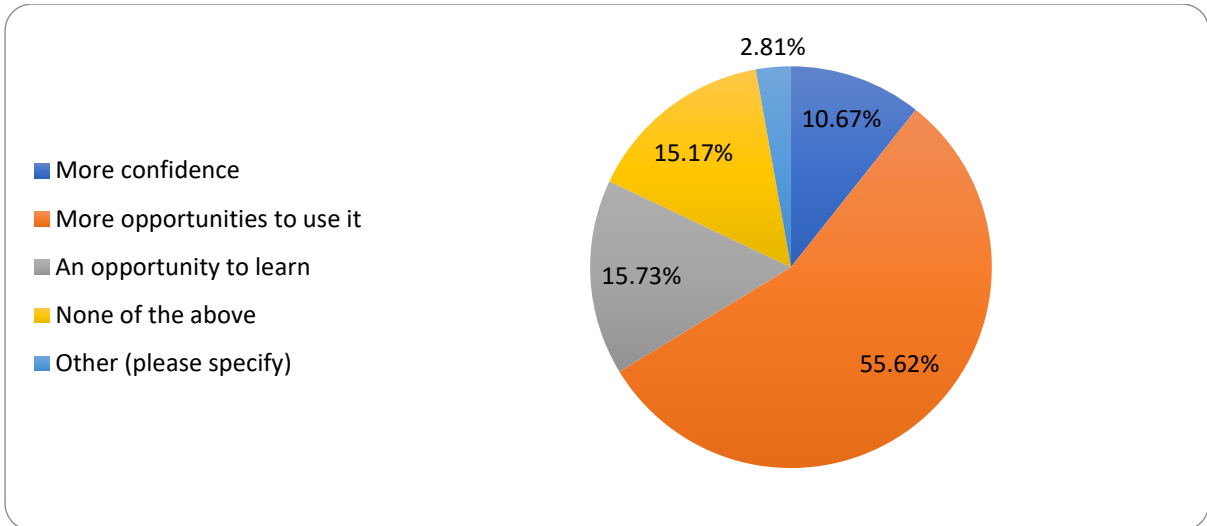


Figure 3 – “What could help you use your Welsh language more?”

Responses in the free-text “other” option include “identifying in shops/ cafes/ restaurants which assistants speak Welsh”, “more support improving standard of written Welsh” and “more people to talk to”.

4.2.3 Would you or someone you know be interested in learning Welsh or improving your/ their skills?

A clear majority of respondents (59%) stated that they or someone they know would be interested in learning or improving on Welsh language skills. A further 13% answered “maybe”.

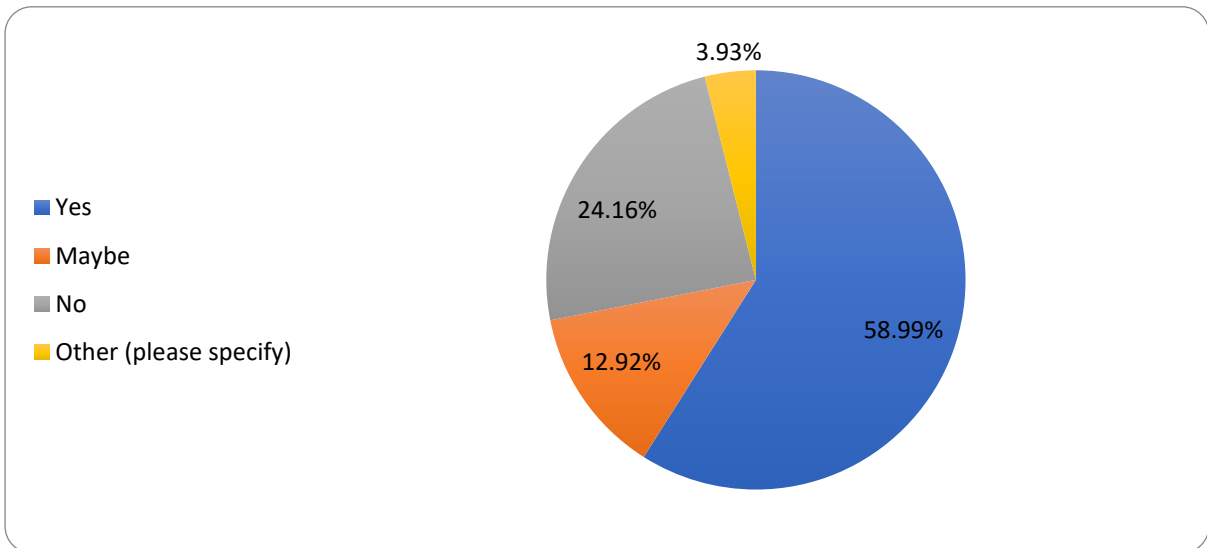


Figure 4 – “Would you or someone you know be interested in learning Welsh or improving your/ their skills?”

In the free-text responses, all 7 respondents who selected “other” stated that they are already fluent Welsh speakers.

4.2.4 *Where would you most like to see additional Welsh language services provided?*

65.2% of respondents identified Youth Services as needing increased Welsh language services. The next most cited departments are Early Years and Tourism & Parks, with 59.6% of respondents indicating them. Leisure & Sport was also identified as being in need of increased Welsh language services by over half of respondents (55.6%).

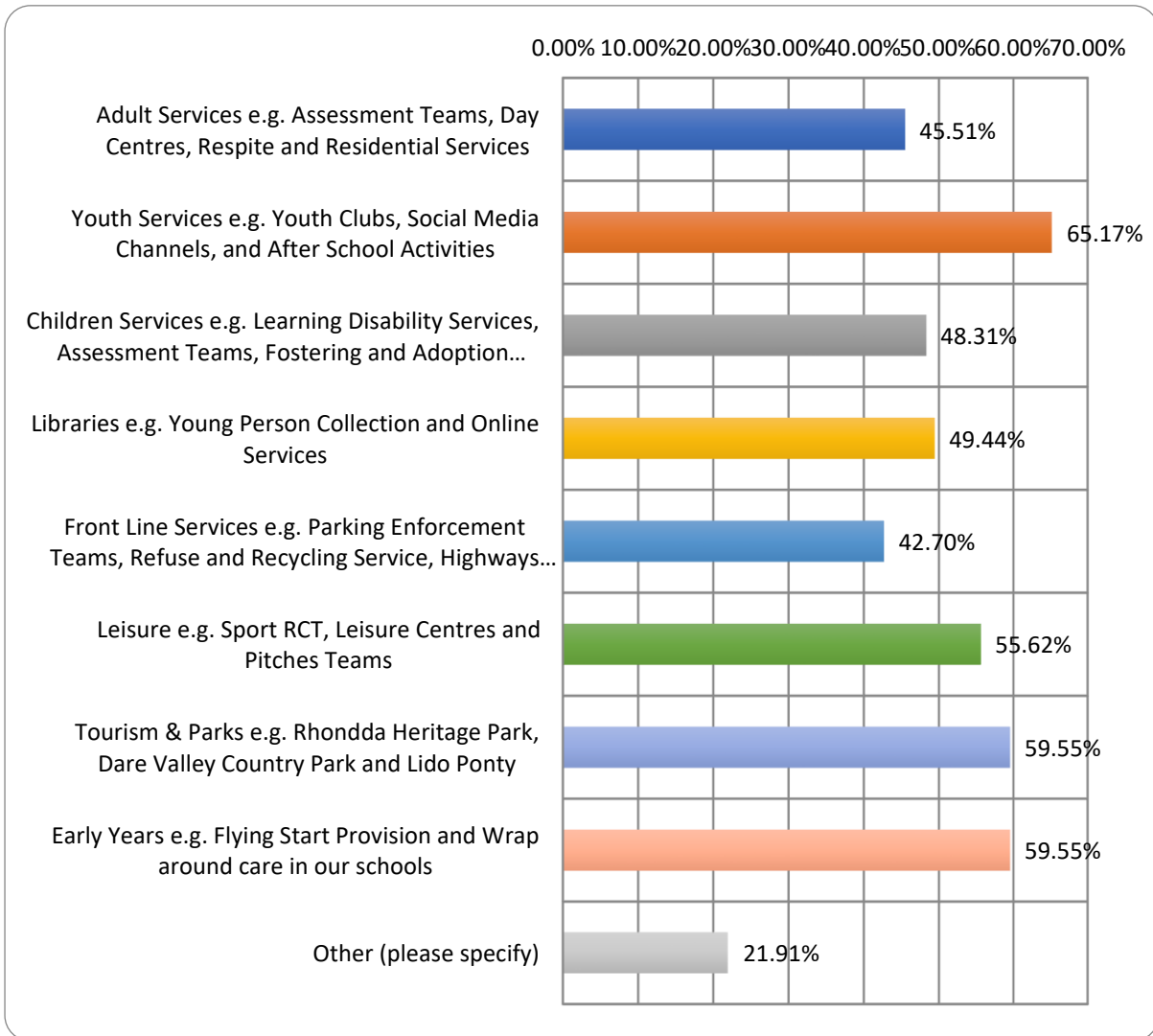


Figure 5 – “Where would you most like to see additional Welsh language services provided?”

Free-text responses from those who selected “other” and the question “Are there Council departments you know of that could improve their Welsh language services?” identify concerns around the provision of Welsh language schools (particularly in North Pontypridd), the lack of Welsh speaking staff answering telephone calls and signage. A number of respondents also state that all departments need to improve.

Multiple (but a minority of) respondents stated that they feel too much money and effort is invested in Welsh language services already.

4.2.5 *Based on your previous answer, what area(s) of RCT do you feel would best benefit from these services?*

Key themes in the responses to this question include education, Early Years and youth services, indicating a strong feeling among respondents that childhood acquisition and normalisation of Welsh language use is vital. Geographically, most of the county is identified in these comments as potentially benefitting from increased Welsh language services.

Other suggestions raised include “the leaders of RCT need to show an interest in Welsh”, “first language on [the] phone should be Welsh with [an] option for English”, “promoting culture as well [as] language. St David’s Day events, small eisteddfods, give schools or sports clubs opportunity to experience Wales play and support events”. The need for social spaces including homework clubs, coffee mornings and so on was also raised.

4.2.6 *Do you feel there’s been more awareness of the Welsh language over the past five years and more people are speaking it in our area?*

Answers to this question vary a great deal, from very positive to very negative. Points raised in comments include “I don’t feel there are enough opportunities to use [Welsh] outside of a learning classroom”, “my local community seems proud to use the language”, “there is a distinct anti Welsh language feeling amongst some which needs tackling” and “yes, in small communities around the Welsh medium primary schools and yes in adult learners”.

4.2.7 *How do you feel we can increase the number of Welsh speakers in Rhondda Cynon Taf?*

Key themes in the responses to this question include free or low-cost Welsh language learning, making Welsh the default for public services, schools in local areas to reduce travel requirements, Welsh language in shops and cafes, course and support for parents of pupils at Welsh medium schools and the importance of embedding Welsh language in community spaces and activities.

Multiple suggestions were made about a badge scheme to encourage staff and visitors in shops, cafes and so on to use Welsh conversationally.

Appendix 1 contains all survey responses received on the Let’s Talk and Dewch i Siarad sites.

Map Tool

- 4.3 The interactive map tool allows respondents to place a pin onto a map of the area with an attached comment. The prompt for this map was “*Where in Rhondda Cynon Taf would you like to see more Welsh Language services?*”.
- 4.4 14 text responses and 15 pins were received on the Let's Talk site, and none on the Dewch i Siarad site. Figure 5 shows the distribution of pins, with the majority (11) being in the Pontypridd/ Ynysybwl area. **The accompanying text responses are presented in Appendix 2.**
- 4.5 The majority of the text responses relate to Welsh language education and school provision, particularly the closure of Welsh language primary facilities in Pontypridd.

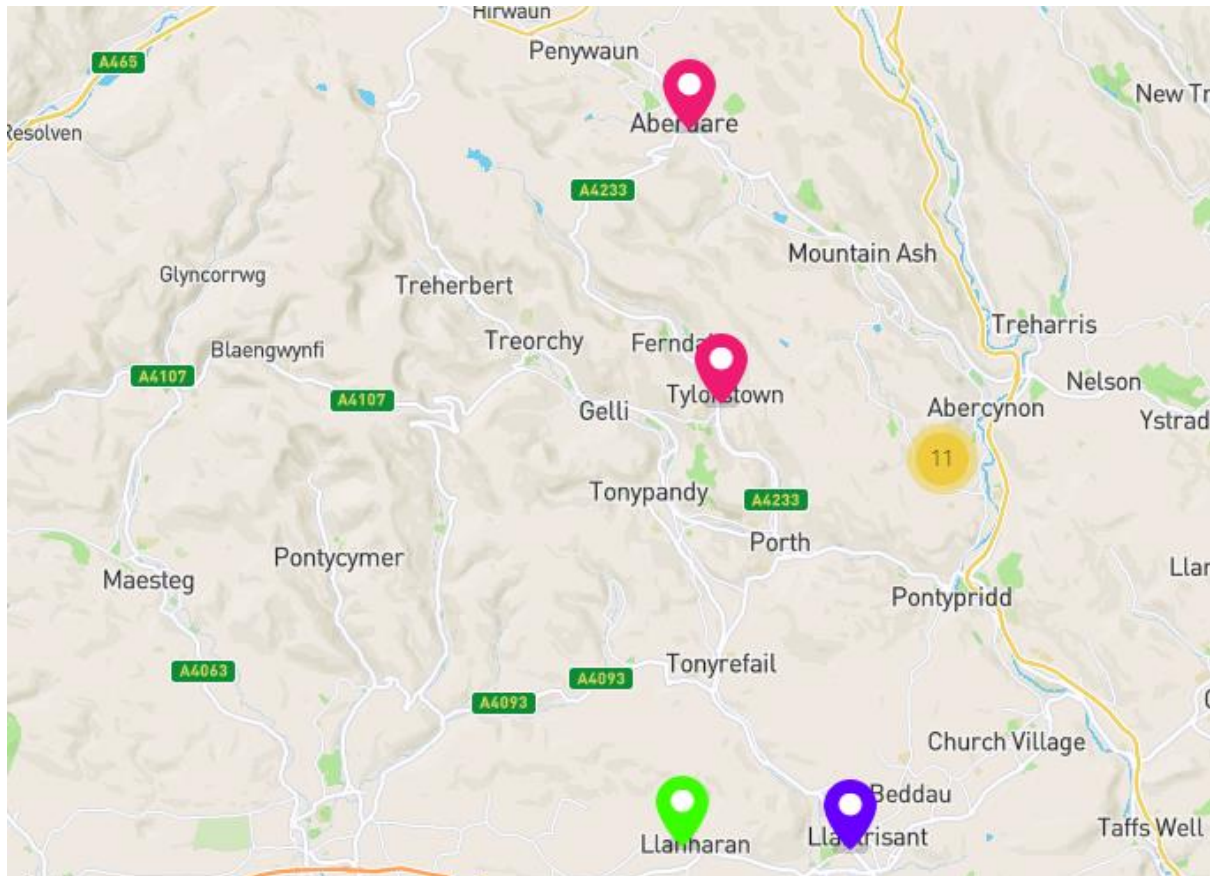


Figure 6 – “Where in Rhondda Cynon Taf would you like to see more Welsh Language Services?”



