



British Transport Police

THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

The British Transport Police (BTP) is the police force for Great Britain's railways and our business is to police the railways as effectively as possible. This puts the Force squarely in the mainstream of British policing, dealing with the same crimes - often the same criminals - as other forces, using the same data, intelligence, research and other resources, and responding to the same public and political priorities. The BTP is unique because it is a specialist organisation providing a dedicated service within a particularly challenging rail transport environment.

The population the Force serves is primarily the people who use, work on and manage Britain's railway systems, although an important element of service is to the wider community.

For statistical purposes, and particularly the measurement of nationally agreed police performance indicators, the "policing population" has been independently assessed and agreed by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and the BTP Committee as almost three million, although more people actually use the railway each day. That population which is spread from the north of Scotland to the West Country, including Wales, and is constantly moving along more than 10,000 route miles and 2,500 stations, or working in the thousands of sidings, yards, depots, offices and other premises, presents some difficult and unique policing challenges.

1.1. A Partnership Approach

The essence of policing is through a range of partnerships and BTP continues to build vital relationships with the travelling public, railway managers and their staff - all key stakeholders in the new railway industry. In addition the Force pursues its policing objectives (which are published in its Annual Policing Plan) in partnership with many other organisations, including local groups such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, Victim Support, Crime Concern and Crimestoppers.

The BTP Committee is legally responsible for maintaining an adequate and efficient police force by providing the Chief Constable with the resources to do his job.

HM Government's commitment to maintaining the BTP as a unified public force providing law and order policing to Britain's railways, including London Underground and Docklands Light Railway, is also a necessary prerequisite for success. Whatever the ownership of the railways, they remain public space and must be protected by a publicly accountable police force with the powers necessary to carry out its duties effectively and completely.

The Force is committed to providing core policing services to maintain law and order and include (without limitation) services undertaken in relation to safety, anti-terrorism, the prevention and detection of crime, the keeping of the peace, the bringing of offenders to justice and the rendering of support to victims of crime.

Within these broad roles, there is wide consultation to deliver a service which meets the needs and expectations of customers, and Police Customer Liaison Groups have been established within the eight operational police Areas, whilst consultation with the local

community is an essential task for Officers-in-Charge of police stations and for Area Commanders.

The views of rail users are also expressed through regional Rail Users' Consultative Committees (including the Rail Users' Consultative Committee for Wales), and the Central Rail Users' Consultative Committee. The Force believes that these user groups play a key role in expressing passenger opinion and monitoring police activity, and strives to maintain close contact with them. On a local basis liaison takes place with a variety of community and neighbourhood groups.

There are inherent checks and balances in partnership policing, but as part of Britain's national policing structure, the Force is fully integrated into the complaints procedure set down within the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and supervised by the independent Police Complaints Authority in England and Wales.

1.2. Operational Policing

The British Transport Police in Great Britain is organised into seven operational Areas each commanded by an Area Commander. One Area has policing responsibility for Wales: the Western Area – covers all of Wales, most of the Midlands, and South West England

There are four British Transport Police stations in Wales:

Cardiff - 24 hour operation
Swansea - 24 hour operation
Newport - community post, no staff
Bangor - non 24 hour operation

2. THE SCHEME AND DELIVERY

The British Transport Police are committed to treating the Welsh and English language on an equal basis in the discharge of its daily public business.

The Force's Scheme:

- conforms to the guidelines of the Welsh Language Board and will be made subject to review in keeping with future legislation.
- forms part of the Force Strategic Plan and Policing Plan objectives and will be financed from the annual Force budget.
- is tailored to deliver the Force's message in a positive and effective way to the people of Wales.
- includes steps to raise staff awareness at all levels to ensure commitment to its success.
- will be monitored for implementation and effectiveness, as appropriate, by the Force Area Commanders with territorial responsibilities in Wales.
- will not be subject to alteration without the agreement and approval of the Welsh Language Board.

3. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

3.1. New Policies and Initiatives

When new policies and initiatives are implemented, we shall assess the linguistic implications to ensure that they are consistent with the Scheme and will not undermine it.

In implementing new policies and initiatives, we will promote and facilitate the use of Welsh wherever possible and advance the principle of equality of language at every opportunity.

We will consult the Welsh Language Board if any changes or initiatives might affect the scheme of another public body (such as another police force, the courts, probation service, Crown Prosecution Service, etc).

New policies and initiatives will be consistent with the Force's Scheme which will not be subject to alteration without the agreement and approval of the Welsh Language Board.

3.2. Delivery of Service

In the application of the Scheme the Force will ensure that people living in Wales will be able to receive a service through the medium of Welsh from our Welsh police stations.

In delivering our policing service we will, wherever possible, ensure that the Welsh speaking public will be able to receive this service in Welsh. However, this may not always be possible in:

- a)** Emergencies, or
- b)** Where to do so would significantly impair the effectiveness of police operations.

We would also ask the public to note that few of our officers and civilian staff are currently able to speak Welsh and the initial contact between the British Transport Police and a member of the public may be with a non-Welsh-speaking officer. We therefore seek the co-operation of Welsh speakers in avoiding unnecessary delay to the furtherance of a police inquiry.

If a Welsh speaking member of staff is not readily available arrangements will be made for a Welsh speaker to be made available as soon as possible. When we are aware from the outset that a member of the public requires a Welsh language service, this will be provided as soon as possible. In particular we will:

- identify members of staff who are Welsh speakers and make arrangements for their hours of duty and contact details to be held centrally by our 24 hour control room;
- arrange for Welsh speaking members of staff based at one police station to be made available to assist another police station when required;
- share services for Welsh speakers with neighbouring police forces and other organisations providing the same services, or purchase the service from them;
- employ professional external translators on an agency basis to provide specific services when required.

When working or co-operating with other groups in Wales, e.g. charities, we will encourage and foster the use of Welsh.

Staff involved in policy formulation will be made aware of the Scheme and the Force's responsibilities under the Act by means of Force Standing Orders, briefings and seminars.

3.3. Standard of Welsh Service

The Force is committed to delivering a high quality service in Welsh and English.

Members of the public will be entitled to communicate with the Force in either Welsh or English as a matter of personal choice.

In its dealings with other people and organisations involved in the administration of criminal justice in Wales, the Force will ensure that procedures are in place to highlight an individual's preferred language.

The Force is committed to meeting the requirements of the Citizen's Charter in Welsh as in English.

The standards attained in our key performance measures will apply to both languages. The standards and their implementations will be closely monitored. We will ensure consistency in the availability of Welsh services in our Welsh police stations.

4. DEALING WITH THE WELSH SPEAKING PUBLIC

4.1. Written Communications

The Force welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English, and letters written in Welsh will be answered within the timescale as for English correspondence.

Following a telephone conversation or face-to-face meeting in Welsh, follow-up correspondence will be in the same language.

Where the language preference of the recipient is not known, the initial letter will be bilingual.

Where the preferred language of the recipient is known to be Welsh, correspondence will be in that language.

Circular and standard letters to the public in Wales will be bilingual.

All staff will be made aware of these arrangements and the assistance available to non-Welsh speaking members of staff to communicate with the public, by means of Force Standing Orders.

4.2. Public Telephone Communications at our Welsh Police Stations

The Force is offering a service in English and Welsh, and all incoming calls will be answered with a bilingual greeting at BT Police stations in Wales.

If a caller's preferred language is Welsh, we shall transfer the call to a Welsh-speaker. However, if none is available at the time, the caller will be given the choice of continuing in English or we shall arrange for a Welsh speaker to make contact with the caller as soon as possible.

All telephone answering machines will include fully bilingual greeting and messages.

A list of Welsh speaking members of staff will be maintained and kept by staff answering telephone calls in our Welsh police stations.

4.3. Public Meetings in Wales

The minutes of public consultative meetings will be available in Welsh. An addendum on the English version will highlight this facility.

The public will be welcome to use either Welsh or English in all public meetings arranged by the Force in Wales. Facilities will be made available for simultaneous translation at those public meetings. We will ensure that invitations, announcements, advertisements and notices relating to public meetings declare that the public are welcome to use either language, and that translation facilities will be provided.

4.4. Police interviews and other non-public meetings (for example, over the counter, in offices, in the home, on site, etc)

Members of the public who are required to be formally interviewed by the police, and those who come into contact with the police in non-public meetings, will be welcome to use either language, including at the time of arrest, and will be offered that facility. To achieve this we will place appropriate signs in police stations stating that either language can be used.

If we are asked to speak to any groups, associations, schools, etc. about the British Transport Police we would seek to know their language preference and, subject to availability, offer a Welsh-speaker if that is so desired.

4.5. The Public Face of the British Transport Police

The public image of the Force in Wales will be fully bilingual.

Corporate Identity

All headed stationery, as well as all forms issued to the public and all materials directed at the public, will be bilingual. Written guidance, which will include a list of all such materials, will be issued to staff. English and Welsh versions together in one document will be favoured.

The Force Annual Report and the Force Policing Plan have a limited circulation as they are primarily intended for the information of the Police Committee. Neither document deals specifically with any of the Force's seven areas and in the light of this we feel there would be little point in producing bilingual publications.

Police insignia worn on uniforms will be bilingual.

Bilingual warrant cards will be issued to all officers permanently based in Wales.

We are experimenting with a design for the Force badge and will seek approval of the Welsh Language Board prior to introduction.

Signs

Signs on buildings, vehicles and temporary signs will be bilingual and the Welsh and English languages on all signs will be equal in terms of format, size, quality, legibility, and prominence.

Audio and Video Tapes

Any tapes produced for the public by the Force will be in bilingual form in Wales. If this is not possible, separate Welsh and English tapes will be produced.

Media Campaigns

Our media campaigns on Welsh language television and radio will be in Welsh. Press Notices will be in bilingual format. Campaigns and news releases in the Welsh-based press and the English-language TV and radio stations for Wales will be bilingual subject to operational emergencies when time may preclude it. Campaigns and news releases on UK-wide media will be in English.

When carrying out public surveys, all questionnaires will be bilingual and arrangements will be made for face-to-face interviews to be conducted in Welsh if necessary.

Consultants

All consultants, designers, printers and publishers employed by the Force will be made fully aware of what is needed of them to ensure we meet the requirements of the Act.

Information stands

Should the Force take part in any exhibitions and the like, fascia boards, etc. would be bilingual.

Official Notices

Official notices, such as Appeal for Witnesses following an incident, will be bilingual.

Publications

The Force will produce bilingual publications in one document. If a charge is made for any publication, the price for a bilingual one will be no higher than that for a single-language version, and if the two languages are published separately, the price of the two will be the same.

Where any publications are available in separate Welsh and English versions, arrangements will be made to ensure they are published simultaneously (this includes co-ordination with offices publishing a version for use in England), and that they are made equally available (displayed together and issued together, whether through the post or over the counters, etc.).

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHEME

5.1. Recruitment and Training

- The Force will identify those workplaces and posts where the ability to speak Welsh is essential and those posts where it is desirable. Job descriptions will be formulated accordingly.
- Where ability to speak Welsh is essential, recruitment advertising will be Welsh-only in Welsh-language publications and bilingual in other publications mainly circulating in Wales. Where ability to speak Welsh is either essential or desirable, this will be stated in job advertisements.
- The Force is committed to ensuring that recruitment programmes encourage Welsh speakers to join the Force, either as a police officer or in a civilian support role. Those responsible for staff recruitment, training and supervision will be made fully aware of this requirement.
- Support will be given to members of staff who are required, or who desire, to learn or improve their ability to speak Welsh. Learning and training programmes will be arranged which focus on workplaces and posts.
- The Force will, through a survey of its workforce ascertain the capability of all its staff in the Welsh language.
- When a non-Welsh speaker is appointed to a post where the ability to speak Welsh is considered essential, that person will be required to learn the language within an agreed period.
- Existing staff in posts that are defined as requiring a Welsh speaker will be offered training in the Welsh language.
- In view of the small numbers of Welsh-speakers in the Force, vocational training through the medium of Welsh is not a practical option at this stage.

5.2. Administrative Arrangements

- The Chief Constable is fully committed to the arrangements set out in the Scheme.
- These proposals have been fully discussed and approved by the senior officers of the Force.
- The Force gives a commitment to integrate Welsh language aspects of the organisation's services within its normal administrative process.
- Integration of the Scheme within the work of the British Transport Police in Wales is an objective within the Force Strategic Plan and Policing Plan.
- The specific responsibility for ensuring that the Scheme is implemented and monitored rests with the Deputy Chief Constable who may be contacted at British Transport Police, Force Headquarters, PO BOX 260, 15 Tavistock Place, LONDON WC1H 9SJY.
- An information booklet is to be prepared for all members of staff in Wales explaining the Scheme and how it is being implemented. It will encompass an advisory section for non-Welsh speaking staff members.
- Arrangements will be made for existing and future computer systems to be equipped with pre-formatted templates for letters and other documents as appropriate.
- When organisations are requested to design computer systems which may impact on the public in Wales, such organisations will be made aware of the scheme.

5.3. Welsh Speakers

The Force will ensure that the public will have access to appropriately skilled Welsh speakers at its Welsh police stations who will be able to initially deal with members of the public or to arrange access to someone proficient in the Welsh language.

A register will be established of how many staff speak Welsh, or are learning the language, and where they work. The register will be kept up-to-date and used to inform all staff of available Welsh speakers.

The Force will ensure that every telephone call received from the public at its Welsh police stations is answered with a bilingual greeting.

5.4. Learning Welsh

The Force will encourage staff to learn Welsh. Priority will be given to those whose work involves contact with the public and the Force provides tuition for staff wishing to learn the Welsh language.

5.5. Translators

Any translators employed by the Force will be suitably qualified and competent and will be selected from those listed in the Welsh Language Board's "Directory of Translators" or members of "Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru" (The Association of Welsh Translators) or other appropriate body.

5.6. Instructions and Guidance

All staff who are planning and delivering the service will be made aware of the Scheme through management briefings, supported by written guidelines.

When agents are employed by the Force in Wales through competitive tendering, the Force will ensure that those agents implement all parts of the Scheme that they are so required to do. This will be stated in tendering documents and contracts.

5.7. Passing Information to Others

When information about people is passed to others (for example details of persons in custody may be passed to other police forces in Wales, courts, the Probation Service and the Crown Prosecution Service), the preferred language of the relevant person, where this is known, will be made clear to those receiving the information.

6. MONITORING THE SCHEME

6.1. The Force will specifically monitor:

- Future planning and development - the Force will promote the use of the Welsh language.
- Dealing with the Welsh speaking public - monitoring performance by checking response times for Welsh and English correspondence - both of which will be acknowledged within seven days and answered in full within 28 days where it is practical to do so.
- Public image - the Force's corporate image in Wales; the introduction of bilingual notices, forms, signs and other published materials.
- Staffing - the implementation and programme of training measures set out in the Scheme.
- Agents & Contractors - the provision and administration of our services by the Force's agents and contractors to ensure compliance with the Welsh language terms of their agreements or arrangements.
- Timetable - measuring the implementation of the scheme against target dates.
- Complaints - performance under the Scheme through the number and nature of complaints relating to our Welsh language service.
- Performance Indicators - Welsh language performance will be monitored by the Area Commander of the British Transport Police Area covering Wales; and results will be published in the Chief Constable's Annual Report.
- Target dates are shown against the sections in the text.

6.2. Publishing Information

The Force will publish how successful its staff have been in visible provision of Welsh; this will include:

- bilingual signs
- bilingual press releases bilingual advertising and publicity
- number of staff attending courses in learning Welsh
- details of the linguistic performance of agencies/companies working under contract to the Force

The Force will report annually to the Welsh Language Board on this performance.

6.3 Publicity

We will inform the public of its Welsh Language service on a continuing basis; for example, the displaying of rosters and notices at our police stations, the provision of explanatory leaflets, and by including reference to it in documents such as our Annual Report.

We will issue a press release advertising the launch of our scheme in Welsh based newspapers. This will also inform the public that copies of the scheme will be available at our four police stations in Wales.

6.4. Contact

For further information about this Scheme please contact the

Policy Unit
British Transport Police
15 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9SY

3. IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

- 3.1 Assess linguistic implications of new policies or initiatives October 1998
- 3.1 Advance principle of equality of language when implementing new policies and initiatives October 1998
- 3.2 Enable public to receive a service in Welsh language from our Welsh police stations Ongoing
- 3.2 Inform staff involved in policy formulation of Force's responsibilities under Act October 1998
- 3.3 Ensure consistency in the availability of Welsh services in our Welsh police stations October 1998
- 4.1 Reply to Welsh-language correspondence in Welsh October 1998
- 4.1 If telephone call or meeting in Welsh, follow-up correspondence in Welsh October 1998
- 4.1 Where preferred language of recipient known to be Welsh, correspondence in Welsh January 1999
- 4.1 Initial correspondence bilingual if preferred language unknown July 1999
- 4.1 Circular and standard letters to public in Wales bilingual January 1999
- 4.1 Issue guidance to staff on communication in Welsh October 1998
- 4.2 Bilingual telephone greeting at Welsh police stations January 1999
- 4.2 If caller's preferred language Welsh, establish arrangements for Welsh speaker July 1999
- 4.2 Maintain list of Welsh speaking staff members January 1999
- 4.3 Establish arrangements for bilingual public meetings in Wales July 1999
- 4.4 Members of public in Wales being formally interviewed, or contacting police in non-public meetings, to be offered facility of either language January 1999
- 4.4 Appropriate signage in Welsh police stations stating either language may be used January 1999
- 4.4 Language preference established prior to addressing groups, associations, schools, etc October 1998
- 4.5 Fully bilingual corporate identify in Wales October 1998

- 4.5 Bilingual stationery, etc October 1998 to March 1999
- 4.5 Bilingual insignia on uniforms in Wales January 1999
- 4.5 Bilingual warrant cards issued to all officers permanently based in Wales September 1998
- 4.5 Bilingual signage, equal in size and prominence, on buildings, new vehicles, etc, in Wales October 1998
- 4.5 Subject to operational emergencies, media news releases and campaigns to be bilingual and, on Welsh language TV and radio, in Welsh July 1999
- 4.5 Public survey questionnaires bilingual and interview interviews in Welsh if required July 1999
- 4.5 All consultants, designers, printers, etc used by Force made aware of requirements of Act Ongoing
- 4.5 Information stands and official notices bilingual March 1999
- 4.5 Publications bilingual in single document or, if separate, published simultaneously March 1999
- 5.1 Recruitment advertising either Welsh-only in Welsh language publications or bilingual in others, according to measured need for language ability in posts March 1999
- 5.1 Welsh speakers encouraged to join Force in Wales in either police or civilian roles March 1999
- 5.1 Training to be offered to existing staff in posts defined as requiring Welsh speaker October 1998
- 5.1 Support given to staff who are required, or desire, to learn Welsh language In place
- 5.2 Issue guidance to staff, in form of information booklet, on Scheme and its implementation March 1999
- 6.1 Review implementation of scheme and targets Annually
- 6.2 Publicise success of scheme January 1999 to October 1999
- 6.2 Report on performance to Welsh Language Board Annually
- 6.3 Inform Welsh public of Welsh language service on continuing basis October 1998
- 6.3 Issue press release on launch of scheme in Welsh based newspapers and availability of copies at our four police stations in Wales Following official approval of scheme