

P-06-1511 Rebuild Cardiff's Lost Observatory at St Fagans Museum "Together we shape the story of Wales"

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 30 Mehefin 2025
Petitions Committee | 30 June 2025

Reference: RS25/11480/1

Petition Number: P-06-1511

Petition title: Rebuild Cardiff's Lost Observatory at St Fagans Museum "Together we shape the story of Wales"

Text of petition: The Penylan Observatory, once a beacon of astronomical discovery and community engagement in Cardiff, was tragically lost in the late 20th century. This petition proposes the rebuilding of this historic landmark at St Fagans National Museum of History, highlighting its importance to the city's cultural heritage and its potential to inspire future generations of astronomers.

The Penylan Observatory, an Edwardian-era landmark in Cardiff, served as a public observatory for decades, fostering community engagement and scientific interest. Its closure in 1979 left a void, but the Cardiff Astronomical Society (CAS) has kept its spirit alive.

Rebuilding the observatory at St Fagans Museum would:



- Honour the observatory's legacy and contributions.
- Inspire future generations through hands-on learning and stargazing events.
- Provide a valuable educational resource for astronomy, history, and science.
- Enrich cultural heritage and foster community engagement.
- Promote STEM education in Wales.

We urge the Welsh Government and the National Museums of Wales to support this reconstruction, aligning with the Future Generations Act and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Let's celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Cardiff Astronomy Society in 2026 with the reopening of this iconic landmark.

The text provided above is submitted by the petitioner. The petitions team make every effort to ensure it preserves their authentic voice. This text has not been verified for accuracy, or errors, and may contain unverified opinions or assertions.

Mae'r testun uchod yn cael ei gyflwyno gan y deisebydd. Mae'r tîm deisebau yn gwneud pob ymdrech i sicrhau ei fod yn cadw ei lais dilys. Nid yw'r testun hwn wedi'i wirio am gywirdeb, neu wallau, a gall gynnwys barn neu honiadau heb eu gwirio.

1. Background

The Welsh Government provides grant-funding to Amgueddfa Cymru (National Museum Wales), which is an independent organisation.

1.1. Funding context

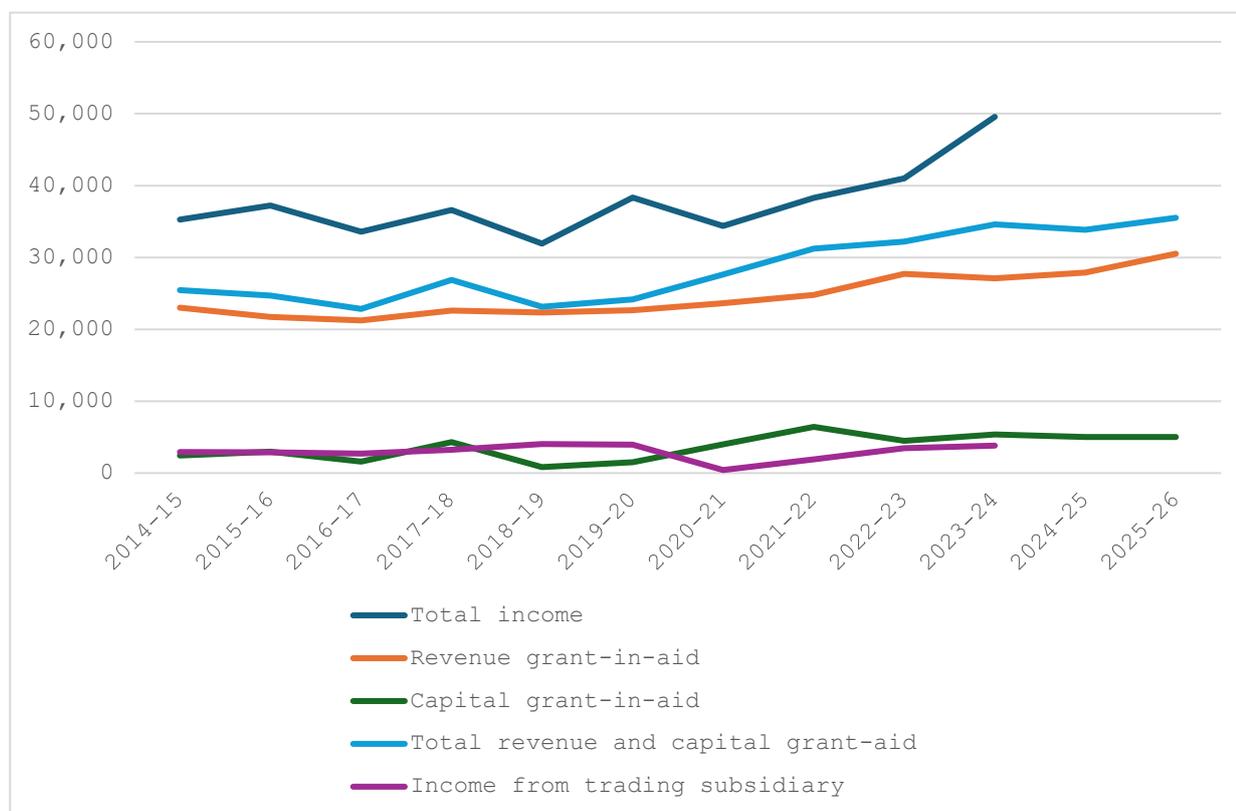
-National Museum

1. In comparison with the 2025-2026 revised baseline, revenue funding (excluding non-cash¹) for the Museum increases from £25.8 million to £27.2 million in the 2025-26 final budget (an increase of 5.4%, not adjusted for inflation). However, given an equivalent cut in 2024-5 of 6%, this just means that Amgueddfa Cymru's revenue funding returns to 2023-24 levels (meaning a real-

¹ Non-cash allocations are ring-fenced and cannot be used to fund day-to-day spending (it can include items such as depreciation)

terms cut between 2023-24 and 2025-26 of about 4%). Between 2024-25 and 2025-26, Amgueddfa Cymru's capital funding has remained at £5 million.

Amgueddfa Cymru finances 2014-15 to 2025-26 (£000s)



Grant-in-aid figures for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are taken from Welsh Government budgets, and so are not directly comparable to previous years.

Grant-in-aid figures exclude specimen grant-in-aid and other government funding.

Source: Amgueddfa Cymru Financial Report and Welsh Government budgets

Welsh Government revenue funding of Amgueddfa Cymru reduced in real-terms between 2014-15 and 2024-25 by about 9 per cent².

2. Welsh Government action

2.1. Culture Priorities

In May 2025 the Welsh Government published its [Culture Priorities](#). These are intended to give strategic direction to the culture sector. When launching this

² Calculated on 22 May 2024 using the [Bank of England inflation calculator](#).

document the Minister noted £15 million to support the delivery of these priorities, which had already been included in the 2025-26 Final Budget. He said:

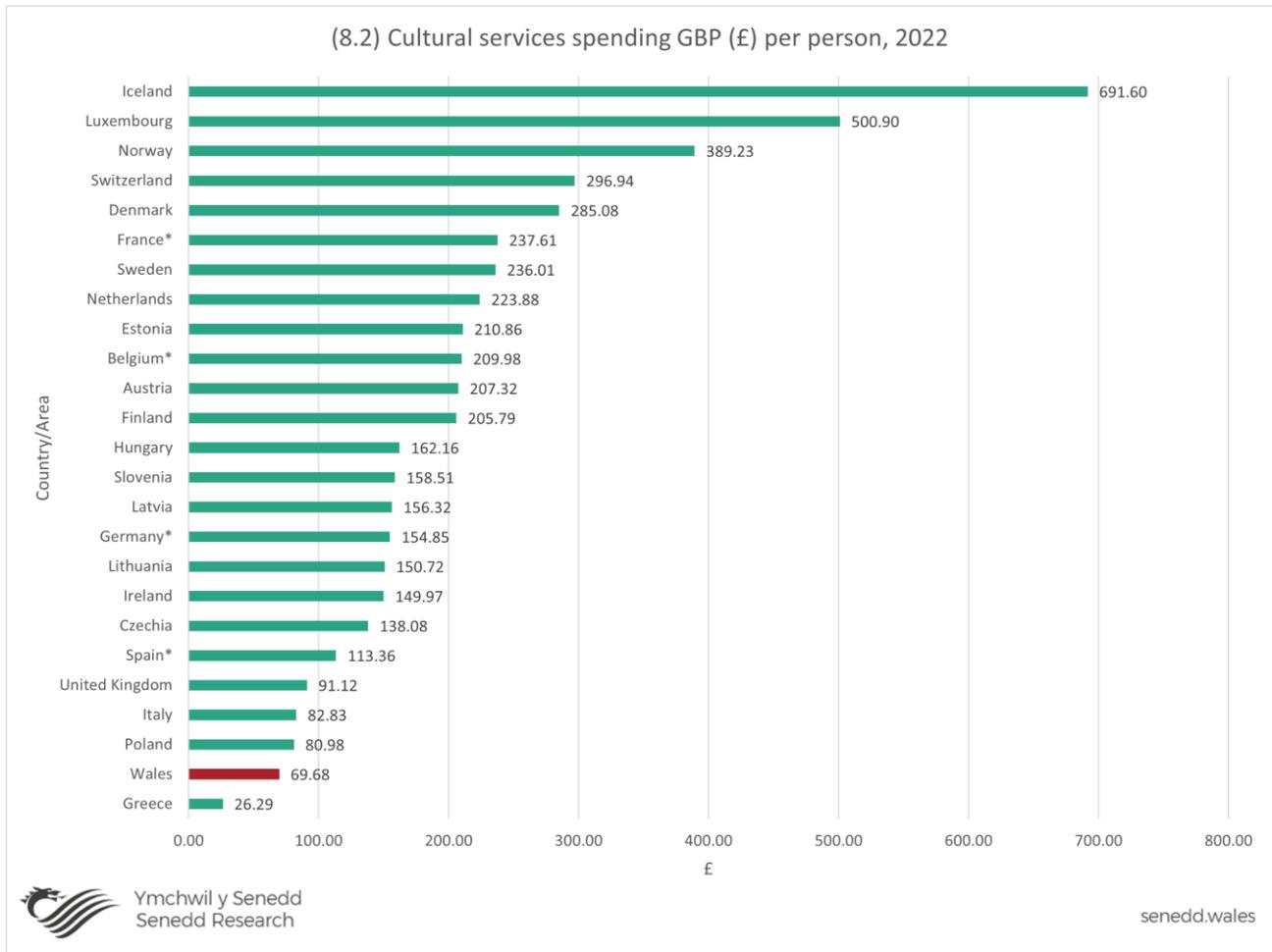
This includes £8 million for an arts sector strategic capital investment programme via the Arts Council of Wales. This significant investment will provide vital capital funding and support the delivery of many ambitions within the 'Priorities for Culture'. It also includes a £7 million capital and revenue fund for museums, archives, libraries and the historic environment.

3. Welsh Parliament action

In January 2025 the Senedd's Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee published a report [A decade of cuts: impact of funding reductions on culture and sport.](#)

[Analysis from Senedd Research](#) compared public spending on culture and sport with 24 European countries (including the UK as a whole) for which data was available.

The average spend on cultural services in these countries is £215.02 per person. In Wales the figure is £69.68 per person, also 32% of the average of these countries. This placed Wales second from bottom of the group of 25 nations.



Source: Senedd Research analysis of Welsh Government, StatsWales and OECD data

The Culture Committee called for the Welsh Government to reach parity of funding with similar countries. The Welsh Government accepted this recommendation in principle, and responded with funding increases in the 2025-26 Final Budget.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

4. Contact

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