

**LINGUISTIC IMPACT OF HAFAN PWLLHELI:
SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REPORT¹**

1. LINGUISTIC CHANGE IN DWYFOR

Up to 1971, the deterioration in the percentage of Welsh speakers in Dwyfor was mainly due to outward migration, but since 1981, the linguistic change has been mainly due to an in-migration of Non-Welsh speakers. Between 1981 and 1991, the percentage of monoglot English speakers has increased from 19% to 25% of the entire population. By 2001, 27% of the population of Dwyfor were monoglot English speakers.² Evidence also emerges from the Census that some Welsh speaking parents do not transfer the language on to their children. In 2001, in 10% of families in Gwynedd, both parents spoke Welsh whilst their 3-4 year olds were Non-Welsh speakers.³

Percentage of Welsh Language speakers in Dwyfor 1981-2001⁴

| | 1981 | 1991 | 2001 | Change 1981-1991 | Change 1991-2001 | Change 1981-2001 |
|---------------|------|------|------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Llanbedrog | 73% | 54% | 53% | -19% | -1% | -20% |
| Aberdaron | 90% | 77% | 77% | -13% | 0 | -13% |
| Llanengan | 72% | 63% | 60% | -9% | -3% | -12% |
| Pistyll | 86% | 78% | 75% | -8% | -3% | -11% |
| Tudweiliog | 86% | 85% | 75% | -1% | -10% | -11% |
| Llanaelhaearn | 91% | 81% | 81% | -10% | 0 | -10% |
| Botwnnog | 86% | 82% | 78% | -4% | -4% | -8% |
| Llannor | 86% | 83% | 78% | -3% | -5% | -8% |
| Buan | 82% | 75% | 75% | -7% | 0 | -7% |
| Llanystumdwy | 86% | 74% | 79% | -12% | +5% | -7% |
| Nefyn | 85% | 78% | 79% | -7% | +1% | -6% |
| Criccieth | 72% | 69% | 67% | -3% | -2% | -5% |
| Pwllheli | 83% | 82% | 81% | -1% | -1% | -2% |

A slow-down occurred in the in-migration to Dwyfor between 1991-2001, however, the number of in-migrants remains comparatively high - in the 12 months prior to the 2001 Census, 5,780 people in-migrated to Gwynedd, with 60% of them coming from England.⁵ A comparatively small number of in-migrants can have a major impact on communities of low population density.⁶

Reduction in the number of high-population density Welsh speaking communities

¹ See 'Linguistic Impact of Hafan Pwllheli: Final Report' for the full discussion.

² 1981, 1991 & 2001 Censuses:ONS

³ 2001 Census: Statistics for Language Transferral within the Family, Welsh Language Board, November 2003

⁴ Some boundary changes have occurred between the Censuses, therefore exact comparisons cannot be made. Source: Gwynedd Council Research Unit, October 2004.

⁵ Table ST146, 2001 Census

⁶ For instance, although only 65 Non-Welsh speakers moved to Tudweiliog over a 10 year period between 1991-2001, there was a reduction of 10% in the percentage of Welsh language speakers during the same period.

Having a high-population density of Welsh language speakers within communities is regarded as being a key factor in preserving Welsh as a living language. In 1981, 82% of Dwyfor's population spoke Welsh, and in 10 of the 13 communities, over 80%+ of the population spoke Welsh.⁷ By 1991, this figure had fallen to 5 communities, and in 2001, it can be seen that in only 2 communities did over 80% speak Welsh. The largest increases in the percentage of Welsh language speakers occurred in the communities of Llanbedrog, Aberdaron and Llanengan.

Some experts stated that achieving a threshold of 80% of language speakers in the community was essential so as to preserve that particular language, as any figure below that level would be inadequate to secure the 'critical mass' of speakers required to sustain it.⁸ By 2001, only Pwllheli and Llanaelhaearn of all the communities in Dwyfor, had a sufficiently high number of Welsh speakers to preserve the language within those communities, according to this benchmark.

Some of the social impacts of the population change

The coastal areas have attracted in-migrants most, especially the beautiful areas from Pwllheli down the coastline towards Abersoch and Aberdaron. It is an area popular with visitors, and also contains the largest number of holiday homes in summer. In 2001, over a third of the houses at Llanengan, a quarter of the houses at Llanbedrog and 1 out of every 5 houses at Aberdaron were used as holiday homes in summer. Lengthy discussions have been held during the years on the impact which summer homes have on communities in rural Wales,⁹ including the finding that it leads to price rises which are unaffordable to local people. However, from the perspective of impact on the Welsh language, it can be argued that summer homes do not have as great an impact as does continuous in-migration, as the owners do not stay long in the area, and neither do they use services such as education.

Gwynedd Council adopted an education language policy as far back as 1975, in an effort to integrate the large numbers of new Non-Welsh speakers who were admitted to the county's schools following the initial wave of in-migration in the 1970's. On the whole, the schools succeeded in teaching Welsh to a large number of Non-Welsh speaking children who in-migrated into the area. Between 1975 and 1987, an increase occurred in the percentage of fluent learners in Gwynedd schools from 6% in 1975 to 15% by 1987.¹⁰ By 2003, it can be seen that 34% of children from Non-Welsh speaking homes who attend Ysgol Glan y Môr Pwllheli catchment-area schools, had learnt the language fluently, with another 67% speaking the language, but not fluently.¹¹

⁷ The correct number in 1981 was 12 out of 16 communities, but due to boundary changes between the 1981-2001 censuses, the communities have been brought together so as facilitate comparison.

⁸ Prof Harold Carter, quote from "The Threat of In-migration to the Future of the Welsh Language" Dr Dylan Phillips, Paper presented to Welsh National Assembly Culture Committee 16 May 2001.

⁹ e.g. 'Attitudes & Second Homes in Rural Wales', Chris Bollom, University of Wales Press, 1978; 'Second and Holiday Homes Research Report', M Tewdwr-Jones, UCL, 2002.

¹⁰ D. Morris (2000) "Yr Iaith Gymraeg a Chynllunio Awdurdodau Lleol yng Ngwynedd", in *Eu Hiaith a Gadwant?: Y Gymraeg yn yr Ugeinfed Ganrif*, Canolfan Uwchfrydiau Cymreig a Cheltaidd, UCW, 557-579

¹¹ PLASC figures, January 2003.

As the future of the language in the area depends on its use amongst young people, it is appropriate to examine language patterns amongst them. Within this context, recent research¹² on 13-17 young people's net-works in Pwllheli and the surrounding area, and their use of the Welsh Language in various social contexts, is scrutinised. Young people from Welsh-speaking homes in Pwllheli and the surrounding area use the Welsh language widely in all aspects of their lives - amongst their peer-group, within the community, and in the clubs and establishments to which they belong. At the same time, young people from Non-Welsh speaking homes who are fluent in Welsh also use the language in their social networks, but at a lower level than the former group.¹³ But although their use of the Welsh language is less, it should be emphasised that young people from Non-Welsh speaking homes have several contacts in their networks, and it is observed that the success of those schools in teaching them Welsh has enabled them to use Welsh when they so wish. There is no evidence from our gathered evidence that those from Non-Welsh speaking homes reject the language. Having said that, if a substantial increase occurs in the number of Non-Welsh speaking homes over the coming years, and that the same patterns of language use are repeated, then it can be expected that Dwyfor's young people will make less use of the Welsh language in general in future.

2. THE ECONOMY - COMPANIES AND POSTS AT YR HAFAN

A face to face interview was held with 16 of the current Hafan private companies, as well as the Hafan company. Most of the businesses in the current Hafan are family concerns, and most of the owners have gained relevant industrial experience and/or an interest in the sector prior to coming to the Hafan. Some worked for a company at Abersoch prior to moving to yr Hafan. 96 people are employed in the 16 businesses concerned, namely 26 owners and their families, and 70 salaried posts.¹⁴ In addition, the Hafan Company employs 14 people, 9 full-time and 5 part-time.

Number of posts in the Hafan private companies, according to language group, 2004

| POSTS: | Welsh Speakers | | English monoglot speakers | | Total |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Full time | Part time | Full time | Part time | |
| Owners and their families | 5 | 0 | 17 | 4 | 26 |
| Employed | 40 | 6 | 18 | 6 | 70 |
| TOTAL | 45 | 6 | 35 | 10 | 96 |

These figures are substantially lower than the 257 full-time posts¹⁵ that the Newidiem report 2002¹⁶ had claimed would be created at Yr Hafan. We believe that there is reason to doubt the validity of some of the data used as a basis for Newidiem's projections, and that consequently some of the conclusions should receive further consideration.¹⁷

¹² Welsh Language Board, 2005

¹³ 47% of the friends of young people from Non-Welsh speaking homes speak Welsh to one another compared to 88% of the friends of young people from Welsh speaking homes.

¹⁴ The respondents (mostly owners) notified us of their workers linguistic ability.

¹⁵ Newidiem, *ibid*, p11

¹⁶ Marina Economic Impact Study, Newidiem, March 2002.

¹⁷ Newidiem's figures were based on responses received to a series of surveys. However, on the whole the rate of response was too low to be able to assert the validity of the data - e.g. of the 476 postal questionnaires sent in the

3. THE IMPACT OF THE HAFAN DEVELOPMENT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE

In the first instance, it should be noted that in-migration to Dwyfor occurs as a consequence of several factors, and the in-migration as a consequence of the Hafan development is only one of them. The population that is likely to in-migrate as a consequence of the intention to extend Yr Hafan stems from three directions: berth-holders, new company owners, and the workforce. It is estimated that the number of in-migrants to Gwynedd during the next 10 years will be as follows:¹⁸

Total possible in-migration, 2003 -2013:

| | Likely number of in-migrants to Dwyfor 2003-2013 |
|--|--|
| Current berth-holders and their families | 84 |
| New berth-holders and their families | 80 |
| New company owners and their families | 13 |
| Workers and their families | 34 |
| TOTAL | 211 |

What impact would in-migration on such a scale have on the Welsh language? In the first instance, we are of the view that it could lead to a reduction in the percentage of Welsh language speakers in Dwyfor. We are aware that two language groups whose social networks differ totally as regards language, become established when the percentage of the Welsh-speaking population reaches approximately 50%-60% within a community. When the figure falls to approximately 40%, both groups merge as a single English language group. Already, below 50% of the population of Llanbedrog speak Welsh and the community of Llanengan is on the borderline with 60% of Welsh speakers. The greater the number of Non-Welsh speakers in the population, the lesser will be the opportunities to use Welsh, according to scale of probability. It should also be borne in mind that the in-migrants tendency to cluster in specific communities, will make it more difficult to have the opportunity to speak Welsh than suggested than the above-mentioned figures. Further, our research on young people's networks suggests that a language division amongst young people is starting to appear within several communities across the area. Our estimates suggest that an extension of 300 new berths could lead to the arrival of approximately 217 new migrants. Although this may seem a comparatively tiny and insignificant figure, it may have a significant effect on the dynamics of the linguistic groups, and cause further division.

4. VIEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE

The aim in this section of the report is to report back on the views of local people regarding developments at yr Hafan. We have been asked to seek the views of various groups within the area: the residents of Pwllheli and district, the business community at Pwllheli, and groups who take stock and objectors to the development

businesses survey, only 87 were returned, which gives a response rate of 18%; with regard to the marina users survey, the response rate was 29% across the three surveys (Newidiem, 2002, ibid: p20-22)

¹⁸ See the full Final Report for details on how the figures were calculated. The estimates are based on patterns observed over the last 10 years.

a) Survey of Local Residents¹⁹ Almost half the respondents (45%) felt that any extension to the present marina would have a negative impact on the Welsh language and a similar sized group (45%) felt that it would not make any difference. None of the Welsh speakers felt that the extension would have a positive impact on the Welsh language whilst 29% of Non-Welsh speakers felt that it would. The vast majority (85%) felt that it was important that the Welsh language be preserved as the principal language of the area, and that the Council should consider the Welsh Language during the planning process (75%). 35% of the respondents saw the positive effects brought by more work and money following any development, whilst 47% were concerned about an increase in pollution, house prices and transport. In general, women and young people saw fewer advantages to marina development than did men and older people.

b) Discussion Groups: Businesses

A discussion was held with the town's business community, and that was done through holding two group meetings²⁰, one through the medium of Welsh and the other through the medium of English, to provide an opportunity for everybody to respond through their chosen language. An attempt was made to obtain a representation from various businesses in the town, some we assumed who would have benefited from the development of Yr Hafan and others who had not perhaps gained so much benefit from it. Both groups gave vastly differing responses, although both agreed that the greatest loss to the Pwllheli area had been that of losing Butlins.

The Welsh medium group claimed that Yr Hafan was not aimed towards locals as only a very few could afford boats. At the same time, the development had not benefited everybody at Pwllheli. Most Pwllheli based companies had made very little trade, although several had experienced some increase. Yr Hafan companies themselves gained a 'large amount of money' from the development. Although the businesses have not seen much additional business, they felt that many Non-Welsh speakers had in-migrated to Abersoch and Llanbedrog, but that they would have probably migrated in any case, without the marina. They did not feel that the marina had made much difference. But the in-migration increases house prices and local people cannot afford housing due to low wages.

On the other hand, the English-medium group felt that Yr Hafan had made a significant difference to their businesses, with everybody regarding it in a positive light, and that it was a year round business. They felt that everybody in the town benefited - 'the greater the business prosperity, the greater the cash flow in the local economy'. The group also felt that Yr Hafan makes an important contribution towards the preservation of the Welsh language and culture through providing employment for young people, rather than having to leave the area to look for work. It was emphasised that their own children had learnt Welsh and had assimilated into the local community. It was also felt that Yr Hafan had contributed

¹⁹ See the full Final Report for survey details, including sample and questionnaire.

²⁰ These were held in accordance with the customary focus group arrangements, including challenging views and providing an opportunity to hold a frank and full discussion. The discussion was recorded as an *aide-memoire*, and to ensure that all views were recorded fairly and fully. Then a transcription of each discussion was prepared as research evidence. This report contains a summary of the discussions held.

towards improving the environment, especially on the North Quay. The lengthy time which the Council was taking to reach a decision on the proposed development was causing considerable frustration, and it was felt that there was too much political intervention in business matters relating to Pwllheli.

c) Discussion Group: Groups to take stock This group felt that public money spent on the marina needed to be looked at, and it was suggested that every post created at Yr Hafan had cost approximately £120,000. In addition, the posts currently at Yr Hafan pay comparatively low wages. It was suggested that locals have gained very little benefit from the current development. At the same time, an area of Pwllheli is amongst the most deprived in Wales, despite a public investment of £6m+ in the harbour. Outsiders have gained the most. There is a monopoly in the present marina, which deprives others of an opportunity. The proposed loan to create the extension is going to impose an excessive burden on Gwynedd's rate-payers - the Fundamentals of the scheme need to be reviewed and create an alternative one, exploring grant funding sources. The group felt that sustainable developments were required that would reduce environmental damage, and promote cultural tourism that would secure a higher standard of services, preserve the environment, visitors spending more money, provide work more regularly throughout the year etc. Another suggestion made was that the Council should consider channelling the current Hafan's profits, which is approximately £270,000 per annum, to a trust for the benefit of the people of Pwllheli and Pen Llŷn.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The initial and most obvious recommendation is that language needs to be planned alongside economic development planning. Secondly, we consider that focussing on young people is crucial to the future of the Welsh language in Dwyfor. It is fairly obvious that schools on the Llŷn Peninsula are fairly successful in teaching the Welsh Language. The children foster very good communication skills. Secondly, we are confident that the parents of the children support their children's efforts and those of the school in this regard. The current major weakness is the failure to transfer linguistic ability to linguistic practice on a large-scale - it is not the *lack* of use that causes the problem, but, rather, *the extension* of use. It appears that lack of confidence is responsible. When getting to grips with this problem, the range of young people's social life should be explored seeking to identify where the weaknesses lie in introducing them to the Welsh language.

Most schools communicate with the children in Welsh but some schools allow the children to converse with each other in English in the classroom. Outside the classroom, the teachers appear to avoid responsibility for the children's language of communication. Encouraging them to use Welsh on the yard would increase the likelihood of per-groups communicating through the medium of Welsh and that the tendency to divide society into two groups, each with a different language, would recede. We realise that it is outside school that pupils are most reluctant to use Welsh, and that this has much to do with lack of confidence - can the school try and solve the problem through presenting Welsh in various situations so as to increase confidence?

Consideration also has to be given to every social establishment to which the young people belong and ask to what extent use of Welsh can be encouraged amongst the leaders. As most such establishments are voluntary, ensuring this would not be an easy task. There should be a joint working partnership with the Language Board when considering methods of promoting such developments. Within the community, methods are required to persuade Welsh speaking adults to use the language with young people. The current tendency amongst many is either to assume that the young people from Non-Welsh speaking families do not wish to converse in Welsh, or let the young people select the language used.

Changing such practices is a time-consuming process. We suggest that the Council establish a partnership with the Welsh Language Board to secure developments that promotes use of Welsh, especially amongst the young people of Dwyfor. Two possible methods to achieve this are:

- Get Community Based Language Officers to work with schools and the Lifelong Learning sector, in order to include work with the young people and adults.
- Create a Partnership between the Board's Language Officers and Community/Town Councils, to promote Welsh language medium activities and identify methods of involving young people in those activities.

These kind of measures would match the Welsh Assembly Government's aims, as stipulated in 'Iaith Pawb'.²¹ In this document, the Welsh Assembly Government confirms the above-mentioned trail in declaring

"...if the Welsh Language is to prosper, that there is a need for young people in particular to develop a sense of ownership of the language and regard it as their own and not only that of the school and culture. The Assembly Government will work to ensure that we provide the maximum number of opportunities for our young people and teenagers to use the language in everyday leisure-time and social situations."

To conclude, we wish to emphasise that this report was only an information gathering exercise. We have not expressed an opinion as to whether or not the Hafan extension is appropriate. It is a matter for the Council and its elected members to take such decisions, having considered the evidence presented in this report alongside evidence contained in other reports.

²¹ 'Iaith Pawb - national plan of action for a bilingual Wales'; Welsh Assembly Government, 2003

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