

Culture Committee CC 06-03(p.5)

Date: 26 March 2003

Time: 9.00 – 12.30

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales

Middleton, the National Botanic Garden of Wales

Presentation to Culture Committee

Outline

Opening Remarks

- A new institute for a devolved Wales
- The role of a national botanic garden in the 21st century
- Securing the future – an icon for Wales

Some facts

- £43m investment, 25% from private sector
- 100 fte jobs
- Trading at a deficit since opening

Addressing the problems

In the past year:

- Financial review and restructuring
- Quick, low cost changes to visitor experience
- Formal market research to test awareness and perception
- Relationship-building
- New corporate plan

Market Research Findings

- Low market awareness
- Confusion over what NBGW is, does and who it is for

- High level of satisfaction but not family friendly
- Insufficient features, attractions and interpretation
- Glasshouse architecturally impressive but interior disappoints
- Insufficient information

Five Year Strategy

- Vision: a progressive, vibrant botanic garden which tells the story of plants, their importance and the need for their conservation
- Drive visitor numbers to achieve financial sustainability

Action Plan

- Proactive marketing and PR – new team in place
- Development of brand identity
- New investment in visitor experience
- Improvement of interpretation
- Maximise income generation from secondary activities

Summary

NBGW is set to make a positive contribution to WAG policies:

- Cultural development
- Regional economic regeneration
- Tourism
- Sustainability
- The knowledge economy

This will require:

- Capital investment in new visitor facilities
- Revenue support until benefits of investment flow
- Support for science and education programmes

