

Agenda – Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 4 – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 22 March 2023

Meeting time: 09.30 – 12.30

For further information contact:

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Committee Clerk

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Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

2 Wales–Ireland relations: Evidence session Evidence session with Higher Education and business representatives

(09.30 – 10.35)

(Pages 1 – 17)

- Paul Slevin, Executive Chairman, Chambers Wales
- Berwyn Davies, Head of Office, Welsh Higher Education Brussels
- Amanda Wilkinson, Director, Universities Wales

Attached Documents:

- Research Brief: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations
- Evidence from Universities Wales & Welsh Higher Education Brussels: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations

Break

(10.35 – 10.45)



3 Wales–Ireland relations: Evidence session with cultural and heritage bodies

(10.45 – 11.45)

(Pages 18 – 28)

- Eluned Hâf, Head, Wales Arts International
- Mali Thomas, Director of Communications and International Relations, Urdd Gobaith Cymru
- Nia Williams, Director of Learning and Public Programmes, National Museum Wales

Attached Documents:

- Evidence from the Arts Council of Wales & Wales Arts International
Wales: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations
- Evidence from Urdd Gobaith Cymru: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations
- Evidence from National Museum Wales: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations
- Evidence from the National Library of Wales: Inquiry into Wales–Ireland relations (Internally translated)

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting

(11.45)

5 Wales–Ireland relations: Consideration of evidence

(11.45 – 12.00)

6 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023–24: Consideration of draft correspondence

(12.00 – 12.05)

(Pages 29 – 30)

Attached Documents:

- Letter to Welsh Government regarding scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2023–24 – xx March 2023

7 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Consideration of the draft report on the Committee's initial findings

(12.05 – 12.30)

Document is Restricted

Wales-Ireland relations – Senedd Inquiry 2023

Supporting paper in advance of the evidence session with the Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee

Universities Wales and Welsh Higher Education Brussels

Universities Wales represents the interests of all universities in Wales. Our mission is to support a university education system that transforms lives through the work Welsh universities do with the people and places of Wales and the wider world. Immediately prior to the pandemic Universities Wales had been in discussion on developing closer collaboration with Irish counterparts including meetings in Dublin supported by Welsh Government and the British Irish Chambers of Commerce.

Welsh Higher Education Brussels supports Welsh universities in their European engagement through facilitating and co-ordinating activities, promoting Welsh higher education in Brussels and gathering and disseminating intelligence to the Welsh higher education sector. Ireland is a key contact for work undertaken by both the Welsh Government office in Brussels and by Welsh Higher Education Brussels as an important Member State with close links to Wales. There are good relationships with Irish organisations represented in Brussels including the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU, the Irish Regions European Office and Enterprise Ireland. WHEB has organised events with the Irish Regions European Office on Ireland Wales Interreg projects.

Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee Inquiry into Wales – Ireland relations

This paper provides input from Universities Wales and Welsh Higher Education Brussels to the Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee Inquiry into Wales – Ireland relations and specifically the following themes identified by the Committee:

- Wales-Ireland relations post-Brexit
- The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to international engagement.
- The funding of future cooperation and collaborative projects between Ireland and Wales
- Priority areas for cooperation between Ireland and Wales

Wales-Ireland relations post-Brexit

1. Ireland has always been an important partner for Wales in higher education and research and this partnership has strengthened in recent years, supported in part by European programmes and funding. We value the Irish students studying in Wales recognising that they can continue to benefit from home fee status. We would be concerned if any new barriers were put in place that would limit the exchange of students in future. With Brexit meaning the end of Structural Funds including the Interreg programme, that provided significant resources for research and innovation work in Wales, it is even more important to ensure existing research collaborations and connections are maintained and developed further. This may include a potential focus on collaboration through Horizon Europe with our partners across Europe with a particular focus on Ireland as our closest EU Member State.
2. Universities in Wales and Ireland have had access to the EU research and innovation programmes that have provided a framework for research co-operation and collaboration. In the previous [Horizon 2020](#) programme there were a number of projects involving participants from Welsh universities and Irish universities but the data suggests that Wales has had more collaborative links with some other similar-sized partners such as Flanders than with Ireland. There was also no strong thematic focus for Horizon 2020 collaborations involving Welsh and Irish universities.
3. The 2014-20 Ireland Wales Interreg programme has provided €100m funding for collaborative work with €79m from the European Regional Development Fund. Twenty-three projects have received funding through the programme and 19 of these projects have involved Welsh universities and many have also involved Irish universities and Institutes of Technology. The programme has had three thematic areas focused on Cross-Border Innovation, Climate Change Adaptation in the Irish Sea area and Cultural and National Resources and Heritage. A number of other Welsh and Irish organisations have also been involved in these projects including local authorities, businesses and research organisations.
4. Given the strong thematic focus provided by the Ireland Wales programme and the significant involvement of Irish and Welsh universities in the programme projects it potentially indicates that Interreg funding provided resources for a number of research collaborations rather than Horizon 2020. As Interreg funding is concluding it will be important to build on the investments made by the Ireland Wales programme to enable Welsh researchers to be considered as useful project partners for relevant Horizon Europe proposals involving Irish research organisations. In this context it is relevant to consider how to align Welsh research activities and areas of strength with Irish research priorities in areas of the Horizon Europe programme such as Oceans Mission and the Climate Change Mission where we share the same geography and challenges. This strategic approach could potentially enable a greater level of collaboration between researchers in Wales and Ireland.

The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to international engagement.

5. We welcome the emphasis on the Wales- Ireland relationship provided by the Welsh Government's International Strategy, published in January 2020, that outlines Wales' international ambition following the EU referendum. The International Strategy stresses the importance of Wales current relationship with Ireland and prepared the policy rationale for the Joint Action Plan. The Ireland Wales [Joint Action Plan and Shared Statement](#) was published in March 2021. It is encouraging that education and research is identified as one of the six key focus areas in the Plan.
6. We are supportive of this approach which provides a framework for activity between the two countries and it is appropriate that education and research are included within the framework. Reflecting the history and breadth of connections the Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan is probably the most detailed outline of bilateral activity between Wales and another country or region. We look forward to update on the Joint Action Plan including education and research activities later this year.

The funding of future cooperation and collaborative projects between Ireland and Wales

7. We were disappointed that the UK Government decided not to participate in the current Interreg programme period running from 2021-28. The Welsh Government together with a number of other organisations around the UK have undertaken work in their geographical regions to maintain important cross-border connections with relevant close partners in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Ireland. Following a period of discussion and consultation with stakeholders the Welsh Government published its [Irish Sea Framework](#) as part of its wider [Agile Cymru](#) work in February 2023 outlining its approach to building on previous programmes to maintain collaborations in the Irish Sea Space. The Framework has three thematic areas: sustainable blue economy, innovation strengths and communities and culture. Welsh researchers have been involved in the discussions and consultations around the development of this Framework and are supportive of its aims and thematic focus as well as its flexibility and links to the Ireland Wales programme. However, it is currently supported by very limited funding compared to the funding available through European programmes in previous periods. We anticipate a funding call shortly for further projects within the Irish Sea Framework.
8. In 2021/22 the Welsh Government ran a call funded through its SCoRE Cymru strand focused on Horizon Europe engagement and increasing Irish Sea co-operation. Based on the budget available, 15 of the 24 applications were selected for funding. Of these, nine projects with a grant value of c.£36,000 involved direct cooperation with Ireland and c.70% of supported projects with a value of around £25,000 were led by Welsh universities.

Priority areas for cooperation between Ireland and Wales

9. The priorities identified in the Irish Sea Framework build on the priorities of the [Ireland Wales programme 2014-20](#). This approach should enable existing connections to be maintained and developed further but there may be other opportunities that we need to be positioned to respond to in areas such as the [Horizon Europe](#) programme and multilateral engagement with Ireland as part of wider Atlantic Area or other geographical and thematic networks. If the UK associates to Horizon Europe this may be easier but even if we remain a third country using these research connections will be even more important to enable researchers based in Wales to collaborate and network with partners in Ireland and across Europe. The level of investment in research and innovation in Ireland coupled with Ireland's success in securing competitive research funding is significant and the development of a number of new regional and applied universities that will receive significant funding, both national funding and European funding, over the next few years will strengthen Irish research further.

There are a number of areas to consider in relation to the relationship with Ireland:

- *As Wales transitions from using Interreg funding to support a number of research collaborations with Irish universities it will be important to build on these connections to work together in the Horizon Europe programme in particular in areas such as the Oceans and Climate Change Adaptation Mission.*
- *It will be important for the sector in Wales to consider how a range of sector-led initiatives in research collaboration and international collaboration can contribute to strengthened Wales – Ireland relations in higher education and research.*
- *It may also be useful to explore education policy issues with counterparts in Ireland including the civic mission dimension, widening participation and language/ culture issues.*

Agenda Item 3

WIR 01

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Cysylltiadau rhwng Cymru ac Iwerddon | Wales-Ireland relations

Ymateb gan: Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru & Celfyddydau Rhyngwladol Cymru | Response from: Arts Council of Wales & Wales arts International

Introduction

1. The Arts Council of Wales is the official public body responsible for funding and developing the arts in Wales. We are accountable to Senedd Cymru Welsh Parliament and responsible to the Welsh Government for the way the money they provide to fund the arts in Wales is spent. We are also a Lottery distributor for the arts in Wales.
2. This evidence is submitted by the Arts Council of Wales, informed by the knowledge and experience of our international in-house agency, Wales Arts International.

Wales-Ireland relations post-Brexit

3. Post-Brexit, the importance of Ireland as our closest EU neighbour has been reinforced. At a cultural level, there is a willingness to continue with collaborations between the arts sectors, but as with many EU member states, the perception of the UK has changed since the EU referendum and exit. We have had to increase our efforts to continue to support and strengthen ties with Ireland.
4. The existence of the Common Travel Area has gone some way to enabling the movement of people between Wales and Ireland to continue, which is helpful in the arts sector when working cross border on some short term and longer-term projects. However, the changes with regards to movement of goods has been one that the arts sector (particularly performing arts and visual arts) have had to adapt to.
5. Our [Arts Infopoint UK initiative](#), in partnership with our sister arts councils across the UK, has been supporting the sector in looking at some of the practical issues for artists – with a focus mainly on incoming to the UK, but also with outgoing mobility to the EU as many practical questions have been raised by the sector. We will be

looking at developing specific information for artists working between UK and Ireland later in 2023.

Current approach to bilateral engagement between the Welsh and Irish governments and whether it is fit for purpose post-Brexit

6. Wales Arts International works in partnership with the Welsh Government's International Relations Team and the Welsh Government office in Ireland. For example, we helped deliver the Wales week events in Dublin 2020; and we launched our [Gwrando - Dewi Padraig dialogue](#) in May 2022 in Dublin.
7. The Welsh Government office in Ireland, along with the establishment of the Irish Consulate in Cardiff and the support given by both governments in particular to the arts and culture sector has been beneficial to the arts sector in Wales in developing relationships in Ireland.
8. Whilst we are still to see the full impact of post Brexit (and post pandemic) on the arts sector's international work, we reiterate that even greater efforts are needed post-Brexit to develop and strengthen our relationships with Ireland.

The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to international engagement.

9. While there are some areas (eg Arts Infopoint UK) where we work across the 4 nations of the UK with Ireland, we find it very helpful to have a Wales specific approach and plan that is distinctive, as culture is devolved and we are able to have a bilateral relationship with our equivalent agencies in Ireland.
10. We welcomed the inclusion of Culture, Language and Heritage as a key theme in the Shared Statement. One of the actions is to "support the strong and growing relationship between our Arts Councils, Wales Arts International and Culture Ireland through a virtual stakeholder group meeting to further develop and enhance cooperation". Wales Arts International has continued to nurture the relationships between the agencies, with a view to re-establishing the virtual stakeholder group now that the changes in senior leadership in all 3 agencies over the past 2 years have happened.

The funding of future cooperation and collaborative projects between Ireland and Wales

11. Wales Arts International /Arts Council of Wales have supported a number of artistic projects through a combination of our International Opportunities Fund and some strategic funding. For example, in 2022 we supported visual artist Sean Edwards' solo exhibition *Chased Losses* in Temple Bar Gallery & Studios, Dublin; as well as Jony Easterby's light and sound installations *Remnant Ecologies* as part of Dublin Fringe Festival. We've supported Welsh language musicians and artists to participate in collaborative performances in the Gaeltacht through Celtic Neighbours in 2019 and 2022. We hosted REIC x Y Stamp: a multilingual Spoken Word and Poetry Performance to mark International Women's Day in 2020 to explore active connections between poets. The event featured performances by Ciara Ní É, Dairena Ní Chinnéide, Taylor Edmonds, Llio Maddocks and Sian Miriam in Welsh, Irish and English.
12. We have also piloted a 4 Nations International Fund in 2022, with a number of UK/Ireland projects (with partners in Wales). One example is the collaboration between Articulture/Green Man Festival (Wales); Articulation/Surge (Scotland); Out There Arts (England) and ISACS / Spraoi Festival (Ireland). The award, alongside other funding, supported artist development and professional networking opportunities plus touring of outdoor art works across all nations.
13. However, these are relatively small amounts and the arts sector in Wales undoubtedly feels the loss of both Creative Europe funding and Interreg Ireland-Wales funding and access to participation in these projects and networks. It would be beneficial to have Ireland specific funding opportunities for Wales. For the arts and culture sector, this could include funding for projects within the specific priority areas listed under the next questions, but in particular we are keen to develop a four UK nations and Ireland project around music and sustainable touring (particularly if Manchester are successful in their bid to host WOMEX in 2024).

Priority areas for cooperation between Ireland and Wales

From Wales Arts International/ Arts Council of Wales perspective we are prioritising the following:

14. Wellbeing and Arts and Health – we supported for some of the policy makers and leading practitioners in Wales to start a conversation with partners in Ireland at Creative Ireland's Arts and Mental Health conference in 2020 and there was a big appetite for that peer-to-peer sharing of practice.

15. Language learning and listening. As part of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032, we are supporting artists to listen to indigenous languages through our Gwrandio programme. This includes activity in Ireland. There is interest in the Welsh language arts sector in Ireland and Arts Council of Wales participated in a British-Irish Council delegation (sub group on minority languages) to Connemara in 2022
16. Development of sustainable touring routes for performing arts companies / musicians and sharing of good practice such as Theatre Forum Ireland's [Green Arts Initiative](#). This is something we are keen to develop over the next few years, both from a sustainability perspective, but also looking at new touring models in a post-Brexit context.
17. Peer learning and sharing around Wellbeing of Future Generations act
18. Exchange opportunities for young people, building on the work that the Urdd have developed with TG Lurgan.
19. Music – continue to nurture important relationships around:
 - a. Horizons at WOMEX partnership in 2023, 10 years after the partnership was created at WOMEX 13 Cardiff
 - b. Lleisiau Eraill Aberteifi & Other Voices Dingle partnership
 - c. Nurturing Celtic Connections at Showcase Scotland and Lorient festival in France

Opportunities in developing parliamentary relations between the Senedd and Oireachtas

20. There is an unprecedented opportunity for the Senedd and the Oireachtas to focus on the opportunity to learn from the amendment made by Arts Council of Wales in 2015 to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act that made Culture the fourth pillar of sustainable development, making Wales the first nation to do so and which lead directly to the wellbeing Goal around Culture and the Welsh language. This move was inspired by the international [Agenda 21](#) United Cities and Local Governments.

Arts Council of Wales / Wales Arts International

17 February 2023



Urdd Gobaith Cymru's response to the Senedd Cymru's Inquiry into Wales-Ireland relations²¹

February 2023

Urdd Gobaith Cymru established in 1922 is Wales's largest youth organisation. Its aim is to provide opportunities and experiences, through the medium of the Welsh language, for all young people in Wales to develop into confident citizens. We have nurtured generations of young people to be proud of their country, open to the world and embodiments of our language and culture, as well as having the global values that are respected in Wales. The Urdd is essential to the future of the Welsh language and to Wales. We are world leaders for youth provision in national minority languages.

This response is based on a co-production project between the Urdd and TG Lurgan in Ireland. We also receive a financial contribution from Welsh Government towards the cost of this project.

Specific reference to our project is included in the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan 2021 to 2025 as a method for international engagement.

Support the development of partnerships between our youth organisations that, respectively, promote the use of Welsh and Irish languages, and specifically facilitate and promote the three-year partnership programme between Coláiste Lurgan and Urdd Gobaith Cymru to share learning and best practice in digital technology

Outline of the partnership between the Urdd and TG Lurgan in Ireland

Coláiste Lurgan is an Irish summer school for young people. TG Lurgan is part of Coláiste Lurgan and specialises in releasing interpretations of popular songs with new lyrics in the Irish language.

The partnership between the Urdd and TG Lurgan was launched in March 2020 with the intention of promoting the Welsh and Irish language among young people by creating joint productions and sharing the cultures of Wales and Ireland. Through the partnership, young people in Wales and Ireland co-produce music videos of well-known popular songs in Irish and Welsh, which are released globally to share the cultures of Wales and Ireland. TG Lurgan's YouTube channel is the most popular minority language YouTube channel in the world.

The partnership started during the covid period when virtual co-productions were created.

2020 - "[Golau'n Dallu – Dallta ag na Soilse](#)" first ever Welsh/Irish co-production, of the popular song "Blinding Lights". watched by 86,000 across all platforms during the first 7 days of its release.

2021 - "[Gwenwyn – Nimhneach](#)", a version of the Alfa band's Welsh song which is the first Welsh song to be played a million times on Spotify.

2022 – [Uisce Faoin Droichead / Dŵr Dan Bont](#) by Adele. 16 young people travelled to the TG Lurgan summer camp in Connemara, during the 4-day visit, together with TG Lurgan young people the following was achieved:-

- Rehearsed the song 'Dŵr dan bont' by Adele
- Recorded and filmed the video for the Lurgan's YouTube channel
- Participated in instrumental and vocal workshops
- Enjoyed in each other's company celebrating Welsh and Irish cultures and the importance of using the languages as young people
- Demonstrated Welsh Folk dancing and Clog dancing workshops and learnt Irish dancing.

- spent time socialising and sharing the two cultures and inspiring each other to make use of Welsh and Irish through the arts.

Quotes

“After living most of my teenage years during the pandemic, this was an amazing experience that means so much more than one can explain.”

“This trip has taught me more about the Irish language and has increased my appreciation for the Welsh language.”

Quote from a young member of TG Lurgan :

“I came to Lurgan not knowing how I would get on. I was anxious about meeting new people but excited at the same time, but meeting all of you from Wales was probably the highlight of my trip. Getting to meet and share an experience with other teenagers that have the same passion for their native language as I do was surreal and honestly really comforting. We are all trying to keep in contact and plan on meeting up at some point. We shared plenty of laughs, bonded over our collective love for musicals (especially Mamma Mia), and had some really amazing jam sessions in the music room. Getting to learn Welsh for the collaboration on Water Under The Bridge was really cool and I for one am really excited to see how it comes out. All in all, my general experience in Lurgan this year was amazing, but meeting all of you was the best part!”

Response by Urdd to the main themes of the inquiry

Current approach to bilateral engagement between the Welsh and Irish governments and whether it is fit for purpose post-Brexit.

From the Urdd's experience of working together on a young people's project, it has

- develop national and international pride and raised the status of minority languages among young people
- brought together people who speak a minority language
- developed good practice in creating and sharing digital content
- enabled us as an organisation to compare and benchmark our provision
- shown to young people the norm of bilingualism within a social context outside of the education system.

The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to international engagement.

We are delighted to be included within the Culture, Language and Heritage element of the action plan. For us as an organisation and for the young people it has been:-

- a positive experience for young people in Wales and Ireland
- a contemporary, dynamic, and exciting way of involving young people in Wales and Ireland and sharing our cultures to the wider world
- of social and personal value for the youth of Wales
- an opportunity for Urdd staff to share good practice and learn with an emphasis on minority languages
- catalyst and opened doors to develop new partnerships in Ireland
- an opportunity to show the Welsh language to a new audience outside of Wales. E.g., coverage in 13 different countries and coverage in the popular press e.g. The Independent, The Sun and Joe.ie

The funding of future cooperation and collaborative projects between Ireland and Wales

The collaboration between the Urdd and TG Lurgan would not have been possible without Welsh Government funding and the links at civil service level between Wales and Ireland.

We have succeeded:-

- to create an inclusive opportunity to develop a project that any young person from any background can participate.
- jointly, to have the opportunity to raise the cultural and linguistic status of Wales and Ireland
- to create a model of joint working between the Urdd and Welsh Government's International department which celebrates the culture and vitality of young people

Priority areas for cooperation between Ireland and Wales


From our experience so far, we would like to see an emphasis on the following priorities:-

- Further develop, with the encouragement of the International Department in Ireland, partnerships between Irish youth organisations and the Urdd.
- Sharing the good practice of the Urdd's provision, e.g., for the first time in Europe introducing the 'Chwarae yn Gymraeg' (Play in Welsh) packages which aims to raise the confidence of new speakers in a minority language
- Wider opportunities to work together to develop and share good practice of youth provision work in a minority language.

An inquiry into Wales – Ireland relations by the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Comments submitted by Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales

Responses are focused on Amgueddfa Cymru's relationship with National Museum Ireland.

- **Wales-Ireland relations post-Brexit**
Amgueddfa Cymru first established a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) in February 2019. This was renewed in 2021 to mark the continued commitment of the strategic relationship between both national museums and in response to the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement & Joint Action Plan (2021-2025).
- **Current approach to bilateral engagement between the Welsh and Irish governments and whether it is fit for purpose post-Brexit.**
In terms of the cultural sector, our approach to bilateral engagement between the Welsh and Irish Governments is working well. NMI is our closest international partner. We are discussing a number of joint initiatives and share a commitment to cultural participation and widening engagement with our National Museums.
- **The Ireland-Wales Shared Statement & Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to international engagement.**
Amgueddfa Cymru is committed to the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement & Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) as an approach to developing our relationships with Ireland. Our involvement in political and diplomatic engagements e.g. supporting Wales Ireland Forum,  has provided a platform for us to exchange policy perspectives, share learning and build collaborations to strengthen our relationship with NMI and the Irish Museums Association. The MoU between National Museums is enabling us to frame this work as part of delivering against the Ireland-Wales Shared Statement & Joint Action Plan (2021-2025).

In response to the Joint Action Plan, we have developed five pillars of focus for our ongoing strategic partnership. These place an emphasis on areas of shared interest, as well as those especially relevant to wider Museum practice in the wake of Brexit, COVID-19 and other global challenges. The five pillars respond in particular to the Culture, Language and Heritage area of cooperation in the Joint Action Plan, but also reflect other areas of co-operation in the Plan. They are currently largely focused on knowledge exchange and on sharing ways of working. The five pillars of mutual beneficial outcomes are as follows:

- **Strategic Development, Peer Mentorship and Learning** - NMI and Amgueddfa Cymru have establishing opportunities for peer review and learning to evaluate, assess and improve our ways of working. For example

- a *Cultural Rights, Cultural Democracy* learning and development conference in Caernarfon with museum workers, leading researchers and government representatives from Cymru, Éire, Alba, Kernow, Breizh, North and Latin America.
- **Decolonisation** - Both Amgueddfa Cymru and NMI are developing strategic initiatives, policies and procedures that address the overall process of decolonisation within our institutions.
 - **Climate and Biodiversity** - We are collaborating on best practice models for museums with extensive Natural History collections, and the opportunities these present.
 - **Mobility of Collections** - As national museums with multiple site locations in both rural and urban contexts, we are sharing methods of working to enable greater mobility of national collections across the communities we serve.
 - **Future Collaboration**- We are also identifying opportunities for future collaboration. For example, supporting the development of the Welsh and Irish languages.
- **The funding of future cooperation and collaborative projects between Ireland and Wales.**

There are opportunities in the future to develop co-funded cultural initiatives between Ireland and Wales although the post-Brexit European funding situation is making this more challenging. Funding is limited and providing seed funding to pilot collaborative initiatives would seem a reasonable way forward.
 - **Priority areas for cooperation between Ireland and Wales.**

In terms of Culture, Language and Heritage it would be good to build on the co-operation that has already been established within individual sectors (such as Arts, Museums and Libraries), to develop a wider co-operation across the cultural sector. This could bring together local and national cultural institutions in the creative and cultural sector to explore closer collaboration on a broader scale.

Manon Edwards Ahir
**Pennaeth Cynllunio a
Materion Allanol**
Head of Planning & External
Affairs

Nia Williams
**Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a
Rhaglenni Cyhoeddus**
Director of Learning & Public
Programmes

24/02/2023

This document provides a translation of correspondence received from the National Library of Wales

Wales-Ireland Relations

Evidence from the National Library of Wales

The Library is grateful for the opportunity to contribute evidence to the inquiry being undertaken by the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee. As a cultural institution responsible for collecting Welsh and Celtic materials, the Library can cite a number of examples where it has collaborated – and continues to collaborate – with institutions and organisations in Ireland.

Legal Deposit

In its capacity as the only Legal Deposit Library in Wales, the Library works closely with Trinity College Dublin on the collection and processing of Legal Deposit materials from the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland. These materials include print publications (books, newspapers) and digital publications (websites, e-books). The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 and the Legal Deposit Libraries (Non-Print Works) Regulations 2013 allow the National Library, together with other legal deposit libraries in the UK and Ireland (the British Library; Cambridge University Library; the Bodleian Libraries, Oxford; the National Library of Scotland; and the Library of Trinity College Dublin). This collaboration is a means of sharing expertise and nurturing a close relationship with libraries such as Trinity College Dublin. In the wake of recent changes to legislation in Ireland, obtaining items from Ireland is more challenging. These changes are not a result of Brexit. In terms of the direct impact of Brexit on Legal Deposit issues, in light of the fact that items from Ireland cross the border, Brexit has increased the cost of collecting items as there are additional costs and paperwork associated with ensuring that print publications can reach the UK.

Collections and the Potential for Collaboration

As the Ireland-Wales Joint Action Plan (2021-2025) acknowledges, 'Culture, Language and Heritage' is an area of collaboration that offers a number of opportunities. Unique collections often provide opportunities to share and create projects that improve relations between the two countries. For example, a collection of Irish manuscripts has been used as part of bids for postgraduate projects and research. The recent project undertaken by the Library to establish a Musical Archive means that there is an interesting relationship with traditional Irish music and the Taisce Cheol Duchais Eireann (Irish Traditional Music Archive). As you would imagine, there are a whole host of links with Ireland across the National Collections, from estate archives to political archives, as well as other literary and cultural connections. The archives of the International Celtic Congress are also kept at the Library in Aberystwyth. In terms of developing parliamentary relations between the Senedd and the Oireachtas, as the institution that receives and looks after the Senedd

Cymru archives, there is an opportunity here to explore research projects in relation to the archives of both institutions.

Other Activities

Staff at the Library support a number of projects. The First World War commemorations were an opportunity to foster relations with Ireland, with a number of activities focusing on the links between Ireland and Fron-Goch near Bala, where 1,800 Irish were interned in a prison camp in 1916. Another current example is the Coastal Uplands project: Heritage and Tourism (Coastal Uplands: Heritage and Tourism (cuphat.aber.ac.uk/)). This project is being jointly undertaken by Aberystwyth University and University College Dublin. It seeks to gather information about areas that will showcase the natural and cultural heritage of coastal upland areas in Ireland and Wales, with the aim of increasing sustainable forms of tourism in those areas, leading to the creation of more sustainable livelihoods, communities and environments. The Library has been supporting this work by holding sessions that enable communities to gather information about the areas in question and upload it to Wikipedia. In terms of broader work related to Wikipedia, the Library also contributes to the Celtic Wiki group, which promotes and supports the development of Celtic materials on the Wiki platform. In respect of culture, there are also opportunities to share expertise in areas such as data management, which is an essential element of supporting a knowledge-based economy. Our links with institutions such as the Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) offer important opportunities for learning and collaboration in this area.

Further Developments

In the Government's International Strategy, published in January 2020, Ireland is identified as one of the priorities. In addition, the Ireland-Wales shared statement and joint action plan (2021-2025) places a greater emphasis on the kind of relations that the Government wants to develop. The Library will develop a new International Strategy during the next year. There will therefore be an opportunity to consider where relations with Ireland belong in that strategy.

15-03-2023

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Document is Restricted