



Cymdeithas  
**Cyfieithwyr**  
Cymru

# A report on activities 2016-17



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## Introduction

The main aim of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru – the association of Welsh translators and interpreters – (hereafter the Association) has been to continue to maintain and develop professional standards in translation and interpretation and to improve, increase and broaden the knowledge and skills of translators and interpreters.

This has been achieved in several different ways, including:

- increasing the number of translators and interpreters that we represent;
- holding membership examinations for translators and interpreters;
- promoting the professional development of translators and interpreters by providing a varied programme of workshops, and encouraging and advocating continuing professional development;
- maintaining our relationship with Higher Education institutions, particularly the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol;
- maintaining and nurturing our links with other organisations and institutions within the field of translation and beyond;
- promoting and marketing the Association and its members.

This report provides an overview of activities during 2016-17 and information regarding the Association's governance and funding arrangements.

**During 2016-17 the Association was partly funded by Welsh Government.**



## Foreword

15 October 2016 marked 40 years since the Association was founded, and the fact that we are still here, to quote the song, is a cause for celebration. During these years, a multitude of active staff and members have ensured the continuation and success of the Association. It is thanks to them that we today, as we state on our website, ensure professional translation standards by further developing and consolidating the English/Welsh translation and interpreting profession.

The Association represents all aspects of English/Welsh professional translation and interpretation. Our members work in the public sector, the private sector and on a freelance basis. We are also involved with individuals who wish to pursue a career in the profession.

It is encouraging to see the focus on the translation/interpretation profession in the Government's Welsh language strategy, "Cymraeg 2050". The strategy acknowledges the 'significant development in the profession over the last few years' and goes on to note that the Government is keen to see work continue 'to ensure a ready supply of professional translators, graduate linguists with modern skills, supported by a robust accreditation and regulation regime which supports professional standards and conduct'. The Association is ready and willing to remain at the cutting edge of developments in the profession and to co-operate with Welsh Government to achieve this goal. Translation and interpretation have a pivotal role to play in realising the ambitious target set in "Cymraeg 2050".

We are also very grateful to Welsh Government for awarding a grant to the Association in 2016-17. The previous grant from the Language Commissioner came to an end in March 2016 and following a period of uncertainty for the Directors, members and, in particular, the staff regarding the Association's financial situation, the grant provided welcome reassurance.

The Association's new website has proved to be extremely successful. It offers members useful marketing tools and is a convenient port of call for potential customers seeking information and a high quality translation service.

It is my pleasure to present, for your attention, this report on the Association's activities during 2016-17. In doing so, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in the important work undertaken by the Association, details of which are given below.

*Claire Richards,  
Chair*



## 2007-2017

Reflecting on the 40 years since the creation of the Association, Berwyn Prys Jones referred, during the Association's annual lecture, the Hedley Gibbard Memorial Lecture, in 2016 to a number of significant milestones in the Association's history. These included setting up the examination system in the 1990s, securing a grant from the Welsh Language Board, creating an office and appointing staff, organising conferences and workshops, drawing up a directory of members, establishing a website and the change of status from a voluntary association to a registered company.

The Association was on a firm footing when the current Chief Executive was appointed 10 years ago. What significant developments have we seen, therefore, since 2007, that will ensure that the Association is robust and confident enough to realise its aim and develop further as a voice for professional translators and interpreters?

- Revising and revamping the examination system and the appointment of a Chief Examiner and 2 deputies in the case of the Text Membership Examinations and 1 deputy for the Interpreting Test in 2012.
- Creating and filling the post of Professional Development Manager (in 2009) to replace the Development Officer. This led to maintaining a varied and successful programme of workshops, bringing about an increase in the number and frequency of our face-to-face workshops and the development of the translation e-workshop, the Interpreting Practice Sessions, specific training for organisations; and the implementation of the Continuing Professional Development scheme in 2014.
- Devising and introducing the Professional Code of Conduct in 2011, the code to which all members of the Association are expected to adhere. Alongside this came an associated complaints procedure and a translation quality assessment service.
- Establishing Areas of Professional Expertise for our Full and Interpreting members in 2015. Court and tribunal interpreting, legislative translation and communications translation were the first areas to receive recognition. Interpreting in the European Union is also acknowledged.
- Introducing Corporate Membership in 2011 for private translation companies. The name was changed to Recognised Company in 2015. On that basis a method of acknowledging public and not-for-profit organisations was also established.
- Creating the Student Associate category in 2015.
- Holding the first Members' Day in 2014.
- Setting up the Wil Petherbridge Memorial Prize in 2007.



- On the academic front: encouraging and supporting the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (since 2011) in the creation of a Professional Translation Course; signing a Memorandum of Mutual Understanding with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol in 2014; encouraging and supporting the University of Wales Trinity Saint David with the establishment of a post-graduate Certificate in Interpreting in 2012; and investing in academic research.
- Consolidating the relationship with HM Courts and Tribunals Service leading to a strengthening of interpreting procedures in courts and the professional status of interpreters. Court interpreting was the first Area of Professional Expertise to be acknowledged by the Association.
- Continuing to nurture and develop the relationship with other translation and interpreting associations and organisations both in Britain and abroad.
- In 2015, in conjunction with the Urdd, and in collaboration with the National Assembly for Wales, creating and supporting a translation competition for young people aged 19-25 at the Urdd Eisteddfod.
- One of the partners of the Translation Challenge into Welsh, in conjunction with Wales PEN Cymru and Wales Literature Exchange since 2011.

## Celebrating 40

2016 was a notable year for the Association because it was a year of 40th anniversary celebrations.

On 15 October 1976 thirteen translators met in Aberystwyth and decided that a professional association needed to be established. At the time, there were only about twenty people working as full-time professional translators. The intention was to set up an association for the small number of translators employed in public institutions, to discuss relevant issues, reconcile translation practice and agree on terminology in order to avoid confusion. Moc Rogers and Mary Jones were elected first Chairman and Secretary of the Association, both of whom were employed, at the time, as translators in the Welsh Office.

It was very fitting therefore, that we should approach Berwyn Prys Jones, Chairman of the Association for the majority of its first forty years, and a prominent and influential figure in the development of the Association and the translation and interpreting profession/ industry in Wales, to present an outline of the history in the Association's annual lecture, the **Hedley Gibbard Memorial Lecture**, held at the Monmouthshire and District National Eisteddfod, as part of the 'Translation Thursday' activities. The lecture entitled 'Troi a throsi: dathlu 40 mlynedd' can be found on our website.

A celebratory dinner was held at Yr Hen Lyfrgell in Cardiff on Friday 21 October 2016. Two of our members, Rhys Iorwerth and Glenys Roberts, both of whom are Chief Bards, greeted us in verse. These are also to be found on the Association's website.



## Membership of the Association

### Individual members

On 31 March 2017, the Association had 359 members, two more than on 31 March 2016, as follows:

Full Members - 197

Basic Members - 144

Interpreting Members - 70 (18\*)

\* The figure in parentheses represents the number of members who are solely Interpreting members. The remainder are also Full members (42) or Basic members (10).

It is encouraging that members' support for the Association is very strong. This is a clear indication that the majority of professional translators value being a member of a professional association.

Membership can only be secured by succeeding in the Association's Text Membership Examinations or the Interpreting Test. There are two levels of membership for text translators - Full and Basic - and one level of membership for interpreters.

The Association's membership year runs from 1 April. We have a robust and fair system for issuing reminders when membership fees are due. As a result, only the names of those members who have paid their annual membership fee are listed on the the Association's website.

### Professional conduct

All members of the Association are aware that they are required to act in accordance with the Professional Code of Conduct when paying their annual membership fee. Linked to that, the Association has a complaints procedure. We are pleased to report that no complaints were received against any members of the Association during the year. The Association also offers, for a fee, a Translation Quality Assessment Service.

### Recognising members' Areas of Professional Expertise

During 2016-17 it was decided to establish and develop a system for recognising Areas of Professional Expertise and to restrict this purely to Full and Interpreting Members. It was resolved that, in acknowledging any area of expertise, consideration should be given, in principle, to methods that would be suitable and appropriate for the area in question.

During the year three Areas of Professional Expertise were established: Court and Tribunal Interpreting (developed in consultation with officers from HM Courts and Tribunals Service); Legislative Translation (developed in consultation with officers from the Welsh Government Translation Service); and Communications Translation.



Also under this system those members who passed the Interpreting test in the European Union in 2009 are acknowledged.

## Recognition of others

The Association recognises translation and interpreting companies via the Recognised Company system. Public and third sector organisations who fulfil the criteria are offered recognition as either Recognised or Associate Organisations.

Recognition as a Student Associate is available to students who intend to pursue a career in translation/interpretation and is a means of encouraging and supporting students to realise their ambition. Being a Student Associate does not constitute membership of the Association.

## The Examination System

### Text Membership Examinations

**Text Membership Examinations** were held in April 2016 and October 2016 at the Basic and Full level. They were held at Coleg Ceredigion, Aberystwyth, Cardiff University, and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Glynllifon. We are very grateful to the staff at these institutions for their willingness to offer support and co-operation. We would also like to thank the examiners, markers and invigilators.

The examination statistics are as follows:

	April 2016		October 2016	
Total number of candidates *	33		44	
	Candidates	Passes	Candidates	Passes
<b>Full *</b>	14	2	8	4
Paper 1 – into Welsh	14	1	7	3
Paper 2 – into English	2	1	2	1
<b>Basic *</b>	19	7	36	12
Paper 1 – into Welsh	17	4	33	7
Paper 2 – into English	6	4	14	6

\* Some candidates sat both papers

The fact that so many candidates sat the examinations for **Full Membership** indicates that there is an increasing desire amongst translators to achieve a truly professional standard in their work.



Despite the fact that only four people passed the Full examinations into Welsh, the majority of the remaining candidates were definitely within reach of passing. It is pleasing to see that the majority of candidates at this level, therefore, are developing an understanding of the standard of professional translation.

Although the majority of candidates came very close to passing at this level, standards must be maintained throughout both texts. Unfortunately there were a number of careless mistakes which meant that it was impossible to be confident that those candidates were ready to become independent translators. Even though these errors were relatively infrequent in almost every candidate's work, at this level proofreading must be detailed and thorough to ensure that mistakes of this type don't occur in work to be submitted.

It is a shame to have to note that, once again, the result could have been different for some if their work had been read more thoroughly before it was submitted. Indeed, a number of candidates succeeded in the first test piece, but didn't perform as well on the second one. This is often evident, to some extent, in examinations, giving the impression that candidates failed to manage their time effectively. Indeed, it would be good practice if all candidates divided the time equally between the two texts, and then divided the hour allotted for each text equally between translation and proofing, in order to ensure the most flawless copy possible.

Generally, the work was of a high standard, with high-quality expression, and the translations, on the whole, read convincingly in Welsh as original texts. There were however, examples of errors of meaning and accuracy, syntax difficulties and clumsy expression.

Turning to the translation into English, although only a small number usually sit this examination, it is pleasing to note that the candidates' work, on the whole, contained commendable touches and competent translation. Yet again, however, there were examples of translation that fell short of the required standard.

We would encourage everyone who intends to sit the Full membership examinations, whether into Welsh or English, to continue to refine their craft and seek continuous improvement in their

The number of candidates for the **Basic examinations** in April 2016 was lower than anticipated, although the numbers in October 2016 were closer to the expected figure.

Although approximately a quarter of the candidates passed these examinations, several more managed to reach the required standard in one of the test pieces and there were promising elements in the majority of the scripts. Very few candidates, nowadays, are totally overwhelmed by the examination texts at this level, an indication that candidates are more aware of the required standard.



As in the case of the Full examinations, several quite promising candidates were seen to fail on the second text, seemingly due to ineffective time management.

We were, once again, disappointed to see that several quite promising candidates failed to meet the required standard due to elementary errors of meaning or accuracy that should have been picked up when reading the work prior to submission. One would not expect to see mistakes of this type made by anyone claiming to be a translator. Anyone intent on becoming a translator should be alert to the type of careless errors seen, especially incorrect mutations, and train themselves to spot these when proofreading their work. One must also remember that candidates are allowed to use a spellchecker in the examinations.

Once again, the most common mistakes seen in these examinations were: slavishly following the order of the English so that the translated text does not flow smoothly, or even becomes misleading; translations that had strayed significantly from the original meaning; candidates who weren't sufficiently familiar with the patterns of the Welsh language; a lack of understanding of Welsh grammar; erroneous syntax patterns, such as unsuitable forms of the verb, poorly constructed clauses, etc.

The standard varied considerably in the examinations into English. None of the candidates was deemed to be hopeless, but it was felt that some lacked sufficient experience of translating into English because several elements of their work had fallen below the required standard. Having said that, the majority of candidates demonstrated examples of intelligent translation.

Unfortunately, alongside examples of successful translations there were also careless mistakes. Some candidates' choice of vocabulary was poor because they didn't have an adequate sense of English language registers, and there was also evidence of a lack of awareness of natural patterns in English.

Despite the fact that the numbers passing the examinations at the Basic level into Welsh and English are in the minority, a good proportion of candidates clearly showed promise, and a considerable amount were definitely within reach of the required standard. We would encourage these candidates to persevere and take advantage of every opportunity to consolidate their skills, and, in particular, to seize all opportunities to read polished English and Welsh and to familiarise themselves further with the natural patterns of both languages.

We are pleased to report that the **Wil Petherbridge Memorial Prize** for 2016 was awarded to Angharad Eleri Edwards, a translator with Gwasanaethau Iaith Calan when she passed the examination. The Wil Petherbridge Memorial Prize is presented - in memory of the former Secretary of the Association, who was a pioneer in the field of translation in Wales - to the most promising candidate for Basic Membership for translation into Welsh, if a worthy recipient is identified.



## The Interpreting Test

One **Interpreting Test** was held during the year in November 2016 at Stiwdio Aran, a professional sound studio at Groeslon, near Caernarfon. There were no candidates in south Wales. We are very grateful to the studio staff for their willing support and co-operation. We would also like to thank the examiners, the assessors and the invigilator.

Unfortunately, both candidates who sat the Interpreting Test were deemed to have fallen short of the required standard. It is fair to say the standard was lower than in previous tests. Syntax and the ability to formulate coherent sentences were the candidates' main weaknesses in this Interpreting Test. As previously noted, interpreters would benefit from listening to English language current affairs programmes in order to improve their syntax.

Having said that, both candidates had confident and engaging voices, and made a good attempt at adding colour and differentiating between speakers.

## Promoting professional development

Once again, in order to promote the professional development of translators and interpreters and those wishing to join the profession, a varied programme of activities was organised, including workshops, the translation e-workshop and the Interpreting Practice Session. As in the past, there was a very positive response to this aspect of the Association's work, a sure indication that there is a demand for workshops and a need for more training activities. The Association's provision, despite being less extensive than it used to be, bridges a significant gap in this field.

As in 2015-16, fewer workshops were organised than in previous years.

During the year **2 face to face workshops** were held. In line with the pattern adopted several years ago, they were held in more than one location to ensure that they were as accessible as possible for translators in all parts of Wales. The workshop topics were as follows:

- 'Wyneb yn Wyneb', a workshop exclusively for the Association's Interpreting members. The tutor was Zora Jackman. 4 people attended the workshop held in Galeri, Caernarfon (15 November 2016), but the workshop due to be held in Yr Hen Lyfrgell, Cardiff (9 November 2016) had to be postponed, mainly because interpreters were busy, at that time, meeting the considerable demand for their services.

- '2 ... 5 ... 250', a new type of workshop over a period of six weeks, with the aim of preparing for the Basic examination, translation into Welsh. This comprised a combination of assignments to be undertaken by candidates in their own time, namely the translation of 2 excerpts of a similar length and standard to those expected in the Basic examination into Welsh; and attending 2 two-hour workshops to discuss those translations. These were held at Yr Hen Lyfrgell, Cardiff and at Galeri, Caernarfon. The tutors were Gareth Wood in the south and Menna Wyn in the north, and 16 people took part in the workshop, 9 in the south and 7 in the north.



The **translation e-workshop** has remained popular as an effective means of learning and offering structured training to people who can work to deadlines in their own time. Separate translation e-workshops are offered at the Full and Basic level. In the translation e-workshops the participants translate two test pieces of the same length and standard as those in the relevant examination, and receive comments on their translations from tutors who are both experienced translators and the Association's examination markers. During the year 4 translation e-workshops were held, 2 at the Full level and 2 at the Basic level. At the Full level 12 individuals took part in the translation e-workshops (14 into Welsh and 1 into English); and 38 individuals participated at the Basic level (36 into Welsh and 6 into English).

The **Interpreting Practice Session**, held in October 2016, attracted three participants.

During the year a **bespoke training programme** was arranged specifically for translators employed by HM Revenue and Customs.

Those who took advantage of these opportunities were employed in the public sector, in private translation companies or as freelancers. This gives a clear indication that translators and interpreters across the profession/industry as a whole see the value of investing in their professional development. Among those who took part in the training were several people who were considering pursuing a career as a translator.

The Association continued to encourage members to give consideration to their **continuing professional development (CPD)**, and to emphasise the importance of paying due regard to this. Another paper was published outlining the advantages of CPD, to be read alongside 'Balchder Crefft' published in 2014. This paper provided members with a convenient guide to help them draw up their personal CPD plan and offered guidance on the type and level of CPD activities that would be most suitable and relevant. Since the launch of the new website, each member is now able to log their CPD activity in their on-line Membership Record, which can only be accessed by the members themselves and the Association's staff.

## The Association's website

The website is central to the Association's marketing and communication activity by promoting the Association's aim and objectives as the professional body for English/Welsh translators and interpreters. This is the only source of information about Welsh translators and interpreters and the profession/industry in Wales. The website provides information to the various groups with whom the Association wishes to liaise, namely members, prospective members, other translators and interpreters, organisations and institutions, commissioners of translation and interpreting, and other key contacts.

It includes essential information and resources for translators and interpreters, and teaching materials and guidance for individuals who wish to become members of the Association. For those people who are looking for a translator/interpreter, a convenient and user-friendly search facility is provided free of charge.



## Maintaining and developing key links – Higher Education institutions

The Association has continued to maintain its close relationship with the **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**. In particular, the Association has continued to support the Coleg in its efforts to develop a national academic scheme in the field of translation studies that will respond to the needs of the translation profession/industry.

The Chief Executive is a member of the Translation Studies Consortium. The Consortium intends to sustain a strategic overview of the academic provision, offer guidance and advice in order to ensure that the academic provision reflects the training needs of the profession and ensure that it reflects the standard and range of skills expected by the translation profession. The Association considers this scheme to be very important for the development of the profession/industry in Wales. Cultivating a strong and practical relationship at all levels between the scheme and the Association is a major priority.

The Association continued to provide practical support for the Postgraduate Certificate in Interpreting at **University of Wales Trinity Saint David**, having played an instrumental role in the establishment of this qualification. This is the only qualification offered for English/Welsh interpreting, and it is an opportunity to gain an academic qualification that satisfies the needs of the profession/industry.

## Maintaining and nurturing key links – organisations and institutions

In the translation world, the Association continued to widen its networks and contacts by maintaining and developing its relationship with translation associations and organisations, amongst which are the Institute of Translators and Interpreters, the ITI Cymru/Wales Group, the Chartered Institute of Linguists, the National Register of Public Service Interpreters and the European Commission. It joined Professional Interpreters for Justice, an umbrella group that campaigns to protect the interests of interpreters, formed in 2012 following the establishment of the Ministry of Justice's framework agreement on language services. The Association is a member of FIT (Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs / International Federation of Translators), the international federation that represents the interests of professional translation the Associations.

As regards **promoting and facilitating the Welsh language**, the Association is a member of the Welsh Language Promotion Group, a collection of Welsh language promotion and advocacy bodies that the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Unit is responsible for co-ordinating and administering.

The **Translation Challenge** was held for the first time since 2013. With the return of the competition the Association, once again, sponsored the bardic staff that is awarded to the winner of the competition into Welsh. We were immensely pleased to see that Glenys Roberts, one of our members, won the 2016 Translation Challenge into Welsh. The bardic staff was presented to her during a ceremony at the National Eisteddfod as part of the 'Translation Thursday' activities.



**A translation competition for 19-25 year olds in the Urdd Eisteddfod** was held for the second time in 2016. The competition was the result of collaboration between the Association and the Urdd. It is pleasing to note that the winner, Ffion Pritchard, is a member of the Association. Her prize was a day at the National Assembly Translation and Recording Service, and we appreciate their willingness to co-operate.

During this period the Association submitted written evidence for two Welsh Government consultations on the future of Local Government. The evidence centred on the pivotal role of translation and interpretation in developing and strengthening the use of Welsh in Local Government administration and in implementing the Welsh Language Standards.

The Association is a member of: Dathlu'r Gymraeg, Dyfodol i'r Iaith, Wales Council for Voluntary Action, and Mantell Gwynedd.

## The financial situation

The Association received a grant of £50,000 from Welsh Government towards funding a number of the Association's activities, agreed upon in a set of targets.

Membership payments was the other main source of income for the Association. This netted £52,066.

The income generated enabled the Association to continue to employ 2 full-time members of staff, as well as carrying out the work described in this report.

The accounts show that the Association had funds of £137,575 at the end of the year.

The (unaudited) Financial Report was prepared by Owain Bebb a'i Gwmni Cyf., Caernarfon. The financial statements were prepared in accordance with FRS 102, Section 1A.

## Management of the Association

Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru Cyf. (the Association's official name) is a company limited by guarantee. It is registered in Wales, registration number 4741023.

The Association is managed by a Board of Directors. The following were members of the Board of Directors on 31 March 2017: David Bullock, Mari Lisa Davies, Bethan Mair Evans, Fiona Gannon, Hywel Gwynn Hughes, Catherine Jones, Mary Jones, Hywel Pennar, Lisa Pugh, Claire Richards, Huw Tegid Roberts.

The Board of Directors met on 26 April 2016, 11 July 2016 and 30 November 2016.

Fiona Gannon is the Association's Chief Examiner and she is responsible for the Text Membership Examinations and the Interpreting Test.



## **Closing remarks by the Chief Executive, Geraint Wyn Parry**

I would, once again, like to express my thanks and appreciation to Nia Wyn Jones for her diligence and commitment to the Association.

Following a period of uncertainty in 2015-16 the grant awarded to the Association by Welsh Government restored stability to the work of the office. We were both heartened by this. As an Association, we are very grateful to the Government for this support.

I would also like to acknowledge the continuing support that I have received from Claire Richards, Chair of the Association. I would like to thank her and all members of the Board of Directors for the sound judgement they exercise when carrying out their duties and for their regular attendance at Board meetings.

Fiona Gannon, our Chief Examiner, plays a key part in the Association's work. I would like to express my gratitude to her for her strong leadership in guiding the Association's most important activity.

I would also like to thank those members who serve the Association in other ways, as examiners and markers, as workshop tutors, as examination invigilators, and those who so readily come to my assistance regarding particular tasks. The congenial co-operation between staff and members is one of the Association's main strengths – long may it continue.

