

Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

Ymchwiliad i'r achosion o COVID-19 ac effaith y feirws ar ddiwylliant, y diwydiannau creadigol, treftadaeth, cyfathrebu a chwaraeon / Inquiry into the COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on culture, creative industries, heritage, communications and sport

CWLC COV73

Ymateb gan Theatr Cymunedol yng Nghymru / Response from Community Theatre in Wales



## **The well-being and confidence of our communities are in peril and the creative community vulnerable.**

As four Welsh language community theatre companies, we would like to draw your attention to the importance and public benefits of our provision. Whilst concerned about the impact of Covid 19 on our companies in the short term and the urgent need to maintain them in difficult times, the long term impact is of great concern as we begin to understand the adverse and punitive effects on our communities and the economy in general.

We are grateful to the Arts Council of Wales and the local Councils for their support, and as we look to the future, our ambition as a network of community companies is to ensure that we play a key role in the regeneration of our communities by ensuring that arts provision continues to be offered throughout Wales.

Theatr Bara Caws, Frân Wen, Arad Goch and Theatr na nŏg were established decades ago to meet the needs of audiences desperate for accessible theatrical experiences in the Welsh language. Today, we four companies between us have over 100 years of experience of both touring nationally and internationally and do so within tight budgetary constraints. The fact that we all still exist and continue to flourish and attract thousands of participants annually is testament to the fact that our work remains relevant and pertinent.

We also employ a significant number of freelance practitioners every year, bringing artists and communities together as well as collaborating with artists in rural areas. This not only benefits all areas of the country, but also ensures that the Welsh language sector continues to thrive.

Though our provision varies greatly from company to company, we share the same aims and ambitions, that of creating and presenting theatre of the highest standard to the broadest demographic within their communities — work which excites, inspires and entertains. Underpinning this ethos is our carefully nurtured and highly prized relationship with our communities which we believe should be safeguarded for the future.

We are proud of the role we play regarding the Welsh Government's intention to increase the number of Welsh speakers of all ages — one million by 2050 - and in supporting and achieving the main objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, a bold, progressive act that offers a great opportunity for the arts to play a key role in all aspects of life.

We believe that what we offer is crucial, not only to the ecology of Welsh language theatre, but it also lies at the very fabric of our cultural existence. We four companies have a rich history and feel passionate that we have an all-important contribution to make in the future. We must continue with our mission of ensuring that the arts are available to all and feel that it is our duty as community theatre companies to continue to take Welsh language theatre to the hearts of the communities of Wales.

We urge you to support our cause and to advocate on our behalf in the difficult discussions ahead. Please consider carefully how the specialised work of our four companies can be fully utilised in assisting the recovery of our

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communities.

Sincerely,

Bara Caws  
Frân Wen  
Arad Goch  
na nÓg