

## **WELSH LESSONS FOR SOLICITOR'S COMPANY**

The latest official report about the Welsh Language is an important one and the Language Use Survey is also very important because it clearly shows the difficulties which exist.

The very first figure we have suggests a hope that 611,000 people over 3 years of age in 2004 were able to speak the language and that was almost 1% higher than in the 2001 Census.

About 315,000 people speak Welsh fluently and only 277,000 of those use Welsh every day.

Although the figures as to ability to speak Welsh are not too disappointing, the figures as to the use of the language cause more concern.

If the Government is serious as to reaching its targets and helping the language, many things are needed including a very real commitment to the language, an effort to provide learning opportunities within everyone's reach and a major campaign as well to change attitudes to promote the language amongst people who are either non-Welsh speakers or less confident Welsh speakers.

In light of this, it is good to be able to report that one local company of Solicitors, Swayne Johnson from Hall Square, has arranged a course of ten lessons (an hour every week) within their office for members of staff who are either non-Welsh speaking or who are less confident in speaking Welsh.

Some felt that this would be of great assistance as they were anxious to learn but had family responsibilities in the evening which made it difficult to attend courses outside working hours. 12 out of 50 workers in the office (including 3 of the Directors) have expressed very considerable interest and the first session of learning was on Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> May. (Several of the 50 were already Welsh speakers of course.)

The brave teacher taking on this task is Judith Jones and she was full of praise at the end of the first lesson.

Sarah Noton (one of the Directors on the course) said

"I have enjoyed the first lesson, especially the singing at the end and look forward to many more again."

The company is grateful not only to Judith Jones but also to Frances Jones

for all their assistance in arranging these lessons. We hope to have an opportunity to report further on the success of these lessons in another edition of Y Bigwn in the future.

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