

Kate Eden, Chair

Jane Richardson, Chief Executive

Amgueddfa Cymru

Cathays Park

Cardiff CF10 3NP

Annual Scrutiny of Amgueddfa Cymru

Dear Kate and Jane,

Thank you for attending the Committee's meeting on 8 October 2025 as part of our Annual Scrutiny of Amgueddfa Cymru. The Committee would like to thank you for your time and the for the evidence that you shared with the Committee. As we mentioned during the session, there are one or two further issues we wanted to raise with you, which we didn't have time to raise during the session, and these are dealt with below.

Budget considerations

The Committee is very conscious of the effect of recent real-term reductions in Welsh Government revenue funding and the challenges that the sector has faced in recent years.

You set out your view that an inflation only budget "would leave [you] just under £3 million short of what [you] need for [your] steady-state strong revenue performance." You went on to say that: "So, we would need to find ways of reducing programming and activities to address that shortfall."

We also heard that, in relation to capital projects, you "are in a very different place" from when you last gave evidence to the Committee, and that "a substantial increase in capital funding" was made available to you to address "some of the most urgent concerns". You also set out the continued risks and funding needs surrounding the National Museum Cardiff building. You highlighted very effectively the high (and arguably disproportionate) level of governance that results from capital funding coming to you as additional unplanned expenditure rather than capital grant in aid. You explained that projects of more than £2m require you to go through a full business model, and that that can take up to two years to produce.

As recommended in our [Decade of Cuts](#) report, we believe that the Welsh Government should provide more of Amgueddfa Cymru's capital funding as grant-in-aid, to avoid the duplication of governance processes (for both the Amgueddfa and the Welsh Government.)

We also discussed, particularly in the light of the burglary at St Fagan's, the need to continually improve security in the context of the increased risk that faces institutions like Amgueddfa Cymru.

The Committee was particularly struck by your statement that:

"We get £5 million in capital funding each year from Welsh Government as part of our grant in aid, and we have to use approximately a third of that to maintain our digital security and digital systems "

The Committee also noted your clear view that *Celf* (the Welsh Government's National Art Gallery project) will continue to need continued financial support from Government for the project to be sustainable:

"There have been two independent assessments of whether the model could ever be self-sustaining, and both of those have said that it cannot be. So, either there needs to be additional money identified once we get to the end of the current funded period, or we as the Amgueddfa are left in the very difficult position of either having to reduce that programme or reduce other things that we do in order to fund that programme."

The Committee has previously expressed its concern about introducing charging for the underground tours at Big Pit (in our report on charging for exhibitions). We have noted the Government's continued commitment to free entry at the point of access. We believe that the Welsh Government should provide adequate funding to Amgueddfa Cymru to facilitate this. We maintain that the principle of free entry to the national museum sites should extend to the underground tour at Big Pit.

The Committee noted with concern your comments that:

"when we did the Van Gogh 'Art of the Selfie' exhibition, the loan of that one Van Gogh painting was not covered by the insurance arrangements in Wales.... Wales has a cap on the level of insurance that doesn't apply in other parts of the UK—and that work was too valuable to be covered by the Welsh Government insurance, so we had to take out a private policy, which was £40,000 just for that one painting."

The Committee will wish to raise these matters as part of our scrutiny of the Welsh Government draft budget in the coming weeks.

Culture strategy

You also set out evidence to the Committee about your role in the development of the Welsh Government's priorities for culture. You explained that you would like to see "a more cross- or whole-of-Government approach to the way in which the cultural sector is funded. I think that could be a really tangible outcome to the priorities."

The Committee has previously expressed concern about the about the lack of detail which accompanies these priorities for culture. It remains unclear to us how they will be delivered, or by whom, or indeed what objectives will be set. You stated that:

"We're going to be very clear in our five-year business plan about what we want to deliver, and we would love to be able to see those lifted and incorporated into a plan that shows how these priorities are delivered."

The Committee will continue to pursue these points with the Welsh Government.

Governance

We discussed with you the importance of robust internal governance processes. We noted the progress that you have made in implementing the recommendations of the Charity Commission's tailored review and your comments on the change in culture at the Amgueddfa.

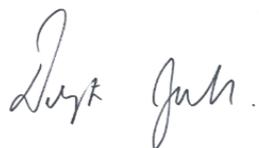
We discussed the process that led to the Amgueddfa failing to achieve full accreditation status. You explained that this was due to an administrative error that meant that the board of trustees had not fully signed-off the current five-year business plan.

We would ask you to provide a note with a timeline of what happened, the current situation and what steps have been taken to ensure that such an unfortunate scenario cannot occur again. Finally, thank you for sharing with the Committee your vision for the NMC 100 project. We look forward to engaging more with you on that project as it develops.

Thank you once again for your attendance at Committee and for your valuable insights.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.