



Y Ganolfan
Dysgu Cymraeg
Genedlaethol —
National Centre
for Learning Welsh

Together towards the million

Strategic Plan — 2021 onwards
Consultation document

“...The contribution of speakers who
acquire Welsh outside the home is vital
to the success of our strategy.”

Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers

dysgucymraeg.cymru
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Uywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Dysgu
Learn

Welcome

The aim of the National Centre for Learning Welsh is to create new Welsh speakers, thus contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's ambition of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. We shall achieve this by providing lessons and resources so that people can learn Welsh.

The Centre is responsible for all aspects of the Learn Welsh sector – from developing pioneering courses and digital resources to training tutors and creating opportunities for learners to enjoy their Welsh. The Centre contracts 11 course providers, who deliver over 1,500 courses on its behalf every year – formerly in communities across Wales, and since March 2020, in virtual classrooms. The sector's workforce has shown incredible innovation and ingenuity during this recent difficult time and staff have proved their passion for delivering excellent opportunities for learners.

Welcoming new speakers from all backgrounds to the Welsh language, and building their confidence to speak the language, is at the heart of our work. The Centre's special projects, such as 'Work Welsh', a scheme to strengthen bilingual skills in the workplace, target specific groups. Special courses have been developed to attract learners from different backgrounds through our 'Welsh for All' programme. The Centre works closely with the Welsh Language Commissioner and other partners to agree which sectors and groups of learners should be prioritised.

The Centre has delivered structural stability to the sector since its formation, with its current pattern of established providers. The Centre will continually review the effectiveness of its arrangements.

Great strides have been taken to regulate and enhance the quality of the provision, which is inspected regularly by Estyn. For the first time, a national curriculum has been introduced, along with a digital platform, learnwelsh.cymru, where it is possible to search for a course and access an array of digital resources, including self-study courses. Estyn has published its recent review of the Centre, which provides assurance the Centre is operating effectively. We welcome Estyn's recommendations, which include sharing successful second language teaching and acquisition methodology with other relevant sectors.

This Strategic Plan, which provides direction for the whole sector during the next phase, was formulated in consultation with course providers and the Centre's company and advisory boards. We will seek the opinions of individuals and organisations before presenting the final version by the summer of 2021.

The timing of this plan coincides with a Rapid Review commissioned by the Welsh Government to consider the Centre's arrangements at the end of the current agreement period in July 2022. We will further develop this plan, depending on the recommendations.

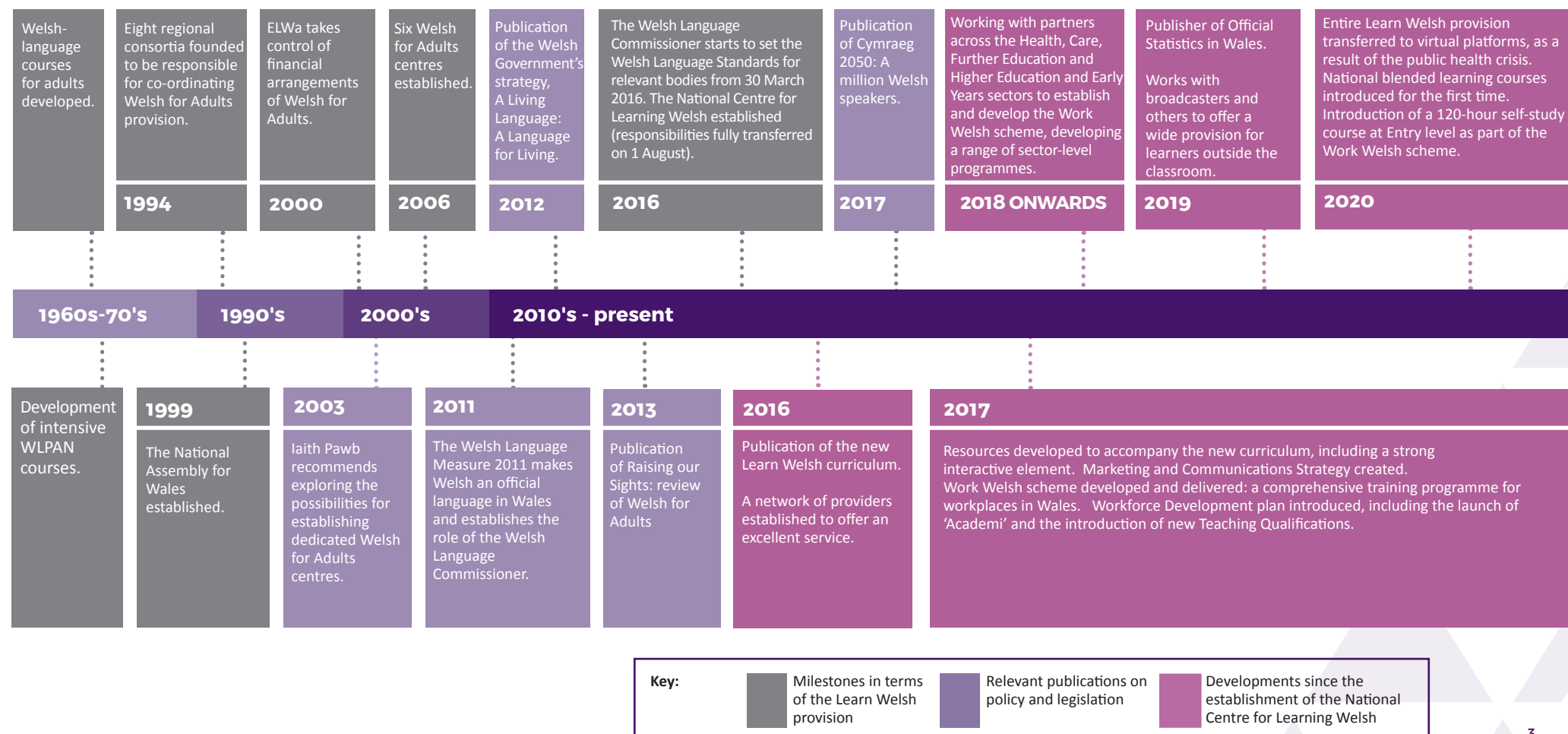
Our aim is clear – to increase the numbers who are learning, and using, the Welsh language. We are proud of all of our learners – their dedication and enthusiasm towards the Welsh language is a continuing inspiration for everyone working in the Learn Welsh sector.

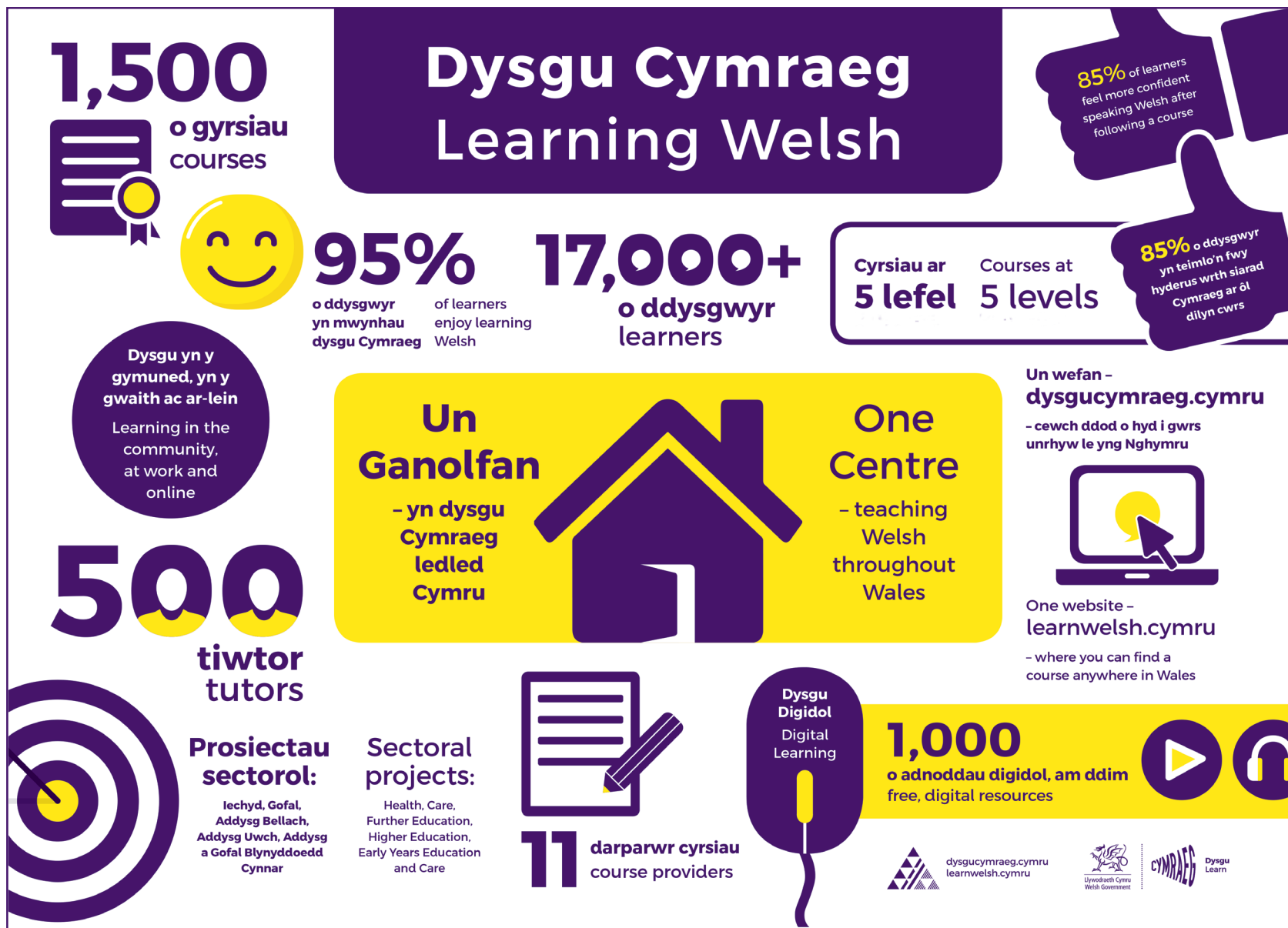
Efa Gruffudd Jones
Chief Executive

**The aim
of the
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1. Timeline

The Centre's work can be considered in the context of developments in the sector over the last fifty years, as illustrated in the timeline below. One prominent feature over time is the move towards strategic and co-ordinated planning on a national level. By implementing this Strategic Plan, the Centre will continue its work of planning and working collaboratively to enhance the opportunities for everyone to learn the language and become new and confident speakers.





Strategic themes in Cymraeg 2050



Increase the number of Welsh speakers

- Language transmission within the family
- The Early Years
- Statutory education
- Post-compulsory education
- Education workforce



Increase the use of the Welsh language

- The workforce
- Services
- Social use of the Welsh language



Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

- Community and the economy
- Culture and media
- Wales and the wider world
- Digital technology
- Infrastructure and linguistic planning
- Evaluation and research

How does the Centre's work support these strategic themes?

Attract – open doors to learning Welsh

- Marketing and promotion
- Strategic partnerships
- Meeting the needs of learners

Teach – provision of excellent Learn Welsh services

- Develop the resources and provision
- Develop the workforce
- Learning opportunities for all

Use – assist learners in using the language

- In the home
- In the community
- In the workplace

Strategic planning – develop an all-Wales service

Develop quality
Research and analysis

2. Vision

	Create confident Welsh speakers by providing an excellent and comprehensive Learn Welsh service.

3. Values

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Ensure learners from all backgrounds are welcomed and supported as they learn and use the language. ▲ Act with conviction and ambition, leading pioneering and progressive plans to attract new audiences of learners. ▲ Work closely with partners and employers across Wales to ensure that proactive and versatile plans are readily available to new speakers everywhere.

4. Strategic Objectives

Introduction	<p>During the next phase, the Centre's work will focus on four priority areas. Three of those areas relate to the Centre engaging with learners: firstly, to attract more people to learn the language; secondly, to provide a range of quality learning opportunities; and thirdly, to support the use of the Welsh language by learners in their everyday lives and in different contexts. These strategic objectives directly contribute to supporting the vision of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.</p> <p>The fourth overarching area reflects the Centre's dedication towards planning provision strategically and highlighting continuous learning and improvement by ensuring robust management and governance arrangements. Through the Centre's management procedures, we will continue to enhance the way we operate as an organisation and the provision for learners. The Centre will employ a team to deliver national developments across the Teaching and Learning Directorate, the Planning and Development Directorate, and the Marketing and Communications Directorate.</p>

<p>1. Attract - open doors to learning Welsh</p>	<p>The Centre will attract people to learn Welsh, ensuring an opportunity for all to learn the language, whatever their background or wherever they live.</p> <p>We shall extend a special welcome to people from all backgrounds and we will develop suitable materials. With the introduction of virtual classrooms and self-study courses, it is possible for anyone throughout the world to learn Welsh with the Centre and many have started doing so - however our emphasis is on people living in Wales. These new opportunities provide a flexibility that has not been seen before, in terms of time, methods and speed of learning. In order to attract individuals, families and the workforce to start learning or to reconnect with the language, it is vital that the Centre, through its activities, shares the message that anyone can learn Welsh.</p> <p>Creating the right conditions and nurturing an enthusiasm for learning Welsh depends on partnership working across Wales, and the Centre will continue to build partnerships. The Centre is eager to share its message that all are welcome to learn Welsh, with numerous opportunities to practice and use the Welsh language whilst learning. New considerations for the future include the availability of broadband and ensuring that learners have suitable equipment.</p> <p>This strategic objective calls for an understanding of the factors that influence the decisions and behaviour of prospective learners. Why do individuals decide to learn Welsh or choose not to do so? Do these reasons change over time, or vary from one area to the next? What are the lessons learnt over time about what motivates learners to keep learning? Does digital poverty affect the ability to attract learners in this new digital world? What effect does digital learning have on decisions? The plans that are developed will consider these questions.</p> <p>We will achieve this strategic objective via the following actions:</p> <p>Understanding of the sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Conduct market research in order to further develop our understanding of new audiences, and information on what facilitates progression for learners. The aim is to act on the basis of evidence. ▲ As a publisher of official statistics, ensure that the correct data about the sector are published annually. ▲ Make best use of the collected and published data to set targets and identify areas of further research by analysing trends and patterns. ▲ Develop a programme to regularly gather the opinions of learners and the workforce in order to implement a programme of improvement.
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	<p>Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Implement a Marketing and Communications Strategy, building on the Learn Welsh brand. ▲ Implement national and local marketing plans that promote courses and support learners' progression. ▲ Use a variety of marketing and communications tools to promote learning Welsh, primarily focusing on digital methods, and continually evaluate value for money and effectiveness. <p>Working together to promote the Welsh language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Develop strategic partnerships with organisations from various sectors to promote the use of the Welsh language. ▲ Develop strategic partnerships to increase the opportunities for learners to practice speaking Welsh. <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Make full use of the unique digital platform developed for the sector in order to provide full access for learners and tutors to information and resources.
<p>2. Teach – provision of excellent Learn Welsh services for all</p>	<p>The Centre is ambitious in terms of the provision offered to learners. An innovative curriculum has been developed and the aim is to provide excellent provision for all learners, and for the learners to feel that their excellent experience of learning Welsh has enriched their lives, improved their skills and boosted their confidence. We are committed to offering opportunities at all levels that are suitable for all and flexible and accessible. We want individuals to be able to learn in the workplace with courses that are relevant to their positions and tailored to their sector. It is also vitally important that opportunities are provided for families to learn Welsh, increasing the use of Welsh in the home.</p> <p>We will continue to invest in an ambitious programme that provides different learning options for learners, including traditional face-to-face classroom learning, virtual classrooms, blended and self-study courses. We will also provide social learning opportunities for learners.</p> <p>We acknowledge the need to learn from best practice and to share this with our network of providers and partners in Wales and worldwide. Ensuring excellent teaching depends on investing in the Learn Welsh workforce, raising the sector's profile, and offering professional development opportunities for tutors and other practitioners. The workforce has proved its ability and willingness to change and develop new skills at speed in recent times.</p>

We will achieve this strategic objective by taking the following actions:

Develop the learning provision, focussing on digital innovation:

- ▲ Edit, review and commission resources that support the Learn Welsh curriculum across the five learning levels, ensuring that high quality resources are available to all learners at every level.
- ▲ Develop a programme of courses across a range of teaching methods, including methods that are new to the Learn Welsh sector, such as virtual classrooms, blended courses and self-study courses.
- ▲ The aim is to provide flexibility so that learners can choose the approach that is best suited for them, while we ensure full support for learners across the whole range of provision. We will look to base our developments on robust teaching practices with a focus on research and learner experience.
- ▲ Design provision that is flexible in terms of location, time and course length, with the aim of increasing learner contact hours to accelerate the process of learning Welsh.
- ▲ Develop an online programme that enables learners to recognise their own progression during and on completing their courses. The aim is to encourage learners to progress through the curriculum, leading to an increase in confident Welsh speakers. We want to encourage learners of all levels, especially those at Intermediate level and beyond, to use the Welsh language as confident speakers.
- ▲ Continue to develop the Learn Welsh Level Checker, the pioneering diagnostic tool that identifies a learner's language level.
- ▲ Offer advice to providers on planning provision for the medium term and long term. This could include considering the possible arrangements for the medium term and long term, self-study provision, and working with an array of new partners in order to expand digital learning opportunities for learners.
- ▲ Share expertise with other sectors in terms of language acquisition and resources.
- ▲ Nurture international connections in order to share our work and to learn from good practice in other countries.
- ▲ Strategically target sectors of employers and develop a tailored service for them.

	<p>Develop the Learn Welsh workforce:</p> <p>Implement the Centre's Workforce Development Plan. The plan is based on four main priority areas under the following headings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the profile and creating attractive career paths. 2. Providing suitable and meaningful structures. 3. Developing a qualified and dedicated workforce. 4. Maintaining high standards of performance. <p>▲ Offer national qualifications ensuring they reflect the requirements of the curriculum and new teaching materials.</p> <p>Provide learning opportunities for all:</p> <p>▲ Implement new, pioneering plans to ensure that learning Welsh is accessible to all, including holding taster courses for asylum seekers and refugees.</p>
<p>3. Use – assisting learners in using the Welsh language in their communities and workplace</p>	<p>The Welsh Government has set a target to increase the percentage of the population speaking Welsh on a daily basis. The Centre, in partnership with others, has an important role to play in increasing and expanding the opportunities for people to use their skills. The aim is to boost the confidence of learners and less confident speakers to use the language in a range of contexts – within their communities, in the workplace and within the family – while supporting the Welsh-language infrastructure.</p> <p>We will achieve this strategic objective by taking the following actions:</p> <p>▲ Deliver the pioneering Work Welsh scheme, expanding the scheme to a wide variety of sectors. Future priorities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Self-study courses with the support of a tutor. – Form strong partnerships with specialist organisations. – Support employers in planning for a bilingual workforce. – Work with various Welsh Government policy departments to extend the scheme on a sectoral basis. <p>▲ Deliver the new Welsh at Home scheme to offer more opportunities for parents to learn so they can speak Welsh with their children. The priorities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offer a range of community courses that encourage parents to learn Welsh. – Work strategically at a local level to form partnerships with schools, leading to more lessons for parents and families. – Adapt resources for parents, in collaboration with specialists from the Early Years and primary sectors. – Develop the 'Clwb Cwtsh' project.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Expand ‘Siarad’, the scheme that pairs learners with Welsh speakers to support learners, building their confidence to use the language. ▲ Develop pioneering programmes that lead to use of the Welsh language, including projects that develop the confidence of learners and speakers. Work with partners to offer opportunities for learners to use their Welsh, including broadcasters and theatre companies.
4. Strategic planning	<p>The Centre plans strategically for the Learn Welsh sector throughout Wales. It is essential to maintain robust management and governance arrangements in order to ensure the organisation is led effectively and that procedures are in place to support a quality service. The aim of the planning, management and governance arrangements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure continual improvement to the quality of the provision, supporting and scrutinising providers’ actions; • to raise the profile of the Welsh language and the opportunities available to learn the language; • to ensure that the Centre makes a key contribution towards achieving the goals of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy. <p>The Centre’s Company Board is responsible for comprehensive and transparent financial management as well as robust and constant risk management. The National Centre for Learning Welsh is a company limited by guarantee without share capital.</p> <p>The Advisory Board, accountable to the Company Board, is responsible for ensuring the Centre achieves its strategic objectives in the Learn Welsh sector in line with the Welsh Government’s vision for supporting the Welsh language.</p> <p>The Centre’s work is also discussed by an independent Scrutiny Committee established by the Government. The committee’s role is to scrutinise the Centre’s work and advise the Government on issues such as value for money and the Centre’s response to Welsh Government policies.</p> <p>We will achieve this strategic objective by taking the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Plan the Learn Welsh service nationally with our course providers. Gather evidence on the effectiveness and impacts of our provision and, through this, develop an understanding of the contribution of our service to the long-term goals of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy. ▲ Regularly convene groups at a national level, including the Curriculum and Resources Committee, the Learner Support Committee, the Quality Committee, and the Marketing and Communications Committee, in order to consult and develop policies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Continue to identify and share examples of excellence and good practice in line with the Centre's National Quality Framework. ▲ Develop a funding mechanism and monitor progress against national targets, outputs and outcomes. As part of the arrangements for monitoring progress, report on performance against indicators and outcomes on an annual basis. <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Maintain a robust, visual and accountable governance structure that drives the improvements of the Learn Welsh services on a national level. ▲ Publish an annual report on expenditure and achievement. ▲ Ensure that internal and external audits are undertaken and provide appropriate responses to such audits. ▲ Consider diversity issues when recruiting for vacancies on the Centre's boards.

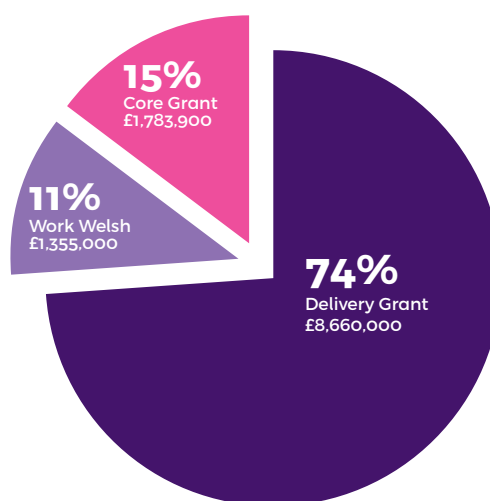
Policy context:	
	Since the Centre's previous Strategic Plan was formulated, there have been significant changes to the policy and operational contexts that guide our work. This section outlines the greatest policy changes that have an impact on the Centre's work.
Cymraeg 2050	The Cymraeg 2050 strategy, introduced by the Welsh Government in 2017, underlines the key contribution of the Learn Welsh sector to the aim of achieving a million Welsh speakers. The strategy acknowledges the opportunities, since the Centre's establishment, to develop the national provision to support Welsh courses in the workplace and at home, and to use technology to support learning. This Strategic Plan supports and contributes towards reaching the goal of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy. It also outlines the importance of the Centre's role in providing strategic guidance and promoting a commitment to learning Welsh among employers and stakeholders.
Well-being of Future Generations Act	The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to work towards the seven well-being goals. The Centre's work supports the vision of this act, including the aim to create a prosperous and equal Wales where the Welsh language thrives.
Prosperity for All	The economic action plan, Prosperity for All, was published in 2017 and acknowledges the relationship between Welsh-language communities and the economy. The Work Welsh programme supports employers in specific sectors to enable them to increase their use of the Welsh language and increase their provision of Welsh-language services.
Policy on Welsh Language Transmission and use in families	The Welsh Government has developed policy proposals on the transmission of the Welsh language, and its use in families. 'Use' is one of the themes of this plan and we recognise the importance of developing skills among adults to enable them to use the language confidently at home and with children. Via our comprehensive provision for learners across Wales, the Centre's courses reinforce the aim of supporting use within families.
Policies and work plans	Sectoral developments and work plans guide the Centre's operations and priorities in its work with strategic partners. For example, the Centre supports the actions of More Than Just Words..., the strategic framework for Welsh-language services in health and social care, working closely with health boards. The Centre also supports the wider work of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since its responsibilities were extended to include the post-16 sector, including Further Education and Apprenticeships. The Centre will also respond to new strategies published, for example Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan: An Anti-Racist Wales.

Policy context:	
Welsh Language Measure 2011	The requirement for public bodies to comply with the Welsh Language Standards also influences the Centre's work, as bodies seek support in improving the skills of their workforce in order to provide Welsh-language services.
Partnerships	<p>Working in partnership has become integral to the Centre's work and the partnerships already established are an important context to the Strategic Plan. Many partnerships became even more important during lockdown, such as those with the National Eisteddfod of Wales and BBC Radio Cymru, and new and significant partnerships were also established with SaySomethingInWelsh and Adult Learning Wales.</p> <p>The Centre's aim at all times is to put learners, and all that's best for learners, at the heart of its work.</p> <p>The Centre has a clear and important contribution to make in supporting policy priorities and leading national plans to support learning Welsh.</p>

The Learn Welsh context:

The National Centre for Learning Welsh took full responsibility for the Learn Welsh sector on 1 August 2016. The Centre was established following a review of the Learn Welsh sector by the Welsh Government, which led to the 'Raising our Sights' report. The Centre's current agreement runs until 31 July 2022. Welsh Government has commissioned a rapid review to report by July 2021 with recommendations about future direction.

For 2020-2021, £8,660,000 was received to distribute to our providers, £1,355,000 for the Work Welsh scheme and £1,783,900 as a Core Grant. For 2021-2022, the Work Welsh budget will be re-instated to £2,500,000.



The Learn Welsh context:

The Centre's data

Learn Welsh statistics

The central database collects information from all learners as they register on a course. This information includes details about the learner (e.g. name, address, date of birth) and the course (level, location and learning intensity).

Number of unique learners



The 'numbers of unique learners' records every learner once, regardless of the number of courses they have followed during the year.

- In **2017-2018**, there were **12,680** unique learners.
- In **2018-2019**, there were **13,260** unique learners, an **increase of 5%** when compared with **2017-2018**.
- In **2019-2020**, there were **17,505** unique learners, an increase of **32%** compared to 2018-2019.

Number of learning activities



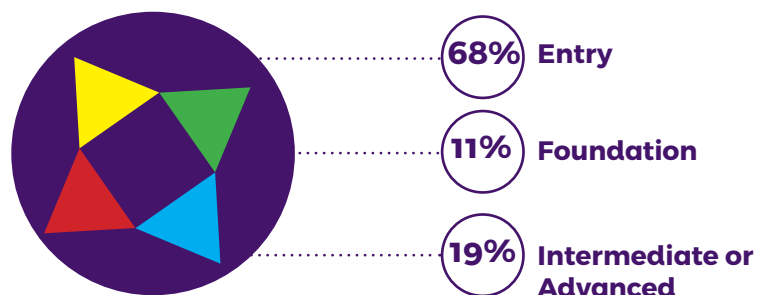
Learners can attend more than one learning activity at different levels or intensities during the year. For example, an individual learner can attend an Entry level course of 170 – 259 hours and a 'per hour' course at Foundation level in the same period. This counts as two learning activities.

- The 2019-2020 learners attended 30,115 learning activities, an increase of 48% when compared to 2018-2019.

The national Work Welsh scheme is included fully for the first time in 2019- 2020.

The Learn Welsh context:

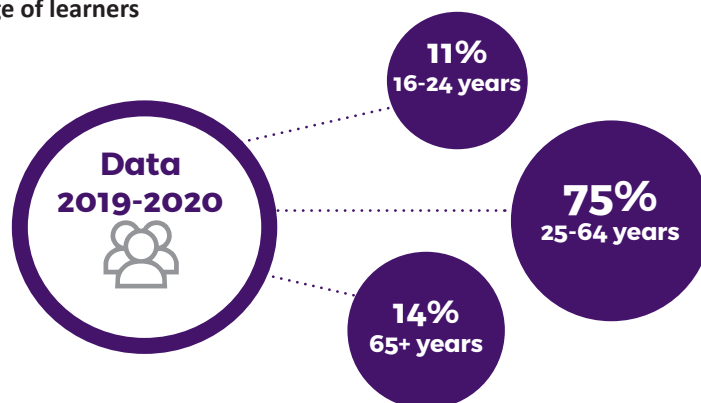
Learning levels



Learning opportunities within the Learn Welsh programme are available at five levels.

- In 2019-2020, 68% of learners were at Entry level, with 11% at Foundation level and 19% at Intermediate or Advanced levels (including Proficiency). There was an increase in the popularity of Entry level courses during lockdown.
- In 2018-2019, 51% of learners were at Entry level. There were 17% at Foundation level and 32% at Intermediate or Advanced levels (including Proficiency).

Age of learners



The age of learners is calculated from the first day of the academic year. For 2019-2020, the age of the learner is calculated from 1 August 2019.

- In 2019-2020 there were 15,015 learners within the working age group (16-64 years old), which is 86% of all learners.

The Learn Welsh context:	
Work Welsh	<p>Since the start of the Work Welsh scheme, approximately 16,000 individuals have participated in training, including online courses, intensive courses and residential courses.</p> <p>In 2018, the first sectoral plans for the Early Years and Further Education / Higher Education sectors were developed. Since that time, sectoral plans have been drawn up for health, care, apprenticeships and the arts. Strategic partnerships within the various sectors have led to the success of these plans.</p> <p>Following cuts to our budget as a result of the public health emergency, the scheme had to be completely revised, with a stronger emphasis on online learning. Many of the sectoral plans had to be delayed but we hope to rebuild for the future.</p> <p>The intensive face-to-face learning has been replaced by access to an online course that is the equivalent of 120 hours of Welsh learning. This is the first time the Centre has offered so many hours of online learning. It is a complete self-study course and the equivalent of Entry 1 and 2. A tutor is also available to support the learning. The residential learning element of the scheme has been adapted, giving opportunities for learners to take advantage of the 'language confidence' courses presented virtually by Nant Gwrtheyrn for the time being.</p> <p>The Work Welsh scheme has been pioneering in terms of digital technology in the last three years and has developed over 110 hours of online learning modules. Six are general courses while 10 have been tailored to meet the needs of different sectors. There was a significant increase in the use of these courses during the lockdown period.</p>
Digital developments	<p>The latest phase has been incredibly busy in terms of digital developments and ambitious plans. The Centre's digital platform, learnwelsh.cymru, is a one-stop shop for the sector and has already made its mark. Learners from across Wales and further afield turn to it to register and pay for a course and use its range of free digital resources. Furthermore, it has been an invaluable resource throughout the public health emergency, providing opportunities for remote learning, virtual learning and self-study.</p> <p>Other digital developments were already underway, reflecting the Centre's aim of offering flexibility and choice to its learners, and, in May 2020, national blended courses were introduced for the first time.</p> <p>It is not clear when it will be possible to return to the 'classroom' to learn. Virtual learning will be an option for learners going forward. These courses can also combine remote learning in virtual classes with online activities.</p> <p>The Centre collates and shares data about learners in order to plan and market the provision.</p>
National resources	<p>Over the past four years, national courses have been introduced for the first time. By January 2021, every course book in the Learn Welsh series had been published.</p>