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Translating Websites

Radyr and Morganstown Community Council has a new website - which is proving to be an excellent way for us to engage with the community we serve. You can see it here, if you wish: <https://www.radyrandmorganstown.org>.

We are, however, mindful of the fact that 15% of our residents speak Welsh. As such, we would like to publish our website in English and Welsh.

Clearly, with the resources available to us, this represents a challenge.

We were interested, therefore, to learn that our website provider (www.weebly.com) provides access to an app, called ConveyThis (www.conveythis.com). We have installed this on our site - and it seems to work quite well.

We have, however, limited ourselves to the free option, for now. This limits us to 5,000 words.

As you will see from the ConveyThis site, priced plans are available - but these are not cheap. Indeed, the plan that would seem to be most appropriate for us (in the long term - as our website grows) costs \$199 per month (around £1,900 per annum). Clearly, that is not beyond our reach - but it would increase our website costs substantially (we currently pay Weebly around £120 per annum for our domain name and website - which we think is amazing value).

I understand that the Welsh Government has a Welsh Language Technology fund. Can something similar to ConveyThis be developed, using that money? I would imagine that ConveyThis links to a machine translation system, such as Google or Bing Translate (I am told that the latter provide a better translation).

The clever bit would seem to be the ability to replicate the entire website - whilst inserting a country-flag on the site to enable the language choice.

Could I please suggest that the Welsh Government funds such a project? Released to community councils, free of charge, it would enable all of them to provide a bilingual website - at almost no cost. Whether such a system could be developed to be used with sites other than Weebly is something for the experts to consider.

And - since there are 735 community councils in Wales, it would represent a cost saving of £1,396,500 per annum (based on the ConveyThis rate).

Alternatively, it might be possible for the Welsh Government to negotiate a deal with ConveyThis. But, to my mind, that is not as exciting a prospect.

I would be happy to discuss this with you - as well as discussing the use of Welsh by community councils more generally.

Thank you - and best wishes

Huw Jones
Chair
Radyr and Morganstown Community Council