



HM Inspectorate of Probation

Welsh Language Scheme – Annual Monitoring Report for 2023/2024

Introduction

1. This report has been prepared by the Inspector with responsibility for our Welsh Language Scheme and covers the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
2. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation promotes excellence in probation and youth justice services across England and Wales. We do this through independent inspections, recommendations, research, and effective practice guidance.
3. In addition to our inspections, we publish regular thematic reports on key issues in the criminal justice system, conduct independent serious further offence (SFO) reviews and produce annual reports each year.
4. Our independent research contributes greatly to our work and provides an evidence base, on which we base our standards for inspections. We also commission leading academics to provide their views on a range of related topics.
5. We use our voice to drive system change, with a focus on inclusion and diversity. Our scrutiny leads to improved outcomes for individuals and communities.
6. We receive a delegated budget from the Ministry of Justice, which for the period 2023 to 2024 was £7,159,000.
7. This year we revised our Welsh Language Scheme, and it was approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 20 February 2024.
8. HM Inspectorate of Probation, led by the Chief Inspector, is committed to fulfilling the responsibilities set out in our Welsh Language Scheme. As outlined in our Scheme we are committed to ensuring, in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, that in the conduct of our inspections in Wales, we will treat the Welsh and English languages on the basis of equality.

Recruitment and staffing

9. We continue to increase our recruitment of Welsh speakers and ensure that the wording in our job advertisements is explicit that we warmly welcome applications from Welsh speaking candidates. We also continue to make regular use of our established stakeholder relationships in the justice sector in Wales, to promote awareness of our vacancies.
10. We provide the advert and job description in Welsh and offer Welsh speaking applicants the opportunity to discuss the position in Welsh.
11. In the forthcoming year we will also be expanding our mentoring and shadowing scheme to include Welsh language speakers. Through this scheme our Welsh speaking inspection staff will offer one to one support, guidance, and shadowing to those who are interested in joining and learning more about the organisation.

12. As a result of our continued commitment to recruit Welsh speakers, we have recruited two Welsh speaking inspectors who joined the Inspectorate in 2023. The Inspectorate now employs three full time members of staff who are Welsh speaking, which represents an increase from one in the previous reporting year.
13. Additionally, we have one Welsh speaking fee-paid inspector, who has been deployed on inspections delivered in Wales in 2023.
14. In addition to our commitment to continue to recruit Welsh speaking staff members, we are working with the Probation Service and youth justice teams in Wales to train some of their Welsh speaking staff to become 'local assessors' who will support the delivery of inspection activity in Wales.

Service planning and delivery

15. HM Inspectorate of Probation designs and implements the inspections in Wales of both adult probation and youth justice services, and at times we work jointly with other relevant inspectorates. In Wales, these include the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Estyn, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). When working together, we promote our Welsh language scheme and are similarly cognisant of other inspectorate's schemes.
16. Our Welsh language scheme sets out our commitment that we will provide at least one Welsh speaking Inspector on our core youth and adult inspection programmes in Wales. This has been achieved in this reporting year.
17. In preparing for both the core and thematic inspections in Wales we have engaged with the Wales Regional Probation Director and youth justice team managers in Wales to ask them to inform us in advance whether any of individuals using their services, staff or relevant partner agencies would prefer to be corresponded and spoken with in Welsh. This early engagement enables us to understand the Welsh language needs of the services and put in place plans to meet them when delivering our inspections and will continue over the forthcoming reporting year.
18. Information requested by HM Inspectorate of Probation in advance of inspection can be submitted in either Welsh or English. During the reporting period, we received submissions from the youth justice services inspected which included documents in Welsh and bilingual copies of relevant policies.

Inspections delivered in Wales

19. We have completed the following inspections of youth justice services in Wales during the reporting period, although not all these inspection reports have been published within the reporting period for this annual report:
 - Carmarthenshire
 - Gwynedd Ynys Môn
 - Conwy and Denbighshire
 - Newport
 - Flintshire.

20. For each of these inspections, the announcement letter, children's information leaflet and consent form, and staff information leaflet were provided in both Welsh and English as per our commitment set out in the Welsh Language Scheme.
21. There have been no core inspections of probation services in Wales during the reporting period.
22. We have completed three thematic inspections that have included areas in Wales, two of which were published during this reporting period:
 - The quality of work undertaken with women.
 - A thematic inspection of work undertaken, and progress made, by the Probation Service to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse and protect victims.
 - The role of the senior probation officer and management oversight in the Probation Service.
23. For the inspections noted above we met all the requests for interviews in Welsh, which totalled 17. This is a notable increase in comparison to the reporting period 2022-2023 where there were none, and 2021-2023 where there were seven.
24. The discussions that take place with staff during an inspection, also serve to promote the importance of recognising that those who access probation and youth justice services are entitled to do so through the medium of Welsh.

Inspection findings in relation to the Welsh Language

25. Our core inspection work in Wales includes a focus on how well the inspected organisation has identified and responded to requests to access their services in Welsh.
26. The inspection of youth justice services in Carmarthenshire found that there was a commitment to meeting the protected characteristics of the young people. Provision for Welsh speakers was well established, with speech, language, and communication provision available in both Welsh and English.
27. In Gwynedd and Ynys Môn, it was also found that the youth justice service was working with children in their preferred language of Welsh or English, with most staff being first language Welsh speakers.

The organisation's public image

28. During this reporting year we have worked with the Welsh Language Commissioner's office to review and update our Welsh language scheme. Our revised scheme was approved by the Commissioner on 20 February 2024.
29. We continue to use our Welsh language branding for all reports and communications in Welsh.
30. Our Welsh speaking staff are clearly identified via their bilingual name badges and lanyards.
31. We have a dedicated Welsh language (Cymraeg) webpage, which includes information about the inspectorate, our reports, consultations, corporate documents, and career opportunities in Welsh.
32. Reports on our inspections that are undertaken in Wales are published in parallel in both Welsh and English. Reports written in the Welsh language were published as soon as possible following receipt from external translators. These published reports are also promoted with a bilingual title on social media platforms.

Wider Communications

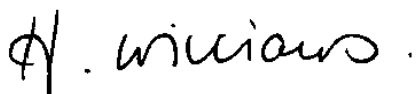
- 33.** HM Inspectorate of Probation has worked with the Ministry of Justice to procure new translation services, which are more familiar to local services. These local services have been accessed during this reporting period.
- 34.** Requests for Welsh language media interviews are referred to our Welsh speaking senior manager. There has been one request about our work, during the reporting period.
- 35.** We have not received any calls or correspondence to our Manchester or London offices through the medium of Welsh during the reporting period.
- 36.** During this reporting period we have kept in touch with partner Inspectorates, including liaison to promote the development of joint thematic inspection arrangements in Wales.
- 37.** Our pro-active stakeholder engagement approach has included ongoing liaison with criminal justice leaders in Wales, and key stakeholders including Welsh Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and the Wales Centre for Crime and Social Justice (WCCSJ). We are also represented on the Youth Offending Team (YOT) Managers Cymru forum, and have regular engagement with Youth Justice Board Cymru and have presented to 'Hwb Doeth' as part of the Youth Justice Board's resource hub.
- 38.** We continue to identify opportunities to further our understanding of the devolved arrangements for adult and children's services, as they apply to our role in inspecting probation and youth justice services.

Staff training and development

- 39.** This year, HM Inspectorate of Probation staff have received input on the history and significance of the Welsh language, our revised Welsh Language Scheme, and the commitments it sets out for all our staff when planning and delivering inspections in Wales.
- 40.** All new staff continue to receive, as part of their induction, an equality and diversity overview which incorporates our responsibilities and commitments regarding inspecting in Wales.

Future arrangements

- 41.** Hannah Williams, HM Probation Inspector, will have lead responsibility for our Welsh Language scheme, on behalf of HM Chief Inspector of Probation.



Hannah Williams

HM Probation Inspector

On behalf of

Martin Jones

HM Chief Inspector of Probation