

# **A welcome to WALES pack**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This pack was produced by the Welsh Assembly Government in September 2006. The information provided is constantly changing and being up dated. If you are not sure of anything please contact the relevant department or agency mentioned for latest information. We intend to up date the welcome pack at least once a year.

**Our Thanks to all the organisations and individual who have contributed to the development of this pack, both in its design and content. In particular we wish to thank ACAS and the EURES (European Job Mobility portal) from whose websites we have included information in this pack. In addition our thanks to the Family Planning Association for access to their website (© fpa All Rights Reserved)**

Should you have any comments or wish to add information please send these to

Head of Voluntary Sector and Inclusion Unit  
Welsh Assembly Government  
Rhydycar  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 1UZ

Please note that whilst we will consider details of organisations to include in the pack we will not be able to entertain including all organisations.

## **INTRODUCTION**

**Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration, Edwina Hart AM MBE**

### **Welcome to Wales.**

The Welsh Assembly Government wants you to enjoy living and working in Wales whether you are here for a short time or intending to stay permanently. To help you, we have produced this **Welcome to Wales** information pack which aims to provide you with basic information and contact points where you can get more details.

Obviously moving to another country to work or live is a big step, not just in terms of how our laws and rules may differ, but the rights and responsibilities we regard as being important. We have tried to explain some of the key rights and responsibilities in connection with your working and living here that are important to us, which you should know about as they apply to you as well.

Like you, we live in communities and we place a high value on people living together, working together, and getting along together. There are differences in culture, language and religion, we respect these differences and believe that they play a positive role in building a society where we can all live together.

Wales has a language of its own, of which we are rightly proud. The Welsh Language is spoken across the length and breadth of the country, and you will see publications and signs in both Welsh and English. We would certainly encourage you to learn Welsh, as well as English. This pack provides you with details of how you can learn and improve your knowledge of Welsh and English which will help you settle in Wales.

This guide also provides you with information to ensure that you receive and can access support services. It tells you about accessing education, training, health and housing for you and your family. It tells you about where you can get help in an emergency, or advice if you get in trouble. In essence if you are not sure, the guide aims to provide you with a contact point that will be able to help.

Of course, the information over time will change and we will do our best to update it, and we would advise strongly that you use this pack together with the information on the Internet.

The information is for your guidance only; if you are unsure you should always take advice. In particular, the law on your remaining legally in the UK is always changing, and you should always check what the law says in your situation.

It is available on our Internet at <http://new.wales.gov.uk/>

**TEN IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW**

1. **Worker Registration Scheme (WRS)** - If you are a national of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, or Slovenia, you are required to register with the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) within 1 month of starting work.

You can do so by submitting a completed WRS Application Form. If you change jobs you will have to complete and register again, but do not have to pay for a second time. It is **important** you register and follow this guidance as you may be treated as working illegally if you do not.

If you are a national of another country not listed above, you may have a work permit issued to you. There are no obstacles to bringing **your family** to the UK if you are from a country within the European Union

2. If you do not have a National Insurance number you must apply for one as soon as you start work. To receive a number, contact the National Insurance Enquiry Centre to arrange an interview on 0845 6000 643 (textphone – 0845 6000 644).
3. If you are **homeless**, contact the Housing Section at your local authority. However, if you have nowhere to sleep and it is outside office hours contact the local authority emergency out of service hours.
4. To access the **National Health Service**, you should register with a local doctor (GP – general practitioner) in the area where you live. It is best to do this as soon as you arrive and before you need one
5. If you want to open a **bank account**, you must provide the following information:
  - Proof of identity (passport, national identity card or national driving licence)
  - Proof of UK address (tenancy agreement or letter of confirmation from your employer)
  - Proof of employment is also often required
6. As well as free access to books, **public libraries** also provide free access to the **Internet** and E-mails. You may be required to register at the library, and you will need two proofs of identity with your address.
7. To **drive a car** you can use your national driving licence. When you become a resident of the UK you must apply for an UK driving licence. You must also have a valid insurance certificate, Road Tax certificate and a valid MOT certificate (including an emission report) and must be able to produce these documents to the police, if and when required. Remember to wear a seatbelt and to **drive on the left-hand side of the road**. You should note that it is

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illegal to drink and drive over the alcohol limit or under the influence of drugs, if convicted you could be banned from driving and or face imprisonment.

8. It is an offence for someone to harass you or for you to harass another person because of their nationality, religion, ethnic origin or colour. It is also an offence for your partner to be violent towards you or for you to be violent towards them. It is also a criminal offence to force a woman to have sex with you if she says no. You must be over 16 to purchase cigarettes and over 18 to purchase alcohol and you may be asked for identification to prove your age. Possession or the intention to supply, or supplying certain drugs is illegal and a criminal offence. Having sex with a minor (child under 16 years old) or with a member of your family is also a criminal offence.
9. If your children are in the UK and they are of school age (between 5 and 16), **they must be educated**. If you do not make arrangements for their education you could face legal action, which could include imprisonment. Local Authorities provide free schooling for all children aged between 5 and 16.
10. In an **emergency** dial **999** and ask for the Police, Fire Service or an ambulance.

For more details please on each of these please see the full Migrant workers guide on our website, or alternatively contact a Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB), Local Authority (usually as Local Council) or ask at the library.

## 1. EMPLOYMENT

### 1.1 Working in the UK

British citizens and many other nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) do not need permission to work in the UK.

EEA and Swiss nationals do not require a visa to enter the UK. On arrival in the UK, you should use the 'EEA/EU' channel where it is available. An immigration officer will check the validity of your passport or national identity card.

You do not require a work permit to work in the UK. You should not be discriminated against in terms of conditions of employment, pay or working conditions. You may be self-employed, or an employee of a company or organisation.

Citizens of all other countries need to have permission to enter and work in the UK.

However, in all circumstances **we advise that before you travel** to the UK you should check if there are any restrictions on you being able to work.

You **must** register with the Home Office **Worker Registration Scheme** if you are from one of the New Member States (normally known as the Accession countries or the A8 countries):

- Poland
- Lithuania
- Estonia
- Latvia
- Slovenia
- Slovakia
- Hungary
- The Czech Republic

Candidates searching for work from the A8 countries must have sufficient funds to support themselves whilst they look for work in the UK.

Nationals from countries outside the EEA can also come and work in Wales, but they must meet the criteria for a **Work Permit** or one of the **schemes** available to people wanting to come to the UK. The stamp in your passport will identify whether you are allowed to work in the UK.

You should note there are unscrupulous agents who will not provide you with accurate information on your entitlement to work in the UK. They are only interested in charging you a fee and may make promises that they cannot keep.

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You should always get independent advice from the British Consulate/Embassy/ High Commission before taking up an offer of employment in the UK.

Detailed information can be found on:

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate website: [www.workingintheuk.gov.uk](http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk) or phone **0870 606 7766** (automated system), or [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk)

### 1.2 Worker Registration Scheme

If you are from one of the New Member State ( Accession countries or A8 countries), you must register within **one month** of starting work, by submitting a completed **WRS Application Form** available from [www.workingintheuk.gov.uk](http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk) or ordered from the Home Office on 08705 210224.

You will also need:

- A copy of a letter from your employer confirming you are working
- 2 passport photos
- Your passport/ID card
- A payment of £70 (from Oct 2005)

**If you do not apply within one month of starting work you will not be legally entitled to work.**

On registration you will receive:

- A registration card
- A registration certificate

Your passport or ID Card will be returned to you

If you change your job, you need to register again. But you have to only send another WRS Application Form. You do **not** have to pay £70 again.

Once you have been working legally in the UK for a year (you can change jobs, but you must not be out of work for more than a total of 30 days in 12 months) you will no longer need to register on the Worker Registration Scheme. And you can apply for a **residence permit**. Use an EEC1 form, available on the site: [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk)

### 1.3 Tax

If you are an employee, your employer will deduct Income Tax from your wages throughout the year and send it to the Inland Revenue. This is known as Pay As You Earn (PAYE).

You will be treated as a UK resident for tax purposes if:

- You are in the United Kingdom for 183 days or more in the tax year, or

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- You visit the United Kingdom regularly and your visits average 91 days or more a tax year over a period not exceeding 4 years, or
- You come to the UK for a purpose that will mean you are in the UK for at least two years.

The tax year runs from 6 April to 5 April. When you arrive in the UK you should ask at your nearest tax office for form P86 and leaflet IR139. All EU countries have arrangements so that you are not taxed twice on the same income.

Income is taxed at the following rates:

Starting rate 10% £0 - £2150  
Basic rate 22% £2151 - £33000  
Higher rate 40% over £33001

You can earn a certain amount of income in a tax year without paying income tax. This is your tax allowance. There are many different allowances for different people, but everyone receives a personal allowance. For 2006-2007 these are:

Personal allowance £5035  
Personal allowance for people aged 65-74 £7280  
Personal allowance for people aged 75 and over £7420

All taxable income must be declared to the HM Revenue & Customs. Tax returns are completed using a self-assessment system whereby you provide all the necessary information and calculate your earnings etc. The HM Revenue & Customs will then check this information and tell you how much tax you owe.

Social security contributions, or National Insurance (NI) as it is called, are also deducted directly from your salary. There are six different categories of contributions

### 1.4 National Insurance Number (NI)

If employed and aged 16 to 65 for men or 16 to 60 for women, you must pay National Insurance contributions (NICs). Some benefits depend on the contributions you have paid, to check what you are entitled to access [http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/cnr/helpsheet\\_download\\_page.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/cnr/helpsheet_download_page.htm)

If you do not already have a NI number you **must** apply for one as soon as you start work. To receive a number contact your nearest Job Centre to make an appointment for an 'evidence of identity' interview. You will need to take proof of identity (e.g. passport) and evidence that you are working.

You must give your employer your National Insurance Number. This number is unique to you. It is used as a reference number for the social security system and

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to record your NI contributions. Phone to arrange an interview on **0845 6000 643** (textphone – **0845 6000 644**).

### 1.5 Employment Opportunities

Employment opportunities can be found through local newspapers, private employment agencies or by visiting a government operated Jobcentre Plus office. Most large towns have a Jobcentre where staff will help and advise you. To find a Job Centre in your town go to

[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk) or

[www.jobs1.co.uk/directory/recruitment\\_local\\_wales.html?time=1145360847](http://www.jobs1.co.uk/directory/recruitment_local_wales.html?time=1145360847)

### EURES (European Employment Services)

EURES provides information on job opportunities in 29 countries. See <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/index.jsp> for multilingual information.

Eures is a partnership between the Public Employment Services of all European Union countries,(plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), which promotes mobility of labour, helps employers recruit from other countries and offers advice, guidance and assistance to jobseekers wishing to live and work in another European country.

The Jobcentre Plus Eures service addresses skills shortages by working with those employers who show commitment to helping the most disadvantaged within our workforce. It runs alongside all other Job Centre Plus (JCP) services. By accessing a wider pool of skilled labour JCP enables companies to continue to expand, increasing the likelihood of continued recruitment across a wide range of vacancies.

Eures offers advice on the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) and facilitates the National Insurance Number process.

### Careers Wales

Career Wales provides support and direction to Children under 16, Children between 16 and 19, Adults and Professionals on all aspect of their career and career development. Careers Wales helps with information on different careers, making choices about courses to take and informs you about the job market in Wales. Careers centres can provide information and advice about the skills and qualification requirements for jobs, availability of learning opportunities, funding for training, etc. It is a government-funded service available free of charge to anyone wishing help to plan their future employment, training or learning. Or you can access the website at: <http://www.careerswales.com/>

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If you would like some more information or advice then talk to your Careers Adviser. You can contact them through your school, college or at your local careers centre or careers shop. <http://www.careerswales.com/>

Wales Career centres and careers shops are open all year round. You can drop in for careers advice and information or to look at our vacancy boards for jobs and training.

For more information you can also call our freephone helpline:

**Learndirect: 0800 100 900**

### **1.6 Recognition of diplomas and qualifications - Academic Qualifications**

The National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (UK NARIC) deals with such qualifications. It is managed by ECCTIS Ltd under contract to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

They can provide you with a letter of comparability that gives a potential employer the UK equivalents of your qualifications. For this they will require:

- A photocopy of your certificate(s) together with transcript(s)
- A copy of a certified translation in English if necessary; and
- A covering letter from yourself stating the purpose of your enquiry.

There is a fee for this service.

### **Professional and Occupational Qualifications**

Each EEA Member State has professions that are restricted by law to individuals holding certain national professional qualifications. These are known as regulated professions. Except for certain specified professions (see below), a general system exists for mutual recognition of qualifications. The general system allows a professional qualified in one member state to pursue that profession in another member state without having to qualify again.

However, where standards of training for a profession are much higher in the second member state, the individual may need additional training before being considered fully qualified.

The general system comprises two European Directives - Directive 89/48/EEC and Directive 92/51/EEC:

Directive 89/48/EEC covers regulated professions requiring at least three years (or an equivalent duration part-time) at a university or higher education establishment plus any professional training required to practise the profession.

Directive 92/51/EEC covers education and training for professions regulated below degree level. This directive has a number of levels of recognition ranging from post-secondary courses of less than three years to short vocational courses or an assessment of an individual's skills and abilities.

Specific directives cover some other professions. They include medical

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professions, architects, teachers and lawyers.

For more information on transferring your qualifications under Directive 92/51/EEC and Directive 89/48/EEC, contact:

Department for Education and Skills  
QFW2, Room E3b  
Moorfoot  
Sheffield  
S1 4PQ  
UK  
Tel: 0114 259 4997  
Email: [application.coe@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:application.coe@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)

### 1.7 Employment and welfare rights

Employment law can be complicated. Your rights at work depend on whether you are an **employee** or a worker;

- An employee either has, or is entitled to, a contract of employment.
- A worker but not an employee works for someone else but usually on the basis of providing a service.

Strictly speaking all employees are workers, but not all workers are employees. In practice however worker is often used to describe those who are not employees.

For advice on a specific problem it is strongly recommended that you obtain professional advice from a Solicitor or the Citizens Advice Bureau or speak to the relevant Trade Union.

Qualification for benefits such as statutory sick pay and statutory maternity pay are dependent on many factors including status, length of residence, period of employment, payment of National Insurance contributions etc.: More detailed information on employment and welfare rights can be found at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eures/index.jsp>

[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk) (Click on benefits and service A-Z, then follow the link for Social Security Agreements with other countries to download information on the social security insurance benefits and healthcare agreements with the appropriate EEA country.)

[www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk) provides information on how to obtain a copy of '**Working in the UK – Know Your Rights**' (This is available in Lithuanian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish, Slovak and Portuguese)

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Alternatively contact ACAS – a public body which promotes good workplace relations: [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) or 08457 474747

ACAS's offices are at 3 Purbeck House, Lambourne Crescent, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5GJ. 029 2076 2636. You may visit these offices, BUT please call and make an appointment.

Many workplaces have Trade Unions who provide support to workers and employees, and can be a source of support for Migrant workers. To find out more contact:

Wales TUC  
2nd Floor Transport House  
Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9SD  
Tel: 029 2034 7010  
Fax: 029 2022 1940

Wales TUC email and website address:

[www.wtuc.org.uk](http://www.wtuc.org.uk)

Information about joining a union, and which one to join, can be found on the TUC's worksmart website - <http://www.worksmart.org.uk/unionfinder/>

### **1.8 Employment contracts**

Only people over the age of 16 are able to enter employment, although children are allowed to have jobs such as delivering newspapers in certain areas.

It is not common practice in the UK to have a formal contractual agreement between employer and employee. However, the employer must, within two months of the date you started, supply a written statement outlining the following details of your employment:

- The names of the employer and the employee;
- The date when the employment began;
- The pay rate and the frequency of pay;
- Hours of work;
- Holiday and sick pay entitlements;
- Details of pension arrangements;
- The notice period;
- The job title or a brief job description;
- Any collective agreements that directly affect the terms and conditions of the job.

These rights are guaranteed under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

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If you are being sent to work in the UK by your company or organisation, EU Directive 91/533/EEC stipulates that they must provide you with the following information:

- The duration of the employment;
- The currency in which you will be paid;
- Any benefits to which you are entitled while working abroad;
- The procedure for your return to your home country.

### 1.9 National Minimum Wage

Most workers including agency workers must be paid a minimum wage. The National Minimum Wage commission sets the minimum wage level and this is currently set from 1 October 2005:

- Main (adult) rate for workers aged 22 and over is **£5.05 per hour**
- Development rate for workers aged 18-21 inclusive is **£4.25 per hour** 2005
- Special rate for 16 and 17 year olds) is **£3.00 per hour**

Workers are entitled to be paid at least the level of the statutory National Minimum Wage (NMW) for every hour they work for an employer.

The development rate can also apply to workers aged 22 and above during their first 6 months in a new job with a new employer and who are receiving accredited training.

From October 2006

- The adult rate of the minimum wage will rise from £5.05 to **£5.35 an hour**
- The youth rate for workers aged 18-21 will be increased from £4.25 to **£4.45**
- The rate for workers aged 16-17 years will increase from £3.00 to **£3.30**.

### 1.10 Agricultural Minimum Wage

A person who works in Agriculture must be paid the agricultural minimum wage rate as follows:

- Basic grade aged 19 and over **£5.05 per hour**
- Qualifies, e.g. working with animals, operate machinery, **£5.58 per hour**

If they work more than 39 Hours per week, they are entitled to overtime pay which is one and a half times the basic rate. Please see:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/pay/national-minimum-wage/index.html>

### 1.11 Lawful Deductions Made From Wages

An employer can **only** make deductions if they are:

- Required by law (e.g. PAYE or NI deductions)
- Authorised by the worker's contract
- Consented to by the worker **in writing** before the deduction is made

This applies to employees and some workers.

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Some employers are making deductions for accommodation and for transport. These charges are higher than you would normally pay if you were to make your own arrangements. Many migrant workers are asked to sign contracts that include clauses allowing employers or agents to make these deductions. Usually with the workers not fully understanding the implications of these deductions or where the contracts are in a different language.

The maximum amount an employer can deduct for providing accommodation is set at £3.90 for each day. There is no equivalent figure set for deduction for providing transport. However, any deduction (for either accommodation or transport or jointly) must not take your pay below the National / Agricultural Minimum wage level.

### 1.12 Working Time Regulations

These apply to employees and most workers. Generally these state:

- The average weekly working time is limited to 48 hours (you can choose to work longer provided that you sign a release form)
- Night workers average daily working time is limited to 8 hours
- Health assessments must be offered to night workers
- Minimum daily (11 hours) and weekly (1 day) rest periods
- Rest breaks at work (20 minutes for every 6 hours)
- Paid annual leave (4 weeks or pro rata)

### 1.13 Health and Safety Protection

If an agency organises employment for you, they must not place you in a job for which you are not appropriately qualified. The company where you are placed must ensure the workplace is a safe working environment and provide appropriate training. Employers have a duty to ensure that their staff are fully appraised of the health and safety regulations and must provide this in a language the worker can understand. See section 1.16 below

### 1.14 Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Employees absent from work through illness for more than 4 days and who earn more than the National Insurance threshold may qualify for SSP. It is paid by their employer. Agency workers paying NI contributions **may** be entitled to SSP if they were on assignment at the time of illness. To find out the threshold levels and eligibility criteria contact your nearest CAB.

### 1.15 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

Pregnant employees/workers with 26 weeks continuous employment by the 15<sup>th</sup> week before childbirth have the right to SMP. If you do not qualify for SMP you may be able to claim maternity allowance from your local benefits agency depending on your NI contributions.

### 1.16 Part time Workers

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The UK has regulations to ensure that part-time workers are not treated less favourably than comparable full-time workers, unless the less favourable treatment can be objectively justified. This means part-timers are entitled to, for example:

- The same hourly rate of pay;
- The same access to company pension schemes;
- The same entitlements to annual leave and maternity/parental leave on a pro rata basis;
- The same entitlement to contractual sick pay;
- No less favourable treatment in access to training.

### 1.17 Equal Pay

Employers must give men and women equal treatment in the terms and conditions of their employment contract if they are employed on:

- 'like work' - work that is the same or broadly similar
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation study, or
- work found to be of equal value.

A woman is employed on 'like work' with a man if her work is of the same or a broadly similar nature. It is for the employer to show that there is a genuine reason for any difference in this 'like work', which is not based on the gender of an individual.

Individuals may complain to an employment tribunal under the Equal Pay Act 1970 up to six months after leaving the employment to which their claim relates. Normally, they may claim arrears of remuneration (which includes sick pay, holiday pay, bonuses, overtime etc as well as 'pay') for a period of up to six years before the date of their tribunal application.

Further information: (opens a new window)

- [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)
- <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=870#10>
- <http://www.wtuc.org.uk/building/index.html>

### 1.18 Ending Employment

Both employers and employees have the right to a minimum period of notice.

The period of notice that an **employer** is required to give depends on the employee's length of service.

- If an employee has been continuously employed for longer than one month, the employer must give at least one week's notice.
- If an employee has been continuously employed for longer than two years, the employer must give at least two weeks' notice.
- For each additional year of continuous employment, an extra week's notice must be given, up to a maximum of twelve weeks.

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An **employee** must give a minimum of one week's notice if his employer has employed him continuously for more than one month. This minimum period does not increase, regardless of the employee's length of service.

These minimum notice periods do not apply if longer periods have been agreed in an employment contract between the employer and employee.

If an employee is on a fixed-term contract, no notice of the expiry of the contract needs to be given. However, if the contract is terminated early the minimum notice regulations apply. If an employee was initially employed for a fixed term of one month or less but is then subsequently employed continuously for a total period of three months or more, they are treated as a permanent employee and so benefit from the minimum notice period regulations.

Any employee who is dismissed after more than one year's continuous employment is entitled to request a **written statement** giving the reasons for their dismissal. The request may be oral or written, and the statement must be provided within 14 days.

An employee dismissed while pregnant or on maternity leave must be given a written statement, whether she asks for it or not.

### 1.19 Unfair Dismissal

Employees who have completed more than one year of continuous service with an employer have the right not to be unfairly dismissed. However, all employees have the right not to be dismissed on grounds that are classified as 'automatically unfair'. These include pregnancy, taking parental leave, reasons relating to the Working Time Regulations and trade union membership.

Employees must make a complaint of unfair dismissal to an employment tribunal within three months of their leaving employment.

Dismissal will be judged as fair if it is for one of the following reasons:

- A reason related to the employee's conduct;
- A reason related to the employee's capability or qualifications for the job;
- Because the employee was redundant;
- Because a statutory duty or restriction prohibited the employment being continued;
- Some other substantial reason of a kind that justifies the dismissal.

### 1.20 Health and Safety at Work Act

Health and Safety at Work Act and codes of practice are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities. These are binding on employers, in addition there's much guidance constituting best practice. Mostly this information

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is available in common foreign languages on HSEs website. It is possible to speak to an adviser in most non-English languages. See

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>

Information advice line 0845345055

Order a publication 01787881165

Employers must ensure their staff are trained and competent and understand health and safety issues in the workplace. Where necessary information and training may be required in languages other than English or Welsh. And where workers are employed through an employment agency the legal duties could fall on either the agency or the place of employment. This should be clearly established before any work commences. See

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/agencyworkers.htm>

### **1.21 Self Employed workers**

Self-employed workers must register with the HM Revenue & Customs as soon as they start work in the UK as Worker Registration Scheme does not apply to them.

### **1.22 Right to join a Trade Union – Representation of Workers**

Employees may choose whether or not they wish to join a trade union. Their employer may not dismiss them, select them for redundancy or otherwise discriminate against them for being a trade union member. The employee is also entitled to take part in official union activities. These rights apply equally if an employee chooses not to join a trade union.

If an employee is discriminated against for trade union membership or non-membership, they may take the matter to an employment tribunal regardless of the length of time they have been with the employer.

An employee who is also an official of a trade union recognised by the employer is entitled to paid time off from work to:

- Perform activities recognised as union activities by the employer;
- Give or receive information from the employer regarding mass redundancies or business transfers; and
- Receive approved training relevant to the duties of a trade union official.

Employees who are members of a trade union recognised by the employer are entitled to reasonable time off, without pay, for certain union activities. To find out more about joining a Trade Union, contact Wales TUC  
2nd Floor Transport House, Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9SD, Tel: 029 2034 7010, Fax: 029 2022 1940.

## 2. HOUSING

In Wales you can buy or rent a home. Details of how you do this are given below.

### 2.1 Finding housing:

It is obviously important that you find a suitable place to live. In Wales you can buy or rent a home and you can do this as an individual or sometimes as a group of people. Traditionally the majority of people in Wales live in homes they own with only about a quarter of all homes available for rent. Due to a large population, and limited supply of land suitable for building, housing costs can be high and could form a large part of the cost of your living in Wales. You should make sure you have thought about your housing needs as part of any plans you have to move to or within Wales. All landlords of rented accommodation have a legal duty to provide you with written details of the rights and responsibilities you will have whilst living in the property, including things like the amount of rent payable, how much notice they should give if they ask you to leave and what responsibility for repairs you or your landlord would have. There is a range of law which governs what must be and what can not be included in these agreements. If a landlord acts outside this agreement or if the agreement itself is not legal you have the right to legally challenge the landlord. There are a number of organisations which can offer advice on the law and support you to challenge your landlord. It is illegal to deny you access to housing on the grounds of your race or ethnicity.

The main types of organisation who you may need to contact regarding housing in Wales are:-

**Estate Agents;** act on behalf of people wishing to sell property. They are usually based in shopping areas in towns and cities across Wales. They provide written details and photographs etc. of properties that are for sale, including usually the price the seller wishes to receive for their property. Many estate agencies also operate through the internet with web-sites providing the same sorts of details. Viewings of properties that are for sale are usually arranged through the estate agent as are any offers you might wish to make for a property. The fee for the estate agents' service is usually paid by the seller of the property. Many estate agents also offer property for rent.

**Lettings agents;** act on behalf of people and organisations who have property to rent. They operate in a similar fashion to estate agents from shops and on the internet providing details of property for rent. They also often operate on behalf of the landlord after the property is rented, collecting rent, conducting inspections of property, and arranging for any necessary repairs that are the landlords responsibility. It is not usual to pay a charge to a lettings agent simply to put you on a list for property.

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**Councils;** are public bodies run by elected councillors who provide a range of local services including housing services. These include housing advice, services for homeless people and as a landlord of rented property. Councils operate from a range of offices, details of which can be found in the local phone book. Councils also operate web-sites which have contact details.

**Housing Associations;** are independent bodies which receive government money to build and manage rented housing and some housing which can be brought on a part owned part rented basis.

To find out about a housing association in your area check

<http://www.welshhousing.org.uk/housingassociations/memberlinks.html>

Also check the Frequently Asked Questions page on

<http://www.welshhousing.org.uk/housingassociations/faqs.html#q1>

**2.2 Housing advice agencies;** there are a number of organisations who provide housing advice and support, this can be about how to contact agencies who can help you find housing and information about your legal rights and even support you to legally challenge your landlord. Details of local advice agencies can be obtained from your local council. There are two agencies who operate across Wales these are the 'Citizen's Advice Bureau' and 'Shelter Cymru'. Details of local offices can also be found in the phone book

**2.3 Housing provided by your employer –** Sometimes your employer may offer accommodation as part of your contract of employment. There are a number of companies or employers offering what is called 'tied' accommodation. Where this is most common includes public houses (pubs) & those who maintain large parks, farms or other agricultural land holdings. You should be aware that 'tied' accommodation is linked to your employment, should you leave or lose your job you are likely to lose your home as well. Tied accommodation must still comply with a range of legal standards and conditions, for example there are rules on health and safety and how crowded your home can be. We are aware that some unscrupulous employers have provided accommodation that does not meet these standards. As a result we advise you are cautious and find out as much as possible about the accommodation your employers will offer. If you are concerned that accommodation provided with your work is not suitable please seek advice from one of the organisations referred to later in this chapter.

**2.4 Rented from a private landlord –** A range of companies and individuals provide accommodation for rent. You can find out about rented accommodation from a variety of sources. Lettings agencies and estate agents have details of property available you will also find details of property to rent in local newspapers

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and advertising publications. In addition to a weekly or monthly rental charge, it is common to pay a deposit or a bond when you first move into a rented property. This would cover rent payable in advance and money which can be claimed by the landlord in the event of any damage done to the property or its contents. These should not be kept by the landlord except where they cover any unpaid rent or damage. It is important that you obtain an agreed inventory when moving into a property. This will list any existing damage and the contents of the property in the event that there are any disputes with the landlord when it is time to reclaim your money.

Most rented accommodation is self-contained and the legal agreement is known as a tenancy. You should ensure that you are provided with a signed copy of this tenancy agreement, if you are asked to leave against your wishes the landlord would need to obtain an order from the courts before you can be evicted. In these circumstances you should seek advice from an appropriate housing advice agency. However, you may find yourself renting a room in someone's' home. This is done through another form of legal occupancy agreement known as a licence. Your rights under a licence are not as wide as those of a tenancy, for example your landlord does not need a court order to evict but should give you proper notice. You still have a right to receive written details of the licence agreement.

If three or more people who are not related persons share private accommodation then legally a property will be considered to be a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). All HMOs must be licensed by the relevant local council. It is a landlord's duty to do this. This is to ensure proper health and safety standards. If you are considering renting an HMO property you should ask the landlord to see the licence certificate and make sure it is up to date. It is in your interest not to accept shared accommodation without the licence.

Further information on HMOs and other forms of private rented accommodation can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government web-site

<http://www.housing.wales.gov.uk/index.asp?task=content&a=a3l>

**2.5 Hotel and bed and breakfast accommodation;** If you cannot find rented accommodation, or you are staying somewhere for a short period of time you may be able to find hotel or bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. This is not housing and is not subject to the same rules. However, the owner will have a duty to ensure that the accommodation is safe and healthy. This accommodation will vary in cost and is likely to be more expensive than renting housing and may impose restrictions on what times you can access your room – Usually, you will be provided with a room and breakfast, and you will have to find your own lunch and evening meal.

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To find out more about B&B check the

<http://www.walesconference.com/tourist-board.htm>

**2.6 Hostels;** usually provided by a hostel owner or an agency. For example, the YMCA Wales is part of the worldwide YMCA movement, operating across the globe. As part of that movement we are also affiliated to the European Alliance of YMCA's (EAY) and the World Alliance of YMCA's (WAY). We are also part of an informal grouping known as the "4 Nation"; England, Ireland, Wales and Wales. More information can be found on <http://www.ymcawales.co.uk/default.asp>

**2.7 Public rented housing;** Councils and Housing Associations provide homes for rent. Public rented housing usually charges lower rents than those charged in private rented properties, Councils and Housing Associations require people to complete applications for housing detailing their housing needs and keep lists of people waiting for accommodation. Councils and Housing Associations must provide information on the criteria on which they decide who will be offered property. They will also be able to tell you what priority your application will have

**2.8 Homelessness;** If you have a right to reside in the UK and are habitually resident, you may have a right to help from the local council if you are homeless or are likely to become homeless. In certain circumstances, for instance if you have children, this would include a responsibility to provide temporary accommodation for you until permanent housing can be found for you. The council will be able to explain this to you. Shelter Cymru are also able to provide you with advice on what responsibility the council will have towards you, you can contact them on 0808 800 4444.

**2.9 Buying a property;** in Wales can be very expensive. Details of property for sale can be found through estate agents, web-sites and details are often included in local newspapers. Purchasing a property can be a complex procedure and you are advised to seek the help of a solicitor who can help with the legal transfer of ownership 'conveyancing' and advise you appropriately. Special loans or 'mortgages' to help purchase properties can be obtained from a range of banks, buildings societies and other financial institutions. Housing Associations can offer the opportunity to part buy part rent properties to people who can't afford to buy on the open market. These schemes, known as Low Cost Home Ownership, require applications which detail your housing needs in a similar way to applications for public rented housing.

Other Housing issues include:-

**2.10 Help with paying your rent;** can be obtained depending on, whether you are entitled to welfare benefits and how much you earn or own and if your home is your only home. If you can't afford your rent you should apply for 'housing

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benefit'. This is administered by the local council to whom you must apply with details of your circumstances including earnings, and savings. Not all migrant workers will be entitled to receive housing benefit and your right to help may be affected by considerations such as how long you have been in work in Britain. The local council will be able to advise you or you could seek advice from the local office of the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

**2.11 Neighbour nuisance;** You have the right to enjoy your home without unreasonable disturbance from your neighbours. This means that you should not be harassed and should not be disturbed by things like loud music. Neighbours who rent their home can be evicted if they are found to have caused you nuisance and do not stop their behaviour. You can complain about nuisance to the neighbours' landlord who is required to take appropriate action. Local Councils have 'environmental health officers' who have the powers to stop people making loud noise, including confiscating music equipment. This of course also applies to you and should be aware of how your behaviour affects your neighbours. Neighbours causing nuisance who own their home may be causing a criminal offence, in these circumstances you can contact the police.

**2.12 Working in Housing;** The opportunities to working in Housing are wide and varied. From tenant liaison, homelessness and housing manager, to regeneration and renewal. The following websites provide a taste of what is available.

The jobs involve supporting vulnerable people in housing accommodation helping others to find somewhere to live, to managing properties or maintaining them. Most jobs are advertised in local and national newspapers, in specialist housing magazines and at job centres.

<http://www.welshhousing.org.uk/jobs/index.html>

<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/>

<http://www.housingsupport.co.uk/Wales/wales.htm>

<http://www.faststream.co.uk/section.aspx?divid=5>

<http://www.allhousingjobs.co.uk/>

<http://www.charityjob.co.uk/seekers/>

### 3. FAMILY

#### 3.1 Bringing your Family to Wales

There are no obstacles to bringing your family to Wales, if you are from a country within the European Economic Area.

If your family are also EEA or Swiss nationals they have the same rights to live and work in the UK as you. This also applies to your family if they are non-EEA nationals.

If you have the right to live and work in the UK, then so does your family. This rule applies to:

- Your husband or wife
- Your, or your husband's or wife's, children (if they are under 21 or if they are over 21 and dependent on you); and
- Dependent relatives, for example your or your husband's or wife's parents and grandparents.
- If you are self-employed you may also bring in family members in the descending line for example your, or your husband's or wife's grandchildren

If you are a student, only your husband or wife and your dependent children may join you.

Your other relatives (such as brothers, sisters or cousins) do not have an automatic right to live in the UK. However, their applications will be considered if you are working in the UK and they are your dependants or lived with you before you came to the UK.

If they are planning to live with you or to visit for a long period of time, non-EEA family members will need an EEA family permit before they can enter the UK. Even if they are only coming for a short visit, they will require an EEA family permit if they would normally require a visa to enter the UK. If they would not normally require a visa to visit the UK, they do not need an EEA family permit as long as they stay in the UK for less than six months. The family member should apply for the permit in their country of residence. This can be done through the nearest British Embassy or High Commission. The application should be made well in advance of their coming to the UK.

#### 3.2 School (see education section)

In Wales, **Schooling is compulsory in Wales between the ages of 5 and 16**. If you have children that are of school age, it is **your responsibility** to ensure that they are educated either through a school or by agreement with the Local Education Authority. In Wales, attending school is free and it is usual to register your child with a local school. If you do not make these arrangements you could face legal action. Children usually start primary school in August when they are

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aged between four-and-half and five-and-a-half. The latest they can start is the August after their fifth birthday. There are three terms to a school year, usually

September to December

January to April

April to July

Holiday periods vary between two weeks for Christmas and Easter, and six / seven weeks for summer, plus there is a week long half term break in each of the three terms.

To register your child for a school, you must contact the Local Education Authority, within the County Council to ensure that a place is made available for your child's education. See below for details of Local Authorities / County Councils.

There is also early education available from the age of three which is optional.

### **3.3 School Policies – Uniform, Food, Transport**

Most primary (junior and infant) schools (under 11 years) do not have school uniforms. Some have guidance that children should wear particular colours, and most allow the wearing of religious dress, unless it is for school activity such as sport or swimming.

Secondary schools (over 11 year of age) however do have a school uniform usually specified colour of blouse/shirt, trouser/skirt and blazer/jacket. Schools are aware that children's uniforms do cost, and try to ensure that the colour and dress is readily available from a range of outlets. They also allow for most communities to meet their religious or cultural needs by allow children to wear appropriate clothing that is in school colours.

Nearly all schools have facilities for food, either for packed lunches or meals for which there is a charge. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government does provide very young children with breakfast on school premises.

Local authorities in Wales are required to provide free transport to and from school for pupils aged 5-7 if they live more than 2 miles away from school, and for pupils aged 8-16 if they live more than 3 miles away from school.

### **3.4 Childcare**

Additional childcare support is also often available locally for under 5s and older children. This provides important developmental opportunities for children and helps parents who need or choose to work outside the home.

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- **Playgroups** provide sessions of play and education for children. Some playgroups also work in partnership with their local authority to provide free, part time pre-school education places for three and four year olds.
- **Nurseries** are for children under five years old to play, learn and have fun in groups while their parents work or study.
- **Registered Childminders** look after children in the childminder's own home.
- **Home based childcare** - childcare agencies can provide childcare in a child's own home, including at times that fit parental needs such as in the evening or at weekends.
- **Out of school clubs** are for school-age children to play, learn and have fun in groups. They are usually based in or near schools and more are being set up to help families whose parents work.
- **Playschemes** provide activities for children in some areas during school holidays.

To find appropriate childcare, look at: [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

### 3.5 Family Benefits

If you stay in Wales with your family you may be entitled to receive some social benefits regarding, for example, your children. For more information visit the nearest Jobcentre, Department of Work and Pensions office or CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau).

### 3.6 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is the physical, mental and/or sexual abuse of a woman or man by a member/ex-member of their household. It also affects any children living in the house. Domestic abuse can occur within gay and lesbian relationships, for help and advice contact:

National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0800-027-1234

For help and advice contact:

## 4. HEALTH

### 4.1 General – The National Health Service (NHS)

Your entitlement to free National Health Service (NHS) treatment depends on the length and purpose of your residence in the UK, not your nationality. There may be charges for some NHS services (e.g. dental treatment, medical certificates, prescription medicine, opticians etc). For further information see: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm> or call 0845 46 47.

In Wales, the nation is divided into 22 local areas called County Councils or Local Authorities and within each county council area there is a Local Health Board. To properly access this website, you will need to know which area you live in. If you know the town, city, county council area, local authority area, this should make it easier to access this website.

The website contains information about the following:

- GP surgeries
- Pharmacies
- Dentists
- Opticians
- Hospitals

Generally you can receive **free NHS hospital treatment** if you have:

- been living legally in the UK for at least 12 months
- come to the UK to take up permanent residence
- come to the UK to work either as an employee or self-employed

The website also provides a link to your Local Authority, County Council, Borough or City and County.

### 4.2 General Practitioner (GP) Surgeries Medical Services

These are local doctors who provide general medical services to the people who are registered with them. It is very important to register with a GP as soon as you arrive in an area in case you become suddenly ill. Some doctors are oversubscribed and may not be able to register you with them, but there are others in the locality that will. The website provides their details. <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm>

The GP can then make a decision regarding whether you will qualify for free treatment. Even if accepted by a GP as a patient you will still have to pay prescription charges to the pharmacist when they dispense any medicines that your GP has prescribed.

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The GP look after the general health needs of a patient and refer patients to hospital if necessary for further specialised treatments or investigations. GPs also look after patients with long-standing diseases, such as diabetes or high blood pressure and provide health screening. Advice on how to keep healthy is available, such as healthy eating and stopping smoking and GPs are supported in their work by Practice Nurses.

Another nurse who works as part of the team with the GPs is the Health Visitor who provides routine advice and support to all families with children under 5. The Health Visitor will visit you at home and also see you in the GP practice where medicals and immunisations are given and your child's growth and development are reviewed.

The Midwife provides care, support and information and advice for women throughout their pregnancy and during the birth. They hold antenatal clinics within most GP surgeries and the mother should see the midwife when the pregnancy is confirmed. Some women are referred for scans and blood tests to the hospital and sometimes need extra care from a hospital doctor.

If you need a doctor at times for a serious illness when the GP surgery is closed, (night-times, Bank holidays) the GP will give you the name and telephone number of the Out of Hours GP Service for you to contact.

Advice and help on health or illness can also be got from NHS Direct at any time – tel no: 0845 4647

### 4.3 Hospital services

A hospital usually provides specialist consultants' services, operations and medical care for those who are referred to the hospital by their doctors, and those who have an accident requiring treatment. Treatment in hospitals emergency units is provided for patients who have had an accident or a real emergency, such as a heart attack or serious asthma attack so please only use this service in real emergencies.

**Treatment in hospitals emergency units is provided on the principle that those most in need are seen first; as a result waiting times can be long. Please only use this service in real emergencies.**

Please note that the NHS in Wales has strict policies towards those who do not treat all NHS staff with respect and courtesy. Being abusive or violent will lead to medical treatment being withdrawn.

In an **emergency** you should call telephone **999** and request an ambulance that will take you to a hospital. For minor accidents you should go to the local

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accident and emergency department at your local hospital. Details of hospitals can be found on <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm> or call 0845 46 47.

Most hospitals have access to language line or another translation service should you require interpretation.

### 4.4 Pharmacists/Chemists

A Pharmacy is where you go to buy medicine, either over the counter, or where you GP has prescribed a particular medicine. A pharmacist is the person who dispenses medicine but can also offer advice for minor ailments such as minor cuts and bruises. Even if you qualify for free NHS care you may still have to pay a fixed charge ( called a prescription charge) for any medication you need at the pharmacy. To find your local pharmacist: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm>  
This website also has details of late opening Pharmacies.

### 4.5 Dentists

A dentist is the person you go to who looks after your teeth. Some dentists only offer care on a private patient basis (where you have to pay for their service) or to those who have an insurance scheme covering the care of teeth. You may need to call more than one Dentist to secure Free NHS care. You should note that even with Free NHS Care there will be times you will have to make a contribution towards the cost of treatment, please ask before you are treated. Dental care is available at hospitals, but only in emergencies, but again you may have to pay for the service . Details of Dentists in Wales are at:  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm>

### 4.6 Opticians

An optician is a person who provides advice in the care of your eyes, including glasses (spectacles) or contact lenses. Many opticians operate both private care and NHS service. Under the NHS children usually receive free eye tests and glasses up to a limit. Adults may have to pay for tests and glasses, though if you have certain eye conditions, such as glaucoma, you may be entitled to some free services. Details of opticians are available from the website at:  
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/directory.cfm>

### 4.7 Mental health

If you have concerns about your mental health you can visit a doctor for help and advice. Mental health problems can affect people at any time of life and in different ways. They can include anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, self-harm and dementia. There are a number of organisations in Wales that provide additional support and guidance. If you need support because of a mental health condition check (this is not exclusive):  
[http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/profilesites.cfm?areacode=mh\\_sites\\_wales&pagecode=LIWA](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/profilesites.cfm?areacode=mh_sites_wales&pagecode=LIWA)

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The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), and independent organisation provides guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS. It also provides guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions.

NICE have produced information for the public the hyperlink below takes you to public guidance for the listed topics. <http://www.nice.org.uk/>

Use the hyperlinks to access NICE Patient Public Information on the listed topics.

**Depression:** <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg023&c=mental>

**Anxiety:** <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg22&c=mental>

**Self Harm:** <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg016&c=mental>

**Eating Disorders:** <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg009&c=mental>

**Understanding Schizophrenia:**

<http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=CG001&c=mental>

**Understanding Violence:** <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg025&c=mental>

**Understanding Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:**

<http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=CG026&c=mental>

**Understanding Depression in Children:**

<http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=cg028&c=mental>

### 4.8 Sexual health

If you need information or advice on sexual matters you can call national helplines:

Telephone 0800 567123 National Sexual health Helpline, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Telephone 0844 46 47 (NHS Wales 24, Health advice and Information) 24 hours a day, for all ages.

Website: <http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/>

### 4.9 Family Planning

**FPA** (Family Planning Association) is a sexual health charity working to improve the sexual health of all people throughout the UK.

The website can be accessed at <http://www.fpa.org.uk>

This site includes information on all aspects of sexual health, including contraception and pregnancy.

### 4.10 The Important contacts

**Cancer** - Marie Curie cancer care Aberystwyth

01970 626242

<b>National Meningitis Trust</b>	08457 538118
<b>Incest Helpline Swansea</b>	01792 648805
<b>British Diabetic Association Cardiff</b>	02920 668276
<b>British Dyslexia Association</b>	0118 966 8271
<b>British Heart Foundation (Wales) Cardiff</b>	02920 382368
<b>British Epilepsy Association</b>	0800 309030
<b>National Aids Helpline</b>	0800 567123
<b>National Drugs Helpline</b>	0800 776600
<b>Asthma Campaign</b>	0207 226 2260
<b>Breast Cancer Care</b>	0500 245345
<b>Disability Wales Cardiff</b>	02920 887325

#### **4.11 Complaints**

If you have a complaint, you are asked to see the supervisor on duty. If however, you wish to take the matter further you can either call 0845 46 47 or write to The Director, NHS Direct Wales, Thanet House, 10 Phoenix Way, Enterprise Park, Swansea, SA7 9LA, or see <http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/nhsdirect.aspx?id=423>

#### **4.12 Working for the National Health Service Wales**

As the largest employer in Wales with 81,000 employees and 133 hospitals and clinics the health service can offer a range of over 200 career opportunities.

For an opportunity check

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=462&pid=4622>

This website list over 200 career opportunities with NHS Wales. Everything from pharmacists, paramedics, gynaecologists, clinical engineers, radiographers, midwives administrative and clerical, porters, managers, etc. It also provides a description of the job, education and age requirements and training and qualifications if they are appropriate. The website also links to current vacancies (job opportunities) that are available. See also <http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html>

## 5. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

### 5.1 Learning English

To help you with settling into Wales, you can take a course to help you learn or improve your English; these are called English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. These courses take into account the particular needs of those whose native language is not English. ESOL learners develop their language skills on these courses so they can:

- understand and participate in their new community
- access services
- become familiar with the laws and customs of the UK
- participate and progress in the labour market
- access further education and training
- support their children's education.
- Become UK citizens

There are also **Literacy** classes for adults who speak English fluently but need to improve their reading, spelling and other writing skills.

Adults who need to improve their mathematics skills for work, education or everyday lives can attend **Numeracy** courses .

These courses are run in adult education and community centres, and further education colleges. They can also be run alongside other government-funded training courses or your employer may provide such courses in your workplace.

Some nursery, primary and in a few secondary schools run Family Literacy, Language or Numeracy courses where you can learn how to help your children at the same time as improving your own skills. Contact your child's school for further information.

More information is available from your local college or adult learning centre and learndirect. Free helpline providing info & advice on learning options to people of all ages 0800 100 900. A separate number is also available for Polish speakers - 0800 093 1114

### 5.2 Early Years Education

In Wales, compulsory education begins in the term after a child's fifth birthday. The expression 'early years' is used to describe the period before compulsory primary education, when children are between the ages of 3 and 5 years. Early year's education in Wales is provided through what are called the 'maintained'

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and 'non-maintained' sectors. In the maintained sector, children can attend nursery schools and nursery and reception classes in infant or primary schools. The non-maintained sector, includes voluntary, private and independent playgroups and nurseries which provide education and in some cases care for the under-fives.

In the majority of local authorities across Wales, almost all of the funded early years provision is in school-based settings. In almost all local authorities there is also provision in the non-maintained sector, which is funded through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships. Children normally attend early years settings part-time from three to four years of age and full-time between the ages of four and five years. Other children may be in a play group or attend part-time. Currently, almost all four year olds have access to a full-time place in schools and seventy-five percent of all three year olds also attend schools part-time. For more information about what is available in your area, please contact your local authority.

### 5.3 Choosing a School

Assembly believes and is committed to all children having access to at least a P/T place from the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and an F/T place from the age of 4. Every child must attend a school while they are between the ages of 5 and 16, unless suitable alternative arrangements have been put in place for their education otherwise than in school. As a parent, you have the right to say which school you would prefer your child to attend, regardless of the school's location. But your right to express a preference does not guarantee your child a place at the school if it is oversubscribed. If your child is not offered a place at your preferred school, you have the right to appeal to an independent panel. Remember, you must first apply for a place at a school. Even if your child is at a nursery linked to a primary school, or a primary school linked to a secondary school, you will still need to make an application to move them on to the next stage. You must not assume your child will automatically get a place at the school of your choice.

### 5.4 Post-16 Education

Once a child has reached the age of 16, they are entitled to leave school; however the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to and encourages post 16 education. Should a child over 16 want to continue in school the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to providing a place in the schools sixth form. Alternatively the child can attend a further education college or a sixth form college.

#### School Sixth Forms

Sixth Forms vary in size and in the range of courses they offer. As they are still part of a school, they may have a more formal and structured timetable than a

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college. Classes are generally quite small and your child may already know the teachers.

### Further Education Colleges

Further Education Colleges have a very different feel about them to school, as most students are over 16. Many offer a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in academic and vocational subjects. Others specialise in areas such as art, agriculture or technology. They are usually larger than Sixth Form Colleges, although many of the students will be part-time and may attend in the evenings.

### Sixth Form Colleges

In the past, Sixth Form Colleges have mainly restricted themselves to academic qualifications: A-levels, AS-levels and GCSEs for 16 - 18 year olds. However, most are now broadening their range to include Key Skills and job-related qualifications, such as GNVQs. Courses are mostly full-time, although there are part-time and evening courses available too.

### Post 16 study - What are A and AS Levels?

A and AS levels are a chance to specialise in subjects learners enjoy and are good at, or which are required for certain jobs. There is a wider range of AS-levels and A-levels on offer than ever before, and it is possible to mix and match AS and A-levels with Vocational A levels, GNVQs and Key Skills.

Learners can take up to four A levels and AS qualifications, usually over two years. This means that in the first year, it is possible to study four to five AS levels (an AS level is equivalent to half a full A level) and then continue in two or three of these subjects in the second year.

## 5.5 The Curriculum

Throughout your child's school life, he or she will follow the **National Curriculum**. The National Curriculum is designed to provide a firm foundation in language, mathematics and science, and to provide children between the ages of 5 and 16 with the opportunity to achieve their best within a broad and balanced curriculum.

Your child will follow the National Curriculum through four **Key Stages** of his or her compulsory school life, two in primary school and two in secondary school.

These are:

Key Stage 1 (from 5 to 7 years of age):

<http://old.accac.org.uk/eng/content.php?mID=120>

Key Stage 2 (from 7 to 11 years of age):

<http://old.accac.org.uk/eng/content.php?mID=130>

Key Stage 3 (from 11 to 14 years of age):

<http://old.accac.org.uk/eng/content.php?mID=175>

Key Stage 4 (which takes pupils to the age of 16):

<http://old.accac.org.uk/eng/content.php?mID=184>

### **5.6 Inclusion and Pupil Support**

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to promoting inclusive education in partnership with schools, LEAs and other organisations. Inclusive education means that children of all abilities should have the opportunity to achieve the best possible results at school. Many children need additional support and this is available in local schools. For example, specialist teachers give extra help to children who speak little English or Welsh. Special help is given to children with a learning or physical disability. So if your child cannot hear or see well, he or she can still attend a school with children who do not have disabilities.

Useful guidance and information is available from the Welsh Assembly Government website on inclusion issues.

### **5.7 Promoting Bilingual Learning**

The Welsh Assembly Government's bilingual learning strategy responds to the Iaith Pawb action plan and Welsh language scheme. The Welsh Assembly Government aims to ensure the learning network can deliver high quality learning opportunities for people to learn Welsh and to enable people to develop their ability to use Welsh in the workplace.

Welsh for Adults is one of the biggest learning programmes for adults in Wales and is offered by 31 providers across the country. The provision is planned by eight local Welsh for Adults Consortia, which are based in the old counties of Wales.

There are two main types of provision:

- intensive (more than twice a week), offered by HE institutions, and
- non-intensive (once a week), offered by FE institutions and LEAs.

Some providers offer residential courses as a form of intensive learning. Other providers offer online Welsh courses. If you would like information about Welsh language courses, please call the Welsh for Adults Information Line on **0871 230 0017**.

### **5.8 Lifelong Learning**

The Welsh Assembly Government encourages Lifelong Learning and the development of vocational and academic skills and knowledge. The Learning Country is the strategy that sets out our programme of support, development and change for education and training in Wales.

Its principles ensure that:

- education and training services are tailored to the distinctive needs and circumstances of Wales.
- academic, technical and vocational disciplines are treated equally.

### **5.9 Learning in the Community**

There are many hundreds of part-time adult education courses available in community centres and similar locations close to where you live. Fees for these courses are kept low through subsidies. If you are unemployed a lone parent or a disabled person, you may be exempt from the fee or qualify for a fee reduction. You may also be eligible for help with transport, childcare and learning materials. Check with your local council for details. If your course leads to a work related qualification, you might be able to get a Career Development Loan.

### **5.10 Work Based Learning – Wales Trade Union Congress**

Trade Union provide Learning Services that are involved with workplace projects engaged in promoting education to all employees and some of the projects are directly involved with migrant workers.

Trade union members are able to approach their Union Learning Reps who will be able to sign-post them to learning which is organised by their union. Some unions are currently running projects which assist migrant workers to access English language courses. For more information contact

Wales TUC Learning Services  
2nd Floor Transport House  
Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9SD  
Tel: 029 2034 7010  
Fax: 029 2022 1940  
[www.wtuc.org.uk](http://www.wtuc.org.uk)

### **5.11 Guide to Funding**

We are very anxious that people who want to learn should not be excluded by lack of funds. Learning opens up valuable opportunities and can be hugely fulfilling for you as a person

You might have family responsibilities or other financial commitments that you'll still have to meet while you're learning - particularly if you're a full-time learner. You may face registration, tuition and exam fees, plus the cost of books, equipment, or other learning materials, as well as transport, childcare and general living expenses. The good news is that there are many sources of help available to meet these demands on your finances. One or more of them may well apply to you.

### **5.12 Individual Learning Accounts**

Learning does not just mean studying for qualifications or to improve job opportunities. It can cover a whole range of mind expanding and physical opportunities. Learning can develop new, update old or build on current skills. The Individual Learning Account Wales (ILA Wales) will help YOU achieve your learning objectives. By taking out an ILA Wales, you can choose when, how and what you learn. The scheme is very simple and depending upon the cost of the course and your personal circumstances, we could give you between £100-£200. It's not a loan so the money you receive doesn't have to be paid back!

If you already have a job, your employer may provide on the job the training through a Work Based Learning programme which will lead to a vocational qualification.

You can use your ILA Wales with a wide range of learning providers. For information on ILA Wales registered providers who will be able to meet your needs please contact learndirect on **freephone 0800 100 900**. A separate number is also available for Polish speakers - 0800 093 1114

### **5.13 Career Development Loans**

These are loans of between £300 and £8,000 which you can borrow to support any course of learning that will help you in your career. The Government pays the interest while you're learning and you don't start repaying until you finish. It will cover up to 80% of your course fees or 100% if you've been out of work for 3 months or more, plus the cost of books and other learning materials. The loans come from three high street banks taking part in the scheme and anyone can qualify if they're aged over 18, particularly if they don't qualify for funding through their local authority. For more information call the CDL Information Line on **0800 585 505**.

### **5.14 Passport to Study Grant**

This is a grant of up to £300 a year which comes from some local council's to help you with the cost of learning if your parents are out of work or are receiving benefit due to low income or disability. It's intended to help you buy things like books or equipment or pay for transport. The money is paid out in three equal parts during the year. You can apply if you're aged 16 – 19 and want to continue in full-time education, either at school or college. You can also qualify if you're 16 and have to live away from home for some reason and are receiving income support. Ask your Local Council Education department for more information. They may also be able to supply information on other grants or bursaries available to 16 – 19 year olds.

### **5.15 Education Maintenance Allowance**

An EMA is an incentive allowance paid to eligible young people who stay on at school or college after school leaving age, attend regularly and achieve learning goals. It is recognised that some young people from low income households need extra support and encouragement to continue in education after school leaving age, in order to make the best of their learning and development opportunities. For more information contact your school or local college or visit [www.studentfinancewales.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk) or the Contact Centre on 0845 602 8845

### **5.16 Student Finance Wales**

Graduates earn, on average, substantially more than people with A levels who did not go to university. Projected over a working lifetime, the difference is something like £120,000 at today's valuation. Higher education is likely to be the best investment you ever make. With Student Finance Wales, you can study first, and pay back when you are earning. Full-time students are eligible for a loan to cover tuition fees. You pay back 9% of your earnings above £15,000 a year, so someone earning the average starting salary of a graduate level job of £18,000 would repay £5.19 per week. You can apply for a loan, which is based on your personal circumstances, to help with your living costs. Students from lower income households could be eligible for a non repayable Assembly Learning Grant of up to £2,700. Many colleges / universities offer non-repayable bursaries - see what is available as you might benefit.

The Student Finance Wales site provides online services and information for those in Wales interested in the financial help available to students in higher education.

[www.studentfinancewales.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk). Further information is also available from the Student Finance Wales Contact Centre on 0845 602 8845 or from your Local Authority.

### **5.17 Basic Skills**

People need a broad range of skills in order to contribute to a modern economy and take their place in the technological society of the twenty-first century. The development of people's proficiency in basic and key skills is now a central plank of government policy in Wales and in other parts of the United Kingdom. In Wales, basic and key skills fall within the Welsh Assembly Government's aim to ensure that everyone possesses a wide range of essential skills.

### **Wales Digital College**

Basic Skills courses through digital TV & internet

[www.learn.cd](http://www.learn.cd)

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### **Dyslexia Associations (DA) Wales**

Gwent 01633 267 268

NE Wales 01691 772 028

Gwynedd 01286 673 122

West Wales 07702 665 799

### **City & Guilds (Wales)**

offers several basic skills qualifications

029 2074 8600

[www.city-and-guilds.co.uk](http://www.city-and-guilds.co.uk)

### **5.18 Extending Entitlement**

Extending Entitlement is the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policy for youth support services in Wales. It includes all services, support and opportunities for young people between the ages of 11 and 25.

There are a number of things we believe that every young person in Wales deserves in order to be able to take advantage of the opportunities and choices that they will be presented with. These things are referred to as entitlements; because they are what the government believes young people should or, are entitled to, receive.

We believe these entitlements are important to:

- help young people make the best choices
- gain personal development and enjoyment
- lead fulfilling lives.

There are ten entitlements. They are outlined here. As a young person in Wales, you are entitled to:

**Your rights; Being heard - your voice, your choice; Feel good; Education and employment; Taking part/getting involved; Being individual; Easy access; Health and wellbeing; Access to information and guidance; Safety & Security**

### **5.19 Information and Advice for Young People**

Clic is the National Information and Advice Service for young people in Wales 11 to 25 and is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government. You can get information on Education, Employment, Environment, Travel, Your Rights, Money, Family and Relationships, Health and Housing as well as how to get local information.

[www.cliconline.co.uk](http://www.cliconline.co.uk)

### **5.20 The Youth Service**

Youth work involves a broad range of activities, concerned with education in its widest sense. Youth work is concerned with the education and development,

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both social and personal, of young people aged between eleven and 25 years, particularly those aged 13 to 19 years. To find out what is happening in your area, contact your local authority.

### 5.21 Young People's Partnerships

The Young People's Partnership (YPP) is the mechanism for delivering youth support services to young people in Wales. The term refers to the partnership led by the local authority, which plans, co-ordinates and oversees all youth support services in an area in line with the statutory framework of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. To contact your local YPP contact your local authority.

### 5.22 Further Education Colleges

Further Education Colleges offer a wide range of courses for both academic and vocational qualifications. Each college will offer a wide mix of courses. Courses usually start in September and depending upon your age and circumstances, the college may charge a fee for some courses. Contact your local college for further details or log onto <http://www.mylocalcollege.com>

### 5.23 Education contacts:

#### Careers Wales

Provide a wide range of free information and advice on careers and learning options to anyone of any age - online or face to face.

[www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

North West 0800 100 900

North East 0800 919 520

West 0800 100 900

Gwent 0800 028 9212

Cardiff & Vale 0800 100 900

Mid Glam and Powys 0800 183 0283

#### Learndirect

Free helpline providing info & advice on learning options to people of all ages 0800 100 900. A separate number is also available for Polish speakers - 0800 093 1114

<http://www.learndirect.co.uk/>

#### Just the Job

Information on careers and learning options

[www.bbc.co.uk/justthejob/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/justthejob/)

**BBC Learning**

Information on distance learning courses worldwide  
[www.bbclearning.com](http://www.bbclearning.com)

**Department for Education and Lifelong learning**

029 2082 5111

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/?lang=en>  
[www.learning.wales.gov.uk](http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk)

**Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)**

029 2026 5000

[www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

**Higher Education**

Perhaps you want to work in sports, the entertainment industry, law or marketing. Whatever your dream job, one thing is for sure, going into **higher education** to study at college or university, will help make your dreams a reality. In fact it will open up more possibilities and choices than you ever imagined possible.

**UCAS**

The Official Guide to over 55,000 courses and the application process

01242 227 788

<http://www.ucas.ac.uk/>

**HERO**

Gateway to information about universities

[www.hero.ac.uk](http://www.hero.ac.uk)

**Careers Portal**

Information on choosing and applying for Higher Education

[www.careers-portal.co.uk](http://www.careers-portal.co.uk)

**Aim Higher**

[www.aimhigher.org.uk](http://www.aimhigher.org.uk)

**UK Course Finder**

[www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk)

**Prospects**

Information on job opportunities for Graduates

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

**University Open Days**

[www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)

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**Wales trade Union Congress - Learning Services**

Involved with workplace projects engaged in promoting education to all employees

<http://www.wtuclearn.org.uk/>

## 6. TRANSPORT

### 6.1 Public Transport

For a wide range of information contact: **Traveline Cymru 0870 608 2 608** or <http://www.traveline-cymru.org.uk/>

This site provides:

- Travel Alerts - information on disruptions, service changes etc
- Timetables for any bus/ coach service in Wales
- A journey planner - offering all possible bus, coach and rail options
- Useful links to operators, local authorities and more
- Information on available tickets
- Information on travelling with a bike on public transport
- Information about us, and our new services: Traveline.txt and Modus
- A brand new "bus stop locator" on the [Traveline.txt page](#) so that you can find your bus stop code and receive your bus times by text message.

It also provides details of public transport to more popular destinations including the Big Pit, Brecon Beacons, Castell Coch, Snowdonia to name a few.

#### Contacts:

##### • Airports

Cardiff International Airport; UK and international flights  
Airport Information desk Cardiff International Airport, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3BD

Tel: +44 (0) 1446 711111  
<http://info.cwlfly.com/en/>

E-mail: [infodesk@cwl.aero](mailto:infodesk@cwl.aero)

Liverpool John Lennon Airport: UK and International Flights  
Customer Services , Administration Offices , Liverpool John Lennon Airport  
Liverpool , L24 1YD  
Passenger Information 0870 129 8484\*  
All flight Information (Real time departures and arrivals) 0906 108 8484. (The flight information number is charged at 17p per minute including VAT.)

Bristol Airport  
Bristol International Airport, Bristol, BS48 3DY

Car Parking- Email: [parking@bristolairport.com](mailto:parking@bristolairport.com)

Flight Arrivals and Departures  
Telephone the Flight information line: 0870 128 2747

- **Rail**

There are train stations in many cities and towns

<http://www.traveline-cymru.org.uk/>

Arriva Trains Wales

Website [www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk](http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk)

St Mary's House, 47 Penarth Road, Cardiff, CF10 5DJ

Phone Number 0845 6061 660

Fax 029 2064 5349

Email Address [customer.relations@arrivatrainswales.co.uk](mailto:customer.relations@arrivatrainswales.co.uk)

Web Address [www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk](http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk)

- **Local Buses**

Call 0870 6082608.

Website: <http://www.traveline-cymru.org.uk/>

## **6.2 Driving: Age restriction and licences**

**All** drivers must meet minimum age requirements:

Minimum age of 17 for motorcycles and to learn how to drive cars.

Minimum age of 18 for Cars

Minimum age of 21 - large lorries and buses (plus to drive these you must possess a HGV or PCV license).

To drive a car you can use your national driving licence (if you are from an EC country). If you do not already have a driving license and would like to get one, you must pass both a theory and practical skills test. Once you have done this, you will be issued with a UK driving license.

But when you become a resident in the UK, you will have to change your driving licence to a British one as follows:

### **EC/EEA Ordinary Licence Holders:**

(An ordinary licence entitles you to drive cars, motorcycles and small vehicles (not Lorries or Busses)

- If you hold a valid Community ordinary licence generally you can drive in this country for 3 years after becoming resident.
- To continue driving after 3 years you must obtain a British driving licence.

### **EC/EEA Vocational Licence Holders:**

(A vocational licence entitles you to drive minibuses, buses or medium/large vehicles)

- If you hold a valid Community Vocational licence generally you can drive for 5 years after becoming resident.

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- To continue driving after 5 years you must obtain a British driving licence. Holders of community vocational licences **must** register with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Holders of ordinary licences **may** register if they wish.

**DVLA Information Leaflet D100** provides further information on the UK driving licences and **Leaflet INF 38** covers driving in the UK as a visitor or new resident. Both these leaflets are available from the Post Office or: [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

### Non EC/EEC Licences

Generally you can drive in this country for 12 months after becoming resident but you should check this at: [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

You **must** be able to produce to the Police if required:

- Your driving licence
- A valid Insurance certificate
- A valid MOT certificate

### 6.3 Insurance

It is an offence to use a motor vehicle on a public road without valid motor insurance. If you injure someone or cause damage to someone's property while driving you must, by law, compensate the other person. To ensure you will be able to do this you must by law have **motor insurance**. The minimum type of insurance necessary is Third Party Only. Most people add Fire & Theft cover which costs a little more. Many people prefer Comprehensive policies which also covers damage to your own car and injury to yourself. Details of insurance companies are available from the phone directory or yellow pages. It is not unusual for people to get a few quotes to compare prices.

### 6.4 MOT

Cars over 3 years must undergo an annual Ministry of Transport (MOT) test. This ensures cars over three years old are checked to see they comply with key roadworthiness and environmental requirements.

The main feature of the new system is that you can check the MOT status of any vehicle that you own, or are considering buying. You will be able to do this either by visiting [[www.motinfo.gov.uk](http://www.motinfo.gov.uk)] or calling our **MOT Status Line** on **0870 330 0444\***. If you are buying a second hand vehicle, and want to check its MOT status you will need the registration mark of the vehicle and either the test number from the new style MOT test certificate or the document reference number from the V5C registration certificate.

It is an offence to use a vehicle on a public road without a valid MOT test certificate. You can get these in-approved garages in your local areas that display the blue, three triangle MOT sign. There is a fee for the MOT itself as well as any repairs that may need to be completed if the car fails the test.

### **6.5 Road Tax**

A vehicle licence (known as a tax disc) shows you have paid the necessary vehicle excise duty for your vehicle. You must display this disc on the left-hand side of the vehicle's windscreen. You can buy a vehicle licence for 6 or 12 months. Information leaflets are available from the Post Office or on:

[www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

### **6.6 Rules of the Road – The Highway Code**

The Highway Code sets out the legal requirements for road use. Failure to follow these may result in a fine, penalty points on your licence, imprisonment or disqualification from driving.

You can buy the Highway Code from bookshops or: [www.highwaycode.gov.uk](http://www.highwaycode.gov.uk)

It contains rules such as:

- Drive on the left-hand side of the road
- Pass on the right

Many of the rules are legal requirements and if you disobey them you are committing an offence. You may be fined, given penalty points on your licence or be disqualified from driving.

### **6.7 Speedlimits – generally (but signs will indicate)**

Built up areas no more than 30 mph (48kph)

Single carriageway no more than 60 mph (96 kph) for cars

Dual carriageway/Motorways no more than 70 mph (112 kph) for cars

If you are caught exceeding these limits (by the police or a roadside camera), you will face a fine and points on your licence or you could face a driving ban. Driving without a valid license, or whilst banned can lead to a prison sentence.

### **6.8 Use of Mobile Phones while Driving**

It is an offence to use a mobile phone while driving. Offenders will be fined and receive penalty points on their licence.

### **6.9 Seatbelts**

The driver and all passengers must wear seatbelts. You can be fined for failing to wear a seatbelt. The driver must ensure that passengers under the age of 14 wear the appropriate restraint. Rear seatbelts must be used for children.

### **6.10 Motorcycles**

The rider and passenger of a motorcycle, scooter or moped must wear protective helmets. You must also have a valid driving licence to ride a motorbike.

### **6.11 Drinking and Driving**

Alcohol (and many other drugs) can seriously affect your judgement and ability to drive. **It is strongly recommended that you do not drive a vehicle after drinking alcohol or taking these drugs.**

If you are found to be driving while over the alcohol limit you will be arrested and kept in a police station overnight to appear in court the next day. Convicted drivers are disqualified from driving for a minimum of 12 months and risk a £5000 fine and 6 months in prison.

### **6.12 Accidents**

If you are involved in an accident you must **STOP**. If anyone is injured or damage is caused to something other than your vehicle you must give your name, address and insurance details to anyone who has a reasonable reason to ask for them. There is no requirement to inform the police in the case of a minor accident but if in any doubt or if the accident is serious please telephone the police (using 999 in an emergency).

## **7. HELP AND ADVICE**

### **7.1 Emergency Services**

In the UK and Wales, the emergency services are:

- Police
- Fire and Rescue
- Ambulance
- Coastguard

#### **When to call 999 for the police**

- Crime in progress
- Violence being used
- Injury road accident/road blocked

#### **When to call 999 for the fire service**

- Fire in the home (including garage, or garden that is out of control)
- Following a road traffic accident if there has been a spillage of petrol or other hazard chemical.
- Gas leak, or leak of other such substances

#### **When to call 999 for the Ambulance service**

- Any accident where there has been an injury to a person, or where a person is unconscious.
- Where a person is having severe difficulty breathing, or is bleeding.
- Where there is a danger that people may be affected due to a chemical leak, fire or other related instances.

#### **When to call 999 for the Coastguard service**

- when a person has been swept out to sea
- when there is a boating accident out at sea
- where there is a threat of piracy

Your call will be dealt with by a trained operator who will ask you which of the services you require. In the UK these services are generally free of charge.

### **7.2 Police, Anti-social behaviour / Crimestoppers in Wales**

You may need to contact the police because:

- you have been the victim of a crime, or
- you have been involved in a road accident, or
- you need information on a crime related issue.

**If it is not an emergency do not call 999.** Instead, contact your local Police or Fire Station. Most towns have one.

In Wales there are currently 4 police forces these can be found at

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<http://www.online.police.uk/english/link.asp?url=www.police.uk>

- **Dyfed-Powys Police.**

Police Headquarters, PO Box 99, Carmarthen, SA31 2PF  
Telephone 0845 330 2000

OR you can fax them on

01267 234262 – 24 hour  
01267 222185 – non urgent

OR e-mail

[ContactCentre@Dyfed-Powys.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ContactCentre@Dyfed-Powys.pnn.police.uk)  
(General Contacts)

<http://www.dyfed-powys.police.uk/>

- **South Wales Police**

South Wales Police Headquarters, Cowbridge Road, Bridgend. CF31 3SU  
Tel: 01656 655 555

Eastern Area: 029 2022 2111  
Central Area: 01656 655 555  
Western area: 01792 456 999

Helpline for the deaf:  
Mini com 01656 656980

For the information centre check

<http://www.south-wales.police.uk/fe/master.asp?n1=2>

South Wales Police Divisional areas

K Division

South Wales Police Headquarters, Cowbridge Road, Bridgend CF31 3SU  
Tel: 01656 655 555

A Division - Merthyr Tydfil, Divisional HQ, Merthyr Police Station, Swan Street  
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8ES, Tel: 01685 722 541

B Division - Rhondda, Cynon, Taff, Divisional HQ, Pontypridd Police Station,  
Berw Road, Pontypridd CF37 2TR . Tel: 01443 485 351

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C Division– Cardiff, Area Headquarters, Cardiff Central Police Station , King Edward VII Ave, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NN . Tel: 029 2022 2111

E Division - Vale of Glamorgan, Divisional HQ, Barry Police Station, Gladstone Road, Barry CF63 1TD. Tel: 01446 734 451

F Division – Bridgend, Divisional HQ, Bridgend Police Station, Brackla Street,, Bridgend CF31 1BZ. Tel: 01656 655 555

G Division- Neath & Port Talbot, Divisional HQ, Neath Police Station, Groll Park Road, Neath SA11 3BW. Tel: 01639 635 321

H Division – Swansea, Area Headquarters, New Swansea Central Police Station, Grove Road, Swansea SA1 5EA. Tel: 01792 456 999 [Map](#)

### **MINORITIES SUPPORT UNIT**

The Minorities Support Unit exists to assist the Public, the Police and any External Agency (Statutory or Voluntary) when dealing with any issue involving hate crime: This includes incidents of Racism, Homophobia and Transphobia

We also provide liaison between agencies and victims regarding issues involving Forced Marriage, Gypsy/Travellers, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers.

Contacts:

Canton Police Station, 194 Cowbridge Road East CARDIFF:- 02920 527234

Port Talbot Police Station, Station Road, PORT TALBOT:- 01639 889194  
Church Village , 12-15 Hollybush Villas, Main Road, CHURCH VILLAGE:-  
01443 743 672

Helpline (Ansaphone) :- 0800 587 8973

Language Line Services . (Used by agencies including the Police) 0207 520 1430 (information)

- **Gwent Police**

Gwent Police Headquarters, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran, NP44 2XJ

Telephone 01633 838111

If you are hearing impaired and have a Minicom device, you can contact Gwent Police on the following number: 01633 877574

<http://www.gwent.police.uk/>

Gwent Police Divisional Areas

Division A, Cardiff Road, Newport., NP9 2EH  
Tel: 01633 244999

Division B, Market Street,, Pontypool, NP4 6YN  
Tel: 01495 764711

Division C, Blackwood Road, Pontlanfraith, Blackwood., NP2 2XA  
Tel: 01495 223673

- **North Wales Police**

North Wales Police Headquarters, Glan-y-Don, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, LL29 8AW

Tel: 0845 6071002  
Minicom: 01492 511265

Central Divisional Headquarters, St Asaph Business Park, St Asaph, LL17 OHQ

Tel: 0845 6071002  
Minicom: 01492 511265

Western Divisional Headquarters, Maesincla, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1BU

Tel: 0845 6071002  
Minicom: 01492 511265

Eastern Divisional Headquarters, Bodhyfryd, Wrexham, LL11 2BX

Tel: 0845 6071002  
Minicom: 01492 511265

<http://www.north-wales.police.uk/nwp/public/en/contact/>

- **Anti-social behaviour**

If you feel you have been harassed in any way, or are suffering from nuisance neighbours, or any other type of behaviour that spoils your quality of life, you can contact a special 24-hour anti-social behaviour helpline on:

Telephone **Crimestoppers Wales / Cymru** (a registered charity): 0800 555111

<http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/Wales/>

## Welcome Pack for Migrant Workers

Calls can be made confidentially.

### 7.3 Working for the Police in Wales

The Police are always looking for people from all sections of the community to who are interested in embarking on a career with the Police either as uniformed Police officers or as civilian Police staff. If you interested you should in the first place visit the website [www.policecouldyou.co.uk](http://www.policecouldyou.co.uk).

Most forces do have recruitment periods during which applications are invited from those members of the public interested in working for the police. They also advertise current job opportunities.

Working for the police is not only limited to being a Uniformed Police Constable (PC), important as that is. There are other support roles that are just as important, such as being a member of the Police Civilian staff that provide back ground support. There are

- Police Community Support officers, uniformed staff that have powers conferred on them by the Chief Constable.
- Special Constables that support the regular force. These are volunteers who receive special training and are required to work a minimum of 4 hours a week.
- Community Safety Accredited officers who provide additional support. Usually these are people who are already in work and are given limited powers to aid the regular police.
- Volunteers, these are people who give up their own time to help in all aspects of the work of the police, freeing up time for the uniformed officers to spend more time on the frontline.
- Administrative and Clerical staff.

This website should answer all your questions and direct you to the relevant recruitment information. All Police forces suggest that you first attempt the self selecting questionnaire designed to help you find out whether you are eligible to join the police service. This is available on the [www.policecouldyou.co.uk](http://www.policecouldyou.co.uk) website. In addition some of the local forces also advertise their vacancies on their websites; if you wish to contact individual local forces you can also do so at the following.

#### **Dyfed-Powys Police.**

Whether you make an application to the regular force, join as a recruit to the High Potential Development scheme (HPD) or as a volunteer with the Specials, or a member of our support staff team we can help.

National Police recruitment website <http://www.policecouldyou.co.uk/>

**South Wales Police Force**

If you have any questions that are not answered from our web pages please telephone the Recruitment and Promotion Assessment Unit on 01656 869 225

**Gwent Police**

If you require advice on the application process, please contact Positive Action Officer on 01495 745413, or check the Gwent police website at <http://www.gwent.police.uk/>

**North Wales Police Force**

North Wales police can be contacted on the following website

<http://www.north-wales.police.uk/nwp/public/en/recruitment/>

**7.4 The Crown Prosecution Service**

The Crown Prosecution Service is the Government Department responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police in England and Wales.

We work closely with the police, although we are independent of them. Our roles can be summarised as follows:

- the police investigate all alleged offences. With the relatively minor offences such as theft or handling stolen goods the police determine the charge, and the case is heard in a Magistrates' court
- More serious cases are referred to the CPS. Our prosecutors decide whether the evidence is strong enough to prosecute in the Crown Court, and determine the charge. The CPS then prepares and presents the cases at court.

**7.5 The Victim's Code**

If you are the Victim of a crime you can expect:

- The crime you have reported to be investigated and to receive information about what happens;
- The chance to explain how the crime has affected you, and your interests to be taken into account;
- To be treated with respect and sensitivity; to be offered emotional and practical support; if you have to go to court as a witness.

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**7.6 Careers with Crown Prosecution Service**

We are the UK's largest law firm, dealing exclusively with criminal cases and exist to ensure that wrongdoers are brought to justice, victims of crime are supported and that people feel safer in their communities.

We are a national organisation with a world class vision and have 11 offices across Wales. Our commitment to Race Equality is highly regarded in the legal profession, in 2005 we were voted best public sector employer at the inaugural solicitors' Race Equality Awards

Our Law Scholarship scheme offers staff the opportunity to study for qualifications to further their career

Working for CPS is not only limited to being a Lawyer, important as that is. There are other support roles that are just as important, such as caseworkers, administrative support workers, witness care teams and secretarial roles.

The kind of job available will depend on what is available at any one time. If you are interested in joining CPS please go to <http://www.cps.gov.uk/> And click on the "latest vacancies" link.

**7.7 Fire Service in Wales**

Fire and Rescue Services play the key role in fire and rescue capability. The service is dedicated to the prevention of fires, deaths and injuries from fires and emergencies such as road crashes chemical incidents and flooding.

The Fire Service in Wales provides a fire service 24 hours a day. Its role is to provide preventative measures that will reduce the risk of fire occurring in the home and work environment and respond to emergency situations that threaten life from fire, road traffic collisions, and many other emergencies.

This service is generally free, including the provision of advice to the public on reducing the risk from fire occurring. Information leaflets are available in many different languages. For further information, contact your local fire station.

**North Wales Fire Service HQ-** Community Fire Safety Department, Fire Service Headquarters, Coast Road, Rhyl, Clwyd LL18 3PL

Telephone: 01745 352 734

Fax: 01745 332 353

Email Addresses: [fire.safety.hq@nwales-fireservice.org.uk](mailto:fire.safety.hq@nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

[Fs.hq.dsfso@nwales-fireservice.org.uk](mailto:F.s.hq.dsfso@nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

[Cfs.hq.mgr@nwales-fireservice.org.uk](mailto:Cfs.hq.mgr@nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

Website: [www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk](http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk)

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**South Wales Fire Service** - Community Fire Safety Education Department, Fire Safety Headquarters, Adam Street, Cardiff, CF24 2FL

Telephone: 01443 23200, or 0114 232 504

Fax: 01443 232 502

Email Addresses: [education@southwales-fire.gov.uk](mailto:education@southwales-fire.gov.uk);

Website: [www.southwales-fire.gov.uk](http://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk)

**Mid and West Fire Service**- Service Headquarters, Lime Grove Avenue, Carmarthen, SA31 1SP

Telephone 0870 6060699

Fax 01267 220562

E-mail [mail@mawwfire.gov.uk](mailto:mail@mawwfire.gov.uk)

Website; [http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk/home\\_eng/index.asp](http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk/home_eng/index.asp)

### 7.8 Working for the Fire Service.

The role of a modern day fire-fighter is very broad based, requiring a range of skills which will challenge you in more ways than you may imagine. Having the confidence to work with schools to educate young people in fire prevention, fit smoke alarms in people's houses and talk to diverse communities, is as important as your ability to deal effectively with an emergency situation.

Fire-fighters need to be people who not only reflect our communities but also want to put something back into those communities. Each of the three services in Wales has responsibility for recruitment of staff. There are various career opportunities available within the Service, these can be full time or part time positions in Operational or Support departments.

The types of posts available are:

Wholetime Fire-fighters

Retained Fire-fighters

Control Room Personnel

Administrative Staff

To find out what is available check the following

[http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk/recruit\\_eng/index.asp](http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk/recruit_eng/index.asp)

<http://www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk/page.asp?page=68>

<http://www.southwales-fire.gov.uk/SWFSCMS/Careers/>

### In the event of a fire –

Immediately leave the vicinity

Do NOT collect belongings (or return to)

Do NOT re-enter burning buildings

Call 999

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If you believe there is someone missing or still in the building tell a fire marshal or members of the fire service.

### 7.9 Ambulance Service in Wales

Many people calling 999 for the Ambulance service will do so where a family member/ friend is involved. it is not always easy to think clearly about how to make such an important call.

To help make it easier, here is a simple checklist to help you ensure you deliver all the information necessary to get help quickly.

- once you have dialled **999** an operator will ask you which service you require, try to answer as clearly as possible
- you will then be asked the location and name and numbers of persons involved - try to speak slowly and clearly to ensure the correct information is imparted
- you will then be asked for a telephone number in case the service need to contact you
- you may then be asked to describe the incident and any injuries
- what ever happens next **DO NOT HANG UP** until you are told to do so there may still be more information that is needed
- the ambulance controller will assist you with first aid advice until the ambulance arrives
- if you can, keep a look out for the ambulance and if it's dark, please leave a light on

### 7.10 Working for the Ambulance Service

- With around 2300 employees the **Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust** is the third largest Ambulance Service in the UK. The Trust provides pre-hospital care, ambulance and related services to the people of Wales and the many visitors.
- There are many career opportunities including;
  - **Emergency Medical Services**– Entrance as Trainee, moving on to Qualified Technician, Registered Paramedic, Training and Operational Management posts.
  - **Routine Patient Care Services**- Entrance as PTS Grade I, moving onto Grade II and Grade III. Staff often progress to the Emergency Services.
  - **Control and Communications** - Control Staff may be recruited with little or no previous Control experience as full training is provide.
  - **Management and Support** – Opportunities in Finance, Personnel, Fleet Management, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Information and Communications Technology, and General Administration.

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To check out the latest vacancies see

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=136&pid=915>

### 7.11 Citizens Advice Bureau

There are many useful sources of information. Most towns will have Citizens **Advice Bureau** (CAB). The Citizens Advice service has been helping people to resolve their money, legal and other problems. Advice is provided on benefits, consumer, housing, employment and legal (including immigration and migration).

Advice is free, impartial, independent, confidential and provided by trained volunteers. CAB advice is available to everyone regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or nationality.

You can also access CAB information online at [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk), including frequently asked questions (FAQs) in English, Welsh, Bengali, Chinese, Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu and fact sheets to download. If you wish to volunteer call 08451 264 264 or information and advice online see [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

### 7.12 Racial Harassment and Discrimination

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to tackling racism and creating an inclusive society in Wales. If you are the victim of racial harassment you are strongly advised to report the matter to the police. Harassment can include verbal abuse, attacks on property and physical assault. Most forms of racial harassment are criminal offences. In all cases the calls are dealt with in confidence. For more information contact:

**Commission for Racial Equality Council Wales**, 3rd Floor, Capital Tower,  
Greyfriars Road, Cardiff. CF10 3AG  
tel: 02920 729 200  
fax 02920 729 220

<http://www.cre.gov.uk/wales>

**CRE Wales (North Wales office)**, Bangor Road, Penmaenmawr, Conwy, LL34 6LS  
Tel: 01492 621 380  
Fax: 01492 621 382

<http://www.cre.gov.uk/wales>

**NORTH WALES RACE EQUALITY NETWORK**, Bangor Road, Penmaenmawr,  
Conwy, LL34 6LF  
Tel: 01492 622 233  
Fax: 01492 623 707

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Email: [nwren@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:nwren@tiscali.co.uk)Website: [www.nwren.org.uk](http://www.nwren.org.uk)

**CARDIFF RACE EQUALITY FIRST**, The Friary Centre, The Friary, CARDIFF, WALES, CF10 3FA

Tel: 029 2022 4097

Fax: 029 2022 9339

Email: [info@raceequalityfirst.org](mailto:info@raceequalityfirst.org)

**CARMARTHENSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES**, 3 St

Peter's Street, CARMARTHEN, Carmarthenshire, SA31 1LN

Phone: 01267 236367

Fax: 01267 239933

Email: [rachel@cavs.org.uk](mailto:rachel@cavs.org.uk)

**SWANSEA BAY REC**, 3rd Floor, Grove House, Grove Place, SWANSEA, WALES, SA1 5DF

Tel: 01792 457 035

Fax: 01792 459 374

Email: [director@sbrec.org.uk](mailto:director@sbrec.org.uk)Website: [www.sbrec.org.uk](http://www.sbrec.org.uk)

**VALLEYS REC**, Venture House, Navigation Park, Abercynon, RHONDA CYNON TAF, Wales, CF45 4SN

Tel: 01443 742 704

Fax: 01443 742 704

Email: [valrec@valrec.freeseve.co.uk](mailto:valrec@valrec.freeseve.co.uk)

**South East Wales REC**, 124 Commercial Street, NEWPORT, WALES, NP20 1LY

Tel: 01633 250006

Fax: 01633 264075

Email: [info@sewrec.org.uk](mailto:info@sewrec.org.uk)Website: [www.sewrec.org.uk](http://www.sewrec.org.uk)

### 7.13 Rape and Sexual Assault

If you are the victim of a rape or assault, whether by a stranger or someone you know, you are strongly encouraged to report this to the police. The Police in Wales have specialist officers who are trained to deal with rape and sexual assault and be supportive to the victims.

In addition there are numerous support groups and help-lines that can provide additional support for victims of rape and sexual assault.

For further information contact

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**National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0800-027-1234**

**Childline**

Counsellors can advise young people on a wide range of problems, with the most common being bullying, sexual and physical abuse, and breakdowns in family relationships. **If you are a child or young person needing help please call our free 24-hour helpline on 0800 1111.**

**If you are deaf** or hard of hearing and find using a regular phone difficult, you can call the Textphone service on 0800 400 222 and it's open from 9.30am to 9.30pm on weekdays and 9.30am to 8pm at weekends.

**Victim Support**

Help for the victims of crime. Groups to be found throughout Wales.

**Telephone:** 0845 30 30 900 (Mon-Fri: 9am-9pm, Sat-Sun: 9am-7pm)

**Web:**

[http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/vs\\_england\\_wales/contacts/wales\\_home.php](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/vs_england_wales/contacts/wales_home.php)

**Samaritans**

Samaritans provides confidential emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. If you're worried about something, feel upset or confused, or you just want to talk to someone. Groups across Wales

Telephone: 08457 90 90 90

Web - for branches; [http://www.samaritans.org.uk/talk/local\\_branch.shtm](http://www.samaritans.org.uk/talk/local_branch.shtm)

**Crime Stoppers**

To report a crime confidentially.

**Telephone:** 0800 5551 11 (Usually open: 8am-10pm)

**Web:** <http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/>

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external websites

**7.14 Incest.**

It is illegal to have a sexual relation with another member of your immediate family. The penalties are strict and there is no excuse. For those who have been victims of such sexual abuse the following helplines can assist young survivors of abuse.

**NSPCC.**

P.O. Box 18222, London. EC2A 3RU

help-line: 0800 800 500

phone: 0207 825 2500

e-mail: [helpline@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:helpline@nspcc.org.uk)

24 hour child protection free help-line. Counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

**Childline** – see above

### **7.15 Smoking**

In Britain there are laws relating to smoking, alcohol and sex, which differ from many European countries. The section below provides only a general guide.

- You must be 16 years and over to purchase cigarettes and other tobacco products. Vendors have the right to ask for proof of age before they will sell cigarettes. The UK Government is currently consulting on raising the age of sale to 18 years of age and over.
- Many areas (in particular public buildings) are already no- smoking, and legislation is currently being introduced which will ban smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces, including restaurants and pubs, from summer 2007. There is no smoking on buses on trains, and you could be asked to leave (or be removed from the bus or train) if you to persist.

For more information and support contact:

Give up smoking; A ban on smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces is due to be introduced in Wales by summer 2007. There will be fines of up to £200 for those who smoke in areas designated as smoke-free. If you would like help and advice on giving up smoking, then contact the following:

**Smokers Helpline Wales (Welsh/English bilingual service) - 0800 169 0 169**

Counsellors: 9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri

Information: 7am - 11pm, daily

**All Wales Smoking Cessation Service - 0800 085 2219**

Call this number to be transferred to a stop smoking advisor in your area

**Quitline** 9am-9pm daily 0800 00 22 00

**Arabic** 1pm-9pm Sat 0800 169 1300

**Bengali Quitline** 1pm-9pm Mon 0800 00 22 44

**Gujarati Quitline** 1pm-9pm Tues 0800 00 22 55

**Hindi Quitline** 1pm-9pm Wed 0800 00 22 66

**Punjabi Quitline** 1pm-9pm Thursday 0800 00 22 77

**Urdu Quitline** 1pm-9pm Sun 0800 00 22 88

**Turkish & Kurdish Quitline** 1pm-9pm Thurs & Sun 0800 00 22 99

### **7.16 Alcohol**

You must be 18 years and over to purchase alcoholic drinks. In some areas bylaws forbid the drinking of alcohol outdoors – these areas will have signs indicating this. In Wales there are some places where there is not alcohol sold on certain days.

### **Alcoholic's anonymous**

If you believe you have an alcohol related problem or are dependent on alcohol you can get confidential advice, through your doctor or to see a list of Alcoholic anonymous meetings please access <http://www.aa-uk.org.uk/lists/Alcoholics-Anonymous-Wales.pdf>

### **7.17 Sexually Transmitted diseases**

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) affect people of all ages in Wales. Incidence is greatest among people under 25, and recent figures show increases in the number of teenagers with infections.

The results of inadequately treated sexually transmitted infections can include:

- pelvic inflammatory disease
- infertility,
- cervical cancer, and
- increased susceptibility to HIV infection.

Chlamydia represents a largely preventable source of infertility and reproductive ill health. For further information see the Assembly website at <http://www.cmo.wales.gov.uk/content/work/sexualhealth/>

**Visit:** Health Protection Agency website at:  
[http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics\\_az/hiv\\_and\\_sti/default.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/default.htm)

### **Sexual Health Wales Helpline** 0800 567 123

This helpline provides information and advice on a range of aspects relating to sexual health including: contraception; condoms; emergency contraception; sexually transmitted infections; pregnancy testing and where to find your nearest sexual health service. Information is also available on the website [www.playingsafely.co.uk](http://www.playingsafely.co.uk)

Details of all services is also available through NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 and [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

The Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) Cymru offer a number of services for people living with HIV. For more information visit their website: [www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk) or call them on 02920 666465. Their UK helpline is THT Direct 0845 12 21 200.

Since December 2005, HIV is now a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005.

### **7.18 Sexual Offences/Public Nuisance**

You must be 16 years and over to have a sexual relationship with another person who also must be at least 16 years old. This applies to both heterosexual and gay relationships.

It is illegal to have sex with someone who is under 16 even if they consented or you believed that they were over 16. This is known as statutory rape and does carry a custodial sentence (imprisonment).

It is an offence to:

- Sell sexual services (or for another person to live off these earnings). Unlike some countries there are no legal or authorised places where sex can be bought or sold.
- Have sex in public toilets (“cottaging”). It is criminal offence to engage in a sexual act in a public toilet of any description.
- Urinate in a public place other than a toilet.

### **7.19 Controlled Drugs**

Possession or the supply or the intention to supply certain types of drugs is illegal. These include cannabis, amphetamine, heroin, ecstasy, cocaine, crack cocaine and a number of others.

Some drugs, although available on prescription from a doctor, are illegal to possess if not prescribed to you. If found in possession of any of these drugs you can be fined or imprisoned or both. For more information contact:

#### **National Drugs helpline**

Freephone: 0800 7766 00

Gives information and advice for anyone concerned about drugs. This includes drug users, their families and friends and people who work with them.

[www.ndh.org.uk](http://www.ndh.org.uk)

**Re Solv**

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Freephone helpline: 0808 800 2345 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

Society for the prevention of solvent abuse. If you have a problem with drugs and/or solvents, then our probation staff will be able to help you too. Please talk to them.

[www.resolv.org](http://www.resolv.org)

### **7.20 Weapons**

You are not permitted to carry knives and guns. Only small folding pocket-knives with a blade of less than 7.62 cm long can be carried in a public place and you may **not** carry a weapon for personal protection.

## **8 COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

### **8.1 The Local Authorities in Wales (County Councils)**

While the history of local government in Wales stretches back at least to the 16th Century, the existing 22 Welsh unitary authorities date from 1996. On a more local level, Wales's community and town councils provide services in their immediate areas.

All local authorities are democratically accountable through elections every four years. The last elections were in June 2004. Local authorities have a cabinet-style executive with the dominant political group making decisions under the scrutiny of the Council as a whole. They have extensive staff structures headed by a chief executive, who works with other senior officers on day-to-day business and decision-making. Some, for example education, must be made available under UK law; others are provided at the discretion of individual authorities.

A typical list of local authority services would include:

- Trading standards
- Libraries, leisure and tourism
- Environmental health, refuse and recycling
- Transport and highways
- Housing
- Social Services
- Education

The Welsh Assembly Government supplies 80% of local authority funding, council tax the remaining 20%.

Local authorities also work in close partnership with other bodies, such as the NHS and the police.

All unitary authorities in Wales are members of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The WLGA represents their views and interests and advises and supports individual authorities.

Access to each Local Authority in Wales can be accessed at

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/localauthorities/?lang=en>

### **8.2 Complaint about Local Authorities**

You can complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales about local government, National Health Service organisations including GPs, and the National Assembly for Wales. The Ombudsman considers complaints about matters such as housing, planning, education, social services and health services.

The primary role of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is to investigate complaints made to him by members of the public about the way a public body has treated them. Complaints will be investigated independently and impartially, and when upheld, the Ombudsman will say what the public body should do to make amends to the complainant and impress the need for improvement in its standard of service in the future. Lessons learned from investigations will be publicised. He will also promote good administration and high standards of conduct by investigating allegations that local authority members have breached their own authority's code of conduct. The Local Ombudsman Wales can be contacted at: <http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk/>

Or at Public Services Ombudsman for Wales,  
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed,, CF35 5LJ

**Tel:** (01656) 641 150

**Fax:** (01656) 641 199

**E-mail** - [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)

### **8.3 Community Planning**

Visit the Local Authority Website or

<http://www.wlga.gov.uk/content.php?nID=29;IID=1>

To find out about community planning developments and how you could have your say on how the range and delivery of services in your area can be improved.

### **8.4 Voluntary, Charity and Community sector and volunteering in Wales**

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to working effectively with voluntary organizations to ensure that the benefits of volunteering are adequately supported and that levels of volunteering continue to grow.

People take on voluntary work because they feel their contributions can help bring positive change to their communities. Many people in Wales provide their time to support a community activity, help a charity or an organisation that works with local people. Volunteering is also extremely beneficial to the volunteers themselves. Volunteers are involved in a vast range of activities and projects, helping communities in many different ways. From

- Befriending to conservation work,
- fund raising, organizing and running events
- providing transport and visiting elderly people

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- giving free professional and personal advice
- acting as magistrates and school governors
- participating in community theatre events
- providing sports coaching

Volunteers contribute a huge amount to the daily lives of people in Wales.

The amount of time you commit to volunteering can be as little as a couple of hours a month and for most volunteering, no special qualifications are needed. Everyone can be a volunteer. Your age, background, previous experience and present needs don't matter - there is an opportunity to suit you. Finding an opportunity to suit isn't always easy and there are people able to help you make the right decision.

But it's not just what you put in that counts. Most people volunteer to get something back - be it skills and confidence through experience and training or simply a feeling of satisfaction from contributing to the local community.

For more information on how to get involved contact

[http://www.wcva.org.uk/main/dsp\\_home.cfm](http://www.wcva.org.uk/main/dsp_home.cfm)

<http://www.volunteering-wales.net/index.html>

### 8.5 Community Centres

There are community centres in most towns. These provide a range of educational and social activities and resources for the local community and are a useful source of help and information. To access details see

[http://www.walesindex.co.uk/pages/442\\_624.html](http://www.walesindex.co.uk/pages/442_624.html)

### 8.6 Places of Worship

There are churches of many denominations in Wales. The list below is not definitive (for details of Catholic Churches please access the Cytun website below)

Baha'i Community of the UK	<a href="http://www.bahai.org.uk/WalesBahai@aol.com">http://www.bahai.org.uk/WalesBahai@aol.com</a>
Board of Deputies of British Jews	<a href="http://www.bod.org.uk/bod/info@bod.org.uk">http://www.bod.org.uk/bod/info@bod.org.uk</a>
Buddhist Society	<a href="http://www.thebuddhistsociety.org/info@thebuddhistsociety.org">http://www.thebuddhistsociety.org/info@thebuddhistsociety.org</a>
Churches' Commission for Inter-Faith Relations	<a href="http://www.ctbi.org.uk/ccifr">http://www.ctbi.org.uk/ccifr</a>

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Council of African & Afro-Caribbean Churches	<a href="http://www.theredirectory.org.uk/org.php?n138">http://www.theredirectory.org.uk/org.php?n138</a>
Christian Free Church	<a href="http://www.unitarian.org.uk/">http://www.unitarian.org.uk/</a>
Church in Wales	<a href="http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/">http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/</a>
Cytun	<a href="http://www.cytun.org.uk/">http://www.cytun.org.uk/</a>
Evangelical Church	<a href="http://www.etcw.ac.uk/default.aspx">http://www.etcw.ac.uk/default.aspx</a>
Hindu Council (UK)	<a href="http://www.hinducounciluk.org/">http://www.hinducounciluk.org/</a>
Hindu Forum of Britain	<a href="http://www.hinduforum.org/">http://www.hinduforum.org/</a>
Imams and Mosques Council (UK)	<a href="mailto:info@muslimcollege.ac.uk">info@muslimcollege.ac.uk</a>
Muslim Council of Britain	<a href="http://www.mcb.org.uk/">http://www.mcb.org.uk/</a>
Sikh Organisations (UK)	<a href="http://www.thesikhway.com/">http://www.thesikhway.com/</a>
Swaminarayan Hindu Mission	<a href="http://www.mandir.org/SHM/index.htm">http://www.mandir.org/SHM/index.htm</a>
Unitarian and Free Christian Churches	<a href="http://www.unitarian.org.uk/">http://www.unitarian.org.uk/</a>
Inter Faith Panel	
Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK)	<a href="http://www.vhp.org/">http://www.vhp.org/</a>

### 8.7 Gay Wales

There are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) groups and networks in all of the larger towns in Wales.

However, there are few organised groups and there is a lot more happening in other parts of Wales. For information, see the

- Gay Wales

Flying the gay flag for Wales <http://www.gaywales.co.uk/cardiff/> with pride across the UK, Europe and the World.

- LGBTi.org - Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender Support Forums  
<http://our-community.org.uk/index.php?act=Help&CODE=01&HID=17>  
Discreet mirror of WayGay.co.uk LGBT Group discussion forums. Under safe template and a discreet address.

- Stonewall Cymru / Wales

The LGB Forum Cymru was established in 2002 through the joint support and funding of the National Assembly of Wales and Stonewall (UK). In 2003 the LGB Forum Executive Committee changed the name to Stonewall Cymru to gain increased support from <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/> and access to their expertise and resources.

<http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/cymru/english/default.asp>

### 8.8 Sports and Leisure services in Wales

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Sports and Leisure Centres are available in most towns. These provide facilities for football, multisports and swimming etc. For locations and more information, see:

- Local authority website for local information
- Arts - <http://www.artswales.org.uk/>
- Events - <http://www.wmc.org.uk/>  
<http://www.millenniumstadium.com/>
- Museums <http://www.cymal.wales.gov.uk/museum/index.html>
- Sports - <http://www.sports-council-wales.co.uk/index2.cfm>
- Music - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/music/>

For more information about Wales the beautiful country see Wales Tourist Board section on the Welsh assembly Government website at <http://www.visitwales.com/>

### 8.9 Libraries

As well as free access to books, public libraries also provide other services such as:

- Free Email and Internet
- Fax
- Photocopying
- Community info
- Council info
- Local newspapers
- Links with community and adult education

There are libraries in most towns. For details of locations and services go to: <http://www.cymal.wales.gov.uk/library/index.html>

On your first visit, bring two proofs of identity, both showing your address (one of which must have a photo) and you will be able to apply for membership and start accessing the services immediately.

There is also a website that migrant workers may find useful - [www.seapn.org.uk](http://www.seapn.org.uk)

### 8.10 Banks

To open a bank account, you must provide the following information:

- Proof of identity (passport, national identity card or national driving licence)
- Proof of UK address (tenancy agreement or letter of confirmation from your employer)
- Proof of employment is also often required

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It is important to open a bank account since most employers will pay your wages directly into your bank account.

<http://www.walesindex.co.uk/pages/921.html>

### 8.11 Post Offices

As well as providing postage for letters and parcels, the Post Office is a useful source of information and forms (e.g. vehicle tax disc payment form). To find your nearest post office branch access

<http://www.postoffice.co.uk/portal/po/finder?catId=20700386>

### 8.12 TV License

If you use a TV you must have a TV licence. The cost varies depending on whether you have a colour or black and white television. You can pay for a TV licence at the Post Office.

Generally if you rent a property and the landlord provides the TV, he is responsible for the licence. If you as the tenant provide the TV, you are responsible. Failure to obtain a licence can result in a £1000 fine.

<http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/information/>

### 8.13 Shopping

Most shops are open Monday to Saturday from 9am until 5.30pm. Many department stores stay open until 6pm and have late night shopping until 8pm one evening a week, usually Thursday. Larger shops may open for up to six hours on Sunday between 10am and 4pm, or 11am and 5pm.

Shops in small towns and villages often close one afternoon a week, usually on Wednesday. They sometimes also close for an hour at lunchtime. Some larger supermarkets are open 24 hours a day from Monday to Saturday. Most major supermarkets now offer online shopping and will deliver to your home. The charge for this is around £5.

Cardiff, the capital city of Wales, has some of the most famous shops in the world, including Howells.

### 8.14 Currency

The unit of currency is the pound sterling (£). There are one hundred pence (p) in one pound.

Notes: £50, £20, £10, £5, (£1 printed by Scottish banks).

Coins: £2, £1, 50p, 20p, 10p, 5p, 2p, 1p.

### 8.15 Weights and measures

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All goods must now be sold according to the metric system used in the rest of the EU. However, many people still use the imperial system.

1 inch 2.54cm

1 foot 30.48cm

1 yard 91.44cm

1 mile 1.6km

1 pint 0.57 litres

1 gallon 4.55 litres

1 ounce (oz) 28.35 grams

1 pound (lb) 0.45kg

1 ton 1016kg

### **8.16 Electrical**

The voltage used is 240 volts AC (alternating current). This means most appliances from EU countries should work. Three pin plugs are standard, so you will need adaptors for any appliances with two pin plugs.

## **9. STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS**

### **9.1 Business Eye**

Whether you're just thinking about it, or are ready to give it a go, there are many services available either to help you make that decision or support you in the crucial first stages. This help comes through the Welsh Assembly Government, working closely with expert partners in the public and private sectors.

It's generally free of charge or low cost so you can afford the advice and practical help you need to create and grow a dynamic business.

If you are interested in starting your own business, a good place to start is Business Eye. This Government sponsored service has offices all over Wales and can give you information and contacts you need.

Phone Contact: 08457 969798

Web: [www.busesseye.org.uk](http://www.busesseye.org.uk)  
[becauseyoucan website](#)

## **10. RESIDENCY PERMIT - LIVING IN THE UK FOR A LONGER PERIOD**

### **10.1 Residency permit**

If you have a right to live in the UK, you do not need a residence permit or need to register with the police. You may still apply for a residence permit if you wish. One case in which you may like to do this is if your family members wish to apply for a residence document.

Residence permits are usually valid for a period of five years. However, they may be issued for a shorter time if you are working or studying in the UK for less than 12 months.

You are unlikely to be given a residence permit if:

- You are in the United Kingdom for a short visit
- You are looking for work
- You will work and live in the United Kingdom for less than three months; and
- You do not work in the United Kingdom and cannot support yourself without help from public funds.

If non-EEA family members come to live with you in the UK, they may wish to apply for a residence document. If they have this document they will not have to apply for another EEA family permit each time they enter the UK. A residence document issued to a family member will be valid for the same length of time as your residence permit.

To apply for a residence document, your family member will need the following original documents:

- Your passport or national identity card;
- Your residence permit (you will need to apply for one if you do not already have one);
- Proof that you still have a right to live in the United Kingdom;
- Your family member's passport;
- Proof of the relationship between you and your family member (if your husband or wife is applying, you will need proof that you are legally married, for example your marriage certificate).

Your family member will not be given a residence document if you yourself do not have a right of residence in the UK. Furthermore, if your non-EEA husband or wife is the result of a marriage of convenience, they will not be treated as a family member.

You may apply to stay in the UK indefinitely with no time limit or conditions on your stay if:

- You have had a residence permit for five years
- You still have a right to live in the United Kingdom; and
- You have been working in the United Kingdom, or have been supporting yourself financially, for at least four years, and are still doing this.

Students will not usually be allowed to stay indefinitely.

Your family (including students) may also apply to stay indefinitely provided they have residence documents and you meet the requirements above.