

Answers to Questions not reached in Plenary 18 April 2002

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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Questions to the Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language

Involvement of the Arts Council for Wales in Prioritising Policies

Q4 Alun Cairns: Will the Minister make a statement on the involvement of the Arts Council for Wales in assisting her to prioritise policies? (OAQ16913) *Transferred for written answer.*

The Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language (Jenny Randerson): The Arts Council of Wales is one of the main partners in delivering the action plans in my culture strategy 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol'. It is also a member of Cymru'n Creu and contributes effectively to that forum.

I meet arts council representatives formally twice a year to discuss issues of mutual interest and officials are in regular contact with their counterparts discussing priorities and seeking advice.

Equality of Opportunity in Rugby and Football

Q7 Alun Pugh: Will the Minister make a statement on how she intends to promote equal opportunity in rugby and football? (OAQ16921)

Jenny Randerson: I am absolutely committed to promoting equality of opportunity, not only in rugby and football, but in all sports in Wales.

In relation to football, the football forum is addressing this area as part of my strategy to develop football in Wales for young people, to create opportunities for all and open access to the game.

The Welsh Rugby Union already adopts policies to ensure that there are opportunities for all: for example, ensuring that girls and boys up to the age of 13 have opportunities to play in a structured system.

Lottery Money for Sport and the Arts

Q8 Pauline Jarman: What progress has been made in the Government of Wales's ongoing attempts to increase Wales's percentage share of lottery funding for sports and the arts? (OAQ16873)

Jenny Randerson: I refer to the answer given to Jocelyn Davies's question (OAQ16868) earlier today. I will be pressing ahead to secure a greater share of lottery funding for sport and the arts in Wales.

FA Cup Final

Q9 Nick Bourne: Will the Minister support moves to bring the FA Cup final to the Millennium Stadium on a permanent basis? (OAQ16882)

Jenny Randerson: Millennium Stadium plc has entered into a contract with the Football Association to host the FA Cup final until May 2005. It is the responsibility of the Football Association to determine the venue for the FA Cup final. I have, on several occasions, said that I would welcome the FA Cup final making its permanent home in Wales but this is a matter for the FA.

I do, however, fully support any moves to bring any major events to Wales, which is one of the objectives set out in my culture strategy 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol', which I launched earlier this year.

Ymweliad â Gwlad y Basg

C10 Dafydd Wigley: A wnaiff y Gweinidog ddatganiad byr am ei hymweliad diweddar â Gwlad y Basg? (OAQ16862) [W]

Jenny Randerson: Ymwelais â Gwlad y Basg rhwng 9 a 12 Ebrill gyda Chadeirydd Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg. Bu'r ymweliad yn fodd inni gael cipolwg gwerthfawr ar y gwaith a wnaethpwyd i gynnal y Fasgeg dros yr 20 mlynedd ddiwethaf, a chymharu'r sefyllfa â Chymru. Bûm yn trafod hefyd â Gweinidogion Gwlad y Basg dros ddiwylliant a chwaraeon.

Visit to the Basque Country

Q10 Dafydd Wigley: Will the Minister make a brief statement on her recent visit to the Basque Country? (OAQ16862) [W]

Jenny Randerson: I visited the Basque Country between 9 and 12 April with the Chairman of the Welsh Language Board. The visit enabled us to gain valuable insights into the work done to support the Basque language over the past 20 years, and draw suitable comparisons with Wales. I also had discussions with the Basque Ministers for culture and sport.

Support for the Arts in South Wales Central

Q11 Jonathan Morgan: Will the Minister make a statement on how the arts are supported by the Assembly in South Wales Central? (OAQ16877)

Jenny Randerson: The National Assembly is supporting the development of the Wales Millennium Centre and Cardiff County Council's bid for Cultural Capital of Europe status in 2008.

In addition, over £4 million was paid out in arts council grants to the South Wales Central area in the last year.

Welsh National Performing Arts Companies

Q12 Tom Middlehurst: Will the Minister make a statement on the future funding of the Welsh national performing arts companies? (OAQ16860)

Jenny Randerson: The Arts Council of Wales has announced a 15 per cent funding increase for all its revenue clients. It is also establishing a stabilisation scheme, for which all revenue clients will be eligible. A stabilisation scheme for the Welsh National Opera, in partnership with the Arts Council of England, has already been announced.

Contributions to the Wales Millennium Centre

Q13 Peter Law: What contributions are public sector bodies making to the Wales Millennium Centre? (OAQ16863)

Jenny Randerson: The funding package for the Wales Millennium Centre, including the contributions of public sector bodies, was made available to all Assembly Members following the plenary debate on 22 January, as follows:

Total Project Cost: £104 million

Key funding sources

Welsh Assembly Government	Millennium Commission	Arts Council of Wales Lottery grant	WDA/CBDC/WTB	Additional funding from private sector
Up to £37 million	£31 million	£10 million	£6 million	£20 million + (of which £11 million is already committed)

The £104 million cost envelope breaks down as follows:

Total building budget (including fit out and IT), of which £77.5 million is the building contract including fees	£97 million
Pre-opening costs	£7 million
Total	£104 million

Question 14 (OAQ16858) withdrawn.

Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol

Q15 Delyth Evans: Will the Minister make a statement on ‘Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol’? (OAQ16854)

Jenny Randerson: My culture strategy ‘Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol’ was formally launched on 7 February 2002 at the Pop Factory in Porth. I will be attending a number of other launch events across Wales to draw attention to the strategy in the time leading up to the summer recess.

Work is continuing on the action plans. I will be discussing progress to date and how to take forward other actions with our partners in delivering the strategy at the next meeting of Cymru’n Creu in May. I will also report regularly on progress to the Assembly’s Culture Committee.

Questions to the Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business

Support for Diversification into Tourism

Q3 Alun Cairns: What support is available in rural areas to assist with diversification into the tourist industry? (OAQ16898) *Transferred for written answer.*

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Assembly Business (Carwyn Jones): There are a number of avenues available to support diversification into tourism in rural areas. These include the farm tourism grant, available through Farming Connect, and the Wales Tourist Board’s investment support scheme.

Questions 4 (OAQ16891) and 8 (OAQ16890) withdrawn. Questions 5-7 answered in Plenary.

Future of Agriculture in Wales

Q9 Lynne Neagle: Will the Minister make a statement about any discussions he has had with the Minister of State for Rural Affairs about the future of agriculture in Wales? (OAQ16925)

Carwyn Jones: I regularly meet with United Kingdom Ministers responsible for agriculture and rural affairs to discuss matters of mutual interest. We last met on 13 February.

Fishing in Welsh Waters

Q10 John Griffiths: Will the Minister make a statement on the latest position regarding fishing in Welsh waters? (OAQ16928)

Carwyn Jones: I am grateful to John for his advance notice that the question relates to concerns about the impact of the Environment Agency's future salmon management proposals on the Blackrock Lave Net Salmon Heritage Fishery.

If, in light of this recent exercise, the Environment Agency proposes to make bye-laws, there is a requirement for further consultation before formal proposals can be submitted to the National Assembly for determination.

Involvement with the Tellus Project

Q11 Cynog Dafis: Will the Minister make a statement on the National Assembly's involvement with the Tellus project? (OAQ16902)

Carwyn Jones: The Tellus project, developed by the European Council of Young Farmers, is aimed at providing educational materials for primary schools to make children across Europe aware of agriculture. I commend the general principle of promoting awareness about the industry, with the future aim of assisting and attracting young people. However, the project's promoters have yet to demonstrate its effectiveness in relation to Wales.

Consent of Landlords and Tenants (Tir Gofal)

Q12 Peter Rogers: Will the Minister make a statement on Tir Gofal in relation to prior consents between landlords and tenants? (OAQ16887) [R]

Carwyn Jones: Under the scheme rules, tenants are required to notify the landlord of their intention to enter into Tir Gofal. A landlord notification form is provided in the application pack to assist them with this process.

In cases where it appears that there is a serious dispute between the landlord and the tenant, the Countryside Council for Wales will not generally enter into a Tir Gofal agreement unless and until the dispute has been resolved.

Conversion to Organic Production

Q13 Alison Halford: What long term financial assistance is being provided to support farms in Wales that decide to convert to organic production? (OAQ16924)

Carwyn Jones: I am conscious of the arguments in favour of an ongoing subsidy for organic farming, particularly in recognition of the environmental benefits it provides. However, the case for such a subsidy has yet to be conclusively demonstrated. I have therefore asked the agri-environment sub-group of the common agricultural policy reform steering group to consider the issues and to report back with recommendations.

Applications to Tir Gofal

Q14 Alun Cairns: What is the current waiting time for farmers' applications to Tir Gofal to be processed? (OAQ16897)

Carwyn Jones: The additional £1.5 million a year for Tir Gofal, which I announced in February, should enable all current applicants to join the scheme later this year or during the course of 2003.

Promotion of Farmers' Markets

Q15 Peter Black: What action is being taken to promote farmers' markets? (OAQ16908)

Carwyn Jones: Over the past few years, the number of farmers' markets in Wales has grown considerably. The Welsh Development Agency Food Directorate, through the agri-food partnership, is supporting a number of initiatives throughout Wales, and all regions of Wales have seen the development of new farmers' markets.