

Our stance on the Welsh language

The Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. We own and manage over 125 woods in Wales. We also work to prevent any further loss of ancient woodland, to improve woodland biodiversity, to increase new native woods and to increase the public enjoyment of woods. To achieve these objectives, the Trust needs to work closely with local communities and public authorities in Wales.

The Welsh Language

The Welsh Language is the cornerstone of Welsh culture. While only 20% of the population of Wales speak Welsh, there is broad support for the use of Welsh in public life. The Welsh Language Act of 1993 requires government organisations and quangos to adopt and implement Welsh Language Schemes which ensure that the English and Welsh languages are treated on the basis of equality. Although voluntary organisations are not covered by this requirement, it has increased expectations amongst people in Wales.

Our position

The Woodland Trust has adopted a Welsh version of its name (Coed Cadw) and already makes use of the Welsh language on interpretation boards, in correspondence, in our biannual magazine Broadleaf and in certain leaflets and press releases. Most of the Trust's Wales-based staff have some knowledge of Welsh, varying from native fluency to a basic working knowledge.

The Trust's aim is to use the Welsh language in an appropriate and consistent way. We believe that use of the Welsh language, where appropriate, alongside English, will enable the Woodland Trust to connect more effectively with people in Wales, and thus fulfil its charitable objectives better. However, as we work throughout the UK it is not feasible or appropriate to produce every item of our literature and communications in both Welsh and English.

In carrying out its public business in Wales, the Woodland Trust will endeavour to treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality. The Trust recognises that:

- People can express themselves better in their preferred language of communication.
- Making our members, supporters and the general public feel welcome to use their preferred language is a matter of good practice and customer care.
- In the spirit of equality expressed in the Welsh Language Act, our members, supporters and the general public may choose whether they wish to communicate with us in English or Welsh.

The Woodland Trust currently has a small complement of staff based in Wales. Some services in Wales are provided by home based staff who live in England, or are based at the UK head office in Grantham in Lincolnshire. We cannot therefore provide all services in all areas in Welsh. However, we will ensure that all our staff are sensitive to the issue of language preference and that we strive to provide the maximum opportunity for people to use their preferred language. If this is not immediately possible, the options will be explained fully and politely.

Our Welsh language guidelines

The Trust has adopted a set of detailed guidelines on the use of Welsh which has been made available to all relevant staff within the organisation. These guidelines cover: the use of our Welsh language name (Coed Cadw), the use of Welsh on leaflets, publications and information boards, in correspondence, in press releases, on the telephone and at public meetings. The vast majority of the guidelines reflect current practice within the Trust.

The adoption of this position statement can contribute towards the Trust's effectiveness in Wales, and its equal opportunities policy.

Cymraeg

