

Communities and Culture Committee Report into the Accessibility of Arts and Culture: ACTION PLAN

Recommendation	Comments / Progress
<p>Recommendation 1. We recommend that the Welsh Government facilitates a sharing of good practice (for increasing accessibility) between organisations involved in delivering arts and cultural experiences. (Page 31)</p>	<p>ACW: the ACW is encouraging more people to enjoy and take part in arts events, and this is a priority in ACW's future plans. The practical actions ACW is taking include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Equalities Strategy - commits ACW to a series of actions designed to broaden the range of those who benefit from its funding and services (ii) ACW's work with specialist agencies such as Disability Arts Cymru, Voluntary Arts Wales and BVSN Wales on targeted projects to improve accessibility (iii) ACW's Marketing Symposium: every year this focuses on a range of audience development initiatives (iv) ACW is investing more money in touring, and is extending the reach of its 'Night Out' initiative. <p>Cadw: Cadw, the National Museum, the Historic Houses Association and the National Trust are planning joint research in 2012 to better understand the barriers to access by targeting segments of the community, and to measure the impact of their various initiatives.</p> <p>The National Museum has suggested joint work to evaluate visitor responses to the current ways in which the sector presents Welsh history to the public. Three meetings on the 'History Agenda' were held in 2011, and Cadw is actively supporting this. Heritage organisations also see the forthcoming 6 part BBC Wales TV series "The Story of Wales" as a key vehicle for reaching more people, and are planning collaborative activities to run alongside this. Cadw and partners are working with the BBC to support the series.</p> <p>Cadw's research priorities for 2011-16 are to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice in engaging young people and families in history and the wider historic environment and character of place. Best practice in engaging with communities and maximising socio-economic benefit. Best practice in tackling 'barriers to access'. The measuring and monitoring of visitor attendance, satisfaction and outcomes, ideally in partnership with other partners in the sector. A programme of research which helps Cadw understand user and non-user attitudes to Welsh history and heritage sites. <p>CyMAL: The 3 national cultural heritage institutions and other partners are working together to deliver 'The People's Collection Wales' (PCW), and are sharing good practice and developing knowledge in the course of this. The PCW website follows accessibility guidelines and the project provides advice on good practice</p>

	<p>relating to digitisation and ensuring accessibility.</p> <p>As public bodies, the National Library and National Museum are required to comply with statutory duties such as the 2011 public sector equality duty, and as part of this duty are required to develop a Single Equality Scheme. For example the Library's Equalities Plan is reviewed every 4 months. The Library is also participating in the Welsh Government Sponsored Body network on sexual equality and disability which is being led by the National Museum. The Library has extensive accessibility information on its website: http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=accessibility</p> <p>CyMAL is supporting professional bodies in Wales to deliver seminars and conferences, to facilitate best practice sharing. CyMAL also publishes a twice yearly magazine to highlight best practice.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2. We recommend that the Welsh Government seeks to increase media coverage of Wales' arts and cultural experiences, and to challenge the perspective that arts and cultural experiences are for "an élite few". (Page 35)</p>	<p>ACW: persuading the media to report on culture in a more informed and more comprehensive fashion is a difficult challenge. However ACW is working to build interest by funding and promoting excellent projects that the media <u>wants</u> to feature. Recent projects include National Theatre Wales' <i>Passion</i> in Port Talbot, the winning of WOMEX 2013 for Cardiff, the launch of the Cultural Olympiad programme in Wales, and the Literature Wales' launch of the Young People's Laureate.</p> <p>Cadw: During 2011 Cadw has been developing its website, in particular to accommodate digital "apps" and social networking. This has started to transform its capacity to engage more directly with diverse audiences.</p> <p>CyMAL: CyMAL is working with the museums, archives and libraries sector to develop its skills and to provide assistance in promoting its contribution to arts and cultural activities. For example, CyMAL is supporting an all-Wales audience development initiative for libraries – this includes the issuing of national press releases, and templates to assist regional and local press releases by services and an annual all-Wales Library Festival. The National Museum and the National Library also have successful public relations programmes, to increase media coverage of Wales' arts and culture.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3. We recommend that the Welsh Government continues to prioritise supporting the development of arts and cultural experiences (including those taking place within "community venues") over and above the development of new, "purpose-built" art venues. (Page 40)</p>	<p>ACW: ACW attaches great importance to encouraging more people to enjoy and take part in the arts. It broadly accepts the recommendation that new purpose-built facilities should not be a priority, and its new Capital strategy to be issued in 2012 is likely to endorse this. However having accessible, fit for purpose venues of quality can be a very effective way to increase access. Whilst the new strategy will probably concentrate on improving and repairing existing buildings, ACW does not wish to dismiss the possibility of new build projects, especially if they can improve access in areas of cultural or geographical disadvantage.</p> <p>Cadw: Cadw is working with a number of communities and arts organisations to enable venues to be used as much as possible for cultural events. All Cadw staff are encouraged to be proactive in seeking such</p>

	<p>opportunities. At the national level, Cadw is being supported by ACW to develop its own arts policy to give the individual initiatives a framework and momentum. Cadw is also developing partnership programmes with Literature Wales for 2012.</p> <p>Five key programmes for development and arts activity began at selected Cadw sites in summer 2011: Plays at a number of Cadw's monuments, produce by 'Taking Flight' - a UK based professional theatre company that works to break down the barriers which can prevent participation in the arts. Work with Sculpture Cymru on a sculpture exhibition inspired by Kidwelly Castle (summer 2012). The Cadw Festival of Heritage Arts & Crafts – an annual programme of 8 one day events, offering opportunities for visitors to work with artists to create artwork inspired by Cadw sites. Songs From Stones - a 5 year arts based Cadw education programme involving 125 - 150 young people each year, to produce animations interpreting Cadw sites. These films will be shown at a annual 'grand premiere', and will be uploaded onto the Songs From Stones website. Storytelling & literacy - an annual creative writing project, involving primary school classes in creative writing. The stories are uploaded on to the learning pages of the Cadw website.</p> <p>CyMAL: The Welsh Government grants programmes administered by CyMAL division and its advisory services support existing local museums, archives and libraries to provide arts, culture and heritage activities in over 400 locations across Wales. The Museums Strategy commits the Welsh Government to support existing museums and will not normally support the foundation of new museums. Funding through grants for museums in Wales is only available to those that meet the Accreditation standard.</p> <p>One of the aims of the Welsh Government's Community Learning Libraries Capital Grant Programme (administered by CyMAL) is to enable public libraries to develop attractive flexible spaces to stage more community activities. This has been extremely successful in increasing the number of community activities, often held in partnership with other organisations, in our public libraries. Almost 80 public libraries across Wales have been modernised as part of this grant programme.</p> <p>The National Museum and the National Library are providing access to high quality cultural experiences in their buildings, online, and through a series of outreach events in communities across Wales.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4. We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that decision makers determining the public funding provided to particular arts and cultural experiences, effectively and thoroughly take into account the</p>	<p>Welsh Government: We propose to emphasise the importance of equality and accessibility issues in the 2012/13 Remit Letters to our Sponsored Bodies. Equality Action Plans will be assessed and monitored throughout the year. We are also considering approaching WLGA, to see whether it would like to extend this to venues that only receive local authority funding.</p> <p>Welsh Government (Cadw): Cadw is interested in applying CyMAL's access summary template to ensure that its access information is meaningful to potential visitors.</p>

accessibility of such experiences for people with disabilities, and LGB people. (Page 49)

The Cadw Interpretation Planning process seeks to improve intellectual access to heritage sites. There is a rolling programme of work on site interpretation improvements. Work on a new programme of site access audits and improvements (for people with physical and sensory impairments) will begin in late 2011 and will run thereafter on a 5 year rolling programme, with review milestones.

Work is under way to review Cadw action on access to its sites, and to benchmark this against other heritage organisations' access plans by March 2013.

Welsh Government (CyMAL): Both the National Museum and the Library have invested heavily in ensuring that their buildings, online resources and services meet and exceed accessibility standards.

CyMAL has run consultation sessions to identify the access priorities of disabled people across Wales. Representatives from access and disability groups as well as museums, archives and libraries identified the need for better information about access provision. In response, CyMAL has awarded a tender to Enable UK to develop an Access Summary Template. The project is on target for delivery of phase 1 in March 2012. The draft template is currently being tested (Nov' 2011), and interest in using the template has been expressed by other heritage organisations including Cadw, CCW and the Forestry Commission.

A survey for the research project 'Spotlight on Museums 2011' resulted in information being submitted by 106 organisations. The final publication is on track to be published by December 2011/January 2012. The study includes information on current physical and sensory access to museums and museum collections.

One of the main aims of the *Community Learning Libraries Capital Grant Programme* administered by CyMAL is to improve accessibility through the library modernisation programme. Promoting access and equality is a key priority within all CyMAL grants schemes. Libraries across Wales are also providing assistive software and hardware to help disabled people to access library resources.

ACW: One of the targets included in ACW's *Disability Action Plan* is to establish how venues are working to reduce the barriers disabled people face when seeking to engage with the arts. ACW is drafting an 'Access Questionnaire', with input from Disability Arts Cymru and Hearing Loss UK (previously RNID). The survey will be sent out in December 2011 or January 2012, to all ACW funded organisations, including those receiving capital funds for venues and galleries. ACW expects to have aggregated and analysed the results by March 2012. It will then bring together the agencies that helped to design the Questionnaire, to assist in assessing the results.

ACW's draft *Equality Strategy* is out for consultation but includes an objective to: "Develop and publish arts specific Equality and Diversity Best Practice Guidance, covering each of the protected characteristics [in Equalities legislation] as well as general issues. Introduce this to the arts sector and encourage its use."

<p>Recommendation 5. We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that an audit is taken of the accessibility of all publicly-funded sites intended for the provision of arts and cultural experiences. (Page 50)</p>	<p>ACW: See recommendation 4 above.</p> <p>Cadw: As above, work on a new programme of Cadw site access audits and improvements (for people with physical and sensory impairments) will begin in late 2011 but will run thereafter on a 5 year rolling programme, with review milestones. Audits were last undertaken in Cadw in 2007; the next round of audits is due to take place in 2012.</p> <p>CyMAL: Access audit – please see information regarding the Access Summary Template under Recommendation 4. The Remit Letter issued by the Minister to the National Museum and National Library contains a reference to the requirement for both institutions to comply with the Single Equality Duty.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6. We recommend that the Welsh Government accepts that it has accountability, at a strategic level, for the funding decisions undertaken by Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies, such as the Arts Council of Wales. (Page 59)</p>	<p>Welsh Government: This has always been the case, and the Welsh Government accepts its responsibility in this area. We will continue to convey Welsh Government strategic priorities through the Minister’s annual Remit Letters to our Sponsored Bodies. This will assist those bodies to focus their resources at specific areas. However, the Welsh Government does not accept responsibility for individual or programme funding decisions taken by sponsored bodies. These remain the responsibility of these bodies, who are ultimately best placed to make these decisions and to assess their impact and benefits.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7. We recommend that the Welsh Government works with partners to enable the identification of geographic areas in Wales where people have particularly limited access to arts and cultural experiences. Following this work, we anticipate that the Welsh Government would then encourage partners to strategically utilise such information to develop increased access to arts and cultural activities in areas where people have particularly limited access to arts and cultural activities. (Page 70)</p>	<p>ACW: ACW is currently aggregating and working its way through a huge amount of data including RFO Annual Survey, LA Survey and Arts in Wales 2010. ACW has also been given some free consultancy from Ordnance Survey as part of training in the use of the GIS mapping technology that it has acquired.</p> <p>ACW has identified through its Investment Review an opportunity for improving digital interconnectivity to encourage virtual shared programming. Live screenings are already happening with productions from London’s National Theatre and the New York Metropolitan Opera regularly screened at venues across Wales. There are three issues here: the hardware (ie: the digital satellite kit), the content (and the contract conditions that apply to its ‘transmission’) and production costs. As part of its new Capital strategy ACW is looking at providing funds for venues to acquire the hardware, in effect creating a digitally connected <i>One Wales</i>. It is currently exploring a pilot with Theatr Mwldan, where the Theatre will lead a consortium of potential venues. The contractual and rights issues are challenging as some companies put restrictions on what venues are able to show. However ACW plans to investigate these further during 2012.</p> <p>Cadw: Audience development is a priority for Cadw. Cadw continues to take steps to ensure that historic sites are increasingly accessible and enjoyable to visit - for visitors and people who live in Wales and, particularly, for people from groups currently under-represented in its visitor profile. A visitor survey was carried out in September 2011 and Cadw will use the data to inform its visitor profiling and targeting.</p>

	<p>An internal review of audience development, events, education and lifelong learning programmes has taken place in Cadw. The review concluded that the staff resources available to deliver community focused programmes were inadequate and resources have been prioritised to enable further posts to be created in this business area. Recruitment will commence shortly.</p> <p>CyMAL: Museums, archives and libraries provide local access points to the arts, culture and heritage in over 400 service points across Wales. In addition public libraries provide mobile and/or housebound services for those people unable to utilise their local static library - albeit that there has been some reduction in mobile library services in Wales as a result of funding reductions. There are also innovative schemes such as the <i>Fan Hyn Fan Draw</i> mobile library service in Ceredigion that delivers access to a wider range of services such as information on public services, including the arts, and internet access.</p> <p>The 'Sharing Treasures' programme, administered on behalf of the Welsh Government by CyMAL in partnership with the National Museum, provides grant funding to enable the national collections to be displayed at local museums across Wales.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8. We recommend that the Arts Council of Wales continue to prioritise the development of a strategy for Children, Young People and the Arts as urgent. (Page 76)</p>	<p>ACW: ACW's new strategy for children, young people and the arts, <i>Young Creators</i> was published in November. A companion document related specifically to targeting Child Poverty has also been published alongside <i>Young Creators</i>. Regular updates on progress and the impact of these documents will be provided to the Welsh Government, to ensure that accessibility to the arts for children and young people is at the heart of ACW's agenda.</p> <p>Welsh Government: We will be closely monitoring the impact of ACW's Young Creators strategy (and Child Poverty annex) to ensure it delivers on its ambitions in accordance with Welsh Government priorities for Children and Young People. A full assessment of progress will be provided during the next update.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9. We recommend that the Welsh Government brings forward a measure to place a statutory duty on local authorities to support arts and cultural experiences in their local areas. (Page 83)</p>	<p><i>We did not accept this recommendation.</i></p> <p><i>(Nonetheless the Welsh Government is encouraging sponsored bodies to develop their links with local authorities through partnership working and sharing of good practice; this will be reflected in the Minister's annual Remit Letters).</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 10. We recommend that the Welsh Government has dialogue with the Arts Council of Wales to ensure that reductions in funding</p>	<p><i>We did not accept this recommendation.</i></p> <p><i>(Nonetheless, we understand that provided that its funding is maintained at intimated levels, the ACW has no plans to reduce its funding to its Revenue Funded organisations over the three years from 2011-12).</i></p>

<p>for its revenue funded clients are limited to around 4% over a three year period from 2011-2012, as set out by the Minister for Heritage. (Page 86)</p>	
<p>Recommendation 11. We recommend that the Welsh Government continues to seek to persuade the UK Government to enable them to provide three-year funding deals to bodies such as the Arts Council of Wales, with year-end flexibility. (Page 92)</p>	<p>Welsh Government: Continued uncertainty over the UK Government’s deficit reduction plans makes a positive decision on this issue unlikely in the short to medium term. Consequently no formal discussions have taken place on this issue to date.</p> <p>In the meantime, the Welsh Government has been able to provide indicative budget figures to WGSBs in line with its own three year budget management programme covering the years 2011-12 to 2013-14. While these budgets are indicative only, they do allow the sponsored bodies to plan their funding over the coming years. It is hoped that this can be built upon following the initial three-year cycle.</p> <p>Welsh Government Heritage officials will continue to monitor this situation closely with their Central Finance colleagues. The Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage will review the position at the beginning of 2013-14 and, if necessary, will ask the Finance Minister to open discussions with the UK Government to resolve this matter.</p>
<p>Recommendation 12. We recommend that the Welsh Government clarifies its total current expenditure towards arts and cultural experiences, across all Government Departments. (Page 93)</p>	<p>Welsh Government: Unfortunately, there is no existing mechanism in place to facilitate compliance with this recommendation although officials have been actively seeking a way forward. Following initial scoping work on the new Welsh Government Grants Management System it became apparent that the level of input required to break down funding activity across the whole of the Welsh Government would be disproportionate to the benefits of having this information to hand. There are fundamental difficulties in providing an accurate figure, not least (i) the definition of precisely what should be classed as an arts/cultural activity, and (ii) how to determine what portion of a grant should relate to arts/community/equality/education etc.</p> <p>For this reason, we are unable to make significant progress with this recommendation at present, although we will continue to review this issue with a view to taking action in future. In the meantime, we will be closely monitoring spend on arts and cultural experiences within the Heritage MEG, and will continue to seek to incorporate funding from other sources into the cultural sector.</p>

<p>Recommendation 13. We recommend that the Welsh Government continues to promote a co-ordinated approach between its various departments in their support for the arts and culture experiences in Wales. (Page 94)</p>	<p>Welsh Government: This is an ongoing commitment that is inherent to the work undertaken by individual departments. Existing collaboration includes work with Health Department colleagues on the Arts and Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, and with Education colleagues on 'Reach the Heights' and the forthcoming Review of Arts in Education. This commitment is being monitored closely, in order to identify additional opportunities to work with other Departments and organisations from within the Culture/heritage sector. The Minister for Housing, Regeneration & Heritage wishes to see closer co-ordination and joint working between individual departments within his portfolio while initiatives such as SCIF funding in Bangor and Swansea are bringing economic, artistic and educational benefits across the country.</p> <p>Cadw: Cadw is an active member of the Cultural Tourism Steering Group/Partnership and the NE Wales Cultural Partnership, and is engaged in joint planning work with NMW and ACW (as outlined above).</p> <p>CyMAL: CyMAL actively contribute to cross departmental priorities such as literacy, digital inclusion, health and well-being and Welsh language, and works closely with Cadw to protect our cultural heritage.</p>
<p>Recommendation 14. We recommend that the Welsh Government continues to encourage the development of regional arts services across local authority areas. (Page 96)</p>	<p>ACW: ACW is continuing to promote the value of partnerships such as the 'Arts Connect' consortium of local authorities, and is keen to develop other initiatives elsewhere in Wales. Work is in progress to assist WLGA, CORL and individual local authorities to implement the 'Simpson Compact' commitment for '<i>local government...to review the scope for collaboration in the future delivery of culture and leisure services by March 2012</i>'. An important focus for ACW's future work on this subject will be the development of a series of strategic local/regional arts partnerships.</p> <p>ACW has acknowledged that during the current Welsh Government term there will be more collaboration and joint working across local authorities and other public bodies, organised around defined localities or regions. Being part of these developments will provide an efficient means of identifying future joint priorities and areas for partnership, of which Arts Connect is one obvious example. ACW is taking advice from the WLGA in developing its new approach, but has committed in principle to putting in place partnership agreements with local government, nationally, regionally and individually.</p> <p>CyMAL: CyMAL is supporting local, regional and national partnership working in promoting access to the collections of museums, archives and libraries across Wales. CyMAL has worked with public and academic libraries in opening-up public access to their collections including supporting regional inter-library loan schemes. CyMAL is supporting regional co-operation between museums in delivering educational activities. CyMAL is also working closely with the WLGA in order to encourage closer regional working between museums, archives and libraries across Wales.</p>

<p>Recommendation 15. We recommend that the Welsh Government sets out a strategic message that all public funding arrangements for arts and cultural experiences should be reviewed to ensure that they promote, rather than prevent, partnership working between organisations delivering arts and cultural experiences. (Page 102)</p>	<p>Welsh Government: Partnership working is being encouraged at every opportunity and will again be included as a specific requirement within the 2012/13 annual Remit Letter. Similarly, ACW will again be required to include this as a standard term in its agreements with its funding clients. This will continue to be emphasised during discussions with ACW and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>Cadw: Cadw has embraced collaborative working; for example it is already working closely with ACW. This follows on from the successful Heritage and Arts Summit in October 2010 which focused on the arts as a means of engaging communities and connecting with audiences who are typically hard for the heritage sector to reach. The Heritage Interpretation and Tourism Summit in December 2010 explored how effective presentation of heritage can boost Wales's tourism offer. Cadw also provides the Secretariat to the HRH Minister's Historic Environment Group which brings a number of key partners together including ACW. Since 2007 HEG has been supplemented by regular "Treftadaeth" conferences and a series of thematic "summits" which have fostered dialogue across a very diverse interest base, including national and very local organisations.</p> <p>CyMAL: The Welsh Government's grant schemes, administered by CyMAL to support the museums, archives and libraries sector, actively encourages partnership working in improving access to our rich and diverse culture and heritage.</p> <p>Partnership is highlighted as a Ministerial priority in the National Museum and the National Library's Remit Letters for 2011-12, and will be emphasised again in the 2012-13 Remit Letters. The Remit Letters provide specific examples of partnerships in which the Museum and the Library are involved.</p> <p>The National Museum, the National Library and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments Wales are working together to deliver the People's Collection Wales (PCW). This is an innovative bilingual digital platform to collect, interpret and display the story of Wales' history, culture and heritage. It also encourages individuals and community groups to contribute to the story of Wales alongside our cultural heritage institutions.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16. We recommend that the Welsh Government continues to emphasise the obligation of Wales' National Arts and Cultural bodies to the people of Wales as a whole. (Page 104)</p>	<p>ACW: In its post Investment Review document <i>Renewal and transformation</i> the ACW stressed its expectations for national companies to act as exemplars and leaders across the full range of arts development functions. A detailed list of expectations is set out in <i>Renewal and transformation</i>. ACW is currently in dialogue with the six National organisations it supports about extending the range and extent of their educational and outreach programmes. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh National Opera's highly regarded WNO MAX programme National Theatre Wales' touring to locations of all scale across the country BBC NOW's work in providing Teachers Resource packs as part of its wider educational activity Literature Wales promotion of Writers Squads and the Young Person' Laureate

The Film Agency Wales's recently launched Cinema Club
Wales Millennium Centre's Learning and Participation Programme

CyMAL: The charitable object of the National Museum, as stated in the Royal Charter, is the advancement of the education of the public:

- (i) primarily, by the comprehensive representation of science, art, industry, history and culture of, or relevant to, Wales, and
- (ii) generally, by the collection, recording, preservation, elucidation and presentation of objects and things and associated knowledge, whether connected or not with Wales, which are calculated to further the enhancement of understanding and the promotion of research.

The National Library was also established by Royal Charter. Its key purpose is to collect, preserve and give access to all kinds and forms of recorded knowledge, especially relating to Wales and the Welsh and other Celtic peoples, for the benefit of the public including those engaged in research and learning.

The National Museum and the National Library meet these objectives by operating comprehensive education and outreach services, covering formal and informal learning.

The National Museum is a key partner in the delivery of *A Museums Strategy for Wales*, sitting on the strategy steering group, and working in partnership with organisations across Wales to improve services to the public. It offers the benefit of its skills and experience in the areas of developing professional skills, learning, conservation, and collections knowledge.

The National Library will be a key partner in the delivery of the Welsh Government's *Libraries Inspire* strategic library development framework and is a member of the strategy steering group. The National Library is leading on the procurement and delivery of all-Wales online resources for Welsh libraries.

A section of the People's Collection Wales website is dedicated to formal and informal learning audiences – tools, resources and material for this section is currently being developed as a key area of programme activity, working with learning professionals.