



Tiger Bay and the World
THE HERITAGE & CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair – Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1SN

29 June 2022

Dear Mr Sargeant MS

Petition P-05-1086 Create a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage

Thank you for your correspondence to The Heritage & Cultural Exchange [HCE] during which you asked for an update on discussions for a permanent home for the Tiger Bay collection, and any related issues to this.

As far as I am aware there have been no further discussions aimed at creating a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage, which I think was the substance of the petition. I can only guess that, like most organisations, the disruption and increased pressures brought by the Covid pandemic caused a re-ordering of priorities and a focus on delivering dedicated services.

On the specific point of rehousing the Tiger Bay collection/archive within a more Accessible location for the public. HCE currently rents a room at Butetown Community Centre, from which we work. We would like more space and the ability to welcome members of the public, but this is all that we can afford.

In terms of HCE and the Tiger Bay collection, we have made slow but good progress and worked throughout the pandemic from our homes. The “we” mentioned is a small group of volunteers and trustees. HCE currently has no staff.

The bulk of the collection has been formally received by Glamorgan Archive and we have signed a deposit agreement. This agreement will allow Glamorgan Archive staff to work on the collection as well as continuing the work with HCE volunteers, the

staff will provide any access, explanation or conservation work to researchers and is as always open to the public who are able to access any part of the collection.

It is hoped that this will also give access to funding restricted to professional bodies. Part of the collection, books, artefacts etc., not housed at Glamorgan Archive because of their professional policies and procedures, are stored in various other places.

The oral histories have been digitised by the National Library of Wales and returned to HCE where we are working out how to give copies to families, as promised and develop methods by which those stories can be turned into learning resources and made available to researchers and teachers.

With the organisation of the collection almost complete the stories, images, artefacts etc. can be used to help inform people of the benefits of migration and how it played a major role in the development of Wales and the UK. The archive can be used to produce teaching materials which are needed by schools to meet the needs of the new curriculum. Our collection tells the story before the Windrush ensuring Black and Minority Ethnic people are seen as part of Welsh history and its population.

To return to the issue of a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage.

It is the view of The Heritage & Cultural Exchange that Wales would benefit from a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage. Such a museum would make amends and restitution for the omissions and misleading recording of history that is about the Black and minority ethnic population of Wales. That includes the stories of migration, immigration and the growth and experience of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, communities, such as Tiger Bay. Such a museum could act as catalyst for scholars and researchers and attract tourists from across the world, thereby increasing the economic base of Wales.

The Heritage & Cultural Exchange supports the concept of creating a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage but one that is well resourced and supported on an ongoing basis by the Government of Wales.

HCE is much sort after by organisations with a focus on history and identity and are very often approached by the media. In fact, the small group that comprises HCE are very busy. Yet, we at HCE struggle to maintain the organisation and I as chair spend a disproportionate time fundraising rather than growing the organisations and have suspended effort to bring BAME professionals together. HCE is reliant on charitable funds or income generated through the sales of goods or services.

If the Government of Wales cannot provide support for a small organisation such as HCE with its valuable collection, what hope is there of major financial support for a National Museum for Welsh Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History and Heritage.

In the understanding of the severe economic pressures the Welsh Government face, we sincerely hope that in the not too distanced future a National museum will be established, which HCE can become part of if not affiliated to.

Yours sincerely

Gaynor Legall

Gaynor Legall
Chair
The Heritage & Cultural Exchange