

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

---

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 15 May 2024

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

[SeneddCulture@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddCulture@senedd.wales)

## Hybrid

---

### Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

### Public

#### 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

#### 2 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Government (8)

(09.30 – 10.30)

(Pages 1 – 30)

Lesley Griffiths MS, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice

Jeremy Miles MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language

Ruth Meadows, Director, Culture, Heritage and Sport

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Welsh Government written evidence

UK Government written evidence



### **3 Papers(s) to note**

(10.30)

#### **3.1 Welsh Government international relations**

(Page 31)

Attached Documents:

Ministerial International Engagement – March 2024

#### **3.2 Legislative Consent: Data Protection and Digital Information Bill**

(Pages 32 – 43)

Attached Documents:

Letter copied for information from the Minister for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Response to questions relating to Legislative Consent

Memorandum (No. 3) on the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill – 16 April 2024

Letter to the Llywydd, Chair of Business Committee: Timetable for scrutiny of Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.4 on the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill No. 2 – 10 May 2024

#### **3.3 Books Council of Wales magazine funding model**

(Pages 44 – 81)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Emily Trahair, Editor, Planet magazine: Outlining concerns regarding the recent Books Council of Wales decision to stop funding – 17 April 2024

Planet magazine annex

Letter to Books Council of Wales: Requesting more information on the new tender opportunity for a new magazine in Wales – 22 April 2024

Response from Books Council of Wales: Providing further details regarding magazine funding – 29 April 2024

Books Council of Wales annex

Letter from Dr Richard Lewis Davies, Publishing Director, Parthian: Support

for the role of the Books Council of Wales within the current publishing industry – 23 April 2024

Parthian annex

### **3.4 A new future for broadcasting and communications in Wales**

(Page 82)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Cymdeithas yr Iaith Digital Group: Letter of complaint about BBC Wales's English news coverage of a Welsh Government announcement on establishing a Broadcasting and Communications Advisory Body for Wales – 17 April 2024 (English Translation by Senedd Commission)

### **3.5 Impact of increasing costs**

(Pages 83 – 85)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from Music Venue Trust: Concerns for grassroots music venues in Wales particularly around the rise in business rates – 25 April 2024

### **3.6 Equality and Social Justice Committee Ministerial scrutiny**

(Pages 86 – 88)

Attached Documents:

Letter copied for information from the Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee to the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice: Invitation to a Ministerial scrutiny session with the Equality and Social Justice Committee – 26 April 2024

### **3.7 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement**

(Pages 89 – 90)

Attached Documents:

Letter copied for information from the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Notification of the inaugural meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) on 2 May 2024 – 30 April 2024

Letter copied for information from the Cabinet Secretary for Education to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Notification that

a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Welsh Ministers and HM Prison and Probation Service has been published – 8 May 2024

### **3.8 General scrutiny sessions**

(Pages 91 – 96)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice: Invitation to a general scrutiny session with the Committee – 30 April 2024

Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language and Cabinet Secretary for Education: Invitation to a general scrutiny session with the Committee – 30 April 2024

Letter to the First Minister: Setting out areas the Committee wishes to discuss at an annual scrutiny session with the Committee on 19 June 2024 – 30 April 2024

### **3.9 HSBC UK Welsh Service Line**

(Pages 97 – 98)

Attached Documents:

Letter from José Carvalho, Head of Wealth & Personal Banking, HSBC UK Bank plc: Update on the Welsh Service Line callback service following a review – 1 May 2024

### **3.10 Development of post-16 Welsh language provision**

(Pages 99 – 101)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language and Cabinet Secretary for Education: Requesting information in relation to the Committee's one day inquiry into the development of post-16 Welsh language provision – 30 April 2024

### **3.11 P-06-1387 Provide humanitarian aid to Gaza**

(Pages 102 – 103)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee: Requesting to be kept updated

on matters relating to Petition P-06-1387 Provide humanitarian aid to Gaza –  
30 April 2024

### **3.12 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024–25**

(Pages 104 – 111)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence copied for information from Elizabeth Atherton, Member of the Senedd's Cross-Party Working Group for Music: The impact of cuts to the Welsh National Opera's funding – 6 May 2024

Annex 1

Annex 2

### **3.13 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union**

(Pages 112 – 122)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from Abi Tierney, Chief Executive of the Welsh Rugby Union: Providing the second quarterly update of the Welsh Rugby Union's progress report against the recommendations in its Independent Review – 7 May 2024

Annex

### **3.14 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025–26**

(Pages 123 – 125)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Finance Committee: Details of its programme of engagement for the forthcoming Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025–26 – 8 May 2024

### **3.15 Safeguarding the national collections**

(Pages 126 – 128)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice: Protecting the national collections – 8 May 2024

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

(10.30)

**Private**

**Break**

(10.30 – 10.40)

**5 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union:  
Presentation of citizen engagement findings (2)**

(10.40 – 10.55)

(Pages 129 – 144)

Attached Documents:

Citizen engagement findings

**6 Culture and the new relationship with the European Union:  
Consideration of evidence**

(10.55 – 11.10)

**7 International Relations Monitoring Report**

(11.10 – 11.20)

(Pages 145 – 160)

Attached Documents:

International Relations Monitoring Report – May 2024 Issue 2

**8 Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2024/25:  
Consideration of draft correspondence in response to the letter  
from the Chair of the Finance Committee inviting comments to  
inform future scrutiny**

(11.20 – 11.30)

(Pages 161 – 163)

Attached Documents:

Draft correspondence

**9 The video games industry: Discussion following private stakeholder event on 2 May 2024**

(11.30 – 11.45)

(Pages 164 – 165)

Attached Documents:

Paper to support a discussion following private stakeholder event

**10 Consideration of the forward work programme for summer 2024**

**(3)**

(11.45 – 12.00)

(Pages 166 – 180)

Attached Documents:

Draft Terms of Reference for a future inquiry into charging for exhibitions

Charging for exhibitions inquiry proposal

Draft forward work programme

Document is Restricted



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## **EVIDENCE PAPER TO THE CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS, WELSH LANGUAGE, SPORT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **The impact of the UK's exit from the EU on the culture sector.**

#### **Introduction**

The impact of the UK's exit from the EU has been felt across the cultural sector. Under the arm's-length-funding principle, all Welsh Government funding for the arts in Wales is channelled through the Arts Council of Wales (ACW). Wales Arts International (WAI) is the international agency of ACW. WAI provides advice and support to artists and arts organisations from Wales who work internationally. It is a contact point for international artists organisations and agencies working in, or connecting with, Wales.

#### **The impact of the new relationship on artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border.**

From a freedom of movement perspective, for artists and creative workers from Wales working in EU countries, the impact of the UK's exit from the EU is that without freedom of movement, artists need to understand the regulations for whichever EU member state they are travelling to – both in terms of border entry/visas and any work permit regulations relevant to what they are planning to do and how long they are planning to stay.

This is made more complex when artists or companies are touring as there's a need to understand different rules in different countries. The Schengen area rule of allowing maximum visitor stays of 90 in 180 days can be prohibitive for touring companies and individual creative workers. WAI reports that it has impacted in particular on the music industry and UK crew who would have previously been booked to work on lengthy European tours.

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. Equally, artists and creative workers from the EU who come to work in Wales have had to understand the new UK border entry requirements and routes that apply to them, as have some of the venues and festivals here. These have generally been through Permitted Paid Engagement, Creative Worker Sponsorship and also some festivals have used the Permit Free Festival route.

## **The impact of the new relationship on European artists and creative workers touring and working in Wales.**

Overall, WAI is being told by the sector that there is an increased administrative and financial burden on the sector, especially individuals and smaller companies (which is predominantly what we have in Wales), due to the processes involved and the associated costs. In a recent survey from UK Music, almost one in three music creators who responded to the survey said their earnings had been affected since the UK's official exit from the EU, and 43% of those hit by Brexit said it was no longer viable for them to tour the EU.

These issues will also have an impact on emerging bands and musicians in particular, on the offers and opportunities to tour internationally. Some organisations funded by ACW have direct experience of the increased administrative and financial burden on them when touring in the EU, including NoFit State, Hijinx and National Dance Company Wales.

At a cultural level, there is a willingness to continue with collaborations between individuals and companies in Wales and the EU - but there is also a perception and sometimes a nervousness expressed that working with the UK/EU will be more problematic.

From a linguistic perspective, there is a significant loss in terms of omnilingual projects coming into Wales supported by the Creative Europe programme. There is also a gap for the Welsh language in terms of the support available for collaborations between minority languages, through Territorial Cooperation projects (Interreg). Whilst there is good will from other minority cultures within the EU, and a sympathy toward Welsh language and culture, it's both more expensive and harder in term of barriers for our artists to be involved in projects funded by the EU.

## **The availability of guidance and support for your sector relating to the new relationship between the UK and EU.**

Since the UK's exit from the EU, there are a number of places offering guidance and support for the cultural sector, but there are also gaps in that provision. WAI/ACW leads on the Arts Infopoint UK initiative, in partnership with Creative Scotland, Arts Council England and Arts Council Northern Ireland. Arts Infopoint 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.

Arts Infopoint UK offers free, practical information to support and help artists, creative professionals, and organisations to understand the rules and administrative requirements for creative visits to the UK. This support has been in the form of webinars and online guides. Some of the webinars have had a focus on practical aspects such as visas or carnets, whilst others have looked at international funding opportunities (e.g. the Four Nations International fund).

Arts Infopoint UK is part of a wider network of Mobility Information Points across the EU and beyond. This group sits under the umbrella of the artist mobility network On the Move, which WAI/ACW is a member. The other mobility points provide practical information for artists travelling to their countries. Seven of them are based in EU member states. In particular, Touring Artists in Germany and Cultuurloket in Belgium have developed guidance and resources specifically for post Brexit questions.

In parallel, many of the UK sector lead bodies have set up specific support and guidance for their members. The music industry in particular has been at the forefront of this. Those who have developed resources include Independent, Musicians Union, Arts Admin, Association of British Orchestras, Outdoor Art and Help Musicians UK. The UK Government has a page on their website for visiting the UK as a creative professional.

PEARLE (Live Performance Europe) has several resources on their website that are useful for UK based creatives working in the EU. Overall, there is guidance available but, for example, the Mobility Information Points do not exist in every country so it can take a lot of time for individual artists and companies to find the information they need. Support, in terms of the financial support needed to cover the costs of the additional administration is needed.

### **The impact of the new relationship on trading arrangements relating to cultural activity.**

WAI reports that the new trading arrangements with the EU have had an impact on the cultural sector, in particular those who are moving goods temporarily. For example, those moving theatre sets and props, musical instruments and equipment and artworks for exhibitions.

In many cases, where goods are being temporarily imported/exported and not being sold, no customs duties are due. However, there is often confusion surrounding this temporary admissions process and whether an ATA carnet is needed or not.

The ATA Carnet is expensive, and not always applicable to artists. There can be low confidence with artists preparing to use a carnet. The performing arts sector used it regularly and while it was suitable for large scale sets of regular performances or larger organisations, smaller organisations found it was not fit-for-purpose.

Musicians in particular, need to be aware of travelling with an instrument containing protected materials (such as ivory), will need a CITES certificate when crossing the EU-UK border. This is applicable to props and costumes too.

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales has told ACW that “we have to commit more resources (time and expertise) in relation to CITES requirements, cargo, and freight. Similarly, there are additional costs where items need to be imported/exported – e.g. if we are ordering equipment from EU countries. This is usually an additional 20% of costs”.

## **Any changes that would improve the operation of the UK's new relationship with the EU for the culture sector.**

Wales has been hugely disadvantaged in several ways that impact the cultural sector, as a result of the UK leaving the EU. The seamless movement of people, and the single market in services and goods that supported the culture sector directly and indirectly, have been replaced with a very limited UK-EU agreement, the Trade & Co-operation Agreement (TCA). Whilst the TCA is fundamental to the Welsh economy as a basis for Wales (and the rest of the UK) to trade in goods with the EU, it does not provide a basis for free trade in services or a basis for the free movement of people to support the delivery of traded services.

The loss of free movement of people moving to perform and to engage in cultural activities has been very detrimental to opportunities for the promotion of Welsh culture across Wales, and for EU artists to come to Wales. Many of the UK sector lead bodies, especially in the music sector, have been lobbying the UK Government for a visa waiver for the cultural sector when touring in the EU/UK and for the reduction in administration burden especially for the temporary movement of cultural goods.

Recent reports and recommendations include Let the Music Move from UK Music Paying the Price from the ISM. While they are music specific, the issues cut across much of the performing arts sector.

Arts Infopoint UK partnered with On the Move for a webinar on EU/UK exchanges in the Visual Arts, resulting in a policy paper with recommendations on the EU side.

In addition, from outside the EU, Wales has no access to funds from the structural funds and Creative Europe that were very directly beneficial to a range of organisations. Following the UK exit from EU, the UK is no longer able to participate in the Creative Europe (MEDIA and Culture) programme which had facilitated valuable European co-production partnerships and funding for independent production companies across the UK to develop productions with international scope.

To counteract the UK no longer being able to access Creative Europe support, the UK government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), announced The Global Screen Fund (UKGSF), financed by DCMS and administered by the British Film Institute (BFI). The UKGSF was specifically designed to boost the international competitiveness of UK screen content through supporting international development, production, distribution, promotional and collaborative opportunities for the UK's independent screen sector and to provide targeted support across the screen sector, including film, TV, Documentary, animation and interactive narrative games content.

However, despite the remit of the UKGSF being to support independent companies across the UK, ensuring a UK-wide benefit and addressing geographic imbalance within the industry, it has not achieved the success of the former MEDIA and Creative Europe programmes and Wales has seen limited results, with disappointingly low level of Welsh applicants and grant recipients of the UKGSF to-date, compared to the far greater benefits (which were proportionally equal across UK recipients) that Welsh companies achieved from the MEDIA and Creative Europe Programmes.

There is a clear need to promote the UKGSF to better serve all the nations and regions, as well as exploring new European and International co-production and collaboration programmes to encourage overseas investment in the TV and Film sector.

The UK has continued to press the EU in recent months for a simplification of visa restrictions that would make touring the EU more affordable and straightforward for creative professionals such as musicians and visual artists. However, the EU view is that as a country that chose to be outside the EU, the UK has no particular basis to make a claim for such flexibilities. The Welsh Government will continue to press on this issue but realistically we do not expect a swift and satisfactory resolution of it.



Department  
for Culture,  
Media & Sport

Julia Lopez MP  
Minister for Media, Tourism and  
Creative Industries  
1st Floor  
100 Parliament Street  
London SW1A 2BQ

E: [enquiries@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@dcms.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/dcms](http://www.gov.uk/dcms)

Delyth Jewell MS  
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff CF99 1SN

3 May 2024

INT2024/03469/DC

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2024 to my Rt Hon Friends the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, to give evidence to your inquiry into culture and the relationship with the European Union.

I am afraid that exceptionally busy diaries mean it will not be possible for a UK Government Minister to give oral evidence to your Committee. I would like to submit this letter as written evidence.

UK-EU relations are positive and driving good results. Whilst the United Kingdom decided to leave the European Union, we can still be friends, neighbours and partners.

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is one of the most comprehensive free trade agreements in the world and our aim is to make the most of it. However, it was inevitable that following the UK's departure from the EU there would be changes to the arrangements under which UK creative and cultural professionals operate in the EU, and vice versa.

HM Government is committed to supporting the UK's creative and cultural sectors to adapt to these arrangements, and provides practical online support via the Export Support Service. We have also worked with the sectors, and directly with EU Member States, to clarify what UK creative and cultural professionals need to do to tour in the EU. This includes, clarifying the terms of mobility of professionals, the movement of goods and transportation.

The majority of Member States (23 out of 27) have confirmed the conditions of entry and introduced easements to allow visa and work permit-free routes for UK performers for some short-term touring. This includes the UK's biggest touring markets such as France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain, the latter having changed its position following engagement from the UK Government and industry. The UK Government continues to work closely with the sector to amplify each other's lobbying efforts, and continue to engage with the few remaining Member States to confirm the requirements and clarify guidance. We also raised the issue of touring musicians' mobility with the EU at the Trade Partnership Committee of the UK-EU TCA on 7 December 2023. Ultimately, however, it is up to EU Member States if they want to replicate the UK's generous approach.

The UK Government has also supported the sectors to adjust to the new arrangements for moving goods between the UK and EU. HMRC has published improved guidance on GOV.UK on the options available for moving goods temporarily between the UK and EU.

Furthermore, following a Call for Evidence on the Temporary Admission procedure last year, HMRC and HM Treasury have been engaging with the cultural and creative sectors on potential changes to make the procedure more accessible and facilitative, and therefore more beneficial.

The UK is already part of the international ATA Carnet system. An ATA Carnet is an option for temporarily moving goods, such as technical equipment, or goods for exhibitions and events, between the UK and EU. It allows goods to be accounted for on a single document, simplifying the process by which it can be cleared through customs. Guidance and a list of countries that accept ATA Carnets are available on GOV.UK and through the London Chamber of Commerce.

Additionally, some goods, such as musical instruments, are protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and require CITES checks when travelling between the UK and EU via a designated CITES Point of Entry/Exit. The UK has increased the number of CITES Points of Entry from 11 to 36 since 2021. Any additional designations will be considered as part of an annual review process.

EU rules state that each individual is able to take up to 1000 euros worth of merchandise, weighing less than a tonne, into the EU to sell on tour without paying EU customs duties. This enables creative and cultural professionals to take some merchandise to the EU duty-free.

Regarding transportation, we have clarified that splitter vans with up to eight passengers, a driver and their equipment, do not fall in the scope of the UK-EU TCA. Therefore, the use of these vehicles by creative and cultural professionals is subject to the applicable Member State law.

We have also introduced 'dual registration' to support specialist concert hauliers to tour more easily across the UK and EU. This allows operators who have an established base in the EU, and also maintain a GB base and operate on a hire or reward basis, to transfer their vehicles between their two operator licences without needing to pay Vehicle Excise Duty in the UK.

The UK Government also takes a range of other measures to support the creative and cultural sectors to operate internationally. To promote continued research and innovation partnerships between the UK and European research and science experts, including on cultural heritage and the creative industries, the UK continues to participate in the EU's Horizon Europe Programme. The Music Export Growth Scheme specifically assists touring musicians to break into new international markets, including the EU, for which funding will be tripled to £3.2 million until 2025 as announced under the Creative Industries Sector Vision.<sup>1</sup> Support is also provided for UK independent screen content to grow in international markets via the UK Global Screen Fund, which will deliver £28 million in funding between 2021-2025. A number of Welsh applicants since 2021 have been awarded funding, including international distribution support for 'Brian and Charles' which was set and filmed in Welsh locations. 'Brian and Charles' was nominated for a BAFTA in 2022 and won the Audience Favourite Award at Sundance Film Festival in 2023.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Creative Industries Sector Vision: A Joint Plan to Drive Growth, Build Talent and Develop Skills](#)

Additionally, we hold bilateral film and TV co-production agreements with 12 countries, and through the Council of Europe Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production the UK can also co-produce with 46 Council of Europe Member States, many of which are also EU Member States. For UK acts performing at international industry-facing showcase events, the UK provides an International Showcase Fund. This offers grants of up to £5,500 for international export opportunities for UK-based artists, bands, songwriters and producers.

For musicians, entertainers and artists from non-visa national countries, including EU Member States, the UK's immigration system contains very generous options to come and undertake paid work in the UK. The length of stay varies from 30 days under the Paid Permitted Engagement route,<sup>2</sup> to up to twelve months on the Temporary Worker Creative Worker route.<sup>3</sup> Visa-free access for up to three months is also provided for under the Creative Worker Visa Concession, and for up to six months if musicians, entertainers or artists are performing at a permit-free festival, ranging from Green Man to Glyndebourne, as published under the immigration rules on GOV.UK. Personal or technical staff, or members of a production team can also support the activities of an artist, entertainer or musician coming to the UK under the Paid Permitted Engagement or Standard Visitor route, provided they are attending the same event and are employed to work for them outside of the UK. Distinct from these shorter-term routes, the Global Talent route enables talented and promising individuals in the fields of arts and culture wishing to work in the UK, provided they are leaders or have the potential to be leaders in their field, as determined by an endorsing body.

The UK Government has also supported events in partnership with the Welsh cultural and creative sectors. For example, the Department for Business and Trade co-curated and co-produced "Going Global" in Cardiff and Bangor to provide Welsh production companies with practical advice and support to enable them to explore opportunities in international markets in conjunction with S4C and the Welsh Independent Producers Association. Similarly, at the 2023 Wales Screen Summit, a session entitled "How to Make Money While You Sleep", focused on the creation, development, production, sales and marketing of television formats to the international market.

The cultural and creative sectors contribute significantly to the economic prosperity of the UK, by enriching citizens' lives, and playing a vital role in presenting the UK as an attractive location to visit and invest. We continue to foster strong international relationships, including with the European Union, by promoting opportunities to share best practices or contribute to dialogues on important issues.

As I have detailed above, the UK Government is committed to a comprehensive set of domestic and international-facing interventions to ensure that the UK's cultural and creative sectors remain globally competitive and are equipped with the right tools or guidance to continue on a path of growth.

Thank you once again for your letter. I can assure you my ministerial colleagues and I will be following the Committee's work in this area closely.

---

<sup>2</sup> Does not require a visa if musicians, entertainers and artists are invited to the UK by a UK-based client or organisation and paid by a UK source.

<sup>3</sup> If musicians, entertainers or artists obtain a visa and Certificate of Sponsorship.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, and the Secretary of State for Wales.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'J'.

Julia Lopez MP  
**Minister for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries**

**MINISTERIAL INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT****MARCH 2024****INWARD VISITS**

- 09 March **Visit to Wales by Vice President of Brittany Regional Council**  
The First Minister held a bi-lateral meeting with Vice President of the Brittany Regional Council when he came to Wales for the Wales in France closing event. During the meeting they discussed Wales/Brittany relations and signed an Action Plan to support the implementation of the MOU signed last year.
- 09 March **Visit to Wales by Councillor Mulot of Hauts-de-France Regional Council**  
The First Minister held a bi-lateral meeting with Councillor Mulot from Hauts-de-France Regional Council when he came to Wales for the Wales in France closing event. During the meeting they discussed youth mobility and green energy, particularly around the use of hydrogen.
- 13 March **Visit to Wales by Irish Minister for Education**  
The First Minister had an informal meeting with the Irish Minister for Education during her visit to Wales to celebrate St Patrick's Day. The brief meeting touched on areas of cooperation covered in the Wales Ireland Shared Statement.
- 15 March **Visit to Wales by Danish Ambassador to the UK**  
The Deputy Minister for Climate Change met with the Danish Ambassador to discuss the Welsh Government's approach to sustainability, trade and investment.
- 16 March **Visit to Wales by Italian Ambassador to the UK**  
The Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd and met with the Italian Ambassador and a business delegation to demonstrate support for Wales-Italy relations and to strengthen links with Italian stakeholders.

**OUTWARD VISITS**

Nil



Ein cyf/Our ref MA/FM/0609/24

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

16 April 2024

Dear Chair

I am responding to the 15 March letter from the Committee to the former First Minister relating to his response to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee's (LJCC) report on the Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (Memorandum No.3), laid in respect of the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill ('the Bill').

I have considered the questions posed and my response to these are at Annex 1.

As the Committee is already aware, since the Bill's introduction the Welsh Government has been in discussions with the UK Government, at both Ministerial and Official level, regarding the devolved implications of a number of provisions within the Bill. Through these discussions, the Welsh Government sought powers for Welsh Ministers, as well as an exemption, across four separate parts of the Bill as follows:

- Part 1, Data Protection – clause 41 Interview Notices;
- Part 2, Digital Verification Services (DVS) Information Gateway - clause 78 Code of practice about the disclosure of information;
- Part 3, Customer Data and Business Data - clauses 85-107;
- Part 4, Other provision about Digital Information - clause 126 Implementation of law enforcement information sharing agreements, clause 127 Meaning of "appropriate national authority", and clause 151 Regulations; and,
- Part 4, Other provision about Digital Information - clauses 138-141 National Underground Asset Register.

Our position, as set out in the Legislative Consent Memoranda laid on the Bill to date, has been that consent could not be recommended for several of the Bill's provisions whilst these discussions were ongoing.

Our discussions have now concluded. We received a 'final package' of proposed amendments from the UK Government which it states it would be willing to make should Welsh Ministers deem them sufficient to recommend consent to the Bill in the Senedd. Following careful consideration of the package, we informed the UK Government on 9 April

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Jeremy.Miles@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

that the proposed package of amendments was not sufficient and, therefore, the Welsh Government would not be recommending consent for the Bill.

Whilst the Welsh Government is supportive of the policy intent behind much of the Bill, the proposed amendments represent a significant lack of movement from the UK Government beyond the offer of consultation provisions. This was despite the Welsh Government being clear throughout the Bill's passage that the inclusion of any form of consultation provision in areas we consider to be devolved, or the creation of concurrent powers without a consent mechanism, is contrary to both our principles on UK Bills, as well as the Senedd's consistent opposition to similar approaches.

In respect of the new National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) provisions, we reiterated that the removal of a devolved executive function from the Welsh Ministers is completely inappropriate. Furthermore, we emphasised that the amendment proposed by the UK Government, which would ensure Welsh Ministers retain their existing regulation making powers under section 79 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, should not be conditional upon us agreeing to any of the other amendments proposed and therefore should be tabled.

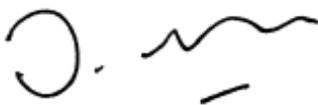
Annex 2 sets out more details of the provisions in question, detailing the requests we made to the UK Government and the amendments it proposed in response.

We have asked the UK Government to reconsider its position on the concerns we have raised on the Bill in order for us to reach a satisfactory resolution which would enable a recommendation to the Senedd for consent to the Bill. For the purposes of clarity though, the Welsh Government will not be recommending the Senedd consent to this Bill as it is currently drafted.

We will be laying a further Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (Memorandum No.4) in respect of amendments tabled on the Bill by the UK Government on 13 March. This Memorandum will also state that Welsh Government will not be recommending the Senedd consent to this Bill as it is currently drafted.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line at the end.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a'r Gymraeg  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language

## Annex 1

**Question 1 a)** Please would you share with us the correspondence received on 6 February 2024 from Julia Lopez MP, the Minister of State for Data and Digital Infrastructure.

**Response:**

We have sought agreement from UKG to share a copy of this correspondence and are awaiting a reply.

**Question 1 b)** We would welcome your views on the different criteria and approaches that appear to be applied by the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the Senedd's Standing Orders when assessing whether a Bill's provisions require the Senedd's legislative consent.

**Response:** The Welsh Government is committed to the Sewel convention as reflected in s107(6) of the Government of Wales Act 2006. In securing the legislative consent of the Senedd, we will continue to comply with the Senedd's Standing Orders.

**Question 2)** Please would you provide details of any devolved implications of the regulation-making powers given to the Secretary of State and the Treasury in Part 3 of the Bill.

**Response:**

A summary of the devolved implications of Part 3 of the Bill can be found in Annex 2.

**Question 3 a)** Please would you share with us the correspondence sent on 23 January 2024 to the Minister of State for Data and Digital Infrastructure.

**Response:**

We have sought agreement from UKG to share a copy of this correspondence and are awaiting a reply.

**Question 3 b)** In her letter on 6 February 2024, did the Minister of State address the Welsh Government's concerns regarding the NUAR provisions? If not, have the concerns been addressed in subsequent correspondence (i.e. the 1 March 2024 letter referred to in the responses to recommendations 8 and 10) or is the Welsh Government still awaiting a response on this matter?

**Response:**

The Minister of State did not address our concerns regarding the NUAR provisions in her correspondence of 6 February or 1 March.

A number of suggested amendments to the NUAR provisions were included within the package of proposed amendments received from the UK Government in February. Please see Annex 2 for further detail.

**Question 4)** In response to recommendation 8 and recommendation 10 in our report on Memorandum No. 3, you refer to correspondence received from the Minister of State on 1 March 2024 in respect of the UK Government declining to share with the Welsh Government a copy of its risk assessment on the potential impact of the Bill on the UK's EU data adequacy decision, and in respect of the UK Government's engagement with the European Commission on the Bill. Please would you share with us the correspondence received on 1 March 2024.

**Response:**

We have sought agreement from UKG to share a copy of this correspondence and are awaiting a reply.

**Annex 2****Part 1, Data Protection – clause 41 Interview Notices**

In Part 1 of the Bill, clause 41 Interview Notices (clause 38 as introduced) inserts new provisions into the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 which confer powers on the Information Commissioner to require certain persons to attend an interview, where non-compliance with particular requirements of the DPA 2018 are suspected. This provision currently includes an exemption for the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED), in so far as it is a controller or processor in respect of information processed for the purposes of functions exercisable by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills by virtue of section 5(1)(a) of the Care Standards Act 2000.

*Amendments sought by Welsh Government*

Welsh Government requested that a similar exemption be granted to Welsh Ministers as the Regulator for the equivalent services in Wales.

*Amendments proposed by UK Government*

UK Government proposed to remove OfSTED's exemption to the Information Commissioner's interview notice powers under clause 41. Further, that OfSTED's existing exemption to the Information Commissioner's assessment notices powers under section 147(6) of the DPA 2018 would also be removed. The Information Commissioner's Office, the Department for Education and OfSTED are understood to be in agreement that the exemption is not needed and are content for it be removed.

*Welsh Government position*

Welsh Government are content with this proposed amendment as it addresses our concerns around ensuring parity in our policy for Wales.

**Part 2, Digital Verification Services: Information Gateway - clause 78 Code of practice about the disclosure of information**

Part 2 of the Bill makes provision for Digital Verification Services (DVS). Together these clauses make provision about the sharing of information for the purpose of providing DVS, conferring a permissive power on public authorities to provide personal information about individuals (subject to consent) to organisations providing DVS. This includes:

- a 'DVS trust framework' of rules concerning the provision of DVS (clause 53),
- a register of organisations providing DVS (clauses 63-73);
- a trust mark for use by registered organisations (clause 79); and,
- an information gateway to enable public authorities to disclose personal information to registered organisations (clause 74) and associated statutory Code of Practice (clause 78).

Clause 74 (clause 54 as introduced), which establishes a new information gateway, confers a permissive power on public authorities to provide personal information about individuals (subject to consent) to identity service providers providing trust-marked DVS. This permissive power would be applicable to Public Authorities in Wales.

Clause 78 (clause 56 as introduced) gives powers to the Secretary of State to publish a Code of Practice regarding the disclosure of information under clause 74. The clause sets out that the Code must be consistent with, and issued under, section 125(4) of the DPA 2018 and that Public Authorities sharing data for DVS must have regard to the Code. Public Authorities in Wales would have to have regard to this Code of Practice when sharing data using the permissive power under clause 74.

Welsh Government are of the view that the purpose of Part 2 is to facilitate the provision of DVS and improve the service offered to the user and that these clauses relate to devolved matters of public services, economy and business and therefore fall within the legislative competence of the Senedd.

UK Government's updated devolution analysis on Part 2 is that they consider consent should be sought for clause 74 and clause 78(3).

#### *Amendments sought by Welsh Government*

Welsh Government sought concurrent plus powers with a carve out in relation to clause 78. This would place a requirement on UK Ministers to obtain consent from Welsh Ministers for any UK wide Code of Practice to apply to Wales, while also giving Welsh Ministers the power to prepare and publish a Wales specific Code of Practice, should we wish to do so in the future.

This approach was adopted in line with our constitutional principles, and recognising the merits of UK alignment.

Welsh Government is supportive of UKG policy in this area and it is highly likely that the UK Code of Practice would align with Welsh policy in this area. However, concurrent plus powers with a carve out would enable Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish a Wales specific Code of Practice, if this was considered to be necessary in the future.

#### *Amendments proposed by UK Government*

UK Government proposed to amend Clause 78 of the Bill to require the Secretary of State to consult Welsh Ministers whilst preparing or revising the Code of Practice.

#### *Welsh Government position*

Welsh Government do not consider the above approach to suitably reflect the principles of devolution, and remain of the view that our request for concurrent plus powers is appropriate.

### **Part 3, Customer Data and Business Data - clauses 85-107**

Part 3, clauses 85-107 (clauses 61-77 as introduced) makes provision about sharing customer and business information to improve data portability (Smart Data). These clauses allow for the secure sharing of data, upon the customer's request, with authorised third-party providers (ATPs), who would then use the data to provide services to the customer, including automatic account switching, personalised market comparisons and account management services. The customer can be a consumer or a business.

The clauses in Part 3 contain regulation-making powers which will enable the Secretary of State or Treasury to require suppliers (as specified in the regulations), and other relevant persons to share customer data and business data, to introduce Smart Data schemes in markets across the economy.

We remain of the view that the clauses within Part 3 of the Bill make provision about the sharing of information to improve data portability to improve the quality of service provided to the customer and to businesses. The purpose therefore relates to business and economy and so falls within the legislative competence of the Senedd, with none of the reserved matters in Schedule 7A to the Government of Wales Act 2006 (GoWA) engaged.

UK Government's view is that whilst legislative consent is required for these clauses, these clauses are devolved in so far as the customer is a business and not an individual, and therefore legislative consent is required but limited in this respect. In UKG's view, the reserved matter of regulation of the sale and supply of goods and services to consumers applies (paragraph 72(a) of Schedule 7A to GoWA).

#### *Amendments sought by Welsh Government*

Concurrent plus powers have been sought in relation to Part 3 to provide Welsh Ministers with regulation making powers in order to enable them to establish sector specific Smart Data Schemes here in Wales.

Welsh Government see practical benefit to a UK-wide regulatory alignment in this area and are of the view that access to UK-wide schemes would be of benefit to both individuals living in Wales and also Wales based businesses. UK Government's initial focus is understood to be on large sectors including cross-sector ideas covering financial services, energy, retail, transport and home buying.

Having concurrent regulation making powers would enable Welsh Government to influence how Smart Data schemes are delivered in Wales. It would also enable Welsh Ministers to introduce schemes in sectors where UK Government have no plans, or in sectors which are being considered by UK Government but which are of low priority.

#### *Amendments proposed by UK Government*

The amendments proposed by UK Government are to provide Welsh Ministers with concurrent powers to create regulations in relation to business customers only, with sectors considered reserved and Consumer Data (as defined in clause 85(2)) being out of scope.

As part of this, an amendment would be introduced which would provide UK Ministers with powers to prevent Welsh regulations in an area or sector where UK Government has already introduced Smart Data regulations and also powers to amend or repeal Welsh regulations that have been created using these powers. This would mean that where a Welsh scheme is in place and UK Government plans to implement a similar scheme UK-wide, UK Government would have the power to amend the Welsh regulations to reflect the UK-wide regulations. Further, where a UK scheme is in place, UK Government regulations may set restrictions on the Welsh Government's ability to introduce a similar scheme.

A consult mechanism would also be placed on both Welsh Ministers and UK Ministers, requiring them to consult with their Ministerial counterparts before implementing Smart Data regulations.

#### *Welsh Government position*

Whilst there is the potential for Welsh Government to establish meaningful Smart Data schemes within the parameters set out within the proposed amendments, to realise the full benefits such schemes can bring, Welsh Ministers should be provided powers to establish schemes which cover the sharing of both business data and consumer data.

The creation of concurrent powers (without consent mechanisms) is contrary to our principles and fails to respect devolution .

The ability for UKG to amend or repeal WG regulations created using the Smart Data powers could be problematic, as this could in effect 'shut down' a scheme that has been established by WG. However, it is considered likely that any Wales regulations would closely align with those of the UKG, lowering the risk that a complete shut down would occur.

**Part 4, Other provision about Digital Information - clause 126 Implementation of law enforcement information sharing agreements, clause 127 Meaning of "appropriate national authority", and clause 151 Regulations**

Clause 126 confers powers on the ‘appropriate national authority’ to make regulations for the purpose of implementing an international agreement relating to sharing information for law enforcement purposes (I-LEAP). New international law enforcement information-sharing agreements are subject to usual treaty ratification procedures and would be made by way of the negative resolution procedure.

Clause 127 defines the “appropriate national authority” by which regulations may be made under clause 126 of this Bill as the Secretary of State or, where a provision falls within devolved competence, Scottish Ministers or Welsh Ministers. It also sets out that Regulations made by Welsh Ministers must contain only provision which would be within the legislative competence of the Senedd.

Clause 151 defines the regulation-making power conferred by clause 126.

The Senedd has legislative competence to make provision for the prosecution of criminal offences and execution of criminal penalties on a wide range of devolved matters, for example, environmental or wildlife crime.

UK Government agree that legislative consent is required for these clauses.

#### *Amendments sought by Welsh Government*

Concurrent plus powers were originally sought in relation to clause 126 Implementation of law enforcement information-sharing agreements (clause 93 as introduced). As a result, the Bill was amended to enable Welsh Ministers and Scottish Ministers to make regulations where a provision falls within devolved competence. This also included a ‘carve out’ to amend Schedule 7B to GoWA, enabling the Senedd to amend the provision in the future.

However, the amendment made only provides Welsh Ministers with a concurrent power, not concurrent plus power. This means there is no requirement for Welsh Ministers to give consent before the Secretary of State can exercise their regulation making power under clause 151, even in areas where Welsh Ministers could exercise it.

Welsh Government requested that a consent mechanism also be included in order to ensure the provision respected devolution.

#### *Amendments proposed by UK Government*

The amendment proposed by UK Government would provide a consult mechanism. This would require the Secretary of State to consult Welsh Ministers prior to making regulations under clause 126, so far as those regulations included provision within the legislative competence of the Senedd.

#### *Welsh Government position*

Welsh Government is supportive of the policy intention behind clause 126 as engaging in international data sharing agreements plays an important role in preventing criminality, especially in terms of organised crime. However, law enforcement also includes the prosecution of criminal offences and execution of criminal penalties in which the Senedd has legislative competence in a variety of devolved areas.

The use of concurrent powers without a consent mechanism has been consistently opposed by both Welsh Government and the Senedd.

## **Part 4, Other provision about Digital Information - clauses 138-141 National Underground Asset Register**

Amendments tabled at Report Stage introduce new clauses in the Bill which make amendments to, and insert a new Part and Schedule into, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA 1991). These require, and make provision in connection with, the keeping of a register of information relating to apparatus in streets, to be called the National Underground Asset Register.

The National Underground Asset Register (NUAR), developed by the Geospatial Commission (part of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology), is a digital map of underground pipes and cables that will significantly improve the way bodies across the UK and industry install, maintain, operate and repair the buried infrastructure.

The relevant provisions are:

- *clause 138: National Underground Asset Register* - introduces a new Part 3A of the NRSWA 1991 which deals with the details of the proposed register. It includes the making available of information contained in it, the form of the register, fees and the provision of information by undertakers. The regulations to be made under Part 3A are to be made by the Secretary of State, who before making them must consult the Welsh Ministers.
- *Schedule 13: National Underground Asset Register: monetary penalties* - inserts a new Schedule 5A into the NRSWA 1991 which makes provision about the imposition of monetary penalties in relation to requirements contained in new Part 3A of that Act.
- *Clause 139: Information in relation to apparatus* - amends the NRSWA 1991 to impose new duties on undertakers to keep records of, and share information relating to, apparatus in streets; and makes amendments consequential on those changes. This also provides the Secretary of State with regulation making powers under amended sections 79 and 80 of the NRSWA 1991 and sets out that Welsh Ministers must be consulted before such regulations are made.
- *Clause 140: Pre-commencement consultation* – establishes that the requirement for the Secretary of State to consult under a provision inserted into the NRSWA 1991 (by the new clauses above) can be satisfied by consultation undertaken before or after the provision comes into force.
- *Clause 141: Transfer of certain functions to Secretary of State* – provides that certain powers to make regulations under section 79 of the NRSWA 1991, so far as exercisable in relation to Wales, are transferred from the Welsh Ministers to the Secretary of State; and makes provision in relation to regulations already made under those powers.

The Welsh Ministers have executive competence in relation to the NRSWA 1991 (except section 167(3)) by virtue of article 2 and Schedule 1 to the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999/672.

No relevant reserved matters in Schedule 7A to GoWA have been identified, and Welsh Government view's is that the UK Government is legislating with regard to devolved matters. UKG agree that legislative consent is required.

#### *Amendments sought by Welsh Government*

Welsh Government has raised a number of concerns around the new NUAR provisions, at both a Ministerial and official level, since their introduction in November.

In particular, concerns were highlighted around the impact upon existing powers of the Senedd whereby, under clause 141, certain powers to make regulations under section 79 of the NRSWA 1991 would be transferred from the Welsh Ministers to the Secretary of State. Welsh Ministers have exercised their powers under section 79 of the NRSWA 1991 and the form of records prescribed, and the exceptions prescribed for the recording of location, are consistent with those set out in the regulations applicable to England.

In addition, the amendments to section 79 of the NRSWA 1991 within the Bill do not set out that the 'record of information' is to be used or recorded solely for the purposes of the NUAR. Nor is there anything to indicate that these records cannot be used for other purposes beyond the remit of the NUAR. This means that whilst the record of information is crucial for the NUAR, any regulations made by Welsh Ministers under their existing powers could have a purpose beyond that of the NUAR. This, again, suggests that the removal of Welsh Ministers' powers would be a disproportionate approach.

Whilst a 'consult' mechanism is included within the NUAR provisions, this places no binding commitment on the UK Government to take our views into account following consultation and does not suitably reflect devolution. This is not considered to be constitutionally acceptable and cannot compensate for the removal of powers which Welsh Ministers already hold.

Concerns were also raised around whether the ability to control our own data in Wales would be negatively impacted by these provisions, where they provide for the Secretary of State to hold the data contained within the register of information. Bodies in Wales currently have access to such data and it is important that the right to access the data and make changes to it, as and when required, is retained.

#### *Amendments proposed by UK Government*

UK Government proposed an amendment to clause 141 to allow regulation making powers under section 79 and the non-NUAR aspects of section 80 of the NRSWA 1991 to be concurrently exercisable by Welsh Ministers and UK Ministers. This would mean Welsh Ministers retain their existing powers under NRSWA 1991 and would be able to make regulations under the existing provisions should they wish to do so. Additionally, should Welsh Ministers wish to replace the NUAR service in the future by establishing a funded service of their own, they would be able to do so if the Senedd were to pass primary legislation.

Under the proposed amendments the new regulation making powers relating to the NUAR service would (still) only be exercisable by the Secretary of State as they relate solely to the NUAR service. The Secretary of State would be required to consult Welsh Ministers and Northern Ireland Ministers prior to regulations being laid.

#### *Welsh Government view*

The removal of a devolved executive function from the Welsh Ministers represents a completely inappropriate reversal of devolution. There should be no question that the amendment which would ensure Welsh Ministers retain their existing regulation powers should be tabled.

The proposed consult mechanism in respect of the specific NUAR service regulation making powers does not afford the same constitutional or legislative safeguards as consent mechanisms. The issues with concurrent powers apply equally in this area.

Rt Hon Elin Jones MS

Llywydd

Chair of Business Committee

10 May 2024

## **Timetable for scrutiny of Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.4 on the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill No. 2**

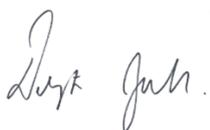
Dear Llywydd,

I am writing to you in relation to the timetabling for the Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.4 on the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill No. 2.

I am afraid that, due to the short time frame, the Committee is unable to review this Legislative Consent Memorandum within the reporting deadline of 13 May 2024. As you will be aware, the Committee has published two reports on the first three Memoranda, but I'm afraid we have been unable to schedule time for Memorandum No.4.

Given the serious implications arising from the Bill, as outlined in previous correspondence to you on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, it is essential that timetabling for reporting is sufficient to allow for full consideration of the issues at large. More so, given the warning by the Cabinet Secretary in the fourth memorandum relating to the UK's EU Adequacy Decision, which could potentially lead to a serious setback in UK-EU relations. I would be grateful if the Business Committee could ask the Welsh Government to consider allowing as much time as possible for consideration of legislative consent memoranda in future.

Yours sincerely



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

# Agenda Item 3.3

*Planet: the Welsh Internationalist*  
magazine (Berw Ltd.)

17 April 2024

Dear Delyth Jewell,

Thank you very much to you and your colleagues for the Zoom meeting this week and for listening to our concerns. I'm getting in touch from *Planet* magazine as suggested with a formal correspondence regarding the issues discussed. These issues have emerged from the recent Books Council of Wales decision to stop funding *Planet* (and *New Welsh Review*). I felt it was important to raise these issues in a constructive way not only for our sake, but also on behalf of funded magazine and website publishers more generally, as we would not want any other publisher to experience what we have undergone in the last few years, and for how we have been treated to set a precedent.

This correspondence follows the 2023 open letter campaign to highlight how desperate funding conditions for magazines and websites had become following successive cuts and more demanding targets, and the impact of this on working conditions. Accounts from *Planet's* experience were included as illustrative examples of issues that affect so many publishers. The open letter was signed by 174 writers (including Rachel Trezise, Laura McAllister, Jon Gower, Richard Wyn-Jones, Charlotte Williams, Eric Ngalle Charles, Niall Griffiths, Mike Parker, Menna Elfyn and Gillian Clarke) plus the National Union of Journalists, Society of Authors Wales, WalesPENCymru, Cymdeithas yr Iaith and the Association of Welsh Writing in English. The letter can be read here: <http://mikeparker.org.uk/openletter.html>

Since the letter was published, the removal of funding from the two magazines which happened to be most prominent in the campaign has deepened the extent to which magazine and website publishers feel so demoralised and undermined as a consequence of the funding regime, which can only be described as Kafka-esque (or perhaps Orwellian double-think – either literary allusion would suffice).

I have attached a pdf of the final *Planet* editorial, which gives insights into the BCW funding decision and wider issues. You and the committee are welcome to forward, quote, file or re-publish the editorial if needed.

After we went to press with the final issue, we discovered a document on the Senedd's website which raises further concerns, a response to your letter from BCW CEO Helgard Krause: <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s143583/Response%20from%20the%20B>

[ooks%20Council%20of%20Wales%20Books%20Council%20of%20Wales%20magazine%20funding%20model%20-%202020%20Decembe.pdf](#)

Particularly problematic are these sentences from Helgard Krause: 'During the current tender round some, but not all, of the magazines, made the case that their business model was no longer sustainable. This would have remained the case even if the grant could have been increased. Within the current tender guidelines, as well as the budgetary context, the requested increases were not feasible'.

This clearly alludes to the two magazines that lost their funding – *Planet* and *New Welsh Review*. As the latest editorial makes clear this is not the case. (To understand more context, the editorial would need to be read in full.) To clarify further here are some additional points below.

The unsustainability of our organisation has nothing to do with our 'business model', in fact it's the way we are structured and run that kept us alive despite cuts to our BCW core grant from 2008 onwards so it ended up being *less than half* it was pre-devolution, and in Thatcher's era (not even factoring in inflation) for reasons unrelated to need. It was £93,892 in 2008 and £45,000 now. We successfully generated extra income streams and contributions-in-kind and partnerships in the meantime, and well exceeded the 'gearing ratio' grant condition introduced by BCW for raising additional income, and demonstrably never lacked expertise, ideas and experience for this, but such activities (such as mentoring students unpaid in exchange for rent) inevitably led to ever longer unpaid overtime hours for staff who are directors. It's also the case that in the current economic climate, it's increasingly difficult to secure stable additional income streams and partnerships for the long term as potential partners (e.g. universities etc.) face such acute pressures themselves.

The increasing unsustainability of working conditions is a direct consequence of these reductions in combination with more demanding and time-consuming BCW funding targets each new franchise period, plus rising costs – we demonstrated how this is the case in all our annual reports and franchise applications to BCW since 2012.

Despite these huge external pressures, and while wages are low and unpaid hours for staff who are directors are very long as a consequence, we have always fulfilled our legal obligations to staff, and done everything in our power to support each other – as detailed further in the editorial and an earlier one in issue 248. There is absolutely nothing more we could have done to ameliorate the situation further with regard to working conditions.

It's *not* true that 'This [unsustainability] would have remained the case even if the grant could have been increased' as Helgard Krause put it in her letter. In our most recent grant application we broke down how the upper amount we applied for (the second budget referred to in the final editorial) of £75,500 would be adequately sustainable, (albeit we made it clear this would be the *minimum* amount to be sustainable). We were told that due to the limited funding available and the quality of the applications across the scheme we could not receive £75,500, and so we'd lose our grant completely, as we had demonstrated we couldn't enable adequate working conditions on the 'maximum' of £55,000. **Crucially, and obviously, our business model would be even**

**more sustainable if we had received the £95,000 that it was later revealed was being held back by BCW from this scheme's budget for a brand new magazine (with a more limited remit than *Planet*) that hasn't been launched yet and which hadn't applied to the competitive tender in 2023.** This also renders untrue, or at least deeply problematic, the claim that we couldn't receive the full amount we applied for (£75,500) due to the limited funding available and the quality of the applications across the scheme, and that 'within the [...] budgetary context, the requested increases were not feasible', as Krause put it.

As a consequence of this decision a magazine that has been running for over half a century (apart from a break between 1979 and 1985) will come to an end, and its staff are being made redundant and have lost their livelihoods. This is also the case for *New Welsh Review*. There has been an outpouring of dismay at this decision from readers, writers, publishers and cultural organisations within Wales and far beyond our borders. A glimpse of what *Planet* means to our readers can be found here <https://www.planetmagazine.org.uk/endorsements> and here <https://www.planetmagazine.org.uk/planet-extra/our-readers-respond-half-century-planet>

Whether or not *Planet* and *NWR* taking the most prominent role in the open letter campaign for fairer funding conditions for magazines contributed in any way to our funding being removed (we are unlikely to ever know definitively either way, not least as BCW do not accept FOIs as a charity) it's a legitimate concern that the simple fact these two magazines lost their grants will lead to other funded publishers becoming fearful of critiquing funding bodies, and of speaking out openly in the public interest about the working conditions determined by grant regimes. Such self-censorship and dampening down of debate around magazine funding would be very damaging to the sector, and we'd encourage those in the industry to keep contributing to these debates.

There was not space in the editorial to discuss the internal review into English-language magazines that took place in 2022, that Helgard Krause refers to here: 'A panel of the English-language Publishing Development Subcommittee along with two external experts (themselves publishers of small independent magazines) met during 2022 to discuss in general terms what the context of the 2023 tender might look like. They produced a report for the Subcommittee which informed their discussions and the subsequent tender process'. However, we had significant concerns about this review as publishers, writers and readers were never formally consulted. The results of the review were never published (albeit I had a very informal summary of the findings from our BCW grants officer when I asked her for more details). When I asked twice of the BCW who was on the panel for the 2022 internal review (including which external experts) there was no response. This all suggests a lack of transparency, and can be contrasted with the previous review into English-language magazines carried out in 2013, headed by Tony Bianchi. (While from my perspective a number of the conclusions of the 2013 review were problematic, it did at least consult in depth with everyone who cares the most about Wales's magazines, and published the findings in a transparent way.) This lack of transparency and consultation is particularly damaging in light of the radical – and deeply destructive – changes that ensued from the review and tender

process, and which have led to huge outcry from readers at the loss of magazines they value so much, being widely characterised as ‘cultural vandalism’. It’s possible that the two external experts were the same as those on the interview panel itself. While I’m sure they are very well qualified in their specialist fields, as experts from and based in England they are unlikely to be aware of the particular cultural, literary and political context of Wales in all its diversity, and the unique structural challenges Welsh media and publishing faces (I say this as someone who was brought up in England myself).

Another point that there was not space in the latest editorial to discuss, is a concern that BCW’s ‘business sustainability’ agenda, and increasingly neoliberal approach to ‘marketising’ Welsh cultural/public interest journalism publications (for which there is obvious market failure, thus justifying adequate core subsidy) will undermine the ability of publications to challenge powerful interests and maintain freedom of expression. This is the case, especially in a small nation where there are multiple conflicts of interest, as press freedom ‘without fear or favour’ is only truly possible for grassroots ‘indie’ publishers if they can remain structurally independent and own themselves, rather than being under pressure from funders to be bought up by or receive significant sponsorship from larger entities for financial reasons. I can say definitely that we would not have been able to publish many key features that ‘speak truth to power’ in the public interest about Wales’s institutions in *Planet* (e.g. those scrutinising and exposing issues within the HE sector, funding bodies, arms industry, media, political parties and the government) had we not been a (micro-)organisation with a co-operative ethos where staff are always the majority at board level (alongside non-staff expertise), and where sponsors, partners and funders have no board presence. This would either be due to direct pressure to not publish on certain topics or through the emergence of an environment of self-censorship in the context of the precarity of livelihoods in the sector and ownership hierarchies.

The dilemma at present is that while there is much I would like to challenge re. the decision, and its longer term implications for the public sphere, right now I am pretty overstretched as the last remaining member of staff, with the administration required to close the magazine before I need to be made redundant and we cease trading and go dormant as a company, while also needing to rest as I recover from cancer.

My immediate objective for contacting you was to correct the record and challenge BCW's points as expressed in Helgard Krause's letter to you - especially the claim that we would not have been sustainable as a business even if we had received a larger grant, as this is potentially damaging to us as a company, especially as we hope one day to be able to re-launch in a different funding environment. (I know that *New Welsh Review* have also challenged this claim.) Secondly, I wanted to raise the wider, longer term issues, as this could constructively inform campaigning for a more progressive funding environment for the media and publishing more generally. Once I’ve closed down the magazine and found alternative employment I hope to be able to continue to campaign as part of the wider open letter campaign for fair funding conditions for magazines and reform of the funding system. I'm keeping my union the NUJ informed of all these issues.

Cofion gorau,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Trahair'.

Emily Trahair, Editor *Planet: the Welsh Internationalist* magazine

# Hwyl Fawr

## Editorial

*Emily Trahair*

It was a struggle to work out how on earth to write this editorial, so I took a twilight walk up Constitution Hill, to gain some perspective. From there, if you squint a little as you look down on the sweep of the bay as the lights come on, Aberystwyth looks like a city in miniature, a Donostia perhaps, or a Rio. It was a clear early evening – the indistinct blue peaks of Yr Eryri and Pen Llŷn were visible across the horizon, so Cardigan Bay looked like a vast lake as you might find in Sub-Saharan Africa, Canada or the Caucasus. In moments of crisis your desire to be very much anywhere else than where you find yourself can lead the mind to trickery. But we are, prosaically, where we are; in this case juggling packing tape and spreadsheets in wintry mid Wales, in the midst of the administrative nightmare of winding up a beloved magazine; and from there to the dole queue.

But we're not quite there yet. There is still this issue left to launch – and, thanks to our contributors, what a beautifully defiant issue it is! Jan Morris once spoke of how she admired the 'chutzpah' of a small magazine that could call itself 'Planet'. It was this Welsh internationalism, this dizzyingly liberating play with scale, which first attracted me to the magazine. From a little office on the western periphery it has bypassed the London media agenda to connect on its own terms with the rest of the world, an independent spirit also over-reaching the cramped limits of the devolution settlement to imagine different futures for Wales. It has played a significant part in helping an often tragically divided nation understand itself better, transcending so many tedious culture wars over the decades. It has been both a weathercock and a signpost, attuned to the undercurrents, the emerging tensions and possibilities within Wales and the world, while also shaping readers' consciousness about everything from the Welsh language and national identity to climate change, neo-imperialism and racism. Countless readers have told me that *Planet* has changed the way they see themselves and the world forever, from when it was founded by Ned Thomas onwards.

It has often irreverently held powerful interests to account, a brave little light burning away almost undisturbed, sometimes needing protection from the chilling draughts of marketisation and political censure. Hand-packed

Pack Page 49

by ourselves, the magazine lands on doormats in almost every corner of Wales, and arrives in postbags everywhere from prisons to New York Public Library, Guyana to Russia, Stormont to Patagonia, Ivy League universities to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and most of the stateless nations of Europe, a global reach for Welsh culture that has taken decades to build up.

In an online event in 2020 to celebrate fifty years of *Planet*, I said that I was so excited to discover *Planet* back in 2006, as it was a miracle a magazine like this was allowed to exist in such a philistine, cynical, neoliberal world. It seems this has finally caught up with us. How? The explanation is decidedly dispiriting, and much of the picture is as yet unclear, but an (abridged) account needs to be given.

Every few years there is a competitive tender for funding from the Books Council of Wales (BCW) for magazines. Magazines like *Planet* depend on this funding for their core costs, and couldn't operate without it. BCW receive funding from Creative Wales, and while BCW are formally autonomous, and responsible for decisions with regard to the distribution of grants, they receive funding from Welsh Government in line with an agreed operational plan. In November we received the devastating news that we would not receive any funding from April 2024 onwards.

Since 2009 we have experienced successive reductions in our BCW core funding for reasons unrelated to need: our current core grant is less than half what we received prior to devolution, when Thatcher was in power, even, not even factoring in inflation. The extent of the reductions were initially due to WAG cuts to BCW, then to Welsh Government misinterpreting changes to European Commission state aid restrictions as applying to magazines like *Planet* (following our research the Directorate-General for Competition in Brussels had concluded that this was an erroneous interpretation of the regulations) and finally, in 2018 as the BCW panel decided they wanted to fund a wider range of websites and magazines. During this period funding targets had got ever more demanding and interventionist, requiring additional staff hours. Business costs have also risen sharply. While we have recently been successful in applications for small supplementary BCW grants, which we were very grateful for, these were to (partially) address specific *additional* costs and losses emerging from contingencies that emerged after 2019, such as the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and ongoing cancer treatment; plus a small grant for extra activity around our fiftieth anniversary. Our editorial standards have been consistently praised by funders.

The direct consequences of these reductions in core grant levels (and

nature of the targets) were ever-increasing unpaid overtime hours for staff like myself who were also company directors. While we could only afford to pay me for twenty-seven hours, I usually work between fifty and seventy hours per week, sometime well over eighty to keep the magazine viable. Staff have been paid £12 per hour since 2012; and while we fulfilled all our obligations as employers within our desperately restricted means, the funding cuts had other impacts on working conditions as detailed in an editorial I wrote in issue 248. We have been alerting BCW to these issues for over a decade in our annual reports and franchise applications, as funding worsened further and further, to no avail. In light of this, in 2019 we staff weighed up whether the magazine should continue, and decided it should, due to our love for it as a collective endeavour, alongside more vigorous lobbying for better funding. What has prevented us from quitting has been the support we offer each other as a grassroots micro-organisation with a progressive ethos, whereby staff are always in a majority in board meetings and are all paid the same wage per hour.

The working conditions determined by funding reductions had become unbearable for a number of publications in both languages, and many of us could no longer balance our budgets at all, despite strenuous income-raising activities. So collectively we publishers (most prominently *Planet* and *New Welsh Review*) worked with authors to launch an open letter addressed to Welsh Government, Creative Wales and BCW campaigning for adequate grant levels to enable ethical working conditions. It was signed by 174 authors plus the NUJ, Wales PEN Cymru, Society of Authors Wales, Cymdeithas yr Iaith and the Association of Welsh Writers in English. The campaign was initiated to halt this race to the bottom in working conditions, and done so in order to uplift everyone – all existing publications and those that may emerge in the future. In my editorial in issue 248, I expressed the anxiety publishers feel about speaking out about these issues, as they fear the magazines they love will lose funding as a consequence. However, we were encouraged that some BCW staff expressed their support for the letter and wished the campaign luck in lobbying Creative Wales.

This autumn we drew up our application for our core funding, submitting two budgets – one for the (very approximate) maximum per annum, ‘anticipated’ to be ‘c. £55,000’ in the tender documents (but with no sum ringfenced), and having liaised with BCW, another for an amount we demonstrated in our report would enable much more sustainable working conditions and the ability to withstand rising costs (£75,500 – up from £45,000 we currently receive, but less than the £93,892 we received in 2008).

During this period, Wales Arts Review announced in an editorial that they would not be applying for their core funding at all and would thus wind up their own website, citing BCW's unsustainable 'Slow Death Grants', a 'status quo' that would 'kill us all'.

We were notified by BCW that the franchise panel had concluded £75,500 was beyond the maximum we could receive due to the limited funding available and the quality of the applications across the scheme, noting we had demonstrated that £55,000 would not enable sustainable working conditions, and that our funding was to not be continued. We were then surprised to learn from a BCW announcement released a few weeks later that the panel had decided £85,000 of the overall £180,000 budget per annum for English-language periodicals would be kept aside for a brand new magazine 'with a sustainable business model' (yet to be launched, that hadn't submitted an application in 2023). This would have a narrower remit and be less ambitious in scope than *Planet* (a literary magazine, rather than a cultural/literary/political magazine like ourselves). The 'precise vision' for the new venture will be drawn up by the BCW Subcommittee in February 2024.

There has been an outpouring of disbelief and outrage, including expressions of what can only be described as grief, from the reading public, writers, organisations, publishers and politicians at both *Planet* and *New Welsh Review* losing funding. There is further dismay that the extent of this 'cultural vandalism' is needless – with £85,000 left to disburse. We have been overwhelmed by calls for petitions, investigations, lobbying, protests and fundraising efforts. We are very grateful for all support and ideas, which have really lifted our morale. However the legacy of the funding cuts, combined with illness and the administration needed to wind up the magazine leaves us with little capacity to campaign, challenge or commentate further at this stage, without risking severe burnout.

Beyond our immediate situation, there are wider issues with regard to the current funding environment that would need addressing before it would be feasible to consider relaunching the magazine, that there is not space to critique here. It's our hope that the open letter campaign can evolve into a platform for constructive analysis of present problems with the system and proposals for how these can be overcome.

There are also concerns that BCW may potentially no longer fund (or substantially fund) political coverage in English. Small amounts of funding had been granted to *Poetry Wales*, and to Nation.Cymru and *Welsh Agenda* for 'cultural content including book reviews and providing a digital free at the

point of use platform for the publishing sector in Wales', with a tiny amount for *The Paper* (the remit for which is as yet unknown). By far the largest amount of funding has been put aside for a future literary magazine. Any narrowing of the parameters of English-language magazines and websites would not only mean a lack of parity with Welsh-language magazines and websites, but would have far more profound effects.

It is inherent to Welsh identity, democracy and internationalism for politics and culture to be seamlessly enmeshed. Periodicals like *Planet* are in an unbroken radical tradition reaching back to the eighteenth-century 'revolutionary pamphlets' celebrated by Robert Minninnick in this issue, via titles such as the *Red Dragon* and *Welsh Outlook*. This was upheld by everyone from Richard Price to Raymond Williams, and latterly through, for example, literary activism for Palestine from our National Poet Hanan Issa. Whether through hybrid forms that animate political issues – such as the English-language equivalent of the *ysgrif* and more recent developments in creative non-fiction – or through juxtaposing together current affairs articles with cultural features within the pages of an issue, this material continues to be vital. Now that earlier platforms for radical politics and self-taught education such as chapels and working men's institutes are largely defunct, periodicals are key contributors to a secular, post-industrial public sphere. In small yet indispensable ways our periodicals collage together a collective conscience through their debate on culture and current affairs, far more meaningfully than via social media and click-bait.

Zooming out away from the specificities of BCW, why did a number of readers on social media express their dismay at the funding decisions in terms of 'the failure of devolution'? We are not so self-aggrandising to believe that the demise of a small magazine represents the height of disillusionment with the devolved professional-managerial class and its associated bodies; rather it was just one sad and wretched example of the contradictions between neoliberalism and social democracy that beset our institutions, as discussed in relation to magazine funding in my editorial in issue 248, and which require further analysis elsewhere in light of the latest decisions.

Part of the answer is that so many organisations that were once part of the fabric of a civil society that took an oppositional approach to the British state – campaigning for and incubating a different, better kind of polity – have post-devolution become co-opted into a state that increasingly resembles the neoliberal one it was devolved from, and are tasked with enforcing its austerity (with a veneer of progressivism and Welsh cultural specificity). This tugging at the communal fabric is often experienced as a

**‘ In small yet indispensable ways our periodicals collage together a collective conscience. ’**

painful tearing within institutions, and indeed within the consciences of many of those who work for them.

What now? There is a compulsion to retreat to the grassroots, to abandon hope in our devolved institutions, to gather round a campfire of funding paperwork, and start zines from garden sheds, crowdfund for podcasts, go rogue as renegade pamphleteers. The maverick spirit of the grassroots lights up this whole issue (as do numerous fires – spot them!): salvaging human agency and expression from AI, building bridges at community level as peace activists; and answers to the crises of our time from folklore, radical anthologies, Danish notions of egalitarian ‘enlightenment’, and everyday ‘structures of feeling’.

However, not only would periodicals be financially unsustainable without public funding, it would be premature to give up on the prospect of radical, independent media being adequately supported arms-length via the state, as it once was. The open letter campaign not only exposed the blatant contradictions between the current funding regime and the Welsh Government’s Fair Work and media deficit agendas, but garnered support from influential figures including politicians. Furthermore, institutions evolve, and values are often deeply contested within them. Alternatively, funding responsibilities can shift to other institutions. Partly in response to the BCW decision regarding the Newsquest-owned Corgi Cymru, the NUJ are lobbying for a Wales Media Institute to fund our media, and for public interest journalism to be redefined as a public service to receive adequate funding, and to end the punishing pretence that this activity could be commercially viable in a small nation. The creeping marketisation of Welsh magazines is *not* inevitable – indeed is increasingly anachronistic, against the tide of so many other European nations who achieve sustainable media subsidy: for example the Irish government recently started funding a far greater number of cultural magazines, with significantly higher grants to each.

Until we can go back to the future, *Planet* goes dormant. We’ve been here before: shutting down in 1979 and re-launching in 1985, and we dearly hope that we can one day land on your doormats again.

Helgard Krause

Chief Executive

Books Council of Wales

22 April 2024

## **New tender opportunity for new magazine in Wales**

Dear Helgard

I am writing to you following the publication of a tender for a new magazine by the Books Council of Wales. Further to our previous correspondence with you, we would be grateful if you could please outline:

1. What consultation was undertaken by the Books Council of Wales with the sector whilst designing the English-language literary magazine tender;
2. What independent appeals process is in place for unsuccessful applicants;

In your letter to us in December 2023, you also noted that the Books Council's five-year strategy asks you to "examine and challenge the power of incumbency". We would be grateful if you could elaborate what this means in practice, and outline to what extent this places those recipients with existing funding at a disadvantage.

Finally, we would be very grateful to receive an outline from you of the Books Council of Wales's vision for the English-language magazine sector, including a copy of the internal review into English-language magazines held in 2022.

We would be grateful if you could provide a response by 8 May 2024 to allow us to consider it at our next formal meeting.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



HK/MLW

29 April 2024

Committee Chair and Members  
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
CARDIFF  
CF99 1SN

Dear Chair and Members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee,

Thank you for your letter of 22 April 2024; we welcome the opportunity to provide further details regarding magazine funding.

I'm pleased to inform you that the tender for the new literary magazine went ahead as planned and was advertised on 4 March 2024 with the closing date on 15 April. We received several applications and are now working through round two of the process. A full English-language Publishing Subcommittee meeting will be dedicated to interviewing and decision-making on 24 July 2024, and we anticipate that we will be able to formally award a tender during the following week.

**You asked what consultation was undertaken by the Books Council of Wales with the sector whilst designing the English-language literary magazine tender.**

In anticipation of the new magazine tender round for 2023, the independent English-language Subcommittee commissioned an internal review by establishing a panel consisting of four Subcommittee members and two external experts: a digital magazine consultant and an editor who runs a small independent magazine. The panel was supported by the Books Council's Head of Publishing Development and the Publishing Development Officer (English-language).

Whilst we did not hold a formal consultation with franchise holders prior to the new tender round, we are in very regular contact with all grant recipients as they typically apply for non-ring-fenced funding and project funding throughout any given year – which necessitates frequent interaction between BCW and grant recipients themselves. Such recurrent interactions means that we have a detailed understanding of the challenges that magazines in Wales face. During COVID and the cost-of-living crisis we responded to the crisis publishers were facing and secured additional emergency support funding from the Welsh Government.

Alongside this, formal appraisal meetings take place annually which consolidate the insights gleaned through our regular in-year contacts; formal appraisal meetings also give grant recipients the opportunity to feedback and share their views and concerns. The reports and minutes of those meetings were shared with the Magazine Subcommittee and were central to their discussion.

As the decisions of the 2023 tender round left a then £85,000 of unallocated funds, the Subcommittee considered the resultant thematic gaps alongside the points made by the

campaign group regarding sustainable levels of funding. It concluded that one tender for a new literary magazine underpinned by a substantial amount of funding would address these issues. However, due to Books Council budget cuts of 10.5% for 2024/25 the budget for the new tender had to be reduced to £80,000 per annum and was advertised accordingly.

**You asked what independent appeals process is in place for unsuccessful applicants. The Books Council's complaints procedure covers this process and states the following:**

*You can complain if you believe that:*

- 'maladministration' has taken place (for example, if we have delayed, made mistakes in or failed to follow the procedures in our formal process);
- we have failed to give you access to information or have given you incorrect advice or information;
- we have not treated you courteously;
- we have not treated you equally and fairly.

*If your complaint is about an application for funding, we can only look at your application again if:*

- we discover (through dealing with a complaint) that we did not follow the published procedures for assessing your application;
- you can show that we have misunderstood a significant part of your application;
- you can show that we did not take notice of relevant information.

*What you cannot complain about:*

*You may be disappointed if we turn down your application for funding, but you cannot use this complaints procedure to appeal against our decision on giving a grant if we have followed our decision-making process correctly.*

The policy in full can be seen here – [complaints policy](#)

We received Stage 2 complaints from *Planet* and *New Welsh Review* following the decision made by the Panel. In accordance with our procedure both were investigated by the Chair of the Magazine Panel and the Head of the Publishing Development Department. Neither of the complaints were upheld and both complainants received detailed replies. Neither complainant decided to escalate their complaint to Stage 3.

**You also asked us to elaborate on what 'examining and challenging the power of incumbency' means in practice and to outline to what extent this places those recipients with existing funding at a disadvantage.**

The Books Council has a long history of enabling new entrants to benefit from the limited public sector grants it distributes. We believe that this line in our strategic plan makes this existing commitment explicit. Examining incumbency recognises that existing recipients have a distinct advantage in that they have detailed knowledge and experience of the process and of working with the staff administering the applications. Being explicit about this reassures new entrants that any process we run is open, fair and competitive which is vital to avoid inertia. It does not place incumbents at a disadvantage, but rather, encourages them to take stock and rethink their strategic approach to the next franchise period.

For the 2023 franchise round, the Subcommittee considered that grant awards needed to be based on applicants' vision and ability to deliver the proposal; previous track record should only be one criterion to be considered and would be valid in so far as it demonstrated the ability to deliver the future concept for a particular publication.

To outline what this means in practice, I would like to give some examples from previous franchise rounds:

1. *Wales Arts Review* and *The Welsh Agenda* won their first franchise tenders in 2012 and 2015 respectively which led to a reduction in grants to then-existing recipients, *Planet*, *New Welsh Review* and *Poetry Wales*. *nation.cymru* joined the franchise magazines for the first time in 2019.
2. In 2023, *Wales Arts Review* decided not to apply for funding, while all other existing recipients (*Planet*, *New Welsh Review*, *Poetry Wales*, *nation.cymru*, *The Welsh Agenda*) made applications in addition to four new applicants. One of the new applicants *The Paper/Y Papur* was successful and secured funding for the next franchise round alongside three existing recipients: *Poetry Wales*, *nation.cymru* and *The Welsh Agenda*. *Planet* and *New Welsh Review* were unsuccessful in this tender round.
3. On the Welsh-language side, *Taliesin* magazine lost its franchise in 2015 after several decades of funding as it did not meet the requirements of the then tender. A new opportunity was advertised and led to the creation of the magazine *O'r Pedwar Gwynt* the following year and it has been receiving funding since. Other new Welsh-language magazines such as *Cara*, *Lysh* and most recently *Hanes Byw* have joined the group of franchise magazines which include *Golwg* and *Barn* while others such as *Y Traethodydd* have not been successful.
4. On the book publishing side, newer Welsh-language publishers such as Atebol, Rily, Broga and Sebra have joined long-established recipients such as Y Lolfa, Barddas, Gwasg y Bwthyn, Gwasg Carreg Gwalch and Y Dref Wen.
5. In 2022, a new English-language book publisher Lucent Dreaming, the first press in Wales to be run by two editors of colour, was successful in securing programme funding. All other successful applicants were established publishers which have been in receipt of funding for several years and in some cases for decades.

These examples illustrate the fair, balanced and consistent approach our subcommittees have been taking over many years when awarding grants. We believe that our processes, which are based on open and fair competition, enable us to ensure a vibrant, relevant and popular offer for Wales, one that takes into account the changing nature of digital development, readerships, costs and sustainability. They have also enabled us to continue operating effectively in spite of over a decade of standstill funding and most recently a very challenging cut of 10.5% to our budget.

**You asked for an outline of the Books Council of Wales's vision for the English-language magazine sector and a copy of the internal review.**

Please refer to the tender documents of 2023 which can be found [here](#), the 2024 new magazine tender documents which can be found [here](#), and I attach a copy of the Magazine Subcommittee's report following the internal review of magazines. In that latter document, the external experts' report is referenced. We are unable to share that report as it contains commercially sensitive information; however, all the core information was distilled into the internal report which we are sharing herewith.

I hope this answers your questions, but please feel free to contact us at any time should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helgard Krause". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and 'K'. The signature is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

HELGARD KRAUSE  
Chief Executive



## REPORT OF THE MAGAZINES SUBCOMMITTEE – JULY 2022

### 1 MEMBERSHIP

The Magazines Subcommittee was chaired by the Vice Chair of the English language Grants Subcommittee who was joined by three other members of the English-Language Grants Subcommittee. Participating from the Books Council of Wales were the Head of Publishing Development and the Publishing Development Officer. Invited as external consultants from the small magazines industry were a digital magazines consultant and an editor of an independent magazine.

### 2 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

External consultants' report.

### 3 PURPOSE

The Magazines Subcommittee was appointed by the English-Language Grants Subcommittee to review the funding process for magazines before the next tender period in Summer 2023. Included in the Subcommittee's review of current funding models was examining the eligibility, criteria, and rationale for funding magazines; funding levels; working conditions at funded magazines; publishing formats; and readership accessibility. Also included in the Subcommittee's scope was to improve fair representation of diverse backgrounds and experiences at funded magazines, following the BCW's report on this area. The Magazines Subcommittee's remit did not include commenting on specific magazines, but to make recommendations on how the BCW could better support the industry to make it fairer and more diverse.

### 4 WORKING PATTERN

The Magazines Subcommittee convened in February at Wrexham Glyndwr University to identify issues preventing fair representation of Welsh voices in the content and infrastructure of magazines. Following the first meeting, the external consultants met to research the sustainability of the magazine industry and presented their findings at the second meeting in April at Glyndwr University. Using their research, the Subcommittee discussed solutions to the issues identified in February and finalised recommendations to be presented to the Grants Subcommittee in May.

### 5 EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS' REPORT

The external consultants' report made a number of crucial comments that fed productively into the Subcommittee's discussion and recommendations. In general terms, going forward we would suggest that the following should be noted:

#### 5.1 Key criteria for awarding grant funding

- Having a strong Welsh identity
- Serving a clear cultural or community need
- Supporting the development of the magazine publishing ecosystem and associated skills in Wales
- Meeting the standards for a 'quality' publication
- Not rewarding incumbency

## 5.2 Consultants' recommendations

Funding should continue for print magazines, but that previously print-only publications should be expected to have a digital strategy.

A digital strategy would:

- Increase the visibility and accessibility of the magazine globally.
- Increase the economic sustainability by providing a website that can host ads and act as an e-commerce site.

The consultants noted that digital-only publications can be regarded as magazines if they meet the criteria and aims of the BCW's 5 Year Strategic Plan. The consultants noted that a YouTube channel could not qualify as a magazine. However, they recommended periodicals utilising digital mediums to increase visibility and generate multiple streams of income should be supported.

## 5.3 Incumbency

In their report, the consultants stated: 'we think consideration of publication quality, organisational efficiency and uniqueness of proposition are crucial to any decisions made about grant allocation'.

## 5.4 Revenue mix

The consultants noted a revenue strategy should be subjective to a magazine's profile but suggested that a mixed revenue is vital to sustainability. Revenue streams included:

- Advertising Sponsorship
  - Print
  - Digital – web, affiliate, email, podcasts
  - Events – virtual and in-person
- Reader revenues
  - Single copy sales
  - Subscriptions
  - Memberships
  - Article sales
  - Event attendance
- Ecommerce
  - Merchandise
  - Affiliate sales

## 5.5 Enhancement of Skills

Alongside grant funding, the consultants recommended training should be made available to publishers and start-up publishers. Alongside specific training requests from publishers, basic training should include:

- How to launch a magazine
- How to develop a multi-channel publishing strategy
- How to develop a mixed revenue strategy
- How to grow your audience
- How to introduce new formats – podcasts, newsletters, virtual events

In the context of the consultants' report, we draw the BCW's attention to the brief impressions that we noted regarding our current stable of funded periodicals.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

As a Subcommittee, we propose the following recommendations should be integrated to the new franchise period and should be reflected in the guidelines, applications process and, ultimately, decisions on which periodicals should be funded.

### 6.1 Incumbency

The BCW's 5 Year Strategic Plan clearly states that in supporting projects it will 'examine and challenge the power of incumbency'. For the next franchise period, award must be based on an applicant's vision and their ability to deliver their proposal. Previous track record should be only one criterion to be considered and is only valid in so far as it demonstrates the ability to deliver the future concept for a particular publication.

### 6.2 Diversity

A major recommendation moving forward is in respect of all aspects of inclusion, production and distribution. Important elements are:

- As a foundation for building structural equality, periodical publications must implement a formal policy for commissioning underrepresented writers, diversifying their Board membership, and broadening the range of individuals contributing to the production of a magazine.
- Publishers should implement schemes which enhance the involvement of underrepresented groups (including those from disadvantaged and working-class backgrounds) through 'temporary' board membership, and opportunities in design and contributor writing.
- The BCW should consider offering a training day for all existing and potential applications on unconscious bias; all applicants would be required to participate in BCW ongoing training programme

### 6.3 Payment

Our consultants explored the pattern of remuneration in small magazine sectors. Their research revealed significant variations and all-too-frequently staff members working well beyond their contractual paid hours. The implementation of a blanket policy of remuneration may, for many journals, be prohibitive; however, this must be balanced against the fact that for many potential and talented contributors it would be impossible for them to contribute without fair financial compensation. (This is particularly important in respect of the issues raised in Section B above).

The Subcommittee recommends that funded magazines should pay their contributors; however, we felt unable to make recommendations on actual rates.

### 6.4 Revenue mix

The relevant quotation from the consultants' report makes clear the healthy mix of income sources that a magazine needs to be financially sustainable. In addition, in a much-changed environment, any application should specifically justify all elements of expenditure, e.g. is stand-alone office space necessary; each and every staff post should be essential to the magazine's operation.

We recommend that applicants for the new franchise must demonstrate how they will improve the ratio of dependency on a BCW grant to other sources of income.

### 6.5 Accessibility of Magazines

We identified several aspects in regard of this concern, namely:

- Accessibility and reach were severely limited, particularly in more rural and less densely populated areas of Wales. These areas were also left out in the

commissioning of contributions and selection of contributors in published articles and stories (class inequality was a major issue in this context).

- Ability to see and purchase copies. The imaginative use of print/online formats to circulate material and potentially attract new audiences, particularly younger age groups, is potentially important. This area of concern also impacts the inclusion of diverse and underrepresented voices. We recommend that all applicants would need to demonstrate an action plan to address issues of accessibility and reach.

## 6.6 Format

In the light of our discussions and the evidence presented to us, we recommend that: submitted business plans should utilise a range of formats; and that publishers utilise targeted social media interventions between issues to enhance their overall impact.

## 6.7 Subject Coverage

The Subcommittee put forward several interest areas for which there may be an appetite for a Wales magazine, namely:

- Welsh history – a useful comparison was made to the successful *The Scots Magazine*
- Environmental and Climate Change – interestingly the BCW has awarded a grant for a pilot issue of such as journal, *Modron*.
- Children’s publications – potentially not at the mass contribution end of the market but that occupied by magazines such as *The Weekly Junior*, *Anorak Magazine* and *Aquila*.

## 6.8 Support Mechanism

In addition to the training programmes suggested in the ‘enhancement of skills’ section from our consultants, BCW and Literature Wales need to explore how an up-to-date database of writers and designers can be created to encompass underrepresented group experiences and backgrounds.

## 6.9 Relationship between magazines and book publishers

Any such link (whether ownership, presumed personal etc.) must be declared at the time of application and updated in each annual report submitted by the successful journals.

## 7 IMPACT

We would highlight two particular elements, namely:

- How can the publisher and the BCW efficiently measure the impact of a funded journal?

Traditionally, success would be measured through website ‘hits’ and circulation figures, which often, perhaps, have been exaggerated following the assumption that a single copy is read by multiple readers. Future applicants might, revealingly, be asked to suggest how their proposal should be judged.

- All applicants should demonstrate how their process of creation will help ‘foster and develop a publishing ecosystem and associated skills industry in Wales’.

Officers may want to consider whether in the light of our recommendations they wish to amend the proforma for the annual narrative report from our supported magazines.

23rd April 2024

Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Dear Delyth Jewell,

I am writing in consideration of the role of the Books Council of Wales/Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru within the current publishing industry and the creative writing frameworks of Wales.

Parthian and the Library of Wales publishing project has been fortunate to have had the support, both financial and practical through business development of the BC team. We have been able to utilise the opportunities afforded by the grant allocation schemes available through the BC. These are openly and transparently administered through a panel scheme aided by what has been an extremely talented team of publishing development officers of a very high calibre over the years. In addition, we have always had effective and direct business relationships with the CEOs of the BC starting with inestimable Gwerfyl Pierce Jones, through Elwyn Jones and now Helgard Krause. Ms Krause has particularly brought acute UK and international publishing industry experience and challenge to the Welsh world.

At Parthian we have been able to discuss new ideas and applications, while through the annual review process, the challenges, future targets and current successes of publishing and Parthian. While when we have been unsuccessful in grant applications or programme proposals, I have always considered that the reasons have been communicated clearly and effectively. While when we have had serious challenges we have always been able to discuss these openly with the team at the BC.

Looking at the roll call of programmes there is a significant run of achievements in recent years. The BC team has been largely responsible for the revitalisation of the Welsh publishers' offer/stand at both the London book fair and the Frankfurt Bookfair. It has been instrumental and hugely supportive of the establishment of the Publishing Wales trade body which developed cross industry support in Wales for the first time. Other schemes of significance include the establishment and administration of the New Audience Fund which has diversified the publishing offer within Wales while managing the nation changing development of the offer and supply of books to all children in Wales. The team worked effectively and creatively to help manage the industry through the Covid 19 crisis.

These successes are in addition to managing the framework of publishing support which has both broadened and diversified the industry in recent years. It has also supported the development of our creative talents through the commission schemes for writers through professional publication contracts for more commercial titles.

We've always had good relations with the team in Aberystwyth and find the BC, supportive, creative, and necessary for the publishing industry in Wales

Dr Richard Lewis Davies

*Richard R Davies*  
Publishing Director



'I'm always delighted to hear of new releases from **Parthian** because I know they will be of such a high standard. from the selection of its authors and topics covered through to the editing and production of the books, Parthian exudes quality. it puts out a dazzling, stimulating, thought-provoking selection of books on par with (if not better and more interesting than) the bigger publishing houses.' – Jenny White

It is a good quote from a leading Welsh journalist and Parthian has continued to attract good notices in 2023 with books such as *Charles: the King and Wales*, which was published in May and received a lot of press attention especially as the subject was in the news. It also reflected a long-standing connection with the Prince's Youth Business Trust who extended a loan to Parthian as a young start-up company thirty years ago.

2023 was a year of celebration, the company had been trading for three decades but also a period of reflection of the things we had achieved and ambition for the future. **Local Fires** by Joshua Jones is one for the future. Our authors continued to win prizes

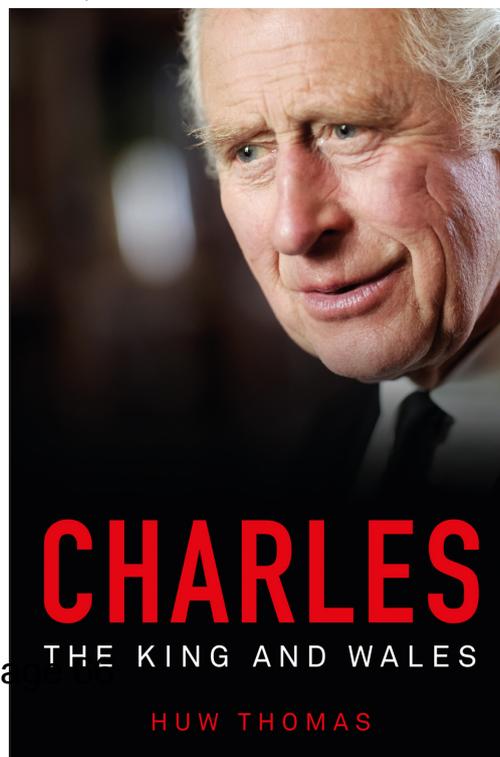
*The Lake* by Bianca Bellova won the EBRD award for translated fiction following a short-listing in 2022



*Published November 23*  
*Long-listed for the*  
*Dylan Thomas Award*  
*2024*



*Bianca Bellova receives the EBRD Award with translator Alex Zucker for the Czech novel **The Lake**. London June 2023*



Pack Pa

*In the news*  
*2023*

Parthian develops new work by young and emerging writers. We also engage with the politics, society and culture of Wales with a range of biographies, memoir and cultural studies.

**Local Fires** a collection of stories by Joshua Jones, a working-class LGBTQ+ young writer from Llanelli is now on the long-list of the Dylan Thomas Award. We have worked with Jones to develop his collection over two years after he was first published in the Rhys Davies short story competition anthologies. We work collaboratively with a number of agencies and editors to offer entry level publication in anthologies to new and emerging writers. Writers such as Rachel Trezise, Tristan Hughes and Deborah Kay Davies were first published in these anthologies and Jones is the latest in that development process.

Cultural Institute  
Sefydliad Diwylliannol

Thursday 25 January  
18:00-19:00

Café Salon Llangeddol / Literary Salon Series

**JOSHUA JONES**

**LOCAL FIRES** Stories

in conversation with Richard Davies  
with a reading from *Local Fires*

**JOSHUA JONES**

bit.ly/LocalFires

HQ URBAN KITCHEN  
37 ORCHARD STREET  
SWANSEA SA 1 5AJ

HQ URBAN KITCHEN  
COVER TO COVER

We have also won prizes including the European Bank of Regional Development Prize for translated fiction with *The Lake* by Bianca Bellova translated by Alex Zucker and an award from the Extepare Institute in the Basque Country for the publication of Miren Agur Meabe's *Burning Bones* translated by Amaia Gabantxo. This will enable us to invite author and translator to the UK in 2024.

We also had books on the long and shortlists of some significant prizes:

*Language of Bees*, a poetry collection by Rae Howells was short-listed for the Wales Book of the Year.

*The Incandescent Threads* by Richard Zimler was highly commended in the Jewish Book Awards fiction section.

*The Half-Life of Snails* by Phillipa Holloway was long-listed for the Ondaatje Award.

We aim to produce a range of books in fiction, non-fiction and poetry that engages with Welsh culture while casting a keen eye on the wider world through the publication of work in translation which included new work in 2023 from Czech, Basque, Welsh and Irish.

However it has been a challenging year for sales with a contracting economy and a cost-of-living crisis. There have been modest welcome boosts with award wins and short listings. The problem is that there are a lot of awards out there that compete for attention and not every book can win an award.

We have looked to work collaboratively with festivals and cultural organisations such as the Hay Festival, The Cultural Institute of Swansea University and the British Council to extend the reach of our books and make the most of a every marketing budget. We have also received support from the Rhys Davies Trust which has enabled us to increase the production quality of art books such as *George Little: An Ugly Lovely Landscape* by Peter Wakelin while awards from Pen Translates has enabled investment in translations from Irish and Macedonian in 2023.

We have leased rights to Penguin Random House in two titles in the Library of Wales series to be included in Penguin's Black British writing series edited by Bernadine Evaristo. These were *Dat's Love and other stories* by Leonora Brito and *Sugar and Slate* by Charlotte Williams. These were titles that we had republished after being out of print for many years. They focused on the Black British and Welsh experience in memoir and fiction so were delighted to see them included in Evaristo's selected list of significant titles in the British canon.

# NEW WRITING / CLASSICS/ DIVERSITY/A CARNIVAL OF TRANSLATION

## NEW WRITING

We have identified key areas of work that we feel we are investing in as a publisher

### **NEW WRITING FROM WALES: FICTION AND POETRY AND THE MODERN WALES SERIES**

We continue to offer opportunities for new writers such as Phillipa Holloway whose first novel *The Half Life of Snails* receiving an excellent critical reception and was long-listed for the Ondaatje Award. In addition we look for opportunities for established writers such Tristan Hughes and Rachel Trezise.

### **POPULAR CULTURAL HISTORY:**

**Modern Wales:** A new series edited by Dai Smith which includes a diverse range of commissioned titles engaging with the culture of Wales.

### **THE OTHER WALES:**

In development we have several stand-alone cultural projects including a biography of Philip Burton by Angela V John and a book of essays on the effect devolution has had on the opportunities for women in Wales edited by Emma Schofield.

### **The languages of Wales**

We positively engage in Welsh-language projects such as the dual publication of significant titles such as **Pigeon/Pijin**, (a first time this was done) and in 2021 **The Journey is Home/Y Daith Ydi Adra**. We have always translated books from Welsh, the latest being **The Last Day** by Owain Owain, a lost classic of science-fiction

# DIVERSITY on going

Publications directly reflecting the cultural diversity of Wales and our relationship with a wider world through cultural engagement.

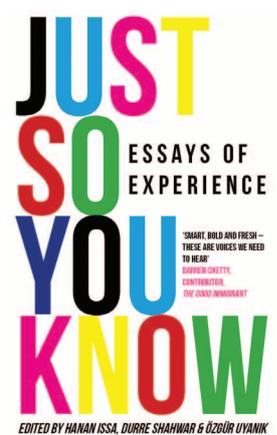
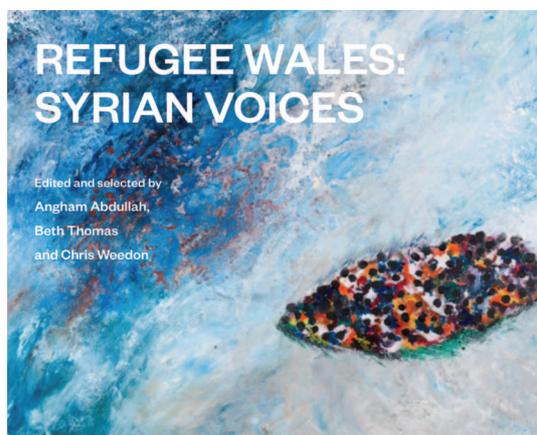
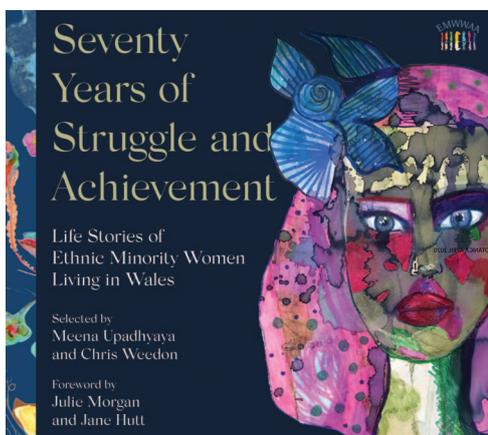
We have been working with a diverse group of writers over thirty years to reflect the cultural diversity of Wales in fiction, creative non-fiction and drama. In recent years we have worked with writers such as Eric Ngalle, Sarah Broughton and John Sam Jones to develop works that reflect a diverse culture of Wales.

In 2021 we worked with the Ethnic Minority Welsh Women of Achievement Association (EMWWA) to produce *Seventy Years of Struggle and Achievement Life Stories of Ethnic Minority Women Living in Wales* (Edited by Meena Upadhyaya and Chris Weedon) and in 2022 we published *Refugee Wales: Syrian Voices* as part of a research and publication project with Cardiff University, the Museum of Welsh Life and the National Museum of Wales to produce a book aimed at raising the awareness of cultural issues of diversity and representation within Wales. This builds on our work with anthologies such as *Just So You Know* (2020) edited by Durre Shawar, Hanan Issa and Ozgur Uyanik and *An Open Door* (2022) edited by Stephen Lovatt that have offered professional

publication opportunities for emerging writers from a diverse group of backgrounds. In 2022 the award-winning *Sugar and Slate* by Charlotte Williams is being added to the Library of Wales series in a new edition through a co-publication project with Planet Books. We have also published *I, Eric Ngalle*, a memoir of migration and this year produced with Spiracle editions an audiobook of the story which Eric Ngalle narrated. We are continuing to develop opportunities for some of these writers to work on further books to be published by Parthian.

We are in conversation with writers who we feel could develop interesting books reflecting Welsh society; several of these are in progress, including a book on the hidden histories of women in the political and cultural life of Wales and a book about the effect of devolution on women in Wales.

As part of our enhanced publication programme for 2023 to 2026 we are aiming to ensure 20% of our list is from writers of under-represented backgrounds. We will work with two consultant editors (Charlotte Williams and Ozgur Uyanik) to ensure that we engage with new diverse voices.

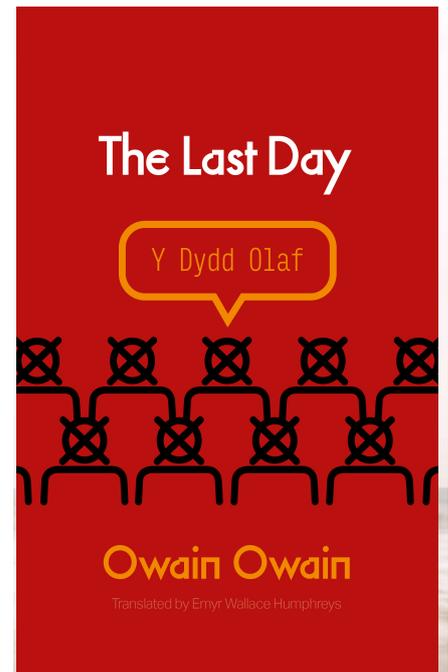
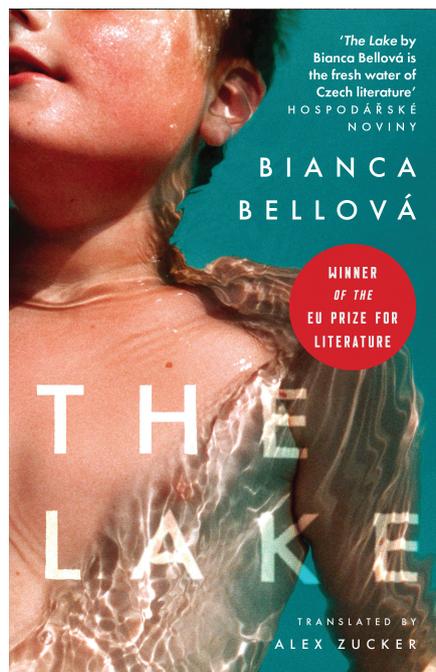
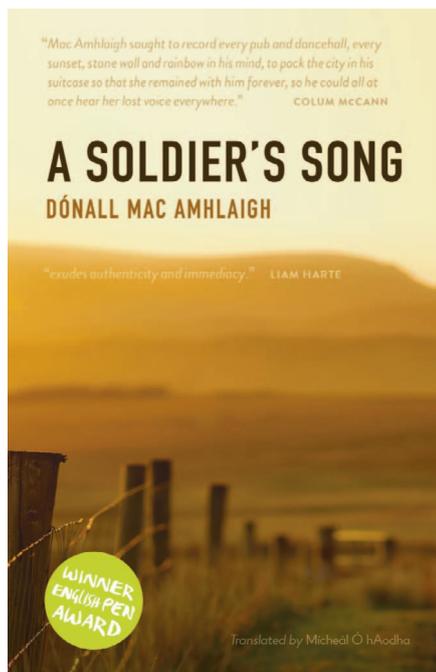


# A CARNIVAL OF TRANSLATION

## PARTHIAN EUROPA CARNIVAL

This series reached its final year with support from Creative Europe. The series in 2021/22 included new titles from Greece, Denmark, Czech, Ireland, North Macedonia and the Basque Country appearing in 2021/22 22/23. We have had good sales of *Exiles* and *Hana* with European-wide interest in the titles. The programme has attracted extra funding from literature funders in Czech and the Basque country while *A Soldier's Song* received translation support from Pen England's programme with a grant of £8000.

The travel restrictions as a result of Covid 19 limited the viability of live events but we concentrated our efforts on online promotion and e-books. We also released two audiobooks. The project is already developing legacy publications with a new book by the Macedonian writer Petar Andonovski supported by a grant from Pen Translates and the North Macedonian Arts Ministry and a further classic text from the Irish writer Donal Mac Amhlaigh published in 2023 with the translators originally commissioned through the Creative Europe fund now supported by Pen Translates and other sources.

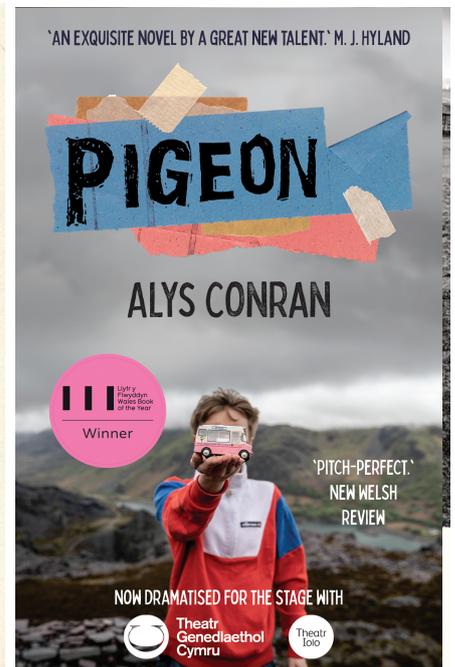
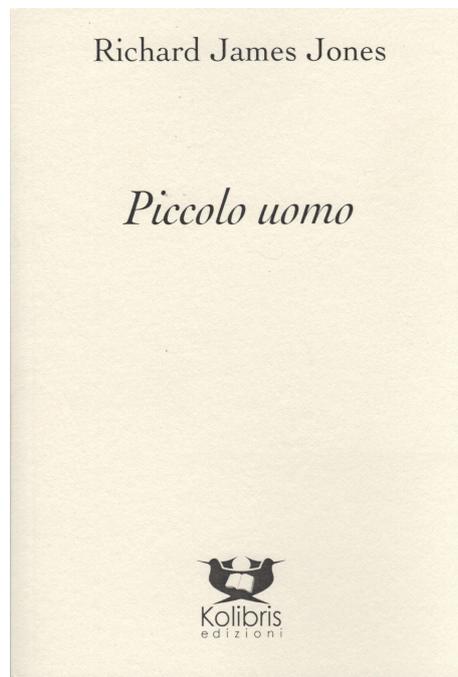
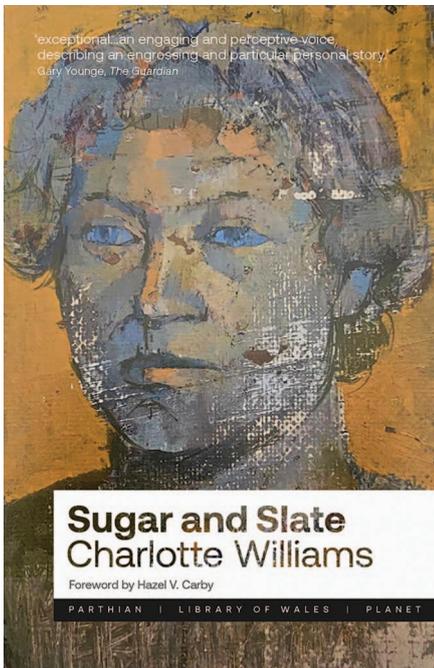


# Rights

We have sold the Arabic rights to Rachel Trezise's novel *In and Out of the Goldfishbowl* and the Italian rights to *Little Man*, *Pearl and Bone*, *MoonJellyfish* *Can Barely Swim* and *Hymnal*, as part of a new Welsh poetry in translation initiative.

We have also successfully extended the lease of our titles *The Long Dry* and *Everything I Found on the Beach* by Cynan Jones to Granta Books for another ten years.

We have ongoing rights interest in the novel *Pigeon* for TV and film production. It was first published in 2017, winning the Wales Book of the Year, in 2023 it was dramatized in a bi-lingual production *Pijin/Pigeon* and toured Wales in a well-received production with Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru. We redesigned the cover to match the theatre production which provided a welcome boost to sales.



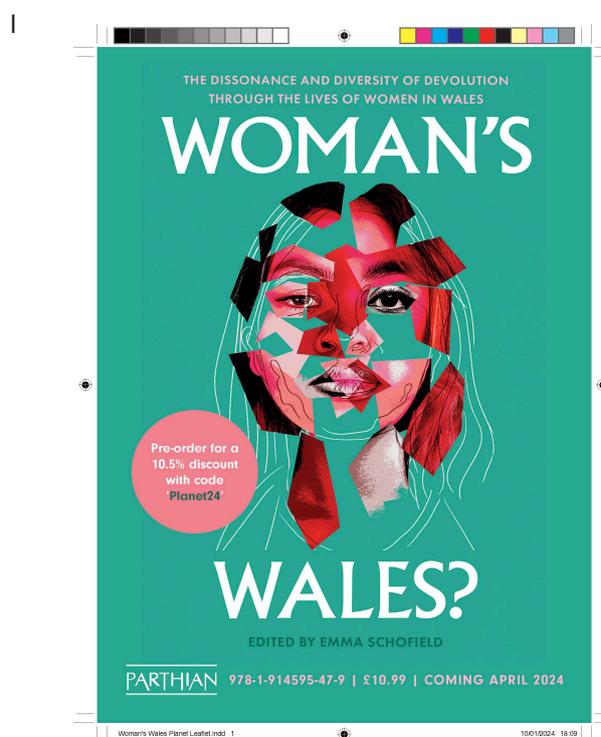
## PUBLISHING AND THE CULTURE OF WALES

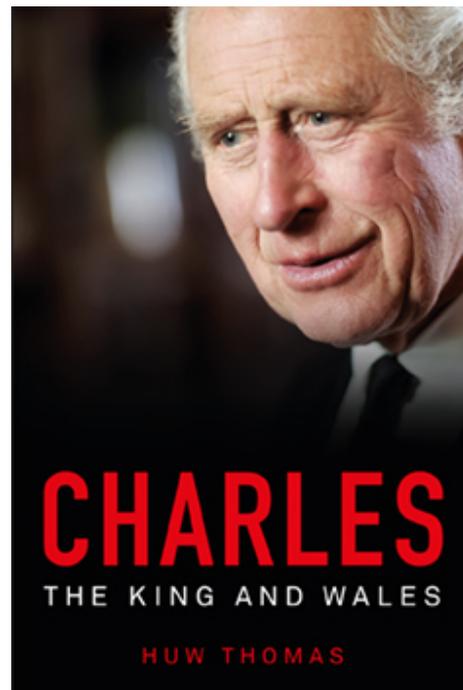
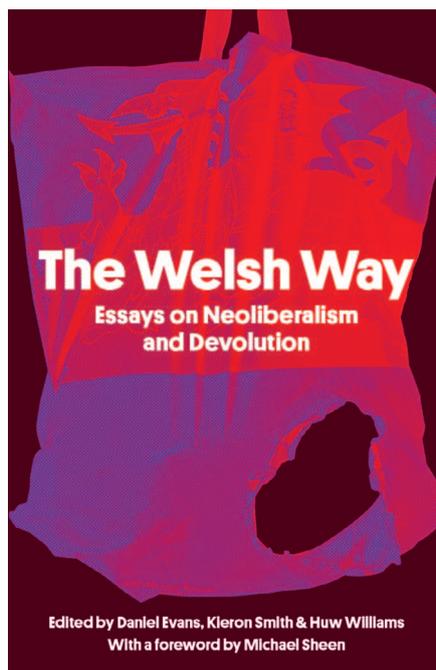
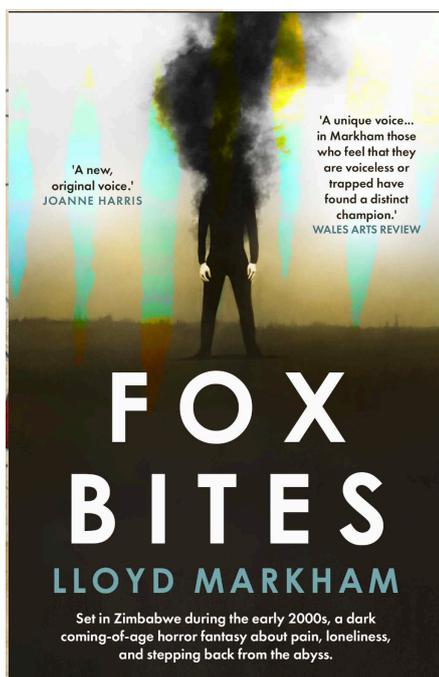
Parthian are one of Wales's leading publishers in the English language. We publish a diverse range of books that represent and reflect the vibrant cultures of Wales. Our list includes the Library of Wales series which features a selection of the best of the literary output of Wales in English from the 20th century. We also publish the Modern Wales series which reflects contemporary society in Wales with several new books in 2021 including *Between Worlds: A Queer Boy from the Valleys* and *Miner's Day*, a striking extended edition of B.L. Coombes' 1945 publication introduced by Peter Wakelin and including contemporaneous artwork by Isabel Alexander. We work with young writers to help develop their talents and literary careers. Award-winning writers such as Rachel Trezise, Tristan Hughes, Alys Conran, Deborah Kay Davies, Lloyd Markham, Gary Raymond and Cynan Jones have all benefited from working through our development programme. In 2021 we published Trezise's new novel *Easy Meat* after a long development process supported by a commission grant from Books Council. We are currently working with emerging writers such as Joshua Jones, Grace Quantock and Ozgur Uyanik, all of whom we have first published through our development anthologies. These are exciting voices from diverse backgrounds that we feel are capable of producing significant new books from Wales

As a publisher we commission, edit and design new work and then print with a specialist printer. We then ensure that our books reach shops and readers throughout the UK and beyond through carefully-designed marketing and promotional activities. We have significant export sales in the US and in 2021 we branched out to the Czech Republic with good sales of our Czech writers back into the East European English language market. We have a fully integrated physical and e-book production system and we also sell rights into the audiobook channels. In 2021 and 2022 with support from the Books Council of Wales and Creative Europe we have produced our first audiobook list including *Ash on A Young Man's Sleeve* read by Griff Rhys Jones, *The Journey is*

*Home* by John Sam Jones and *I*, Eric Ngalle. We also sell rights to our books across the world.

In 2021 we worked with the Ethnic Minority Welsh Women of Achievement Association to publish *Seventy Years of Struggle and Achievement: Life Stories of Ethnic Minority Women in Wales* while also publishing *The Welsh Way*, a book of political essays and challenges to the role and efficacy of devolved government in Wales. In August 2021 we published *Raymond Williams: From Wales to the World*, a book to engage further in the work of this leading critical thinker on the centenary of his birth.

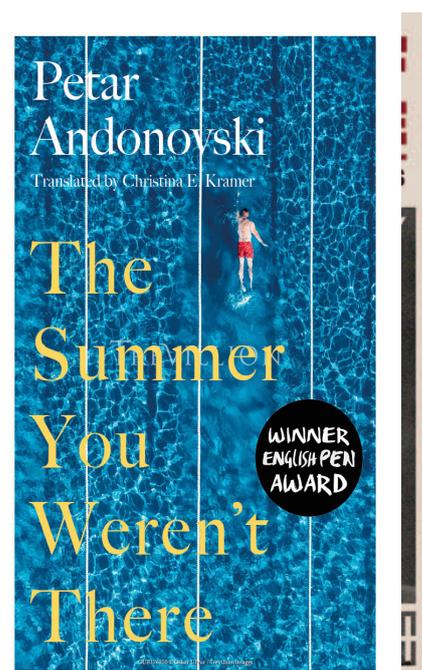
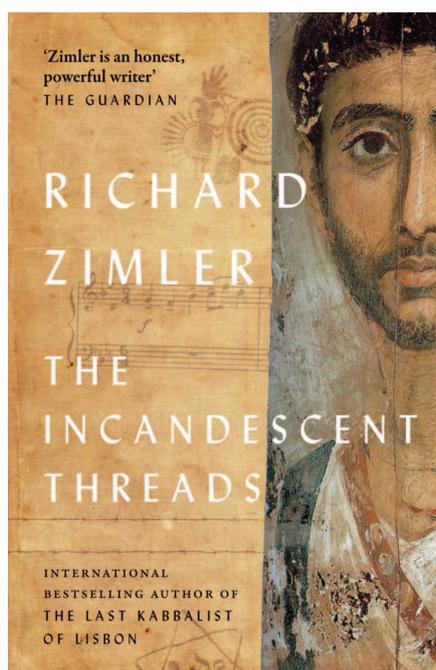
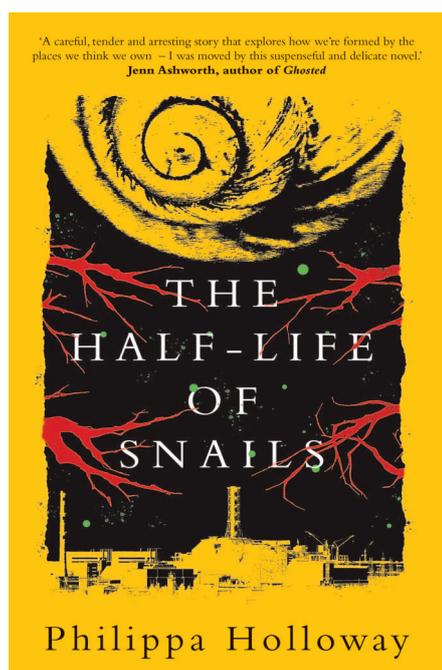




## DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

We aim to design attractive covers which are suitable for the modern book trade both for physical and e-books. We are continually evaluating the success of our covers with our team and the wider public. We have had an excellent reaction to new designs for *The Incandescent Threads* and *The Half-Life of Snails* and a new look to the Library of

Wales series. We include straplines and review quotes and update covers when a reprint is ordered to include more recent notices or a move to the paperback format. We also look at opportunities for re-designs with relaunches of backlist titles such as *Parthian Modern* with new cover designers and cover art appropriate to the form.



## Promotion and strategy

We aim to have an organized launch for each book at least once. Our aim is to work with promotion partners such as the Cultural Institute of Swansea university and festival partners such as Hay and various smaller festivals such as Llandeilo, Machynlleth, Knighton and Caerleon all of whom hosted events this year. The most successful promotion was a four-date tour of Wales with Charlotte Williams to promote the re-issue of *Sugar and Slate*.

We also worked with the Borzello Trust to fund a purchase of four poetry and one short fiction title to be made available to 250 public and school libraries in Wales. This was heavily promoted. John Sam Jones also toured Wales talking about his award-winning *The Journey is Home*.

We publish most of our titles as ebooks except for poetry and art. We developed a programme of selected audiobooks but the investment has not resulted in a return that is sustainable. They are expensive to produce and very difficult to market without a significant budget. Some of the titles in our backlist have been developed by audiobook producers and we have had had some return from these rights sales. We will look to target significant books for audio rights sales.

In 2023 Ela Griffiths has continued developing the reader engagement role for Parthian. New projects include a Parthian Tik-Tok presence while also working with Grace Quantock on a forthcoming travel writing podcast series. She project-managed the Parthian Viet Nam writing project.



Publisher Richard Davies and Ela Griffiths Reading Engagement Editor at the Hanoi European Literature Night May 2023

## Diversity and Inclusion - Ongoing

In 2023 Parthian was part of the UK Viet Nam season supported by the British Council. The writer Joshua Jones who identifies as LGBTQ+ and is neurodivergent was supported to visit Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in Viet Nam with a view to collaborating with Vietnamese and Welsh writers in a queer writing project. He took part in the festival of European Literature in April in Hanoi. The project developed over the Summer of 2023 through on-line conference meetings into the Room/Ystafell/Phòng anthology which was published tri-lingually in November. We will continue to work with Jones in 2024 as his career develops with the opportunity of the Dylan Thomas long-listing a welcome boost.

Six writers in the Room project Joshua Jones, Maik Cây, Leo Drayton, Kai Nguyen, Lauren Morais and Xuân Tùng.



'Much of the work in Room reads as affirmation – prayer-like in their reminders of what being capital-Q Queer is, and how to make and embrace the space it needs to breathe. I highly recommend those interested to grab a copy, and read – re-read it again, and look forward to future work from its authors.' – Alex Wales, Nation. Cymru

'What makes Room/Ystafell/Phòng heartwarming and poignant is its ability to traverse through different art forms, effortlessly portraying the spectrum of emotions and experiences within the queer community. The collaboration between Wales and Vietnam is not just significant but also beautifully executed.' – John Evans, Buzz Magazine

Six writers, three from Việt Nam and three from Wales come together in the Room/Ystafell/Phòng to discuss their queer identities and how it has been shaped by world around them. Featuring discussion transcripts, poetry, photography, collages and prose.

We have continued to employ new graduates on paid internship programmes through the Open University offering challenging skill-based placements to extend their skills and employability. These are now supported on-line to allow a wider pool of possible candidates to apply.

# DIGITAL PUBLISHING

We have further developed our digital and on-line resources to reach readers, build communities around our books and our cultural offerings. We have expanded our e-book list and increased direct contact with our reading audience/market/community through digital connectivity via zoom launches and discussions, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook development to increase followers. We are currently developing more on-line content in the form of podcasts. We have also developed our own Parthian YouTube channel which features interviews and short films.

We have invested in access to online promotion platforms such as netgalley for early proof distribution.

## **OUR ON-LINE OFFER:**

Our website and social media profile through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tik-Tok linked to our own website is a major feature of our marketing campaigns. Our website is focussed on sales with all our books featured with covers, summaries, reviews. It also provides a platform for promotion of events and basic press information.

Our success with direct reader engagement has seen our own website direct sales increase again in 2023

## Sustainability

We have adjusted our business model over the last few years to concentrate on publishing in a digital format and only printing modest runs of each title (excluding art book publications). This has allowed us to reduce both the over-production of titles and the consequent energy footprint, our up-front printing costs and also our storage costs.

We have an ongoing relationship with Oxfam bookshops in Cardiff and Swansea and the Ty Hafan Children's Hospice Charity in Cardiff where slightly shop damaged returns and occasional excess backlist titles are donated for re-sale so no books are recycled for landfill. This reduces the energy footprint of our business.



## Parthian Books looks to the future as it hits 30

Still relishing the day job, co-founder Richard Lewis Davies reflects on the joys of indie publishing—just don't mention Brexit

Julie Vuong  
@juliesvuong



F ledgling publishers might find it reassuring that Richard Lewis Davies can't think of many, if indeed any, losses in three decades of independent publishing. In his experience "meeting fascinating people over the years through literature" has outstripped any negatives. Davies is earnest, looking pleased, albeit chilly, in his study at home in Cardigan in west Wales—although we haven't mentioned Brexit yet, but more on that later. Thirty years on from launching Parthian Press with his partner Gillian Griffiths and university friend Ravi Pawar, Davies is still publishing thought-provoking Welsh writing in English and has added a "carnival of voices from many languages and cultures" to the mix.

Davies is right to be happy given the success of recent titles and initiatives. Take Philippa Holloway, whose debut, *The Half Life of Snails*, which weaves the Welsh landscape with the legacy of Chernobyl, is on the longlist for the Ondaatje Award. Another notable title is Richard Owain Roberts' *Hello Friend We Missed*

TheBookseller.com

*You*, a darkly comic story of Hill, a man who returns home to Ynys Môn (or Anglesey, as most of us outside Wales know it) to tend to his ailing father. It won huge acclaim and scooped everyone's favourite alternative award, Not the Booker Prize, in 2020. Canadian-Welsh writer Tristan Hughes' *Hummingbird*, a coming-of-age tale set in the Canadian wilderness, was Stanford's Fiction Winner in 2018; it generated so much word-of-mouth demand that Nic Bottomley, owner of Mr B's Emporium in Bath, persuaded Parthian to reprint it with a promise to buy half of the second print run of 400, following the first hardback run of 500 copies. Parthian even threw its hat into the podcasting ring in 2021, releasing five episodes around the subject of queer Welsh writing.

Parthian's strength comes from stability. Griffiths continues as financial director; Pawar serves as chair of the board of alongside his job as head teacher of a school in Bridgend. Turning 30 enables Davies to reflect on how far Parthian has come: from the necessary vehicle to publish his own novel *Work, Sex and Rugby* and being "quite ad-hoc for the first 10 years" to a respected indie with a dynamic team of eight. "We're friends with everyone we've worked with," Davies says, offering up another advantage of his line of work—the fact that production editor Robert Harries returned to Parthian after time on London's publishing circuit is testament to that.

Davies recalls applying for a Prince's Trust loan as the moment his pet project became a bona fide business. Then, with the establishment of the Welsh Assembly in 1999, things really



RICHARD LEWIS DAVIES AND PHILIPPA HOLLOWAY OUTSIDE PALAS PRINT BOOKSHOP, CAERNARFON

We've always published new work by Welsh writers because that's where we are, but it's not the only thing we've done

Richard Lewis Davies

took off, enabling Parthian to have direct discussions with funding organisations within the country. "That was a big boost," he confirms. Since then, Parthian has used its funding wisely. It produced the Library of Wales series, a 10-year project with support from the Welsh government and the Welsh Books Council, which featured a list of 50 titles of classic writing, selling almost 100,000 copies.

Parthian isn't just focused on the home front. "We've always published new work by Welsh writers because that's where we are, but it's not the only thing we've done," Davies says. "I've always been interested in other cultures and that's been one of the joys: to bring new work into English, particularly from smaller European languages." Financial support will be crucial

after Parthian's three-year project with Creative Europe ended last year, while the "pain" of Brexit continues to stifle sales from abroad. Davies laments a "tough year" with "reduced production" but is thankful for funding from English PEN.

Yet Parthian has much to rejoice as it hits 30: it made the Nibbies' Small Press of the Year shortlist in 2019 and is expecting big things from this year's cohort of books, including September release *Local Fires*, a short story collection by "a proactive new LGBTQ+ writer" Joshua Jones. Celebrations around the anniversary have so far been local and low-key, and Parthian will continue that intimate tone at festivals including Hay, while a bigger stage is set for an exhibition in Cardiff in September. Davies is not interested in grandiose events—what Parthian is doing provides the only pat on the back he needs. "We've got more expertise, a better distribution network and got wiser over these 30 years."

15

"A POIGNANT AND VIVID DEPICTION OF LIFE IN THE SOUTH WALES VALLEYS... FULL, COMPLEX AND MULTIFACETED"  
POLLY WINN, *THE WELSH AGENDA*

"A TOTALLY ORIGINAL VOICE"  
ANDREW DAVIES

### **A LOOK TO THE FUTURE:**

In 2024 Parthian will have been publishing for thirty-one years. In that time we feel we have had made substantial progress, from one book with a catchy title to a list approaching five hundred books. A list that reflects the breadth and diversity of Welsh culture while engaging through translation, collaboration and exchange with a wider world. Our own carnival of voices.

In the next three and thirty years we are aiming to learn from this experience in developing, adapting and innovating to ensure new voices are nurtured and heard, political and social concerns are interrogated, discussed and written about and the best of Welsh writing is published.

### **IN A BROAD SUMMARY:**

We publish a range of books in the Parthian Carnival engaged with the matter of Wales, diverse in themes politically, geographically and socially, while developing excellence in writing and offering opportunities for younger and new older writers to publish their work in anthologies of fiction and essays which often lead to longer commissions.

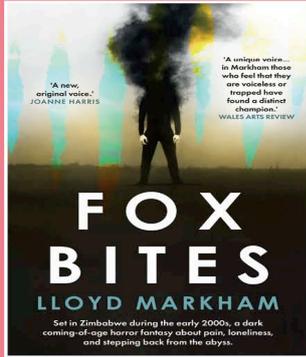
A carnival of voices.

Dr Richard Davies Publishing Director  
1 February 2024

Local Fires New Voices

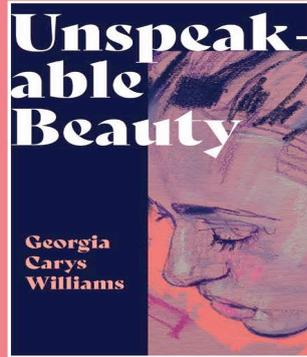
PRE-ORDER FOR A 10.5% DISCOUNT WITH CODE 'PLANET24'

978-1-914595172 • £10.99 • Fiction



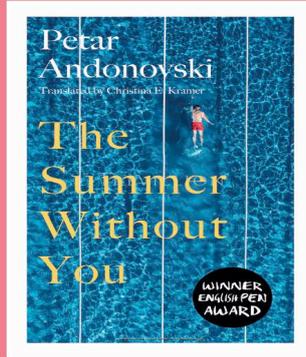
OUT 4 APRIL 2024

978-1-914595424 • £10.99 • Fiction



OUT 7 MARCH 2024

978-1-914595813 • £9 • Fiction



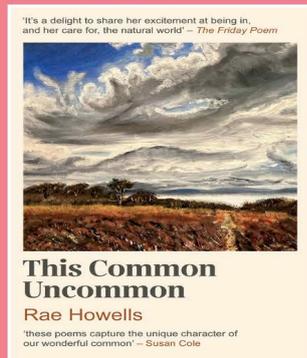
OUT 3 JUNE 2024

978-1-914595806 • £9 • Fiction



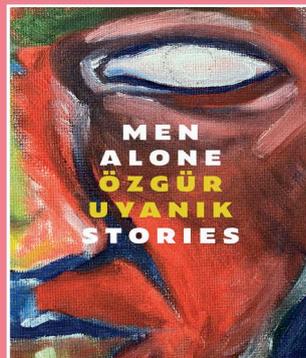
OUT 6 JUNE 2024

978-1-914595905 • £10 • Poetry



OUT 2 MAY 2024

978-1-914595820 • £10 • Stories

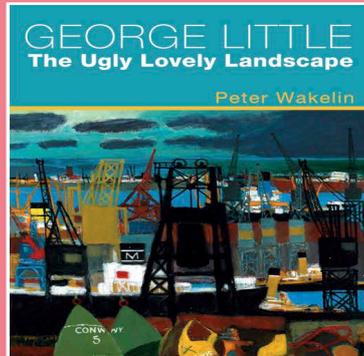


OUT 4 JULY 2024

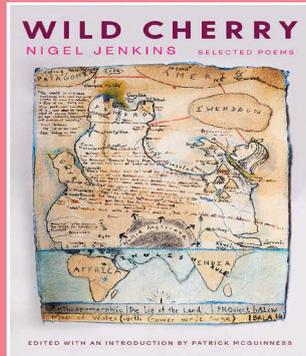
**PARTHIAN**  
FORTH-COMING  
TITLES  
2024

parthianbooks.com  
X: @parthianbooks  
IG: parthian\_books  
TikTok: parthian.books

978-1914595660 • £20 • Art



978-1914595226 • £10 • Poetry



JUST IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM – OUT NOW

WWW.PARTHIANBOOKS.COM

---

PARTHIAN

---

## Agenda Item 3.4

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to you to complain about the lack of coverage provided on BBC Wales's English news service of the Welsh Government's historic announcement on 12 March this year, regarding the intention to establish a [Broadcasting and Communications Advisory Body for Wales](#), based on some of the recommendations made in a report by Mel Doel and Professor Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones, '[A new future for broadcasting and communications in Wales](#)', which was published in August last year.

There was coverage of the announcement on [BBC Cymru Fyw](#), but not on the equivalent English language website. As a consequence, only Welsh speakers will have heard this important announcement, while monolingual English speakers in Wales will not be aware of the development.

To make matters worse, it was reported on BBC Wales News's English website at the end of September last year that [no such body would be formed](#). In fact, the only information that users of your monolingual English service have is that the body in question would not be established. [We questioned the validity of the story at the time](#), but we did not receive any explanatory evidence to back it up. You will therefore understand why we are so concerned about the lack of coverage regarding the latest development, which is an official, accurate announcement.

In our opinion, this follows a pattern, namely the BBC's lack of impartiality in addressing the debate surrounding the devolution of broadcasting, in an area that directly affects the corporation's interests.

The establishment of the Body is of considerable significance, as it will – as the Government itself acknowledges – address the protection of public broadcasting and will improve the overall media environment in Wales. The Government also recognises that the establishment of the body is an important milestone in the process of devolving the broadcasting sector, which would be transformational development for the media in Wales.

Of course, the establishment of the body – as well as the devolution of broadcasting – would have a direct impact on the future of the BBC, making it all the more important that you cover this matter fairly.

I request that you remedy the situation by covering the establishment of the body on your English platforms as a matter of urgency.

Sincerely,

Mirain Owen

Vice-chair, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Digital Group

# Agenda Item 3.5

**From:** Sophie Brownlee <[externalaffairs@musicvenue trust.com](mailto:externalaffairs@musicvenue trust.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 25, 2024 10:28 AM

**To:** Jewell, Delyth (Aelod o'r Senedd | Member of the Senedd) <[Delyth.Jewell@senedd.wales](mailto:Delyth.Jewell@senedd.wales)>

**Subject:** Grassroots music venues - business rates

Dear Ms Jewell,

I'm emailing from Music Venue Trust given our recent work around business rates and a mandatory ticket levy in Wales, which I know you're aware of.

Given your capacity as Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee, we wanted to make you aware of our ongoing concerns for grassroots music venues in Wales, particularly around the rise in business rates. We are disappointed that we have not been able to make significant inroads on this with the Welsh Government.

MVT is a registered charity which acts to protect, secure, and improve the UK's GMV circuit. MVT provides advice to the government, the cultural sector and the music industry on issues impacting on the network of venues and are the nominated representative that speaks on behalf of the Music Venues Alliance, an association of more than 800 such venues from across the UK.

In 2023, 76 GMVs in the UK permanently closed. That's more than one a week. Another 72 GMVs significantly reduced or ended their live music offer. As I'm sure you're aware, the GMV sector in Wales presents hundreds of events every year in the local community, providing opportunities for artists to build their audience, develop their skills and further their careers. These venues and the programme of events they provide are essential to the future of Welsh music, being the first step in a talent pipeline. Welsh grassroots venues, however, are facing a real crisis, with many venues simply unable to financially support this vital research and development work. This is due to a variety of challenges facing GMVs, including energy prices, new developments, noise abatement complaints, the cost of putting on live music and particularly business rates.

In December 2023, the Welsh Government announced that Business Rates relief for pubs, shops and restaurants will be cut from 75% to 40%. These planned rises are an immediate threat to GMVs. Cutting Business Rates relief will have a direct impact on the number of events that will be staged in Wales, reducing supply, cutting economic activity, and negatively impacting on jobs, especially in the 'gig economy'.

The gross profit from the entire sector in Wales in 2023 was £119,000. The proposed fall in rates relief creates a new additional cost of £127,000. This single measure risks putting the sector, as an entire network, into the red. It places the long-term resilience of Welsh GMVs at a severe and direct competitive disadvantage when compared to their cultural counterparts in England that will continue to be entitled to rate relief, resulting in very significant national disparity between costs associated with touring.

37 GMVs in Wales (77%) are subject to the increase in costs, allowing for all models of rate relief. The demand for rate payment increases falls disproportionately on

venues already identified by MVT as those most at risk of closure due to their legal infrastructure, location and business model. The value of the increase by venue is such that it will present an immediate threat of closure to 16 venues - 33.3% of all the venues in Wales. If these 16 venues close, the direct cost to the rates budget would be £153,679. Only 12 of these venues would need to close before the total raised from the predicted increase delivered by this budget measure (£127,000) would be eliminated by business closures.

588 jobs, £8 million of economic activity, 3500 events and 30,000 performance opportunities for musicians are at direct risk from this measure. The closure of a single venue represents a huge loss to the local community, to the music sector, and to the future of Welsh talent. The closure of 16 would be a catastrophe to the Welsh grassroots music scene.

We recognise concerns that the wider hospitality and nightlife sectors may ask for similar consideration if GMVs are granted an exemption. This is, however, a clearly defined sector with specific characteristics, already recognised by the Welsh government during the delivery of Covid relief measures.

As you may know, MVT are also campaigning for a mandatory ticket levy on large music events and arenas to help fund grassroots live music. This small charge on every ticket would enable GMVs to remain viable through improving their accessibility, buying new PA systems or air conditioning, or training their staff. This is particularly important given the increasing financial challenges that are facing GMVs. Welsh GMVs deserve to be operating within a level playing field and therefore we strongly urge you to act to conserve the previous, lower, rate of business rate relief for GMVs in Wales.

We hope to be able to work with you closely on the challenges facing GMVs and how we might best support the sector. For context, Tom Giffard MS has [raised](#) this in Plenary with the former First Minister and we have written to the new First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Culture Social Justice but have not yet received a response. Our previous letter to Rebecca Evans, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office, and her response to us, can be provided to you if helpful.

We hope you will be willing to meet with us to discuss these challenges further, raise them directly with the Welsh Government, or hold a Committee session on this item. Please do let me know if any of the above would be of interest and I'd be very happy to arrange or send further information.

Best wishes,

Sophie

--

**Sophie Brownlee**  
External Affairs  
Music Venue Trust

E: [externalaffairs@musicvenuetrust.com](mailto:externalaffairs@musicvenuetrust.com)  
W: [www.musicvenuetrust.com](http://www.musicvenuetrust.com)

---

**Equality and Social Justice  
Committee**

Lesley Griffiths

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice

26 April 2024

Dear Lesley,

**Ministerial scrutiny session with the Equality and Social Justice Committee**

The Equality and Social Justice Committee would like to invite you to attend a Ministerial scrutiny session at 13:00 on 17 June to discuss your priorities in your new role as Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice.

While Members are free to ask questions on any topics, we thought it would be helpful to highlight the topics which are of particular interest to the Committee and would welcome a response in writing to some of the questions posed below.

**Coordination of cross-cutting issues within the portfolio**

- We are keen to know more about your strategy for effectively addressing cross-cutting issues within your portfolio. In particular we would like to understand your plans for collaborating and co-ordinating with other government departments, as well as your approach to championing equality and social justice issues more generally?
- The Cabinet Secretary's vision for promoting equality and social justice through the lens of the arts and culture?
- Where does responsibility for the LGBTQ+ Action Plan and Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan now sit as they appear to be omitted from the list ministerial responsibilities since the reshuffle?

**Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units**

- The Cabinet Secretary's view on the effectiveness of the Units as currently constituted, and your vision for their future role and responsibilities?

## Fuel poverty and the Warm Homes Programme

- The Cabinet Secretary's priorities for this work and an update on progress in tackling the worst first including the timescales for key milestones of the rollout?

## Child poverty

- Whether there will be any change to the approach to tackling child poverty or the Welsh Government's strategy and an update on progress with Professor Rod Hicks' work to create an evaluation framework, including the timescales for completion.

## Benefits Charter

- What approach does the Cabinet Secretary plan to take for implementing the Benefits Charter?
- How does the Cabinet Secretary plans to guarantee compliance with the Charter's commitments across all public bodies?

## Public Services Ombudsman report on Gypsy and Traveller sites

- What actions does the Cabinet Secretary plan to take in response to the recent **report** by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, which highlights failures by local authorities in fulfilling their obligations regarding the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers?
- How does the Cabinet Secretary intend to address the issues raised in the Ombudsman's findings?

Please note that I am sharing this letter with the Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

I look forward to working with you in your new role.

Yours sincerely,



## Jenny Rathbone

Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee



Lesley Griffiths AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder  
Cymdeithasol  
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice

Agenda Item 3.7  


Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Sarah Murphy MS  
Chair  
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Senedd Cymru

[SeneddLJC@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddLJC@senedd.wales)

30 April 2024

Dear Sarah

**Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Inter-ministerial Group (IMG) for Culture and Creative Industries**

In accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, I wish to notify you of the inaugural meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG), which will take place virtually on 2 May 2024.

The IMG meeting will be chaired by the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The meeting will likely cover the Creative Industries Sector Vision, upcoming major cultural events and current creative & cultural sector issues.

I will provide an update after the meeting.

I am also copying this letter to Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office, the Rt Hon Elin Jones MS Llywydd and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol**  
**Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice**

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Lynne Neagle AS/MS  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Sarah Murphy MS, Chair  
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Senedd Cymru

8 May 2024

### **Memorandum of Understanding Welsh Ministers and HM Prison and Probation Service**

In accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, I am writing to notify you that a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) between Welsh Ministers and HM Prison and Probation Service](#) was published on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The MOU describes the working relationship between the Welsh Government and HM Prison and Probation Service. It sets out the general principles which underpin the Parties' shared commitment to reducing re-offending in Wales and the continued acknowledgement that learning and skills provision leading to sustained employment is one of the most effective means of reducing re-offending and combating crime. The MOU covers offender learning and skills within custody and sets out how offender learning is to be taken forward in Wales.

I have also copied this letter to the Children, Young People and Education Committee, the Equality and Social Justice Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne Neagle".

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**  
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Lesley Griffiths MS  
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice  
Welsh Government

30 April 2024

## **General ministerial scrutiny**

Dear Lesley

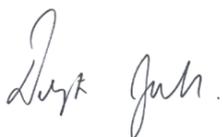
I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your recent appointment as the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice.

You will be aware, of course, of the number of challenges that exist in your new portfolio: - many of these are of great interest to the Committee, and we would welcome the opportunity to explore these in a general scrutiny session with you during this summer term. The issues which are perhaps of most urgent interest to us include the delivery of the long-awaited Culture Strategy; protecting the national collections; adequate funding of sport in disadvantaged areas; and future broadcasting and media policy. I will ask our officials to liaise with Welsh Government officials to identify a suitable time for the Committee to meet you.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your new role, and we look forward to working with you.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee for their information.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Jeremy Miles MS  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and  
Welsh Language  
Lynne Neagle MS  
Cabinet Secretary for Education  
Welsh Government

30 April 2024

## **General ministerial scrutiny**

Dear Jeremy and Lynne

Congratulations to you both on your recent appointments as the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language and Cabinet Secretary for Education respectively.

You will be aware, of course, of the number of challenges that exist in each of your portfolios. Many of these issues are of great interest to the Committee, and we would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues, amongst others, in a general scrutiny session with you during the summer term. The issues we are perhaps most concerned about include the funding of post-16 skills through the medium of Welsh; understanding the reasons for the recent drop in Welsh speakers that was recorded in the 2021 Census; and the forthcoming Welsh Language Education Bill. In a scrutiny session, we would especially like to understand how you will both work together to achieve the Cymraeg 2050 target.

I will ask our officials to liaise with Welsh Government officials to identify a suitable time for the Committee to meet you.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your new roles, and we look forward to continue to work with you as we head towards the Cymraeg 2050 target.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee for their information.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Vaughan Gething MS  
First Minister  
Welsh Government

30 April 2024

## **Annual scrutiny**

Dear Vaughan

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your recent appointment as First Minister.

You will be aware, of course, that the Committee's international relations remit includes scrutiny of the Welsh Government's international activity and how it is resourced.

As a Committee, we look forward eagerly to a number of key milestones being reached in the time that remains before the end of the Sixth Senedd, including the implementation review of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the renewal of the Wales-Ireland Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan, and the soft "refresh" of the Welsh Government's International Strategy, as outlined by the former First Minister.

We would welcome the opportunity to explore these, as well as other topical international issues with you at our annual scrutiny session on 19 June 2024.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your new role, and we look forward to working with you on international relations during the remainder of this Senedd term.

I am copying this letter to the Chairs of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee for their information.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.





**José Carvalho**

*Head of Wealth & Personal Banking, HSBC UK Bank plc*

Delyth Jewell MS

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

Via email: [SeneddCulture@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddCulture@senedd.wales)  
cc: *Jeremy Miles MS* [Jeremy.Miles@senedd.wales](mailto:Jeremy.Miles@senedd.wales)

1 May 2024

Dear Chair,

Following my letter of 21 December 2023, I am writing to provide an update on our Welsh Service Line callback service, following the review we conducted at the end of the first quarter.

### **Background to the change**

Our Welsh Service Line proposition was resourced by four Welsh-speaking agents, receiving approximately 22 calls each day, from 1676 unique customers. Due to the low volume of calls to the Line, Welsh-speaking agents undertook everyday banking calls in English via our main line, meaning they were often unavailable when a Welsh-speaking customer called. As a result, just 6% of calls were answered by a Welsh-speaking agent.

Since 15 January 2024, customers who call the Welsh Service Line are automatically transferred through to our main contact centre where they can request a callback in Welsh, which is made from a branch in Wales within three working days. We wrote to our customers to inform them of the change on 8 November 2023 and a follow up letter was sent on 22 December 2023. Personal calls were made, in Welsh, to the most frequent users of the Line, to discuss ways to bank and promote the callback service. We advertised the change on HSBC radio in all our Welsh branches, and adverts were placed in branches and on our public website.

### **Performance 1Q24**

A total of 17 call back requests have been received throughout the quarter. The average time to contact a customer is 1 hour 19 minutes. The quickest callback was 10 minutes, and the lengthiest attempt took 4 hours and 30 minutes, which was due to a public holiday. On average in 1Q24, we received 14 calls per day into the Welsh Service Line number.

Since 15 January 2024, we have monitored calls into the Welsh Service Line, carrying out quality assurance and call listening to ensure calls are handled correctly and our Welsh customers are supported. Contact centre agents proactively ask customers if they would like to speak in Welsh, if they have been redirected from the Welsh Service Line.



On 30 January 2024, we amended the rerouting customer audio message to proactively encourage customers to request a call back in Welsh. However, no increase in requests has been seen as a result.

### **Future Service Expectations**

Following our Q1 review, we are reducing the maximum length of time for a callback from three working days to next working day. We now have the confidence to reduce this timeframe through our experiences from this first quarter, and the diligence of our Welsh-speaking branch colleagues. We will write to all customers advising them of this change in Welsh and in English. Whilst it will take longer to formally update our procedures and public website, we will endeavour to keep our current average callback time as low as it currently is.

### **Customer Sentiment**

Customer feedback has been positive, and our customers have told us they are “pleased with the service”, “being called back so promptly” and that “HSBC are supporting customers who wish to conduct their business in Welsh.” Two customers indicated they would have preferred to request a call back via the automated system, rather than through an agent, but this is not something we are currently able to implement. We also sought feedback through the members of Merched y Wawr and have listened to their views on the removal of the original line and other operational challenges.

We continue to meet and engage the Welsh Language Commissioner and have committed to working with their team to promote the callback service beyond our branch network.

I trust the improvements to the service outlined here demonstrate our ongoing commitment to our customers in Wales and those who choose to bank in Welsh.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "José Carvalho". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'j'.

José Carvalho

Jeremy Miles MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language

Lynne Neagle MS

Cabinet Secretary for Education

Welsh Government

30 April 2024

## **Development of post-16 Welsh language provision**

Dear Jeremy and Lynne,

I would like to congratulate you both on your recent Welsh Government Cabinet appointments. Both the Committee and I look forward to working with you in your new roles. As you might be aware, on 17 April 2024, the Committee held a one-day inquiry into the development of post-16 Welsh language provision. We agreed to undertake this work following the decision by the Welsh Government to re-prioritise funding as part of the 2024-25 Budget.

During that one-day inquiry, we considered items of written evidence and spoke to representatives from the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Colleges Wales, the National Training Federation for Wales, and the National Centre for Learning Welsh. It was clear to us from the evidence that there are a number of challenges and opportunities inherent in this important aspect of our collective journey towards the Cymraeg 2050 target.

In response to the changes in funding of post-16 Welsh language provision that were made during the 2024-25 Draft Budget, we recommended that:

*"The Welsh Government, as part of an exercise to collate information on the impact of budget cuts on Cymraeg 2050 targets, should provide an assessment of*

*the potential impact of funding decisions on the number of learners able to access Welsh language post-16 provision, and in particular, apprenticeships."*

In response to this recommendation, the then Minister for Education and Welsh Language accepted this recommendation and agreed to provide further information to us by the end of March 2024. We look forward to receiving this analysis in due course to inform our consideration of these matters. In the meantime, we would like to ask for the following information:

Details about the commitment to re-profile budget allocations for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Centre for Learning Welsh beyond the term of the Co-operation Agreement, including any assurances that funding levels previously committed to in this area will be restored in 2025-26. This should include, please, any details of discussions to ensure that funding levels provided for in 2024-25 do not become the new funding baselines for post-16 Welsh education provision.

Information about steps taken by the Welsh Government to mitigate for any loss of momentum developing Welsh language provision in the post-16 sector, and commitment to providing the Coleg Cymraeg and National Centre with the required resources to maintain progress in the future.

Details about how the Welsh Government is supporting the post-16 sector to develop a bilingual workforce, which would enable learners to choose courses and training in Welsh or bilingually. This should include an outline of how the Welsh in education workforce plan, and any incentives in place, will encourage staff to undertake training to teach through the medium of Welsh.

We would also welcome an outline of how the work to develop Welsh skills in the education workforce interacts with the Welsh Government's response to recommendation 18 of the Review of Vocational Qualifications in Wales Report.

An update about how the recommendations in the Review of Vocational Qualifications in Wales are being progressed – and in particular, the development of vocational qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

An outline about the funding commitments aimed at ensuring continued growth and development is seen in post-16 skills and qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

A summary of the datasets and data sources used by the Welsh Government and its delivery partners in the post-16 sector to monitor staff and student Welsh language skills and learning requirements, and how it intends to support the improvement of data collection and analysis which will inform future demand for post-16 Welsh language education and training.

Information about how the Welsh Government is ensuring that good practice in developing post-16 Welsh language provision is shared elsewhere locally and nationally.

An outline of the assessment made by the Welsh Government of existing and future demand for Learn Welsh provision among the 16-25 year-old learning cohort, and an explanation of the government's role in supporting this.

We would welcome a response to our questions by no later than 30 May 2024.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations  
Committee**

**Senedd Cymru**

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

SeneddDiwylliant@senedd.cymru

senedd.cymru/SeneddDiwylliant

0300 200 6565

**Welsh Parliament**

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

senedd.wales/SeneddCulture

0300 200 6565

Jack Sargeant MS

Chair, Petitions Committee

30 April 2024

## **Petition P-06-1387 Provide humanitarian aid to Gaza**

Dear Jack

Thank you for sharing your letter dated 23 February 2024, to the then Minister for Social Justice. It was noted and discussed at our meeting on 17 April 2024.

Members were grateful to you for bringing this petition to our attention. We would be grateful if you could keep us informed about any response you receive from the Welsh Government about any discussions that have taken place with humanitarian charities involved in the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal in Wales, and any further action the Government may consider taking to provide humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Thank you again for bringing this matter of shared interest to our attention.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.



We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

# Agenda Item 3.12

Dear Delyth,

I am emailing you in your role as Chair of the Senedd's Culture Committee to alert you to correspondence I have sent to both Vaughan Gething and Lesley Griffiths (copied below) about the immediate crisis taking place at Welsh National Opera. Without an urgent, emergency, bi-national funding package being secured, WNO will be forced to become part-time, which would obviously be devastating, both for those who work for the largest arts organisation that our nation has, and for Wales itself.

Please can I ask you to read the email below, along with the attached open statement, and view the 176 signatories that I have also attached which show the enormity of feeling about this issue, both within Wales, across the UK and further afield.

I do hope that you will be able to raise this issue with the necessary parties in Welsh Government to encourage cross-border discussions with the Culture Secretary in Westminster, and I know that Rhianon Passmore would be pleased to speak to you about this issue as Chair of the Senedd's CPG for Music (of which I am a member). I am copying her in to this email so that you can be in touch.

I would also appreciate it if you could raise the issues at your next Culture Committee meeting. I believe that an urgent inquiry needs to take place into the funding model here in Wales, just as is happening in England right now. In my opinion, there is something seriously wrong with the way the system is working currently and proper scrutiny needs to be given to the decisions being made and the principles being applied when allocating funds.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that you will be able to encourage engagement and cooperation between all parties concerned to ensure that Wales's flagship arts organisation is not dismantled before our eyes.

With best wishes,

Elizabeth Atherton

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Elizabeth Atherton

**Subject:** Welsh National Opera crisis

**Date:** 5 May 2024 at 17:36:08 BST

**To:** [correspondence.lesley.griffiths@gov.wales](mailto:correspondence.lesley.griffiths@gov.wales), [PSCSCSJ@gov.wales](mailto:PSCSCSJ@gov.wales)

Dear Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice,

I enclose a formal statement which has been signed by international figures from across Wales, the UK and beyond. It describes the highly perilous position that Welsh National Opera has been placed in due to severe cuts in their funding from both the Arts Councils of Wales and England. The unique nature of the long-standing, bi-national funding agreement for WNO, paired with the difficult financial landscape in Wales, means that urgent intervention is necessary.

An online petition set up by the Orchestra of WNO in conjunction with the Musicians' Union calling for WNO to be retained as a full-time company has also now received over 8,000 signatures.

Without emergency financial assistance, Wales stands to lose its flagship arts organisation, a brand that represents Wales globally and attracts international talent to our shores. This is a situation that simply cannot be ignored.

Please can I urge you to read the statement that I am sending and enter into talks with both representatives of WNO and the Culture Secretary in England to discuss how WNO's cross-border agreement for funding can be honoured and an emergency package be put in place by both administrations to secure the future of the company.

This is far too important an issue to ignore, and in the run-up to a General Election it is imperative that the electorate sees a real commitment to the Arts from our politicians, as a nation which is proudly developing a core-funded National Music Service, and particularly given the importance that the Labour Party in England is attaching to them.

This is a crucial moment, both for WNO, and for the politicians leading us, and the time is right for our leaders to signal that they mean what they say about the importance of the Arts. If this moment is not grabbed, it will be the end of Wales's largest Arts organisation and employer as we know it. Politicians should not simply pay lip service to the Arts in the lead-up to elections - your support right now would be a clear sign to your electorate that our politicians are serious about issues that significantly matter to many who vote for them.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Atherton  
Member of the Senedd's Cross-Party Working Group for Music

Welsh National Opera is the jewel in Wales's crown. It is the only full-time opera company our nation has and our largest arts employer, created in the 1940's by a group of doctors, miners and teachers who wished to build a performing ensemble that would live up to our reputation as the "Land of Song".

WNO currently stands on a precipice, having received cuts from both the Arts Councils of Wales and England that amount to 25% of its yearly budget. This is clearly completely untenable. Unless further financial help can be found, WNO is being forced to make its orchestra and chorus, the beating heart of the company, part-time. It is scaling back its touring venues and has already offered voluntary redundancy to the rest of the company. This will result in a loss of vital skills across the organisation.

Without increased funding in the short term, WNO will be unable to continue to deliver its substantial offer of opera, education, and engagement and wellness programmes, providing artistic, community, educational, and health benefits across communities the length and breadth of Wales. The quality and output of Wales's flagship arts organisation will be severely diluted in the UK and beyond.

WNO is the largest touring opera company in Europe, enjoying a global reputation for excellence, and representing 'Brand Wales' on the world's stage. If WNO ceases to be a full-time company operating year-round it will be very hard to come back from that as the organisation becomes unable to retain its talent within Wales. What has painstakingly been built up over eighty years will be eroded and a vicious cycle will have begun.

The potential dismantling of one of Wales's finest national institutions would be devastating - for the nation, for the organisation and its 222 employees, and for home-grown cultural excellence. The world-renowned quality of WNO's output will be eroded, as the true ensemble nature of the company is undermined, with top musicians unable to sustain jobs in the orchestra and chorus on a part-time salary and no real freelance work in Wales with which to supplement their incomes. The cultural life of communities across Wales and England will be impoverished and diminished as a result.

Music and opera are needed now more than ever before. Not only do they have monetary value, existing in an ecosystem in which numerous other sectors and businesses benefit and bringing outward investment into our economy, but the value that they themselves bring to our lives as humans is immeasurable.

"The Arts are essential to any complete national life. The State owes it to itself to sustain and encourage them," stated Sir Winston Churchill during a time of extreme political upheaval and financial deprivation. The difficult financial landscape right now is widely recognised, but as we approach a General Election, our politicians need to stand up and demonstrate that they comprehend the necessity for our society to have a thriving Arts scene - one that can inspire, sustain, and nourish the imaginations, souls, and health of their electorate. We, as a people and as a nation, deserve no less.

Elizabeth Atherton, Singer/Member of the Senedd's Cross-Party Working Group  
for Music

Along with:

Thomas Adès, CBE, Composer/Conductor/Pianist

Tim Albery, Opera Director

David Alden, Opera Director

Louise Alder, Winner, Audience Prize BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition  
2017

Sir Thomas Allen, CBE, Singer

Julian Anderson, CBE, Composer

Sir Richard Armstrong, CBE, Former Music Director, Welsh National Opera

David Atherton, OBE, Former Principal Guest Conductor, BBC National Orchestra of  
Wales

Geoff Ballinger, Senior Producer, BBC Wales

Ryan Bancroft, Principal Conductor, BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Chief  
Conductor, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra

Suzanne Barnes, Director, CânSing

Cath Barton, Writer/Elected Member, Society of Authors in Wales Steering  
Committee

Jamie Barton, Winner, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition 2013

Sally Beamish, OBE, Composer

Nicola Benedetti, CBE, Violinist/Festival Director, Edinburgh International Festival/  
Founder & Artistic Director, The Benedetti Foundation

Sir George Benjamin, CBE, Composer

Sophie Bevan, MBE, Singer

Susan Bickley, Singer

Thomas Blunt, Conductor

Dame Hilary Boulding, DBE, President, Trinity College, Oxford/Former Principal,  
Royal

Welsh College of Music and Drama

Professor Mark Bowden, Composer/Professor of Music, Royal College of Music

Joanne Brandon, Director of Communications, Arts, Health Charity and  
Engagement,

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Katie Bray, Winner, Audience Prize BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition  
2019

Mark Le Brocq, Singer

Rob Brydon, MBE, Actor/Comedian/Writer/Presenter

Susan Bullock, CBE, Singer

Iain Burnside, Pianist

Stuart Burrows, OBE, Singer

Hugh Canning, Opera Critic

Rupert Christiansen, Opera Critic

Allan Clayton, MBE, Singer

Nicholas Cleobury, Conductor/Former Music Director, Mid Wales Opera

Alison Chitty, OBE, RDI, Theatre, Opera and Film Designer

Paul Charles Clarke, Singer

James Clutton, Chief Executive and Director of Opera, Opera Holland Park

Nicholas Collon, Principal Conductor, Aurora Orchestra/Chief Conductor, Finnish

Radio Symphony Orchestra  
Dame Sarah Connolly, CBE, Singer  
Alice Coote, OBE, Singer  
Adolfo Corrado, Winner, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition 2023  
Wayne Crocker, Director, Mencap Cymru  
Gerald Davies, CBE, DL, International Rugby Player for Wales and British Lions/  
Former President, Welsh Rugby Union/Journalist  
Iestyn Davies, MBE, Singer  
Neal Davies, Singer  
Wyn Davies, Director of Music, New Zealand Opera  
Geraint Talfan Davies, OBE, Former Chair, Welsh National Opera/Arts Council of  
Wales  
Evan Dawson, CEO, National Youth Arts Wales  
Professor Lynne Dawson, Head of Vocal Studies and Opera, Royal Northern College  
of

#### Music

Martin Duncan, Opera and Theatre Director  
Matthew Epstein, Former General Director, Welsh National Opera  
Dame Anne Evans, DBE, Singer  
Luke Evans, Actor/Singer  
Rebecca Evans, CBE, Singer  
Dr Pedro Faria, Senior Lecturer in Composition, Cardiff University  
Richard Farnes, Conductor/Former Music Director, Opera North  
Iain Farrington, Pianist/Coronation Composer/Arranger-in-Residence, Aurora  
Orchestra  
Catrin Finch, Head of Harp, Royal Academy of Music  
Thierry Fischer, Music Director, São Paulo Symphony Orchestra/Former Principal  
Conductor, BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
John Fisher, Former General Director and Artistic Director, Welsh National  
Opera/Assistant General Manager, Metropolitan Opera, New York  
Nuccia Focile, Singer/Vocal Tutor, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama  
Stephen Johns, Artistic Director, Royal College of Music  
Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, CBE, Principal, Royal Academy of Music  
Anthony Freud, General Director, President and CEO, Lyric Opera of  
Chicago/Former  
General Director, Welsh National Opera  
Olivia Fuchs, Opera Director  
Anthony Gabriele, Conductor/Pianist/Orchestrator  
Patrick Gale, Novelist/Screenwriter  
Laura Gardiner, Foundation Director, The Benedetti Foundation  
Dr. Cameron Gardner, Director of International Engagement, Cardiff University  
Edward Gardner, Principal Conductor, London Philharmonic Orchestra  
Norman Gettings, Communications and Outreach Lead, Oasis Cardiff  
Adam Green, Founder and Director, The Prison Choir Project  
Professor Kenneth Hamilton, Senior Director for International Partnerships, Cardiff  
University  
Dr. Monika Hennemann, International Dean for the College of Arts, Humanities and  
Social Sciences, Cardiff University  
Gavin Higgins, Composer-in-Association, BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
Jeffrey Howard, BEM, Pianist/Organist/Arranger/Vocal Coach

Yvonne Howard, Singer/Professor of Singing, Royal Northern College of Music  
 Dr. Owain Arwel Hughes, CBE, Conductor  
 Beverley Humphreys, MBE, Singer/Broadcaster  
 Professor Brenda Hurley, Head of Opera, Royal Academy of Music  
 Leo Hussain, Conductor  
 David Jackson, OBE, Artistic Director, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition  
 Sir Karl Jenkins, CBE, Composer  
 Katherine Jenkins, OBE, Singer  
 Stephen Johns, Artistic Director, Royal College of Music  
 Aled Jones, MBE, Singer/Broadcaster  
 Claire Jones, ARAM, Former Royal Harpist  
 Dame Gwyneth Jones, DBE, Kammersängerin of Austria and Bavaria, Singer  
 Dr. Nicholas Jones, Head of School of Music, Cardiff University  
 Richard Jones, CBE, Opera Director  
 Ruth Jones, MBE, Actress/Comedian/Writer/Producer  
 Simon Jones, MBE, Former England Cricketer  
 Gwyn Hughes Jones, Singer  
 Vladimir Jurowski, KBE, Conductor Emeritus, London Philharmonic Orchestra/Music  
     Director, Bavarian State Opera Munich  
 Deborah Keyser, Director, Tŷ Cerdd, Music Centre Wales  
 Mary King, Singer/Vocal Talent Consultant, Glyndebourne Opera/Creative Director  
 Lothar Koenigs, Former Music Director, Welsh National Opera  
 Mike Leigh, Film and Theatre Director and Writer  
 Dr. Richard Lewis, MBE, DL, High Sheriff Mid Glamorgan  
 Jeffrey Lloyd-Roberts, Singer/Vocal Tutor, Royal Welsh College of Music and  
     Drama/Cardiff University  
 Dame Felicity Lott, DBE, Singer  
 Ed Lyon, Singer  
 Sir James MacMillan, CBE, Composer  
 Stephen Maddock, OBE, Principal, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
 Chris Marshall, Percussionist/Composer  
 Malcolm Martineau, OBE, Pianist  
 Samantha Maskrey, Vice Chair, Arts and Business Cymru/Vice President, Shelter  
     Cymru/Director, Hay Festival/Board Member, Chapter Arts Centre  
 Sarah Maslen, Manager, Fast Track Cymru/CEO, Undivided Training and  
 Consultancy  
 James Mayhew, Children's author/Illustrator/Concert Presenter/Live Art Performer  
 Professor Paul Mealor, LVO, CStJ, Composer  
 Sir Brian McMaster, CBE, Former Managing Director, Welsh National Opera  
 Sir David McVicar, Opera Director  
 Oliver Mears, Director of Opera, The Royal Opera House  
 Professor Linda Merrick, CBE, Principal, Royal Northern College of Music  
 Katie Mitchell, OBE, Theatre Director  
 Stephen Moore, Director of Music, Llandaff Cathedral  
 Right Reverend Barry Morgan, Former Archbishop of Wales  
 Corin Morgan-Armstrong, Director, Invisible Walls  
 Suzanne Murphy, Singer/Vocal Tutor, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama  
 Dennis O'Neill, CBE, Singer  
 Roy Noble, OBE, DL, KstJohn, Broadcaster/Writer  
 Sakari Oramo, OBE, Chief Conductor, BBC Symphony Orchestra

Professor Ian Pace, Pianist/Professor of Music, Culture and Society, City, University of

London

Mark Padmore, Singer

Sir Antonio Pappano, CVO, Music Director, Royal Opera House

Rhianon Passmore, MS, Chair, Senedd's Cross-Party Working Group for Music

Professor Julian Philips, Head of Composition, Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Michael Pollock, Consultant Vocal Coach, ENO Harewood Artists/National Opera Studio

Sir David Pountney, CBE, Opera Director/Former Artistic Director, Welsh National Opera

Lisa Power, MBE, Former Manager, Fast Track Cymru

The Venerable Mark Preece, Archdeacon of Margam

Janet Price, Singer

Sir Simon Rattle, OM, CBE, Chief Conductor, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra/  
Conductor Laureate, London Symphony Orchestra

Tim Rhys-Evans, MBE, Educator/Conductor/Arranger/Composer/Founder of The Aloud

Charity

Christine Rice, MBE, Singer

Menna Richards, OBE, Former Board Member, WNO/Former Controller, BBC Cymru Wales

Carlo Rizzi, OSI, Conductor Laureate and Former Music Director, Welsh National Opera

Natalya Romaniw, Singer

Amanda Roccroft, Singer/Professor of Singing, Royal College of Music/Vocal Tutor,  
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Matthew Rose, Singer

Michael Rosewell, Director of Opera, Royal College of Music/Former Music Director,  
English Touring Opera

Michael Sheen, Actor

Brindley Sherratt, Singer

James Southall, Conductor/Pianist/Vocal Coach

Nicky Spence, OBE, Singer/Broadcaster

John Storgårds, Chief Conductor, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra/Violinist

John Summers, OBE, CEO La Nuova Musica

Ingrid Surgenor, MBE, Former Official Accompanist, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World  
Competition/Studienleiterin Bayreuther Festspiele/Glyndebourne Festival

Opera

Sir Bryn Terfel, CBE, Singer

Cari Thomas, Author

Paul Islwyn Thomas, TV Executive Producer, Wildflame/Former Head of Arts, BBC  
Wales/Chair of Bafta Cymru

Will Todd, Composer

Sir John Tomlinson, CBE, Singer

Petroc Trelawney, Broadcaster

Ailish Tynan, Singer

Bill Upham, MBE, CEO, Growing Space

Matthew Kofi Waldren, Conductor/Co-Founder, Your Turn Collective

Garry Walker, Music Director, Opera North

Errollyn Wallen, CBE, Composer  
Deborah Warner, CBE, Theatre and Opera Director  
Huw Watkins, MBE, Composer/Pianist  
Julian Lloyd Webber, OBE, Cellist/Conductor/Broadcaster  
Dame Judith Weir, Master of The King's Music, Composer  
Sir Willard White, OM, CBE, Singer  
Mark Wigglesworth, Conductor  
Ryan Wigglesworth, Chief Conductor, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra  
Llŷr Williams, Concert Pianist  
Roderick Williams, OBE, Singer/Composer  
Huw Tregelles Williams, OBE, Former Head of Music, BBC Wales/Deputy Chair,  
Wales  
    Millennium Centre  
Rt. Hon. Jenny Willott, OBE, Former MP and Minister/CEO, Re-engage  
Professor Alexandra Wilson, Author/Arts writer/Professor of Music and Cultural  
History,  
    Oxford Brookes University  
Dr. Charles Wilson, Lecturer in Music, Cardiff University  
Ryan Wood, Pianist/Choral Conductor  
Kenneth Woods, Artistic Director, English Symphony Orchestra/Elgar  
Festival/Colorado  
    MahlerFest  
Kate Woolveridge, MBE, Co-Founder and Artistic Director, Forget-Me-Not Chorus  
Barry Wordsworth, Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Ballet  
Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Singer/Vocal Professor, Royal Academy of Music

# Agenda Item 3.13

Good afternoon,

Please find attached the latest, and second, quarterly update of the Welsh Rugby Union's progress report against the recommendations of our Independent Review published in November 2023 (<https://www.wru.wales/2023/11/wru-independent-review/>).

In this update, we welcome Dame Katherine Grainger, who joins Dame Anne Rafferty on the oversight group which will monitor our work and show the developments and an updated timeline for our progress in each specific recommendation.

It can be noted that the main focus of the March quarter has been on developing our strategy at pace, which we are on track to publish in early Summer. With this in mind, we look forward to even further progress in the June quarter report, as many of the recommendations are linked to the development of our strategy.

This strategy work is well underway and we have undergone a significant period of consultation which has included the WRU Board and Council members, members of the Professional Rugby Board, our executive staff and a wide range of other senior figures at the WRU and in the professional game, including current and former players. This consultation and engagement will now be further expanded in the coming weeks as we near completion of our new ambitious five-year plan.

If you have any questions about the document attached or about the advancements we are making in any of the areas raised please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Abi



**Abi Tierney | WRU Group Chief Executive Officer**

**Welsh Rugby Union Group / Grwp Undeb Rygbi Cymru**  
Welsh Rugby Union Group, Principality Stadium,  
Westgate Street

**Email/ Epost:** [atierney@wru.wales](mailto:atierney@wru.wales)

**Values: Excellence | Integrity | Success | Courage | Family | Humour**  
**Gwerthoedd: Rhagoriaeth | Cywirdeb | Llwyddiant | Dewrder | Teulu | Hiwmor**

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
Pack Page 113	<b>1 Appoint an oversight body</b>	a. The WRU should appoint an external oversight group of no fewer than 3 people. At least one should be nominated by an outside body and at least one experienced in people management or organisational culture.	We will appoint this oversight group.	Revised to 30 April 2024	Dame Anne Rafferty appointed as Chair and Dame Katherine Grainger has been appointed to the Group. One further appointment will be made shortly.
		b. For the next 3 years the WRU should report quarterly to this group, setting out its goals, actions taken to meet them and how success is measured. We hope that substantial progress will be made in the first year but recommend that the body stays in place for 3 years so it can oversee the constitutional review and changes.	We will report quarterly to this external oversight group (EOG).	Week of 18 January 2024 and each calendar quarter thereafter	Report to 14 January shared with Dame Anne in February; Report to be published April 2024.
		c. The group's remit should be to consider steps by the WRU to implement the recommendations in this report and to create an inclusive environment for staff and for all those involved in rugby in Wales.	We will agree terms of reference for the EOG and include this in the remit.	Terms to be finalised by 31 May 2024	Draft discussed with Oversight Group Chair and will be agreed with the group once all the members have been appointed. Target date of 31 May 2024.
	<b>Continue reform of the Board</b>	a. The WRU is a national sporting organisation which is also a large corporate body. Its Board must be an efficient body with clear responsibilities for the governance of all aspects of the WRU and should not be seen as just representing the community clubs. The executive should report to the Board on all aspects of the WRU's work.	We agree – the full new Board has been announced and is in place as at 1 January 2024. The Executive does report to the Board on all aspects of its work. We will ensure the Executive reports on all aspects of work; concisely and effectively.	14 January 2024	CEO reporting in place and will be further developed as goals and KPIs are developed for the new strategy from June 2024.
		b. The size of the Board should be further reduced to 10 by lowering the number of Council representatives, elected or appointed, to 2 from currently 4. The changes made at the March 2023 EGM should be given time to take effect before further reform of the Board, so this change need not be immediate but be developed during the 3 years in which the oversight body operates.	The governance changes which were set out at the EGM on 26 March have been implemented within the specified time period with the number of Council Members elected to the Board reduced to 4. The new Board is in place as of 1 January 2024. We will commission the governance review after there has been a period of operation of the new Board and work with Member Clubs and Council to discuss these recommendations in the light of this review.	To be discussed – 31 December 2025	Governance review to be commissioned Spring 2025 to report September 2025 and 2025 AGM. Implementation by December 2026.
		c. We recommend that within two years the WRU commissions an external report on governance. That report should consider how the March 2023 reforms are operating and how committees can be streamlined to avoid duplication (along with other relevant matters).	We will commission an external report and review our sub-committees and establish the necessary number to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the relevant subject areas. The Board Committees have been streamlined and in addition to the Professional Rugby Board ( PRB) and Community Rugby Board (CRB) will include a Finance Audit and Risk Committee, and a People, Culture and Governance Committee.	31 December 2025	Governance review to be commissioned Spring 2025 to report September 2025 and 2025 AGM.
		d. Implement a "fit and proper person" test for Council/Board members and candidates for the Council/Board. Board members, elected or appointed, should be able to show that their membership of the Board would not undermine the reputation of the WRU or make it harder for the WRU to promote rugby in Wales.	A fit and proper person test was introduced for appointments to the Board made over the last 6 months. It was also used for Council elections that took place in 2023.	31 March 2024	A fit and proper person test is in place for all current and future Board and Council appointments. It will continue to be used going forwards. Directors and Council Members will be asked to renew attestation on an annual basis.

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
Pack Page 114	e.	There should always be a current strategic plan for key areas of the sport, shared with relevant managers and (subject to competitor knowledge) published. This should include professional rugby, community rugby, men's rugby, women's and girls' rugby, rugby for those with disabilities, and broadening inclusion. All plans must be approved by the Board. Staff need to understand what they are asked to deliver.	We commit to this and to make this public. Our new strategic plan conversations have already started and will be completed with the support of stakeholders. This plan will be reviewed at least annually going forwards.  We will produce a WRU Group Strategic Plan ready to be published by 30 June 2024.	30 June 2024	Strategy process is underway including consultaion with stakeholders. A Board session took place in April.
	f.	Set up a structured system for reporting to the Board which includes:	We commit to ensuring that the reports available to the Board are clear, concise and contain the relevant amount of information to inform, discuss or make decisions as appropriate. We commit to ensuring that all Executive KPIs are shared and monitored once they have been thoroughly developed to align with our new strategy. The KPIs will cover all aspects of WRU performance, including People, Operational Performance, Finance, Programme Delivery, Risk and Assurance.	31 March 2024  Executive Board KPIs to initially be short term and then from 30 June 2024 in line with new Group Strategy	New system to be in place.
	i.	Written reports to the Board from the executive at least quarterly and always in good time prior to each Board meeting.			
	ii.	Papers to the Board should identify relevant options and include clear decision-making principles or criteria.			
	iii.	Each report should include KPIs for individual members of the executive and departments of the WRU which should be monitored and appraised.			
	g.	The administration of the Board should be streamlined:	We have already hired some immediate support and we commit to ensuring the resources are available to enable us to deliver on this element.	14 January 2024	Support in place to identify needs and develop capacity. Ongoing resource requirements are being reviewed to ensure right level of capacity and capability is in place.
	i.	A dedicated support service should be provided to help the Chair, chairs of committees and Board members with their roles.			
	ii.	Each Board member should participate in a skills review, have a skills matrix drawn up on appointment and be encouraged to undertake appropriate development according to needs identified on their skills matrix.	A skills and experience review of the existing Board was carried out prior to the recruitment of the new Board members; this will be populated further with the skills of the new Board members and refreshed every year.	31 March 2024	Skills and EDI audit for current Board in place. Skills review to be done annually thereafter. Paper on this to be taken to the Board in May 2024.
	iii.	Everyone appointed to the Board should be offered induction training on (i) their duties as a director; (ii) good practice in governance; (iii) equality, diversity and inclusion; (iv) representing the WRU; and (v) the current state of Welsh rugby and the WRU's strategic plans.	Induction training has already been discussed by the Board and a new comprehensive induction programme has already commenced. We will take on board recommendations from throughout this report and integrate relevant points into the induction process. We commit that all Board and Council Members will receive a detailed induction and the development training as identified in the recommendations.	31 March 2024	Induction programme has been implemented, with all new Directors having received an induction. Feedback on induction programme has been requested from Directors. Induction programme will be reviewed and refreshed, taking into account feedback received. Training offering to Directors will then be tailored (also linked to Board effectiveness review).
	iv.	The role of executive staff attending the Board should be clarified.	Agreed, this has been done.	14 January 2024	Executive staff attend meetings for relevant agenda items, where the CEO requires specialist input. All Board meetings to have NED only session.
v.	Clarify the fiduciary role of Board members to oversee all the activities of the company, uphold its values and respect one another's skills and experience.	Agreed, this has been a key consideration of the recruitment process for the new Board. The Board has already discussed this and will spend some time in early 2024 discussing this in practice.	14 January 2024	Discussed and agreed with Board members. Ongoing Board training programme started in the 25 April 2024 Board meeting with expected further sessions.	

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
<b>3 Council</b>		<p>In view of the duplication of Members between Council and Community Game Board, the shared responsibility for establishing the strategy for community rugby, seeking Board approval and then delivering the approved strategy, the constitutional structure should be streamlined and simplified in a single entity. It could perhaps be described as the Community Council. It should be expanded to include a wider group of stakeholders.</p>	<p>This will require the consent of member clubs and Council as this structure is embedded in our Articles. We will consult on these recommendations with these bodies, understand in more detail the concerns behind the current structure and develop a plan.</p>	<p>To be discussed – 31 December 2025</p>	<p>Consultation with stakeholders; Cocreation of a plan for way forward, AGM 2025 to discuss.</p>
		<p>To fulfil this role the Community Council should be drawn from a broader base of those involved in rugby in Wales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Membership of the Community Council should be a maximum 16 (Currently we understand the Council has 19 members: 5 National Council members and 14 District Council members – 2 each from Districts A – E and 1 each from F, G, H and J. Following the EGM in March 2023 the Board may appoint up to 6 Council members.): 9 elected from districts, 1 elected nationally and 6 representing other rugby community interests, as set out below.</li> <li>ii. The six new places on the Community Council should be for people representing (1) schools rugby; (2) rugby in colleges and universities; (3) community rugby players (The WRU will need to consult and draw up a definition. We recommend a broad definition. One option is election by captains of teams that play in leagues in Wales other than the regional sides in the United Rugby Championship. However, the exact approach we leave to the WRU.); (4) women's and girls' rugby (5) rugby for players with a disability and (6) officials. Where possible these should be elected but it might be difficult to identify an electorate and arrange elections at a reasonable cost in all these areas. If so, the WRU should run a competitive appointment process according to a person specification it should draw up.</li> <li>iii. Members of the Community Council should be limited to 3 consecutive terms of 3 years (with the possibility of re-election after one fallow period).</li> <li>iv. The individual elected nationally should chair the Community Council and have a seat on the Board. The other Board member should be elected by the Community Council.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. Again, the constitution of the current Council is included in our Articles so we will consult with Council and we will need the support of member clubs to implement this. The Articles post-EGM March 2023 provide Board with the ability to appoint six additional Council Members, the intention being that this would broaden the base of representation. The Articles do not specify who these need to be, so there is discretion for the Board. There would need to a change in the Articles to reduce the number of Council Members.</p> <p>We will consult with clubs and council on these proposals whilst understanding in more detail the concerns from the Independent Review to develop a plan.</p>	<p>To be discussed – 31 December 2025</p>	<p>Initial consultation with clubs prior to 2024 AGM in November and will be discussed at the AGM.</p>
		<p>We recommend above that the Board should approve and maintain the strategy for all areas of the game, including the community game. The Community Council should be a representative, not a management, body and should not direct management or set strategies or budgets.</p>	<p>Noted. The Board does have responsibility for all aspects of the game. We will consult with clubs and council on these proposals whilst understanding in more detail the concerns from the Independent Review to develop a plan.</p>	<p>To be discussed – 31 December 2025</p>	<p>Council plan to be discussed and developed.</p>

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
		Membership of the Community Council should involve at least induction training on representing the WRU, its inclusion and diversity policies, its current strategic plans and their implementation.	We agree. We commit to ensuring that Council Members receive thorough induction training relevant to their role and representing the WRU. We will use the recommendations in this report to improve the induction programme.	31 March 2024	Induction programme has been implemented, with all new Council Members having received an induction. Feedback on induction programme has been requested from Council Members. Induction programme will be reviewed and refreshed, taking into account feedback received. Additional training opportunities to also be identified.
4 Pack Page 116	<b>Take steps to become more transparent</b>	a. Draw up a transparency policy setting out when the WRU will give information to the public, the rugby community and employees based on the principle of sharing as much as possible. The primary reasons for withholding information should be (i) competitor knowledge; and (ii) legal obligations.	We agree. Over the next 6 months the WRU will engage with other bodies and institutions to establish best practice in this area and bring a policy, statement or framework proposal forward to the Board.	30 June 2024	Transparency statement has been drafted to be proposed to Board for approval at June Board meeting prior to publication.
		b. Publish the privileges associated with membership of the Board and Council, and for senior staff (distinct from, for example, attending matches as a host in a working role). The grounds for reduction or removal should also be set out.	We agree. A review of this will be carried out and published shortly for transparency.	31 January 2024	Privileges published in February 2024.
		c. When terminating employment, the WRU should only use non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) for an express purpose, not as a matter of course. This does not preclude the use of confidentiality clauses about the terms of a settlement agreement.	We agree. Settlement Agreements will continue to be used only on a case-by-case basis and not as a matter of course.	Immediate – 14 January	
		d. When reports are commissioned about general matters (rather than specific employees) they should be published unless there is a particular and agreed reason not to do so. If publication is not appropriate, the authors should be asked to write a brief summary of the issues, and their conclusions, for publication. The WRU would have been in a better place at the start of 2023 had it been known that it had commissioned reports into women's national rugby, governance, and equality, diversity and inclusion which recommended significant change.	We agree that where appropriate either a summary disclosure or full disclosure of any report commissioned should be shared. This is something we will also consider within the recommendation regarding a transparency policy (as per recommendation 4(a)).	Immediate – 14 January	
		Debate about the organisation and funding of Welsh rugby should be actively encouraged and the WRU should seek to share information to engage people's productive participation in a structured, not speculative, way. Underlying this is greater acceptance of constructive criticism with a view to improvement. A number of people commented on the WRU seeking to control the rugby environment too much.	We agree and consider this a part of the strategy process that has just commenced.	30 June 2024	

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
Pack Page 117	<b>5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b>	Align the WRU clearly and publicly with inclusion and diversity, demonstrating visible and vocal leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion. The WRU's commitment to inclusion and its opposition to abusive behaviour, exclusion and discrimination need to be unambiguous.	We commit to doing this authentically and openly.	30 June 2024	A review and update of our commitments on our WRU and Gamelocker websites will be undertaken and in place by 30 June 2024. This will include our internal intranet.
	a.	Amend the WRU's statement of values to include one related to diversity and inclusion.	A values review will be a part of the strategy exercise and we will prioritise the identification and roll out of our values as a part of the output of the strategy.	Revised to 30 September 2024	Values review not progressing at intended speed. Likely this will now follow publication of strategy. Target date to be revised to 30 September 2024.
	b.	Give greater publicity to women's rugby and rugby for people with disabilities.	Our EDI plan is aligned with this, we agree we need to invest more into this area.	30 Sept 2024	Publicity (comms, brand, marketing) plan – from the strategy work. In the short term, a women's and girls conference was arranged for 26/27 April 2024, targetted marketing campaigns to be agreed and delivered, training for our players to enable them to self promote on social media and the WRU will showcase our players as role models.
	c.	Respond robustly to discrimination and hate crime in stadia and online.	In line with our zero tolerance approach to discrimination, we agree that we need to improve our reporting mechanisms and ensure our process for dealing with reports is efficient and effective.  We will further improve on the Principality Stadium reporting system by regularly publicising anti-racism and discrimination messages on the concourses and stadium TV systems and emphasise the need to report this type of behaviour to Principality Stadium personnel on event days.	31 March 2024	Review current approach - ensure collaboration across the organisation. Publish what we are doing. Instadia: Anti-racism and discrimination messages are regularly displayed throughout the stadium for all events, encouraging spectators to report any incidents immediately to stadium personnel.  Online: Constant moderation of Union social feeds to report abuse and block offending parties. Gradual integration with the Arwen AI platform to automate the process through our partnership with Six Nations Rugby Limited.
	d.	Express clearly and publicly the WRU's commitment to the inclusion of all members of Welsh society both in rugby and in its own staff group	We will make our clear and unambiguous statement public as a part of our strategy.	30 June 2024	Part of Strategy. Review what other organisations do.
	e.	Have a clear equality, diversity and inclusion strategy underpinned by a delivery plan.	The WRU's EDI policy has been revisited over recent months and approved by the Board. Women's rugby is at the heart of this document. We agree that we need to work harder and move more quickly on our Inclusion delivery plan.  We will develop a clear EDI delivery plan to underpin our strategy.	30 June 2024 for EDI Plan – in line with strategy  30 September for EDI Delivery Plan	EDI Plan will be reviewed in line with WRU strategy. The delivery plan will then enable the overarching strategy and be in place by 30 September 2024.
	f.	Work collaboratively with the EHRC, should the EHRC take any steps in relation to WRU.	We commit to working with the EHRC.	TBC once initial scope and process is agreed with EHRC.	Engagement with the EHRC continues.

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
6	<b>Financial support to clubs</b>	<p>Reform financial support to clubs with a view to achieving key goals reflecting the WRU's strategy for the community game.</p> <p>These should include all facilities for women and girls (including training and club house facilities), steps to broaden access to rugby for all communities, proper disciplinary policies and procedures in clubs for responding to unacceptable behaviour (including discriminatory behaviour) off the pitch.</p>	<p>We have recently rolled out a suite of services under the heading WRU Dysgu which are learning tools and tips for clubs to make their club houses and facilities welcoming to all sectors of society. How to take appropriate action should unacceptable behaviour be identified or witnessed is an element of this service.</p> <p>Dysgu is a re-education programme where we will be expecting all clubs to have an EDI plan by the end of 2024. A working group has been established to look at how investment is distributed.</p> <p>We have rewritten the payment of players (Integrity Statement) and reviewed our approach and policy in relation to our core grant.</p> <p>A self-assessment tool has been approved for clubs. The club development team will guide clubs in Wales through this process in 2024. Attached to this are supportive tools which will support the discipline procedures to enable clubs to address all behaviour which falls short of acceptable standards.</p> <p>Aim to align all funding to safe, inclusive and compliant clubs across the country.</p> <p>We agree that we need to do more in this space, linking financial support for clubs to our strategic aims around safe, inclusive, welcoming clubhouses. We will need our clubs support to move forward with changes to funding to support our ambitions. We will carry out a review of how we deliver support to our clubs and what the appropriate linking mechanism is as a part of our strategy process.</p>	<p>Already started; quarterly reviews</p> <p>Strategy agreed 30 June 2024</p> <p>Implementation 30 June 2025</p>	<p>This will feature prominently as part of the strategy which will be published in June 2024.</p>

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
<p><b>7 Invest in the women's and girls' game:</b></p>	<p>a. Analyse the expenditure on the women's and girls' game in light of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) income and expenditure of other unions;</li> <li>(ii) growing sponsorship, broadcast revenue and attendances at women's matches; and</li> <li>(iii) the need to invest to develop the game so that funding for women and girls is benchmarked and expressly managed based on data. Spending should be in line with other unions and with spending on men and boys and appropriate to a growth and investment phase.</li> </ul> <p>This analysis will require decisions about allocating income (For example how does one allocate general sponsorship? The sponsor will want the exposure from large TV audiences currently obtained by the men's first team. That will affect how much they pay. However sponsors will pay nothing to an organisation the public sees as excluding groups in society.) and expenditure and is not intended to be an exact exercise but to inform decisions. The analysis should include support for the community game as well as player development and national squads.</p>	<p>We have made progress in this area but we know more needs to be done. We commit to the recommendations to support further development. We will look at areas that require investment and ensure we align that with identified sponsorship opportunities. We will review our spending and ensure that it is comparable with other competitors and our own comparable investment in the men's and boys' game, appropriate to growth.</p> <p>Detailed work has been done on establishing a strategy for women's and girls' rugby and this now needs to be integrated into the overall WRU strategy. This will be published by not later than 30 June 24. The appointment of a board member who has expertise in the women's game, Amanda Bennett is a key development. Amanda has played a key part in the development of the strategy to date as a member of the Women's Strategy Group. The WRU has increased its investment in women's rugby considerably over the last two years both in the community and at the top of the performance pyramid. An assessment of our competitors' spend and our own individual needs were central planks to the focus of this additional investment. The WRU's partnership with Vodafone is an excellent example of a targeted approach, regarding sponsorship investment, improving the opportunities available in the girls' and women's game at all levels.</p> <p>Initial professional contracts commenced on 1 January 22 with the total number and the quantum of the contracts increasing for the second round based on what our immediate rivals were paying and the desire to raise performance levels by giving the women's squad coaches greater access to their players. There are currently 31 contracted players with 32 budgeted for. In addition, there are 2 Hybrid contracts with GB7s. For WXV there were also 5 Fixed Term (FT) contracts, and the intention is to have 3 FT contracts for the Six Nations in 2024.</p>	<p>30 June 2024 to publish strategy and an update on all other matters</p>	<p>A Women's and Girls Strategy Group has been established, chaired by Amanda Bennett. It met for the first time on 8 April to critique the work done on the strategy to date and will meet regularly over the coming months.</p>
	<p>b. Keep the salary for professional female players at a level competitive to other careers and other nations and ensure the number of contracts is sufficient to support full national teams.</p>	<p>The level of payment and the number of players contracted will be kept constantly under review to ensure that it is competitive, fair and in line with other careers. It should be noted that the senior squad has risen to 6 in the world rankings over the last two years and that immediately beneath that level Wales will have two teams taking part in the Celtic Challenge with U20 and U18 teams also being established in the past 18 months too.</p>	<p>30 June 2024 – subject to an annual review -</p>	<p>New contracts to be issued in June will see increases across the board.</p>

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



Pack Page 120

Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
	c. Embed a player pathway for women and girls by completing development of the hubs offering support to players in Wales and by continuing outreach support to players at clubs in other nations. The specific approach might change but the WRU should continue to provide professional staff to support the pathway in women's rugby.	Further down the player pathway 3 player development centres have been established in East Wales, West Wales and in North Wales supported by player hubs. A Women's Pathway Physical Development Lead has been appointed who will oversee, all pathways' programmes and develop a curriculum for the physical development of our female pathway players. This position is seen as critical to the evolution of the Women's Pathway programme and underpins both our performance and injury prevention strategies  We will increase investment in our women and girl's pathways going forwards.	30 June 2024 – subject to an annual review	Incomplete until domestic competition in place which is fit for purpose. The Celtic Challenge will continue and discussions are ongoing with various parties regarding future competition formats.
	d. Ensure the women's team has (as a minimum) current levels of support staff and access to sufficient gym time with required equipment. If sharing resources with men, the division of time should be made clear.	The management team which supports the Senior Women's programmes, is consistent with that of our competitors in terms of number, quality and experience of staff. The men's and women's senior team managers meet regularly to discuss utilisation of the NCE facilities. If there are any queries/ issues these are brought to the attention of the PD to ensure performance and equity is at the heart of decision making.	Already in place – report 14 January 2024	Will continue to monitor across all administration support.
	e. Develop a maternity strategy for professional, or soon to be professional, players. This might involve additional funding to cover maternity and advice on return to work.	The maternity policy for our players was included in their contracts issued in January 2023 with all players entitled to the same benefits as other employees of the WRU.  We will consult with our women players on the current maternity policy and support and make appropriate adaptations to support their needs where possible.	Already in place	Policy in place. Further consultation underway to see if this can be improved.
<b>8 Continue to improve employment practices</b>	a. Regularly measure staff and player experience, separately considering players, coaching/ managing staff and administrative staff. A range of approaches should be used to include individual interviews and anonymous online surveys.	Players, coaches and support staff have completed two surveys over the past 18 months with year-on-year analysis being monitored. All data is collected anonymously and discussed across a range of groups.  We will consult with players to understand how best to feedback on player experience  We will consider the use of other approaches in addition to anonymous surveys to gain feedback on employment practices.	Already in place – Review 30 September 2024	Further consultation required. Review as part of Strategy.
	b. Expand appraisals for senior staff to include 360-degree feedback - a structured approach to listening to those at and below their level of management - from people not chosen by the manager. Managers should be helped to a sense of how they are perceived by others.	KPIs for senior staff are currently being used. A Senior Leadership Group (SLG) was introduced in 2023 to improve communication and inter-departmental working throughout the organisation.  We will implement 360 appraisals for all Executive and Senior Managers	30 September 2024	A review of our current appraisal process is underway to include 360 feedback.

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
		c. Offer mentoring and reverse mentoring. Each will best be used for limited groups and defined periods given the time commitment of proper mentoring.	We recognise that a new systemic offer needs to be created across the whole WRU.	30 June 2025	
		d. Include as KPIs for senior staff to be assessed in performance reviews (1) co-operation with managers at an equivalent level; (2) breaking down departmental barriers/ 'silos'; (3) adopting a collegiate management style towards junior colleagues.	We will include these as KPIs in the next iteration of our assessment process.	30 September 2024	A review of our current appraisal process is underway to include 360 feedback.
Pack Page 121		e. Annual training in equality, diversity and inclusion should take place for all staff. This should be as broad as possible so it is delivered in different ways and different places. There are more engaging approaches than an annual zoom lecture.	Annual training was undertaken in 2021 and modular training offered to Board, Council and Exec in 2022. 2023 has seen EDI training made available to all staff with Show Racism The Red Card responsible for providing the training as part of a Welsh Government scheme. Additional training is planned for next year.	30 September 2024 delivery	Review of EDI training in progress to procure a suite of training to accommodate learning styles. Board training taking place in April 2024 and new online training system has made basic EDI training mandatory to all employees.
		f. Adopt a Speak Up approach, with systems to encourage communication and appoint a member of the executive to implement this and a Board member to oversee communication within the organisation.	We have already implemented our "Have a Voice" campaign led by our Director of People, Lydia Stirling; at Board level this will be overseen by our People, Culture and Governance Committee that is chaired by Alison Thorne.	30 June 2024	Complaints procedure under review to then be communicated.
		g. Designate someone responsible for managing the culture at the National Centre of Excellence. The success criteria should be to make the NCE more inclusive and facilitate frictionless sharing of facilities.	We take note of the comments regarding the NCE and are committed to making the necessary changes to improve the environment to ensure all staff and visitors have the experience they should expect. The Executive Director of Rugby, Nigel Walker, will be charged with improving the culture and will be measured on action taken.	Immediate – Nigel Walker appointed	Representatives for all teams resident at the NCE were brought together on 27 March to discuss the environment we want to create. Principles to be developed in the coming weeks which will be shared and debated and ultimately adopted by all who attend the NCE.
		h. Implement a zero-tolerance approach to language which excludes others from work or sport. By zero tolerance we do not mean that people must always be dismissed for exclusionary language but that it must always be reported, recorded and dealt with according to an express policy. If 'banter' is defined as making a comment which breaks social taboos, and waiting for nervous laughter, staff should be told it is not appropriate for the workplace.	We recognise there is more to do to embed our zero tolerance approach and we are reviewing our policies to make sure that they encourage people to come forward and report any exclusionary language. We will review our policies and statement of intent on EDI to ensure that it is clear of a zero tolerance approach. We will continue annual EDI training. We will continue to find ways to support reporting poor behaviour.	In place and ongoing	A review and update of our commitments on our WRU and Gamelocker websites will be undertaken and in place by 30 June 2024. This will include our internal intranet and our complaints procedure.
		i. Ensure each team manager has as part of their role an objective of listening to concerns and helping communication. The approach is likely to include 360-degree appraisal and communicating to WRU necessary changes to manage stress, relationships, group and personal concerns.	We will embed this in guidance for WRU employees in the next appraisal and development round.	30 September 2024	A review of our current appraisal process is underway to include 360 feedback. Funding is required to provide an efficient process which is under review.

# WELSH RUGBY UNION INDEPENDENT REVIEW RESPONSE APRIL 2024



	Recommendation summary	Recommendation	Initial WRU Board viewpoint on recommendation	Target date for implementation	Update as at April 24
		<p>j. Arrange for someone independent of the WRU to sit in on final interviews for Board members, the Chair and Chief Executive and any members of the Community Council who are appointed (see above), reporting in writing to the Board on whether the appointment followed good practice and the stated process. This should not be an audit or lead to a detailed report but a simple conclusion.</p>	<p>An independent was part of the appointment panel for all Board (including CEO) appointments made in the last 6 months. We are committed to continue with this practice.</p>	<p>Already in place – 14 January 2024</p>	
<p>6 Pack Page 122</p>	<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>Continue to work with disability sports bodies, according to a published strategy.</p>	<p>The WRU has extensive links with a range of disability groups and has attracted major events to the Principality Stadium, such as the European Wheelchair Rugby Championship in 2023.</p> <p>The WRU commits to developing a strategy, in consultation with Sport Wales, to ensure maximum impact in this area.</p> <p>WRU will continue to deliver against the Insport Gold Strategy and support the DSW strategy</p>	<p>30 June 2024 as a part of our strategy</p>	

Chair, Children, Young People, and Education Committee  
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee  
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee  
Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee  
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

8 May 2024

Dear Committee Chairs,

### **Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26: Engagement**

At our meeting on 24 April 2024, the Finance Committee (the Committee) considered its programme of engagement for the forthcoming Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025-26, ahead of the Committee's annual Plenary debate on spending priorities, provisionally scheduled for 17 July. I am writing to Chairs of subject committees to share our thinking. The Committee has agreed to undertake a number of engagement activities prior to the publication of the Draft Budget later this year. These include, a stakeholder event, focus groups held with the general public, and various other approaches to gather the views of young people.

### **Stakeholder Event: Carmarthen**

This year's stakeholder event will take place at Canolfan S4C Yr Egin on Thursday 13 June. This will be an opportunity for the Committee to hear directly from interested organisations/individuals on the expected Draft Budget proposals, as well as their views on the Welsh Government's approach to setting the budget and prioritising resources. As cross-Committee engagement with stakeholders on the budget is crucial to effective scrutiny, I would like to invite Committee Chairs or a Member of your Committee to join the event. If Chairs or Members are interested in attending, please contact the clerking team [seneddfinance@senedd.wales](mailto:seneddfinance@senedd.wales) by 20 May.

## Citizen engagement focus groups with the Welsh public

On behalf of the Committee, the Senedd's Citizens Engagement Team will be holding a series of focus groups on the Draft Budget with the Welsh public. The team has undertaken similar exercises over the past few years and the aim of this work is to form a cross-sectional study to allow the Committee to monitor perspectives and attitudes over time. Participants will be sourced through similar partner organisations to cover the same demographics as last year, and groups will be organised to focus on particular policy areas. The Citizens Engagement Team will circulate the dates of sessions to all Committees, should any Members wish to participate. This will allow an opportunity for Members to hear first-hand from the citizens of Wales where spending should be prioritised.

## Youth Engagement

In previous years, to further complement our engagement work, the Committee has held a workshop with Members of the Youth Parliament (WYP). As the WYP is currently not in session, the Committee will be engaging with young people by different means. There will be an opportunity for young people to provide their views at the Urdd National Eisteddfod, the National Eisteddfod and at the Royal Welsh Show. The Citizen Engagement Team is also organising a dedicated workshop for young people and will be inviting participants from Coleg y Cymoedd, the National Youth Advocacy Service and 'Voices' from Care Cymru. The Digital Communications Team will also be using interactive social media tools to encourage engagement, and we would appreciate if other Committees would use their own social media presence to promote this work.

## Finance Committee Plenary Debate on the Welsh Government spending priorities

As mentioned above, the Committee intends to hold a Plenary debate on Wednesday 17 July on the Welsh Government's spending priorities for 2025-26. The outcomes of our engagement work will inform and feed into this debate, which will provide the best opportunity to influence the Welsh Government spending priorities before the Draft Budget is published later in the year. As ever, we would very much welcome the participation of Committee Chairs, as well as other Members, as part of this debate, to ensure that the Welsh Government's spending plans are informed by the views and priorities of Senedd Committees.

## Approach to budget scrutiny

I will shortly be writing to Chairs, with regard to the Committee's approach to budget scrutiny, including information on the consultation and timetable once the Trefnydd has notified the Business Committee of the Draft Budget publication dates before the summer recess.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the Draft Budget process, please feel free to contact me or the Clerk to the Finance Committee, Owain Roberts, 0300 200 6388, [seneddfinance@senedd.wales](mailto:seneddfinance@senedd.wales).

Yours sincerely,



Peredur Owen Griffiths  
Chair, Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations  
Committee**

Lesley Griffiths MS  
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice  
Welsh Government

8 May 2024

## Protecting the national collections

Dear Lesley

I write to you following the reports about the future of [Amgueddfa Cymru](#) and the [National Library for Wales](#), as well as in response to your [recent letter](#) to the Committee (dated 04 April 2024).

In your letter to the Committee, when speaking about the need to prioritise future consequential funding for protecting the national collections, you note that:

*Our national collections are an integral part of our heritage. We will continue to play our part in ensuring they are safe for future generations. This includes continuing to prioritise funding to our arm's length bodies to protect the national collections.*

Whilst we welcome this stance, we are concerned that the Welsh Government's actions to date have failed to recognise the seriousness, or the significance, of the dire situation facing our national collections which are housed at Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library for Wales. You note that the previous Deputy Minister was assured that the national collections were safe: recent news reports, however, would suggest that this was not the case. We wrote to your predecessor in this post on several occasions to raise similar concerns.

We first [highlighted the issue in January 2022](#) during scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2022-23. In our report, we noted that proposed reductions of over 30 per cent in capital funding for Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library would potentially pose "a serious threat to some important collections." At the time, we recommended that the Welsh Government should

outline how it would help both institutions address their capital maintenance backlogs. In response to this recommendation, ministers told us that both institutions had responded positively to their draft budget allocations, and that across the culture portfolio there had been a substantial increase in capital spending.

We expressed further reservations a year later in January 2023 during Draft Budget Scrutiny. While capital funding for Amgueddfa Cymru increased that year, the capital budget for the National Library was reduced again by 20 per cent. We were informed that, as a result, there would be a “very serious risk to the collections which [they deemed] to be totally unacceptable without additional funding.” In conclusion, we stated that:

*“Both these institutions are of significant cultural value for our nation, and we think consideration should be given to how these institutions are provided with funding to manage their national treasures.”*

We wrote again, in March 2023, to the then Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip, raising concerns about safeguarding the national collections. We drew attention to the maintenance backlog of £65m at Amgueddfa Cymru, of which £15m was deemed essential. We sought assurances from the Welsh Government that the future of the national collections housed at both Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library of Wales were safe. In response (dated 27 April 2023), the Deputy Minister told us that:

*“the Welsh Government has prioritised funding for front line services, particularly health services, in the most recent Budget. It is not possible to fund everything that we would wish to, and difficult decisions have had to be made.”*

We reiterated these concerns through the summer of 2023 and during this year’s Draft Budget scrutiny process. As we were told in autumn 2023, Amgueddfa Cymru said:

*“We're having to look at a restructuring of the museum and a remodelling of what we do, in order to be able to adapt to what we think will be a new financial landscape. And that means we're going to have to probably be a smaller museum.”*

They added that they required £90million of capital funding to safeguard the national collections for which they are responsible over the next decade.

The responses received to date by the Welsh Government on this issue have, we have felt, been unsatisfactory. Whilst we have recognised the severe funding constraints faced by the Welsh Government, we are of the view that protecting our national collections is of vital importance to our identity as a nation.

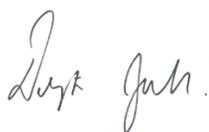
As you will be aware, we have recently called for a cross-government mission to assume the responsibility for protecting our national collections. We recognise that it is unfair to for one government department to shoulder this responsibility alone. Ensuring that there is a collective government effort in protecting our national collections would ensure that the collections are safeguarded at the present time, and also for future generations. In doing so, the Welsh Government would be acting consistently with the Future Wellbeing goal of a “Wales of vibrant culture”.

It was refreshing to hear you note in Plenary recently that you think that this matter is a “cross-Government” issue, as well as to hear your recognition of how important it is to protect these collections. We also welcome your comments about ensuring that as much of these collections as possible are on view to the public.

We would welcome an indication of how you will change the course of this issue and ensure that the national collections are not only safeguarded for the present moment, but are also available for future generations to enjoy.

I look forward to receiving your response by 6 June 2024.

Yours sincerely,



**Delyth Jewell MS**  
**Committee Chair**

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



# Culture and the new relationship with the European Union

## Engagement findings

March 2024

To support its inquiry into culture and the new relationship with the European Union, the **Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee** sought insights into the effects on the creative industries. The Citizen Engagement Team facilitated interviews and focus groups with performing and touring artists and creative professionals engaged in cross-border work. The results of which are detailed in this paper.

### Background

The Brexit transition period ended on 1 January 2021, which means that it is two and half years since the new regulations were introduced for working and trading between the UK and the EU.

### Engagement

Between 11 December 2023 and 26 February 2024, ten interviews and one focus group were conducted by the Citizen Engagement Team. The purpose of the interviews and



focus group was to provide the Committee with the views and experiences of performing artists and creative workers touring and working cross-border.

## Participants

13 participants took part in the interviews and focus group. Participants included Welsh international professional folk, rock, and instrumental performing artists, performing artist managers, a Welsh instrument manufacturer, a Welsh cruise director, promoters of Welsh international music and instrumental festivals, and representatives from cultural businesses and venues in Wales as well as an organisation advocating for artists in the music industry.

Some of the participants have performed and toured in Europe since the new regulations came into effect, whilst others have made a conscious decision not to do so.

Participants were sourced via a screening survey sent to over 35 individual artists and bands and over 15 cultural organisations in Wales.

Some performing artists were approached, but chose not to partake in the engagement, suggesting that it is too early to measure the impact of the new regulations, particularly since they came into effect during the pandemic.

**Thank you to everyone who contributed to the programme of engagement.**

## Methodology

All interviews and focus groups were held online to enable Welsh artists, working across Europe and further afield, to take part.

The following discussion points were addressed during the interviews and focus group:

1. In your view, what impact, if any, has Brexit had on your cross-border work?
2. Are there particular aspects of the new rules that you would like to discuss?
3. In your view, what impact, if any, has Brexit had on accessing funding and networks?
4. Do you think there is enough guidance and support available to you relating to the new relationship between the UK and the EU? What additional support would be beneficial to you?
5. How do you see the future of your cross-border work?
6. What changes, if any, would you like to see in the future, to improve cross-border working for the culture sector?

## 1. Summary of recommendations

**Recommendation 1.** Accessible management infrastructure supported by the Welsh Government, where performing artists and creative workers can access practical advice and support to manage and further their professional development, on a local, national and international level.

**Recommendation 2.** Accessible, accurate guidelines on the new regulations.

**Recommendation 3.** Tax incentives or Welsh Government funding to encourage cross-cultural exchange between the UK and the EU.

**Recommendation 4.** Streamline merchandise paperwork for performing and touring artists.

**Recommendation 5.** Reduce the cost of carnets and subsidise the deposit required.

**Recommendation 6.** Visa waiver agreement for performing and touring artists.

**Recommendation 7.** Support performing and touring artists to seek cultural opportunities beyond the EU.

**Recommendation 8.** Develop and support cultural opportunities in Wales.

**Recommendation 9.** Create a new role, Culture Commissioner for Wales to re-establish and nurture new partnerships and networks with the culture sector in the EU. This role could also be an opportunity to support performing artists and creative workers in Wales, whilst also promoting a more positive attitude towards the culture sector.

## 2. Key themes

### The main impacts of the new relationship with the EU on culture

1. All participants agreed the new regulations have had a negative impact on their cross-border work and the new relationship between the UK and the EU, within the culture sector, is a difficult and strained relationship.
2. Participants also spoke about the added complexities of identifying the impact generated by the new regulations, as their coming into effect coincided with the instability of the pandemic, a financial crisis and an energy crisis – “a perfect storm.”
3. All participants spoke about the short and long-term impact of the new relationship with the EU on the careers of performing artists and creative workers in Wales.
4. Participants expressed concern about the specific impact on culture in Wales, at a time when there is more interest than ever before in Welsh language and culture.

*“It's massively frustrating because Wales specifically has gone through huge changes in confidence in language and culture....and is now getting more mainstream media attention. But the delivery of that on a practical scale is then hampered by all of these ridiculous hurdles to try and get that out into the world, when there is actually now more interest than ever there was before.”*

### Fewer opportunities

All participants agreed that there are fewer invitations and opportunities for performing artists and creative workers from Wales, within the cultural sector in Europe, since the Brexit regulations came into effect.

*“In this field of work, there are highs and lows, that's how it's always been, over forty years of being a professional musician....but it's pretty odd that nothing has come in since Brexit.”*

- 5.** Participants expressed their growing concerns as promoters opt to hire EU citizens only.

*“People in the EU think it's just too tricky to work with the UK it's just too much paperwork”.*

- 6.** Participants spoke of some promoters, even within the UK, hiring only EU citizens.

*“There are Brexit benefits.....for people with EU passports. Britain has lost its 'soft power'.”*

- 7.** One of the participants' biggest employers is a French harp manufacturer. Before Brexit, the participant used to travel all over Europe with them. Since Brexit, the participant has not received any work from the company.

- 8.** One manager suggested that booking inquiries for artists are down 20-30% since Brexit and Covid-19.

- 9.** One participant illustrated the specific impact on young artists. For example, in Denmark, artists need to earn a minimum requirement before they can perform without a visa.

- 10.** One music instrument manufacturer illustrated the importance of showcasing his products at events in the music industry within the EU. This has not been possible since Brexit.

- 11.** Some participants explained how the cultural market beyond the EU continues and, in some cases, has expanded. For example, the United States of America. However, they tend to be complicated and more expensive markets and don't have the same appeal as the EU market for some performing and touring artists.

- 12.** Other participants said that performing and touring artists should be considering new opportunities beyond the EU.

## **Financial implications**

- 13.** All participants referenced the financial implications of the new regulations.

**14.** Many participants spoke about the additional costs of carnets, if required, and the deposit which is 30 to 40% of the value of the item(s) carried.

**15.** Participants explained the importance of merchandise as a revenue stream for performing and touring artists. Due to shipping costs, some artists are employing EU businesses to produce their merchandise locally, to save having to transport their merchandise. This has an obvious impact on businesses in the UK, including Wales.

*“If you can't do that [sell merchandise whilst on tour] or you can only take a small amount because of the cost, then it's going to be a really big hit to what you're actually taking home as a result of that tour.”*

**16.** Some participants illustrated the impact on ways of working, both in Wales and the EU, as promoters struggle to commit to bookings, offering profit shares rather than guaranteed fees to performing artists.

*“Promoters [in the UK, including Wales] are less willing to take risks on bigger fees....you get asked a lot more to do shares....like profit shares with a number of audiences. So you take a cut of the box office instead of a guaranteed fee. There's a whole new way of working going on....It's a trickier scene than it was before.”*

**17.** One participant illustrated how his musical instrument manufacturing business has seen a drop in EU sales, largely due to export costs as well as increased difficulty in importing EU materials for manufacturing.

**18.** Another participant spoke of financial losses, due to additional fees, whilst trading with a company in Ireland.

**19.** Some participants explained that accessing any funding intended to replace EU funding has become very competitive and short deadlines do not allow time to consider possibilities and opportunities in their entirety.

## Administration

**20.** All participants spoke of the labour-intensive increased paperwork, as a result of the new regulations, with artists and creative workers having to spend more time on administration and less on creativity.

*"I don't think we can underestimate the significance of the impact of having to understand and comply with all of that, [the paperwork]....It's just all very time-consuming and it's a real headache."*

- 21.** Participants spoke of the impact of increased paperwork on their creativity.

*"Obviously, there are exceptions, but for the most part, it [the extra paperwork] really affects an artist's mindset, and that affects you too creatively, not just in practice."*

- 22.** Some participants, emerging artists in particular, mentioned being offered last-minute work in the EU. This has become increasingly difficult to accept, because of the up to 90 days within any 180 days regulation and the additional administrative paperwork.

- 23.** Many participants spoke of their frustration with the postal system and the delivery of goods, since Brexit, in relation to merchandise.

- 24.** One participant, who runs a record label, explained how some EU companies have refused to deal with them as the paperwork had become so onerous.

### **Travel and border issues**

- 25.** All participants raised concerns about the limit on stays of 90 days within 180 days. This impacts performing artists and creative workers in different ways. For example, a musician might support several different tours during one stay in the EU - this is no longer possible.

*"I'm pessimistic...it's such a regression from where we were, when I could just load my car up with my instruments and do whatever I wanted essentially in 27 other countries, which are generally, the cultural hub of the world."*

- 26.** One participant explained that 80% of his work was in the EU, pre-Brexit. The stay of 90 days within 180 days makes this impossible, resulting in a loss of earnings.

- 27.** Other participants gave examples of having to turn work down in the EU because of the up to 90 days within any 180 days.
- 28.** Some participants explained how the up to 90 days within any 180 days also impacts their personal travel arrangements, for example, family holidays.
- 29.** Participants spoke of the challenges of travelling to the EU with musical instruments and the continued confusion regarding carnet requirements.
- 30.** Many participants illustrated how they source musical instruments locally when performing in the EU. However, this is not always possible.
- 31.** Some participants gave examples of touring artists travelling to the EU in their personal vehicle carrying only their own merchandise, having to buy a freight ticket, which is far more expensive.
- 32.** Orchestras are highly impacted by the changes, particularly the cabotage rules, whereby a vehicle over 3.5 tonnes is only allowed three stops, before having to return to the UK.
- 33.** Many participants spoke of the lack of knowledge and understanding of the new regulations by border officials in the UK. For example, artists were told in Dover that they needed carnets for their guitars, which was not the case.

*“Border officials within the UK need to be better trained...they’re still clearly still confused about the rules.”*

- 34.** Some participants, who promote international festivals in Wales, spoke about the unfortunate welcome sometimes faced by EU traders arriving in the UK, including Wales.

*“It should be clear-cut – they’re [European artists] coming in for an activity of this nature...and we want to be encouraging that and making it a friendly place to trade with.”*

- 35.** Other participants spoke about facing the same confusion at EU borders too, for example, recently in Sweden.

## Lack of confidence

**36.** Participants shared their nervousness about the administrative paperwork and the implications of “getting it wrong”, particularly among young and emerging performing artists.

*“One of the biggest things that has occurred is the knock of confidence on the trade going both ways, post Brexit. There is certainly the lack of confidence in the process.”*

**37.** Some participants, specifically emerging artists, illustrated the challenge of having to take responsibility for so many roles.

*“We do a lot ourselves, we organise tours, we're the agent, we're the manager and even the thought of learning all those things and making sure you do them right is so overwhelming.. ... it puts you off unless it's really worth it.”*

**38.** Some participants explained how the new regulations have stifled their aspirations to develop as international artists.

*“In the long run it limits a person's ambition, there is so much red tape to travel and to consider travelling.”*

**39.** Many participants spoke of the lack of advocates for emerging performing artists to help develop and promote the music industry on a national and international level.

*“I see myself as quite a privileged artist, I'm a musician and I have a large team of people behind me. If I didn't have management backing me.....I suspect I would be completely lost in a world of paperwork and I wouldn't do it.”*

**40.** Some participants shared a concern for future generations in the culture sector, specifically in the music industry in Wales.

**41.** Participants said there is a marked decline in the opportunities available to nurture young musicians in Wales, particularly those from a disadvantaged background.

**42.** Some participants compared the opportunities available to them to perform within the EU, from an early age with the limited opportunities available to young musicians today.

*"It was so much easier to go abroad to perform. Now, it's all red tape... is going to break young people's hearts before they start, from both sides. That's sad."*

### Dwindling networks and partnerships

**43.** All participants agreed that the new regulations have put a strain on existing partnerships and networks with the EU.

*"Wales is pretty good with community arts, we have a pretty great level of experience within the sector and to be able to share that, and to learn.....well, that's gone."*

**44.** One participant, the director of an international music festival held in Wales, suggested the new regulations could have an impact on the support of international sponsors for events in Wales, which in turn would affect opportunities for Welsh artists.

*"I fear the barriers will make Wales less appealing to international sponsors. Why sponsor a festival in Wales if it costs them a quarter of the price to do the same elsewhere in Europe?"*

**45.** Participants spoke about their concern about the impact of lost networks and partnerships, on Wales, as a result of the new regulations.

*"I worry that Wales is becoming less appealing to organisations and companies that have been so supportive in the past."*

**46.** One participant said that three of his agents were finding it increasingly difficult to support him, as their European networks *"had disappeared."*

**47.** Participants explained the economic impact of the new regulations on businesses in Wales. For example, some music instrument companies in Wales are facing increasing challenges buying instruments from the EU, which in turn, restricts music instrument sales in Wales.

### Impact on creativity

**48.** Most participants expressed concern about the impact of waning networks and partnerships with the EU, on creativity within the culture sector in Wales,

*“It’s culturally important to share and exchange artistic ideas. It’s a way of bringing countries and cultures together.”*

**49.** Many participants illustrated the benefits and value of co-production and working in partnership with organisations and companies within the EU.

*“You miss that excitement of sharing ideas....the ability to stand shoulder to shoulder with other artists and other cultures and have that respect for each other.”*

*“We’ve left Creative Europe and that’s a real shame because we didn’t have to as a result of leaving the EU and that is obviously going to mean less funding, fewer opportunities to have partnerships”.*

**50.** Some participants are concerned about the decrease in the number of European musicians and other performing artists travelling to the UK, including Wales, to study and perform - *“we are losing both ways.”*

**51.** Other participants illustrated the *“talent drain”* whereby performing and touring artists with an EU citizenship are leaving Wales, to take advantage of opportunities within the EU.

*“When we lose the arts, we lose much more than we think.”*

### Guidance and support

**52.** All participants feel the lack of guidance and support has been one of the biggest challenges facing performing artists and creative workers, who want to perform and tour in the EU since the new regulations came into effect.

*“You would have expected for a government that drove legislation to remove us from the EU, would have established a supportive network of advice and guidance that could help you navigate professionally through [the changes].”*

### Access to information

**53.** All participants agreed that accessing information regarding the new regulations has been very challenging, if not impossible at times.

*“As much as I hate what Brexit has done, I can get on and deal with that, but I can only do that if I have the right information.”*

**54.** Participants spoke about having to contact numerous organisations and websites, for example, the Independent Society of Musicians, Musician’s Union, Wales Arts International and the website, [ukeartswork.info](http://ukeartswork.info) to access information about the new regulations.

**55.** Many participants explained how difficult the information is to understand and that they are being treated like traders, rather than artists.

**56.** Some participants mentioned there has been no attempt to publish accessible resources, for example, easy-read content.

**57.** Some participants said that there is some support available, for example, the website, [vivalavisa](http://vivalavisa), but it is not well advertised.

### Confusing and conflicting information

**58.** All participants referred to the complexity of the new regulations, particularly the fact that the requirements are different for each of the EU member states. For example, not all countries offer up to 90 days within any 180 days stay; Greece offers one day at one performance before a visa is required.

*“We have had to spend our time trying to understand something that was pretty impossible to understand for the first couple of years.”*

**59.** One participant illustrated the ‘strange’ requirements of some EU member states, for example, the Netherlands.

*"The Netherlands has quite a strange requirement; you need to be a substantial or essential part of a noteworthy artistic event' to take advantage of their visa and work permit waiver.....Now, who's that?"*

**60.** All participants expressed concern about the misleading and conflicting information shared, even on the UK Government website.

*"That [conflicting information] is actually causing more problems than the actual changes themselves because it's stopping people from going in the first place."*

**61.** Some participants mentioned the UK Government website is still not being updated regularly.

### **Lack of management infrastructure**

**62.** Participants agreed that there is a lack of management infrastructure in Wales to support performing artists, particularly emerging artists, to develop their careers on a local, national and international level.

## **3. Improving future cross-border working**

**63.** Participants suggested ways of improving cross-border working and restoring performing artists' and creative workers' confidence in performing and touring within the EU.

**Recommendation 1.** Accessible management infrastructure supported by the Welsh Government, where performing artists and creative workers could access practical advice and support to manage and further their professional development, on a local, national and international level.

*"If only there was a little army of people that can be funded in some way and that a young band or musician can go to and they can say I've got this gig can you help me.....I'm sure if there was just that help*

*there...as I have...that would be a first step to restart this whole movement."*

**Recommendation 2.** Accessible, accurate guidelines on the new regulations.

*"In terms of my personal experience, we need to make it easier and simpler for companies to understand the rules...that would then have an impact on the opportunities available to performers like me."*

**Recommendation 3.** Tax incentives or Welsh Government funding to encourage cross-cultural exchange between the UK and the EU.

*"Significant work needs to be done, to mend the relationships with international markets....It's so important within the creative industries....It's difficult to do business on a bad feeling."*

**Recommendation 4.** Streamline merchandise paperwork for performing and touring artists.

*"We haven't got the same aspiration [to work cross-border] anymore. Why would you do it, when there are obstacles in the way?"*

**Recommendation 5.** Reduce the cost of carnets and subsidise the deposit required.

**Recommendation 6.** Visa waiver agreement for performing and touring artists.

*"We're so [geographically] close to European countries, I want to make that border as convenient as possible in terms of encouraging artists to travel...We're going to lose important partnerships if that doesn't happen."*

**Recommendation 7.** Support performing and touring artists to seek cultural opportunities beyond the EU.

*"Far beyond Britain and Brexit, the world is moving forward, and pleasure ship companies are expanding.... As far as I am concerned the sea will be the future."*

**Recommendation 8.** Develop and support cultural opportunities in Wales.

*"If musicians and people in the cultural industry are losing work abroad, we need to try and replace it here [in Wales]."*

**Recommendation 9.** Create a new role, Culture Commissioner for Wales to re-establish and nurture new partnerships and networks with the culture sector in the EU. This role could also be an opportunity to support performing artists and creative workers in Wales, whilst also promoting a more positive attitude towards the culture sector.

*"There needs to be more investment.....if we are serious about supporting our artists and their careers."*

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 9

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 10

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted