

BRINGING WELSH TO THE COMMUNITY IN 2012

THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR AN ARRAY OF ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN ARRANGED BY THE CARDIFF AND THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN WELSH FOR ADULTS CENTRE, TO TEACH MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS ABOUT WELSH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

A Welsh Day was held in the Friary Centre in Cardiff City Centre on St David's Day, where more than 70 ESOL and Skills for Life students took part in several Welsh taster courses with Gwennan Higham, Development Officer and Tutor at the Welsh for Adults Centre. Those who took part learnt Welsh greetings and useful phrases through different activities, including a workshop and quiz by Gareth Bonello from St Fagans and Cardiff Library. Gareth showed the groups a variety of different Welsh historic artefacts and taught the group about the background of each one. For the vast majority, it was their first contact with the Welsh language and Welsh heritage.

Gwennan said: "I thoroughly enjoyed teaching this large group and was pleased to see such eagerness amongst ESOL and Skills for Life students to learn Welsh and find out about Welsh culture. I very much hope to work with them again in the near future. Many individuals during these events commented on the fact they would appreciate greater access and encouragement to learn the language."

Gwennan also took part in a free day out for the members of Communities First Plasnewydd and Oasis Cardiff to St Fagans National History Museum.

Gwennan introduced key Welsh phrases to the group of refugees and immigrants, which were then put to practice throughout the day at the museum. A guide from the museum, Owain Rhys, the curator of contemporary life at St Fagans, taught the group about the history of Wales before guiding them through the museum's exhibitions, including a display on multilingual and multicultural Wales. As well as showing the historical buildings and sites, the curator explained about the Eisteddfod and the history of the Welsh Knot. The day ended with a feast of Bengali home-cooked food in the Tŷ Gwyrdd – a perfect end to a Welsh multicultural day.

Reynette Roberts from Oasis Cardiff said: "It is great that those from BME [Black and Minority Ethnic] communities can learn both the language and the richness of Welsh culture in an informal way".

The Welsh for Adults Centre offer scholarships to people from a range of ethnic backgrounds to attend a Welsh course. This scholarship is a key driver for engaging people from all backgrounds into the Welsh language and Wales' culture. Fifteen people have entered in this year's scholarship so far and the winners of these 10 scholarships will be announced before the New Year.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- 3,000 people enrol on Welsh classes with the Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre every year
- The Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre offers fee concessions to pensioners, students and people who receive income-based benefits
- You can take a Welsh citizenship test through the Welsh language
- At least eight of the current Welsh rugby squad are fluent Welsh speakers
- Chris Coleman, the Welsh football coach, is currently having lessons run by the Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre
- The following celebrities speak Welsh: Huw Edwards, Rhys Ifans, Cerys Matthews, Connie Fisher, Matthew Rhys, Alex Jones, Ioan Gruffydd, Gethin Jones
- The Welsh for Adults Centre is part of the School of Welsh at Cardiff University and has been established for 30 years

The Centre's vision is to reach out to everyone who lives in Cardiff and the Vale and make Welsh courses accessible to all, and to integrate people into the Welsh-speaking society by involving them in the main events of Welsh-speaking cultural life.

Many attended Tafwyl, a free Welsh-language festival run by Menter Caerdydd, in June. It took place in Cardiff Castle and welcomed over 8,000 visitors in one day – many of whom had never had contact with Welsh before. Next year's event will be held at Cardiff Castle on June 15.

Rachel Heath-Davies, the Director of the Welsh for Adults Centre said: "We are committed to delivering Welsh lessons in all local communities across Cardiff and the Vale.

"With over 40 languages spoken in Cardiff alone, we are keen to offer a wide range of opportunities for people of all backgrounds to learn Welsh."

To find out more about Welsh for Adults courses contact Marketing Officer Gwenllian Willis on 029 20 870 413 or email info@learnwelsh.co.uk www.learnwelsh.co.uk

Top right: the Welsh for Adults Centre's courses are accessible to everyone living in Cardiff and the Vale