

## **Policy outlining services provided by The National Archives to the people of Wales in the Welsh language**

### **Summary**

As the national record office for Wales, we recognise our duty to provide certain services to the people of Wales in the Welsh language. This includes members of the public, records and archives professionals and the Welsh administration.

We undertake to:

- answer in Welsh written enquiries received in Welsh
- provide Welsh translations of selected internally-produced documents as defined at 4.1
- continue to meet our statutory responsibilities for publishing Welsh Assembly Acts and statutory instruments made by the Welsh Ministers
- invite a 'suitably qualified' person or persons to represent the people of Wales at meetings where Welsh interests are at stake

This policy will normally be reviewed every three years.

## **Contents**

1. Purpose
2. Background
3. Written correspondence received in the Welsh language
4. Provision of selected internally-produced documents in the Welsh language
5. Publishing legislation
6. Welsh representation at meetings where Welsh interests are at stake
7. Review

## 1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 This policy is a statement about the range of services we provide to the people of Wales in our capacity as national record office for Wales.
- 1.2 The policy is not only for internal reference, but also a public statement outlining the services we provide to the people of Wales with particular focus on where we are committed to doing that in the Welsh language.

## 2. **Background**

- 2.1 As well as creating the National Assembly for Wales, the 1998 and 2006 Government of Wales Acts also designated records relating to the administration of Wales as 'Welsh public records' (a full definition is provided at section 148 of the 2006 Government of Wales Act).
- 2.2 The Government of Wales Act states that while Welsh public records fall outwith the definition of a public record, as set out in Schedule 1 to the 1958 Public Records Act, they should be treated as if they are public records until the Secretary of State issues an order to transfer responsibility for the records to the Welsh Ministers or their staff.
- 2.3 Note that records of reserved functions relating to Wales, i.e. functions that have not been devolved to the Welsh Ministers or their officials, do not generally fall within the definition of 'Welsh public records'.
- 2.4 Until the National Assembly for Wales establishes an official record office for Wales, equivalent to the National Records of Scotland and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, The National Archives provides that function. In our role as the national record office for Wales, we select Welsh public records for permanent preservation, safeguard those records on transfer, and make them available for inspection by the public.
- 2.5 This policy sets out the additional services we are committed to providing to the people of Wales in recognition of that role.
- 2.6 The responsibility for printing and making available the authoritative version of primary and secondary legislation sits with the Queen's printer, an office operating from within The National Archives. This policy also sets out how Welsh language versions of legislation will be provided

**3. Written correspondence received in the Welsh language**

3.1 We will answer in Welsh all written correspondence we receive in Welsh. Written correspondence includes letters and email as well as enquiries received through one of the website contact forms. We will answer this correspondence within normal deadlines.

3.2 Original records will not be translated and any citations from original records in or attached to our replies will remain in the language in which they were written. We will, however, translate research guides and paid search guides which are relevant to the enquiry.

3.3 We will not provide any of our oral, real-time, or character-limited information and advisory services – on-site, over the telephone, or online, – in Welsh. Provision of these services cannot be justified on grounds of cost and demand.

#### **4. Provision of selected internally-produced documents in the Welsh language**

4.1 We will provide Welsh-language versions of selected internally-produced documents and will normally make these available on the website or by post or both. These documents include leaflets, standards, consultation papers, policy statements etc. held electronically and in hardcopy. As noted above, they do not include original records. The criteria for selecting documents for translation are as follows:

- Documents sent out in response to written enquiries as a matter of course. This is to assist primarily in meeting the commitment at section 3
- Documents concerned with Wales and the people of Wales, (e.g. Operational Selection Policy 7 for the Welsh Office, 1979 to 1997)
- Documents closely related to other materials in Welsh

4.2 Documents will not be translated if any of the following factors apply:

- They contain highly complex or technical language, e.g. more technical records management guidance
- Translation is unjustified on grounds of cost or practicality, (e.g. the Keeper's annual report and pages of - as opposed to documents attached to - the website)
- There is insufficient demand

4.3 When we deliver projects jointly with Welsh bodies, responsibility for ensuring the production of Welsh language materials will be agreed as part of project development.

4.4 We will maintain a list of the documents we provide in Welsh. The list will be available on the website, and on request.

## 5. **Publishing legislation**

- 5.1 The Documentary Evidence Act 1882 provides legal protection and authority for printed legislation produced under the superintendence of the Queens Printer, including Welsh Acts and statutory instruments.
- 5.2 Welsh Assembly Acts and Measures are published in dual language, English and Welsh.
- 5.3 The Queen's Printer also has statutory responsibility under the Government of Wales Act 2006 (which amended the Statutory Instruments Act 1946) for superintending the publication of statutory instruments made by the Welsh Ministers. The 1946 Act and the Statutory Instrument Regulations 1947 (S.I. 1948 No. 1) set out the various powers and duties on the Queen's Printer for the registration, numbering, printing and publication of Statutory Instruments, including Welsh statutory instruments.
- 5.4 We will continue to deliver a Welsh language version of the [legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk) website. We are committed to the fast and routine publishing of legislation for Wales as high quality open data in modern formats, freely available for re-use including for commercial use.

6. **Welsh representation at meetings where Welsh interests are at stake**

- 6.1 We will ensure that conveners of meetings which have a particular bearing on the people of Wales nominate or invite a 'suitably qualified' person or persons to represent the interests of the people of Wales.
- 6.2 The National Archives will reimburse the nominated person or persons any travel and subsistence expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred to get to and from the meeting or meetings.
- 6.3 Meetings are likely to take place at The National Archives and will be conducted in English. The National Archives does not undertake to provide the nominated person or persons with an interpreter.



7. **Review**

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or when an official record office for Wales is established or when changes to legislation demand.