

“The future of Welsh is ‘in good hands” – Minister

The Minister was responding to the results of National Survey for Wales 2017-18, published today, which show that more 16-24 year olds say they can speak Welsh or have some Welsh speaking ability than any other age group.

While the Census is the main source of information about the proportion of people who can speak Welsh the National Survey is used to monitor trends for adults between censuses and asks questions about confidence and attitudes towards the language as well as ability.

The Minister also welcomed the fact that that 62% of those who couldn't speak Welsh would like to be able to speak it, and 85% of those with some ability in Welsh wanted to speak it better. She said:

“The Welsh language belongs to all of us, whether we're fluent speakers, can just get by, are starting to learn or can manage a “Iechyd Da” with a drink. It's great news that so many people would like to learn or improve their Welsh and it's even better news that the help you need is out there.

“When it comes to learning or improving, there is something for everybody, whether that's an online course, a taster session, a Clwb Cwtsh course where you can learn alongside your children or grandchildren, work based courses or courses that lead to formal qualifications. There are so many different ways to learn and I would encourage anyone in that 62% or 85% to find the right course for them and to give Welsh a go.”

The survey also revealed that, unsurprisingly, those who can speak Welsh fluently and those who use the language daily are the most confident when speaking, while those who are less fluent or who don't speak Welsh as often are most likely to lack confidence and to fear of being judged as the main barrier to speaking the language.

The Minister added:

“When it comes to languages, using them regularly is key to learning, improving and feeling confident so I would urge all those who have some Welsh to use the language every day to build their skills and confidence. Fluent Welsh speakers can also play their part, either informally by encouraging learners they know to use their Welsh or by volunteering for the ‘Siarad’ scheme, which pairs fluent speakers and learners for a minimum 10 hours of chatting over a coffee or a pint.

“With so many opportunities for adults to learn and the language being strongest amongst 16-24 year olds, the future of the language is in good hands.”