

Facts about Wales

1. Wales is home to the highest mountain in the UK.
2. Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world, was named after a Welsh man.
3. Wales has its own language, money and army.
4. The Welsh flag is a white cross on a blue background.
5. One of the most popular sports in Wales is Rugby.
6. The capital city of Wales is Swansea.
7. Song is an important part of Welsh culture and many famous singers come from Wales.
8. Anthony Hopkins, Catherine Zeta Jones and Richard Burton are all famous actors that come from Wales.
9. A traditional Welsh dish, Welsh Rarebit, is made using toast and rabbit.
10. Wales has been politically independent from the rest of the UK since 1282.
11. The longest word in the world is "Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch" and it is the name of a place in Wales.

Listening task

Listen to Ieuan from Pontarddulais in south Wales. Here are three questions he answers. Make notes about each of his answers.

<p>What mostly happens in your area?</p>	
<p>What would you say were the major changes in your area?</p>	
<p>Is your region famous for anything?</p>	

Interview transcript: Ieuan Evans

Interviewer: First of all Ieuan, can you tell me a little bit about the part of UK that you're from?

Ieuan: Yes, I'm from a small village in South Wales called Pontarddulais. Pontarddulais is about in the middle of South Wales.

Interviewer: Right. And can you tell me a little bit about what you like about your area?

Ieuan: Yes, I really come from a small village, and so it's a closely knit community and it's pretty rural really, so there's lots of facilities there but actually we're kind of country kids when we grew up there.

Interviewer: What mostly happens in that area?

Ieuan: I'd say mostly rugby, rugby and industry were the two things and farming was the other thing.

Interviewer: Right, and since you've lived there, which, is that from since you were a child?

Ieuan: Yes.

Interviewer: What would you say were the major changes in that area?

Ieuan: I think the major change has been the fact that it's become a lot more built up and I suppose, industrialised. It's along the M4 corridor, so there's been building all over the place; a lot of the fields I remember when I was a child have been built on with the new housing estates and things like that. So things have changed a lot. There's a lot more people in the community now that we don't know, a lot more incomers and I'd say people we don't know. They're commuters, so they don't play a big part in the community anymore; they just live there in the evenings and the weekends. Apart from that we don't really see them. There has been a positive effect; the school is a lot more vibrant now, and a lot of the kids are learning Welsh even though they are English incomers. So there has been a positive effect, I do have to say.

Interviewer: Oh, that's good.

Ieuan: Yes.

Interviewer: Is your region famous for anything, would you say?

Ieuan: Well, we've got very good male voice choir. I don't know if that makes us famous or not, but Pontarddulais Male Voice choir tours the world, really. So for a small village that's quite a big thing really. I suppose we've produced quite a few rugby players as well. Ryan Evans, Peter Hopkins – people like that.

Interviewer: And, what about music?

Ieuan: Well always we take part in the Eisteddfod, which is the national music festival of Wales. In fact, that includes all sorts of activities, not just music but also poetry and storytelling and much more actually, but that's the main thing, and that tours Wales and recently came to a town near us, which was a great honour for us. Everybody in Wales takes part in music of some sort during their life.

Interviewer: Can you just tell me a little bit about how people speak in your area?

Ieuan: Its funny, there's a distinct accent for this part of the world; we call ourselves the Taffs, this er ? and nearby town is called Swansea and they have a longer drawn out sort of accent. But here everybody, a lot of the people speak Welsh and that makes the accent a bit stronger and people say we have a sing-song type of accent here, which makes it difficult for some people to understand, but otherwise I think we speak quite slowly so often people say we're easy to understand. People call each other boyo and bach and that sort of thing. All right bach?