



Department  
for Culture,  
Media & Sport

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay  
Minister for Arts & Heritage  
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

8 March 2024

INT2024/01850/DC

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport regarding our plans to ratify the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. I am replying as the Minister for Arts and Heritage.

Whilst the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will act as the 'State Party' to the Convention, as much of culture and heritage policy is devolved, I have worked closely with the Devolved Administrations as we prepare for ratification.

HM Government believes that a benefit of ratifying this Convention is to start conversations about the extraordinary range and breadth of intangible cultural heritage across the whole United Kingdom, so I warmly welcome your interest and am glad to respond to your specific questions:

- 1. What benefits can be expected from inclusion on the national inventory, such as access to funding or initiatives to support intangible heritage?*

The inventory is an important first stage in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, and in ensuring the viability of intangible cultural heritage in the United Kingdom. Ratifying the Convention is intended to start a national conversation about cultural and community heritage and its value to the identity, pride and cohesion of our communities and people across all parts of the United Kingdom.

Inclusion on the inventory is the first step in this process. The initial benefit will be to recognise and raise awareness of the items that are included. Further aspects of safeguarding, such as seeking further funding or researching initiatives to support items on the inventory, will be considered as part of the ongoing conversations about how, collectively, we should safeguard living heritage in the United Kingdom.



2. *When it comes to the approval panels that will be allocated to each nation, how will the panel for Wales be established, and with which government will responsibility lie? For example, will the Welsh Government be determining the membership for the panel in Wales?*

We have been seeking public views on the functioning of the approval panels. We are now collating views and DCMS will work with the Devolved Administrations to agree next steps.

The Department has taken care to avoid making these panels burdensome or overly bureaucratic. That is why we are consulting in detail on the inventory criteria, in order to help make the approvals panel process as light-touch as possible.

3. *How does the UK Government envision a 'compatible inventory' operating, and how will the UK and Welsh governments work together to maintain the Convention's arrangements?*
4. *How will the UK Government work with the devolved governments to ensure the inventory is maintained?*

With regard to the inventories, continuing the approach of ensuring that implementation of the Convention is as light-touch as possible, DCMS and the Devolved Administrations have been discussing a model where the 'back end' or infrastructure for the inventories are managed in a single place. Each inventory will also use the same criteria and same submission format to minimise any duplicative effort.

It is a key aspect that intangible cultural heritage is not fixed and evolves as it is passed on from generation to generation. It is therefore also important that the inventories remain a living record and are kept up to date. We are also consulting on how best to ensure this and, as above, will launch discussions with the Devolved Administrations in due course.

Thank you again for your interest in this area. Intangible cultural heritage plays a hugely important role in the identity, pride, and cohesion of people and communities across the whole United Kingdom. I hope that, in ratifying this Convention, we can continue to work together to champion that role and the great value of our shared heritage.

With best wishes,



Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay  
**Minister for Arts & Heritage**