

Making Welsh Easy to Read and Understand

Introduction to Welsh Easy Read and Design Guidelines



English language Easy Read Guidelines

Am I making myself clear? Mencap's guidelines for accessible writing
<http://november5th.net/resources/Mencap/Making-Myself-Clear.pdf>

How to make information accessible: a guide to producing easy read documents - Change
www.changepeople.co.uk/freebies-download.php?id=30

Making written information easier to understand for people with learning disabilities - Department of Health
www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_121927.pdf

Acknowledgements

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Learning Disability Wales

Learning Disability Wales is a membership organisation that works with its members and partners to create a Wales that values and includes every child and adult with a learning disability.



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Mencap Cymru

Mencap Cymru want people with a learning disability in Wales and their parents and carers to be valued equally, listened to and included. Our projects and services help people to get their voices heard, become more independent and have a say in the future of their communities.



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LANGUAGE BOARD



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www.photosymbols.com

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Making Welsh Easy to Read and Understand

These guidelines have been written to provide important advice and information to anyone:

- translating Easy Read documents from English to Welsh
- writing in Welsh who wishes to make their documents more accessible.

English language guidelines are available on the principles of writing and designing documents in Easy Read (See page 2). Most guidelines apply equally to whichever language the Easy Read document is written in. However there are differences between languages such as patterns of grammar, syntax, mutation, etc which need to be addressed in a way appropriate to the specific language being used. The guidelines in this document aim to address these issues in relation to the Welsh Language.



What is Easy Read?

Easy Read is a way of writing and presenting information which is easier to read and understand for people with learning disabilities. It is a way of telling people what they need to know.

Easy Read is not just about using easier to understand language. An Easy Read version of a document concentrates on the main points of the document and make additional explanations of hard words or concepts where needed.

Easy Read documents are more accessible for people with learning disabilities either reading on their own or with someone to support them, because they combine the use of:

- easy words and language
- images to support understanding
- accessible design
- editing and selecting the important points
- additional explanation.

Why make documents in Easy Read?

People with learning disabilities have the same rights to be kept informed and included as anyone else, but many documents are written or presented in a way that excludes people because they are not easy to understand. This means that people with learning disabilities can find themselves missing out on important information.

Easy Read supports people with learning disabilities to understand the important issues and make informed decisions if needed.



Every person with a learning disability is different, but some of the common issues they face with written information include:

- **Reading ability.** 8 out of 10 people with a learning disability have problems with reading. Some people with learning disabilities can read very well, others have problems and may need some support, others cannot read at all.
- **Memory issues.** Some people find it hard to remember what has been said previously in a document or even on the same page.
- **Understanding concepts.** Complicated or abstract concepts can be difficult to understand.
- **Concentration.** Long sentences, paragraphs and documents can be a problem for people with concentration difficulties.
- **Visual impairments.** These are relatively common amongst people with a learning disability.

Easy Read is a way of reducing these barriers.

Increasingly organisations are recognising the need to present information in an appropriate way for people with learning disabilities. In different situations and at different times of people's lives, access to meaningful information is especially important for example:

- accessing health care
- using banks or paying bills
- becoming a parent
- moving home
- in school and college
- employment
- dealing with benefit claims
- being consulted on services
- involvement in legal / court proceedings.

Producing accessible information is a way for organisations to respect the rights, views, opinions and involvement of people with learning disabilities.

Easy Read and the Welsh Language

When writing for someone who has difficulty reading and understanding documents it is clear that using the language they are most comfortable with is crucial.

Enabling people to use their preferred language plays an important role in people realising their rights; denying people the right to use their preferred language can place them at a disadvantage.



The importance of providing people with learning disabilities with services in their preferred language is highlighted in the report 'Welsh in the Health Service' written for the Welsh Consumer Council.

*"The difficulties which face people in this situation can be intensified if they are obliged to communicate in their second language. There is significant anecdotal evidence that Welsh speakers with learning disabilities do respond better to stimulus in their first language."*¹

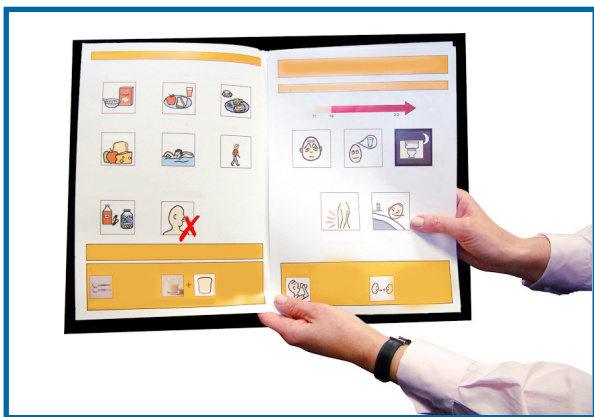
1 'WELSH IN THE HEALTH SERVICE: The Scope, Nature and Adequacy of Welsh Language Provision in the National Health Service in Wales'

Design Guidelines

Putting words into sentences that are easy to read and understand can be made even more accessible by following some simple rules about layout and design of your document.

Below are some general rules about layout of easy read documents. However, if you know who you are writing for and how they like things to look, follow their lead and produce documents in a way they are used to or find suits their particular needs.

The general rule for designing for Easy Read is that the design should be simple rather than making it “stylish” or fashionably designed.



House style

Your organisation may have its own ‘house style’ for the design of documents. You will of course have to pay regard to these when designing or formatting your documents but do not let an established style get in the way of accessible design.

Bilingual design

The rules for easy to read layout are the same when you are writing in Welsh or English but there are a couple of things to consider when producing bilingual documents.

Remember that the length of your Welsh text will probably be longer than the English.

Don’t make text smaller or squashed up tight just to fit Welsh into the same space as the English – it won’t be accessible and won’t treat Welsh readers the same as English readers.

For documents in English and Welsh you need to consider the best layout for your audience. Ask people with a learning disability how they would like it.

Here are some options to consider:

1. Two separate documents



2. Tilt and turn



You can find out more about bilingual design from the Welsh Language Board's 'Bilingual Design Guide'². It is important to consider your audience when choosing. Choose an option that causes least confusion.

The whole document

Make the front page bold and clearly explain what the document is about.

For long documents, include a clear and simple contents page at the beginning.

Use clear headings to break up the document into small chunks.

Make your headings obvious by using things like:

larger font

different font

colour

Be consistent with font style and size, decide upon font and size of text for ordinary text and headings and then stick with them throughout your document.

2 'Bilingual Design Guide: The Welsh Language Board', 2009

Don't use underlining, *italics* or BLOCK CAPITALS; all of these can make reading more difficult.

Use page numbers.

The whole page

Use a plain white background or pale yellow behind your text.

Do not reverse text and background colours i.e. white on black.

Never put text over a pattern or picture:



Rhowch wybodaeth rydw
i'n gallu ei deall i mi.



Rhowch wybodaeth rydw
i'n gallu ei deall i mi.



Use a sans serif font such as **Arial**, **Verdana** or **FS Mencap**³ (a font designed by people with learning disabilities). The text in this document is Verdana.

Make sure that your font size is at least 14 Point.

Make sure that your text is lined up on the left hand margin and jagged on the right.

Make sure there is white space between text and pictures.

Ensure there are blank lines between each paragraph.

3 <http://www.mencap.org.uk/node/6382>

Use pictures and graphics

Use pictures to show what you are writing about.

Where possible use one picture for each idea or sentence.

There are lots of different places to get pictures you can use:



Photosymbols

www.photosymbols.com

Phone 0117 959 4424

Email ask@photosymbols.com



Change

www.changepeople.co.uk

Phone 0113 388 0011

Email info@change-people.co.uk



Valuing People Clipart

www.valuingpeopleclipart.org.uk

Phone 0800 0430 980

Email info@inspiredservices.org.uk



Widgit Software

www.widgit.com

Phone 01926 333680

Email info@widgit.com

Put the picture on the left, and the text on the right.

Avoid using graphs and charts.

Difficult words

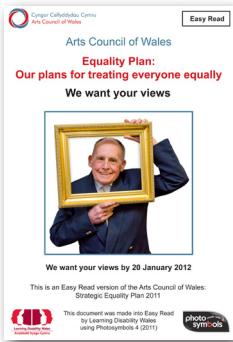
Use bold text to highlight **important** or **difficult** words.

Where you are explaining difficult words **highlight it in bold**; then put your explanation of the word in a text box on the same page.

Some examples of Easy Read

Here are some examples of good quality easy read information:

Arts Council of Wales: Equality Plan



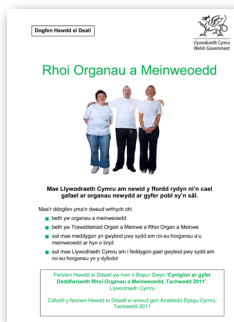
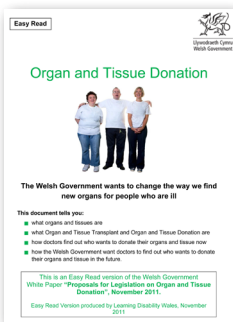
English

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/arts-council-wales-2011.pdf>

Welsh

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/cyngor-celfyddydau-cymru-2011.pdf>

Welsh Government: Organ and Tissue Donation



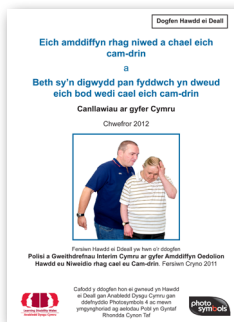
English

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/organ-tissue-donation-2011.pdf>

Welsh

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/rhoi-organau-meinweoedd-2011.pdf>

Adult Protection Fora in Wales: Keeping You Safe from Harm and Abuse



English

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/keeping-you-safe-2012.pdf>

Welsh

<http://learningdisabilitywales.org.uk/pdfs/wg/eich-amddiffyn-2012.pdf>



Learning Disability Wales
Anabledd Dysgu Cymru



Llais anabledd dysgu
The voice of learning disability



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