

Baroness Kay Andrews

National Heritage Fund

6 June 2019

Dear Baroness Andrews,

### **Culture and poverty report**

The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the National Assembly for Wales is looking at how culture and the arts can be used to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

We launched an inquiry in the Autumn of last year and have spoken to a number of organisations and individuals about the way in which work in this area is organised at a national and local level.

The Committee has heard from practitioners and participants of the Fusion programme, introduced by the Welsh Government following your [report](#): 'Culture and poverty: Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social justice in Wales'.

There was a lot of praise for the programme and the valuable connections which organisations have made as a result of taking part. There were also some interesting discussions about the best way to capture the success of the work being done. For instance, Allan Herbert, of the South Riverside Community Development Centre, said that the current outcomes used to evaluate Fusion were limiting, and too focused on employment. He called for the outcomes to be re-designed based on the original recommendations in your Culture and Poverty report. He told the Committee:

I think Welsh Government's done a disservice to the Baroness Kay Andrews report. I think it's a terrific report, and the breadth of that report was not just about employment. I think out of the 28 recommendations, there were about four or five that were about employment. And when that gets translated into an outcomes

framework for Fusion—and they matched Fusion up in a very clunky way with Communities First outcomes as well—it distorts the entire intent of the recommendations of Baroness Andrews. They've co-opted another programme for an employment programme, and that does a disservice to the research, it does a disservice to people and their ability, because the real way that you get progress is not just through shoe-horning someone into a job; it's through increasing the engagement process with culture, and that will lead to more meaningful employment. If you don't do that, you're missing a real big trick, there.

It would be very useful for our inquiry to have an assessment from you on the implementation of the recommendations in your report. I would appreciate your views on Allan's comments and on the way the Fusion programme has been evaluated and reported on. Would you be able to let me have your thoughts in a letter by the end of June?

Yours sincerely,



Bethan Sayed

Chair of the Committee