



**Samaritans**

**Welsh Language Scheme**

**This Welsh Language Scheme was approved by the  
Welsh Language Commissioner on 14/05/2014**

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## 1. Introduction

Samaritans is a national charity and the co-ordinating body for the 199 Samaritans branches in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, each of which is an independent charitable organisation, plus two non-brick branches (Festival and Correspondence).

*Samaritans Vision is that fewer people die by suicide.*

We work to achieve this vision by making it our mission to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings and suicidal behaviour.

We do this by:

- **Being available 24 hours a day to provide emotional support** for people who are experiencing feelings of emotional distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.
- **Reaching out to high risk groups and communities** to reduce the risk of suicide.
- **Working in partnership** with other organisations, agencies and experts.
- **Influencing public policy and raising awareness** of the challenges of reducing suicide.

We are committed to the following values:

- **Listening**, because exploring feelings alleviates distress and helps people to reach a better understanding of their situation and the options open to them.

- **Confidentiality**, because if people feel safe, they are more likely to be open about their feelings.
- **People making their own decisions** wherever possible, because we believe that people have the right to find their own solution and telling people what to do takes responsibility away from them.
- **Being non-judgemental**, because we want people to be able to talk to us without fear of prejudice or rejection.
- **Human contact**, because giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair.

Each local Samaritans branch is supported by staff based in Samaritans General Office in Surrey. Samaritans additionally has staff who cover each nation. Our Wales staff are based in our office in Cardiff. We refer to this office as the Wales Office in this document. We also have offices in Dublin and in Edinburgh.

The General Office in Surrey provide services, such as operational support, training support, research and data management and media and fundraising support to the whole organisation.

In Wales Samaritans operates under the banner of Samaritans / Samariaid. Samaritans / Samariaid provides support to volunteer branches in Wales including ensuring branches across Wales have access to the necessary information and funding to sustain their vital work.

Samaritans / Samariaid also co-ordinates all Assembly / Welsh Government work. Its work is funded through a Welsh Government grant and by our own charitable funds.

Samaritans has a federal structure. In Wales our service is delivered by volunteers working in our nine branches, which are spread across Wales.

Together we form the Samaritans/Samariaid service in Wales delivering listening support via a telephone helpline, e-mail, text and face to face both within a 'brick branch' and throughout our local communities as well as in locations such as prisons and at festivals.

Samaritans / Samariaid in all its activities, aims to participate fully as part of civic society in a bilingual Wales. We aim to inform debate and to influence policy and practice through our engagement with the National Assembly for Wales, with the Welsh Government and with decision makers, partners and other stakeholders, locally and nationally.

## 2. Statement

Samaritans / Samariaid has adopted the principle that in carrying out its work in Wales it will treat the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practical. We believe that offering services which respect an individual's choice of language can make a significant difference. Evidence of caller need supports this.

Although there is no statutory requirement for Samaritans / Samariaid to prepare a Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act 1993, we feel strongly that bilingual services should be provided for the public in order to uphold the following principles:

- that members of the public can express their opinions and convey their needs better in their preferred language
- the importance of providing services in the preferred language of the service user
- that enabling the public to use their preferred language is an important part of good practice
- that denying them the right to use their preferred language could put members of the public at a disadvantage.

This Scheme explains how Samaritans / Samariaid will put into effect these principles in the provision of services for the public in Wales, wherever practical and appropriate. Although the Scheme will be implemented in Wales primarily, it will be approved at a UK level. All members of staff will be aware of their duty to operate the Scheme where relevant. If we are unable to provide the required service initially we will work towards providing it in future.

Samaritans/Samariaid will, through its services and activities, endeavour to support and respect the use of the Welsh language.

### **3. Planning and delivering services**

#### **3.1 New policies and initiatives**

By considering the Welsh language and the needs of individuals when developing new and revised policies and initiatives, Samaritans / Samariaid can move towards achieving the objectives of this Scheme. We will endeavour to make the most of such opportunities in order to move closer to the principle of equality between the English and Welsh languages.

In planning new policies and initiatives which affect the provision of public services in Wales, Samaritans / Samariaid will ensure that all developments comply with the commitments made in this Scheme. Samaritans / Samariaid will assess the language needs of the target audience in order to offer the most effective service and make the best use of resources.

As an organisation with a head office outside Wales we will ensure that our Wales office and all relevant departments outside Wales, are aware of the requirements of the Scheme. The leadership of Samaritans/Samariaid and in particular the Samaritans Cymru Board will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Scheme. A Welsh language sub committee will monitor the compliance of new policies and initiatives with this Scheme. The group will be a sub-committee of the Samaritans Cymru Board.

This Welsh Language Scheme will not be altered without being submitted for review to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

## 3.2 Delivery of services

The aim of Samaritans / Samariaid is to provide a consistent and reliable service throughout Wales. In planning services for areas where there are substantial numbers of Welsh speakers we will endeavour to ensure adequate provision for those who wish to communicate in Welsh.

Samaritans/Samariaid provides a Welsh Language helpline (currently run by the Bangor branch). This is currently available for a limited number of hours each day. We will continue to promote the line, seeking the most effective means of doing this. We will build on the learning from our feasibility study on this line, which includes a limited promotional campaign. We will produce and act on recommendations from the study.

As set out in the timescales Samaritans / Samariaid will work towards the provision of a service of the same high standard in English and Welsh by:

- ensuring that all staff/volunteers know how to refer individuals to the Welsh language helpline
- providing training and guidance for staff/volunteers to facilitate the implementation of the Scheme
- finding reliable translation services of a high standard to ensure that all relevant material is translated quickly and reliably.



## **4. Communicating with the Welsh-speaking public**

### **4.1 Written Communication to the Wales Office**

The Wales Office of Samaritans / Samariaid welcomes correspondence in English and Welsh and undertakes the following:

- Any correspondence from the public in Welsh will receive a reply in Welsh.
- When Samaritans / Samariaid has no staff available to answer correspondence in Welsh to a sufficiently high standard, we will use a professional translation agency.

### **4.2 Caller communication**

Samaritans / Samariaid will maintain a helpline and Welsh-speaking volunteers will be available when practical. The Welsh language helpline is currently available for four hours a day.

For the Wales Office, all external calls will be answered with a standard bilingual greeting:

‘Bore da Samaritans / Samariaid’ or ‘Samaritans / Samariaid’.

In branches, efforts will be made to include Welsh speakers in providing support particularly in those areas in which there is more frequent contact with Welsh speakers.

### **4.3 Public meetings and events organised by the Wales Office**

The Wales Office of Samaritans / Samariaid arranges meetings and events with a wide range of organizations and groups. Samaritans / Samariaid encourages the use of Welsh during these events.

All publicity material for events organised by the Wales Office will be published bilingually.

Those attending conferences in Wales organised by the Wales Office of Samaritans / Samariaid will be welcome to contribute in English or Welsh. When Samaritans / Samariaid Wales Office arranges conferences it will assess the need for Welsh provision by including a clear statement on registration forms indicating that delegates may express a preference to contribute in English or Welsh. All registration forms will include a section to indicate language choice.

Working Welsh stickers will be available for Welsh speaking delegates name badges.

## **5. Corporate Image**

### **5.1 Corporate identity**

The public image and corporate identity of the Wales Office of Samaritans / Samariaid, including its address, logo, visual identity and any other standard information will be bilingual. This will include headed paper, compliment slips, fax sheets, business cards, name badges, exhibitions and publications, signage, and premises.

Both languages will be equal in terms of size, format, quality, clarity and prominence.

## **5.2 Signage**

In Wales, when replacing signage, all external and internal signage in public places at the premises of Samaritans / Samariaid will be bilingual and equal in terms of form, size, quality and prominence.

## **6. Publications**

### **6.1 Documents**

Samaritans / Samariaid aims to publish all its relevant material bilingually in one document. If it is necessary for whatever reason, e.g. the size of the document, for Samaritans / Samariaid to publish English and Welsh versions separately, we will publish them at the same time. Bilingual documents will include those distributed to or provided for the public in general by the Wales office, and which:

- provide information on the services of Samaritans / Samariaid
- explain and advise Samaritans / Samariaid new policies, initiatives, developments and services

We will ensure that the Welsh text is of a high standard and is mindful of the target audience. Campaign information material and external policy reports produced by Samaritans / Samariaid for distribution across the UK will be assessed to see whether bilingual versions are necessary.

Policy and technical research documents produced by Samaritans / Samariaid for UK use will rarely be translated as this material is often expensive and may have limited distribution in Wales.

## **6.2 Press releases**

We are committed to issuing bilingual statements and notices to the press and the media in Wales whenever possible.

- Press releases generated by the Wales office for the press and media in Wales will be issued bilingually. It is understood that occasionally, in an emergency, it will be necessary to issue press releases in English only, but in all other circumstances the translation process will be incorporated into the planning timescales.
- Samaritans / Samariaid will identify suitable Welsh speakers who will be able to represent represent Samaritans / Samariaid within the boundaries of their knowledge. We will keep a list of suitable contact names.

## **7. Websites and Information Technology**

### **7.1 Websites**

The Wales section on the main Samaritans website is and will continue to be fully bilingual. All English pages in the Wales section will have a corresponding page in Welsh. The languages will appear separately and it will be possible for the user to move from one language to the other at any time by using a prominent language switch, ideally at the top right hand side of the page.

English and Welsh versions of any Samaritans / Samariaid documentation uploaded on to the Wales section of the website will

usually be available bilingually at the same time. If this is not possible then a note will be inserted on the Welsh page explaining that the Welsh content will be uploaded soon and vice versa.

## **7.2 Discussion Forums and Electronic Networks**

When planning or redeveloping websites or any other Information Technology service, we will consider the Welsh Language Commissioner's guidelines: 'technology, websites and software: Welsh language considerations'.

## **8. Implementation and monitoring**

### **8.1 Staffing**

Samaritans / Samariaid recognises that the ability to speak Welsh is a valuable and relevant skill.

Whenever a new post in the Wales office is established, or an existing post becomes vacant, an objective assessment will be made to establish whether there is a particular Welsh language skill needed for the post, such as: conversational Welsh with people we support and the public; or writing emails in Welsh; and whether there may be additional support options available that would encourage applications from Welsh speakers

Where a post is designated as Welsh essential or where a short-listed candidate has indicated that they are fluent in the Welsh language, their oral and written fluency in Welsh will be tested. If there have been difficulties in recruiting a Welsh speaker to a post for which the ability to speak Welsh is an essential requirement, it may be necessary to consider appointing someone who cannot speak Welsh.

In such cases, the Welsh language elements of the post will be supported by another member of staff while the appointed officer receives language training in order to reach the necessary standard within a particular timescale.

All posts, which are not designated Welsh essential, will have 'fluent Welsh' as a desirable attribute. This will mean that those interviewed will receive additional weighting if they are fluent Welsh speakers. Staff recruitment for Welsh essential posts will be advertised in Welsh, accompanied by a brief explanation in English, or bilingually.

## **8.2 Learning Welsh**

Samaritans / Samariaid will encourage and support staff who wish to learn or improve their Welsh and encourage Welsh speakers to use the language wherever practical.

The organization's approach to allocating spending and resources will be adapted to reflect this. The aim is to normalise spending and use of resources on Welsh language services such that it is entirely natural for services to be provided in the two official languages of Wales and to organise resources to meet that objective.

## **8.3 Services by contractors on behalf of the organization**

It is sometimes necessary for Samaritans / Samariaid to contract services to other agencies, organizations or individuals. On such occasions the contracted organization will be notified of Samaritans / Samariaid commitment to this Welsh Language Scheme. This notification will form a standard part of the contract.

Contracts or arrangements may be of short duration and for a specific task or activity where it is not practical to require full compliance with the Scheme. In such cases the fullest possible compliance will be sought.

#### **8.4 Monitoring**

A monitoring and evaluation report will be provided to the Chief Executive of Samaritans / Samariaid and a copy will be sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner for feedback on an annual basis.

Samaritans / Samariaid will review and revise if necessary the Scheme every three years in consultation with the Welsh Language Commissioner.

#### **8.5 Complaints and feedback**

All complaints regarding the implementation of the Scheme will be submitted locally and monitored by the Samaritans Cymru Board of Samaritans / Samariaid.

Samaritans / Samariaid welcomes suggestions from the public, its staff and members for improving its Welsh Language Scheme and service. All suggestions should be sent to the Executive Director for Wales, Floor 2, 33-35 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HB

### **9. Advertising the Scheme and raising public awareness**

Samaritans / Samariaid will refer to the Scheme in its annual report, business plan and general material.

The scheme will be available on our website

Samaritans / Samariaid will provide copies of the Scheme on demand.

Samaritans / Samariaid welcomes suggestions to improve the Scheme. Any suggestions should be sent to the Samaritans Cymru Board, Samaritans / Samariaid, Floor 2, 33-35 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9HB.



## Appendix 1

### Timescales and Implementation Plan

AREA OF ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTATION	BY WHOM	TIMESCALES
<b>3.1 New policies and initiatives</b>	Make all relevant Samaritans departments and branches aware of the scheme	DfW/CEO	March 2014
	Establish Welsh language sub committee	SCB board	April 2014
<b>3.2 Delivery of Services</b>	Promote the Welsh language line  Communicate with Welsh branches about the scheme	Marketing project delivered by external provider: DfW  Regional Director/DfW	March 2014

	Produce recommendations from the feasibility study	SCB Board	September 2014
<b>4. Communicating with the Welsh-speaking public</b>	Monitor demand for and response times to Welsh language correspondence	DfW	Ongoing
<b>4.1 Written communication</b>	Create an internal directory of Welsh speakers	Regional Director/DfW	May 2014
<b>4.2 Telephone communications</b>	Guidelines for staff on telephone answering issued for Wales Office	DfW	March 2014
<b>4.4 Public meetings and events</b>	Publicity for all events organised by the Wales office produced bi-lingually	Wales Office: DfW	Ongoing

<b>5.1 Corporate identity</b>	Bi-lingual corporate identity established	CEO/DfW	Ongoing
<b>5.2 Signage</b>	Bi-lingual signage increasingly in place	DfW/branches (to be discussed)	Ongoing
<b>6. Publications</b>	Information on the Scheme and its implications communicated to General Office	DfW/Exec Director of Fundraising and Communications	March 2014
<b>7. Websites and Information Technology</b>	Bi-lingual website in place: monitor  Assess current branch websites' language options.  Work towards ensuring these are consistent	DfW	Ongoing  June 2014  January 2015

<b>8.1 Staffing</b>	Creation of a list of Welsh speaking staff and volunteers.	Regional Director/DfW	May 2014
<b>8.3 Services by contractors on behalf of the organization</b>	Notify contractors with the Wales office of the scheme	DfW	Ongoing
<b>8.4 Monitoring and review</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation report to Chief Executive of Samaritans and a copy to Welsh Language Commissioner	Samaritans Cymru Board/DfW	Annually
<b>8.5 Complaints and Feedback</b>	Complaints monitored by Samaritans Cymru Board		Ongoing
<b>9. Advertising the</b>	Scheme referred to in annual report – and	CEO	Annually, Sept 2014

<b>Scheme</b>	placed on website.		
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