

Welsh in Business is good for business

Thanks to Welsh in Business, the Welsh Government's free language support service, more than 1000 businesses have interacted with the Welsh language during the first year of the initiative. Almost 200 businesses have received support to develop action plans to increase their use of Welsh, the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language confirmed today.

The initiative's focus is to increase the number of private businesses using Welsh and, in turn, the number of opportunities for people to use the language locally.

The national network of Welsh in Business officers are based in the Mentrau Iaith (Language Initiatives) across Wales and rooted in their communities. Engaging with small to medium-sized private sector businesses, they offer a wide range of support, from improving Welsh language interaction with customers to providing bilingual merchandise and advice on recruiting Welsh speaking staff. A free translation service is also available – and 140 businesses took advantage of this service within the first 12 months.

One business taking advantage of St Dwynwen's day as a commercial opportunity is Shop No1 and High Street Deli in Newtown. Elizabeth Mary Evans, owner said:

“St. Dwynwen's Day is special to us and to our shop because it is special to Welsh people. We are very passionate about our Welsh language products and about the fact that most of them are produced in Wales. And of course, St. Dwynwen's Day brings more business to the shop. This week alone – the week of St. Dwynwen's Day – about 20% of our customers have come in only to ask for cards and gifts for St. Dwynwen's Day. And Welsh in Business are helping us to integrate more of the Welsh language and to promote our business.”

With support from the Welsh for Business network, increasingly popular businesses such as 'The Escape Rooms' are following in the footsteps of other successful which have seen the benefits of embracing the Welsh language.

Ellie Daniels, owner of Newport's escape game, The Escape Rooms, said:

“We believe the language is an important part of Welsh culture and we're keen to promote the everyday use of it. We worked closely with Welsh in Business officers, who were incredibly supportive, to offer a Welsh version of our original game, 'Torture Corp'.

“This has generated a lot of additional interest and it's created a 'good-feeling' amongst our Welsh speaking customers. The publicity alone helped us reach much higher than anticipated and caused a knock-on spike in sales across the board, not just for our

Welsh language game.”

Eluned Morgan, Minister International Relations and the Welsh Language is urging businesses to take advantage of Welsh in Business:

“Getting private businesses on board is vital to the success of Cymraeg 2050. There’s still much to do, but the work Cymraeg Byd Busnes has done so far shows that businesses are willing to engage and I’d like to thank the officers who’ve been supporting them to increase their use of the Welsh language and show love to the language around St Dwynwen’s Day.

“We believe that Welsh in Business is good for business! Operating bilingually can increase customer satisfaction. To me it’s a no-brainer. If you’re a business owner who feels daunted by offering bilingual services, I want you to know that Welsh in Business is here to support you.”

For more information or to find out how your business can take advantage of this free Welsh language support, visit:

<http://cymraeg.gov.wales/business/business/swyddogion/?lang=en>

Follow #Cariad for information on businesses supporting St Dwynwen’s Day.