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Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon  
Minister for Culture and Sport



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
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Christine Chapman AM  
Chair  
Communities, Equalities and Local Government  
Committee

17 June 2013

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your letter dated 17 May, as agreed please find below further detail on the action points raised at the meeting.

During the general scrutiny session I agreed to provide further information on the issues surrounding the recent losses of heritage sites in Wales and the possibility of providing an emergency service until the time and resources are available to re-develop these sites.

A range of powers already exist for local authorities to step in to help tackle heritage assets that are at risk. For example, local authorities can use powers under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to carry out urgent works for the preservation of unoccupied listed buildings in its area and Cadw will consider providing financial support for costs incurred by the local authority that are non-recoverable. Provision of support has to be considered on a case by case basis given the limited availability of financial resources.

In addition, you will be aware from my Historic Environment Strategy that I have commissioned an options appraisal for the establishment of a Welsh Heritage Trust. Such a body could take on the management of buildings, particularly in emergency situations, or act as an advisory body. I expect to consider the outcome of the options appraisal over the summer.

I also agreed to provide further information on outreach work undertaken by theatre companies in Wales to widen participation of the arts within communities. Increasing access and participation to the arts for all the people of Wales is a key priority for the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government. The Arts Council of Wales Operational Plan for 2013-14 includes a number of targets and key performance indicators designed specifically to ensure that this is achieved. Theatre companies have an important role to play in achieving these objectives, be they the large national organisations or the smaller, local companies and a

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huge amount of work is going on in this area. 'Taking Part' is the Arts Council of Wales publicised strategy on this matter. Additionally its expectations are outlined in the inclusion of a specific strand for participatory projects within the Lottery Guidelines for organisations and individuals. I enclose further information and examples in Annex 1.

Further to your query regarding research into the impact of the success of Cardiff City Football club and Swansea City Football club on participation levels in football as apposed to viewing sport in Wales, work continues on this and I will write to the Committee again when in a position to provide an update.

You have also asked me to provide an update on discussions with the Managing Director of Media Wales as I was due to meet after the committee meeting. During my meeting on 15 May with Alan Edmunds, Editor in Chief of Media Wales and Deputy Editorial Director of Trinity Mirror Regionals I expressed concern about the effects of Trinity Mirror's recent restructuring which could lead to weakening an already diminishing industry.

I was given reassurances that Trinity Mirror is committed to maintaining its Welsh titles and the restructuring will not impact on its distinct Welsh content including coverage of politics, news and sport across Wales. There has been significant investment in its website WalesOnline and there has been an increase in the numbers visiting the site.

During the Committee meeting Janet Finch-Saunders AM raised concerns about the future of the *North Wales Weekly News*. During my meeting and in subsequent correspondence to my officials Trinity Mirror stated that there was no threat to the newspaper or of it being taken over by the *Daily Post*.

In your letter you have also requested further information on the following of which I have responsibility for:

- Information on meetings with religious denominations in Wales to discuss the practical problems associated with selling and re-development of chapels and churches in Wales and in particular the co-operation between government departments, Cadw and planning departments in local authorities;
- Active Travel Bill - update on where local authorities are in producing their two maps (current walking and cycling provision and establishing a long-term plan for their networks);
- An update on the timescale and delivery plan of the Task and Finish Group on Schools and Physical Activity;
- How we are endeavoring to ensure that play is separate from organised recreation and sport.

I attach this information at Annex 2.

I trust that I have addressed the Committee's queries in full and I look forward to working closely with you in the future.

Yours,



John Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant a Chwaraeon  
Minister for Culture and Sport

***Further information and examples of outreach work undertaken by theatre companies in Wales to widen participation of the arts within communities***

**Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru**

The company has significantly developed its community outreach programme in the last two years. A strong example was *C'laen Ta*, a project with residents of Peblig, Caernarfon, a Communities First area. This was a partnership between Galeri Caernarfon and ThGC inspired by the play *Sgint*. ThGC with members of the community over an extended period on a piece of theatre derived from the experiences of community members. Community members were responsible for all elements of production, under the mentorship of professional practitioners (including Bethan Marlow and Sarah Bickerton). Community members played the parts, assisted in the management of stage, costume, set design and marketing. The final work was shown as a promenade theatre piece on the estate.

**National Theatre Wales (NTW)**

Its programme of one-off performances and debates was revamped to generate four democratically-selected participatory events in the four corners of Wales, with up to 1,000 people voting each time for their chosen event. This format of using performance and debate to unlock and own local stories and questions is a pioneering model of creative social agency.

National Theatre Wales' TEAM moved into an ambitious new phase in 2012/13. TEAM is the company's network of community members who champion NTW's work within their local areas. The TEAM scheme won extended funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to expand the staff, build TEAM on a nationally networked level, produce a year-round programme of events and workshops, and the creation of TEAM panel to act as an advisory board to the executive and staff team. NTW's TEAM programme has become an internationally celebrated model for leadership, advocacy and participation in the arts.

**Sherman Cymru**

Sherman Cymru's Creative Learning team runs a range of projects for people of all ages and levels of experience whether looking for a performance or training opportunity. In addition to regular groups and workshops the company also holds special events to attract new participants as well as actively seeking opportunities to work with partners from the arts community and the voluntary, public and private sectors.

Company 5 is an RSC Openstages funded initiative for people aged 18 – 80, who share a common interest in theatre and performing, but who may have no or little experience. Meanwhile, Sherman Cymru's Outreach and Schools Programme is committed to engaging with local communities and schools ensuring that they are at the heart of what Sherman Cymru produces.

Through Sherman Cymru's Youth Theatre (four groups spanning ages 10-25 years old) and Sherman Sherbets (ages 4-9), the company strives to nurture young people's creativity and self expression through the power of drama and theatre, working from a devised model of practice to ensure all performances are crafted from the participants' own ideas.

### **Mess Up The Mess Theatre Company**

*Hidden Harm* was an original piece of theatre created by young people in Llanelli based on their experiences as the children of alcoholics and drug addicts. MUTM worked alongside young people from Barnardo's Carmarthenshire Young Carer's Service, young people from MUTM's own drama projects and professional artists to create, stage and tour a professional production for youth audiences raising awareness of young people's experiences of substance misuse in the home. 216 young people (aged 12- 17) took part in the project, and the final performances played to a total audience of 1,510.

***Information on meetings with religious denominations in Wales to discuss the practical problems associated with selling and re-development of chapels and churches in Wales and in particular the co-operation between government departments, Cadw and planning departments in local authorities.***

My officials in Cadw have been involved in a range of discussions over the last few months with stakeholders regarding the adaptation and re-use of listed places of worship. This includes religious denominations, local authorities, Housing Justice and colleagues in the Welsh Government Housing and Regeneration department – these meetings are set to continue. As well as participating in an on-going working group to discuss these issues, Cadw intends to prepare new guidance in 2014 for the conservation, care and conversion/modification of historic places of worship which will be informed by the discussions with a range of stakeholders.

***Issues around Libanus Chapel, demolition and de-listing***

These issues came up in discussion at Committee and I wanted to provide you with a note setting out the situation in terms of the role of the Welsh Government / Cadw.

**Libanus Chapel**

Officials understand from the City and County of Swansea Council that what remains of the fire damaged listed building is seen by some as an eye sore that should be demolished.

The Council is responsible for administering the legislation concerned with listed buildings. The next steps concerning the future of the fire damaged building are therefore a matter for Swansea Council and the owner, rather than my officials in Cadw. In instances of fire damage, the Council should normally consider with the owner whether any urgent works are necessary while the future of the building is being considered and operate closely with the fire service and police in case of suspected arson. It is a matter for the owner to consider the future of the site and this could include possible options such as rebuilding the property, retaining the remains or complete demolition with any necessary listed building consents being obtained from the Council. My officials would be pleased to be a party to any pre-application discussions between the Council and owner if that was thought to be helpful.

The owner has been advised that any further demolition would require lbc and he confirmed that he would not demolish the remainder of the building. Following the fire in January 2012, the fallen masonry was cleared from the public footpath and left on site with the boundary secured with herras fencing.

The chapel site has two main problems which have so far stalled any redevelopment or re-use of the site. Firstly the site is land-locked and without any vehicular access as a result. Secondly, there is a Victorian water culvert of approximately 2m diameter running immediately under the building which will severely affect any reuse proposals.

However, I understand that there has been further complaint recently regarding falling masonry on to the public footpath. From the resultant inspection on 23 May, the Council considered that the building has deteriorated to the extent that it presents an immediate danger to the public. In view of this it has instigated emergency action under section 78 of the Building Act 1984. The owner has been instructed to reduce the height of the walls on all elevations to a safe height. The owner has been advised of the constraints in terms of the listed building status and will be storing all relevant materials accordingly.

Given the ongoing complaints about the condition of the site, the Council has commissioned Purcell Architects to scope and cost immediate issues such as Urgent Works and longer term sustainable reuse. An initial report is awaited and will be used to discuss options with owner.

### **Demolition and Listed Building Consent**

The demolition of any listed building is an option of last resort and requires listed building consent from the local planning authority. Each application is considered on its merits in the light of the Welsh Government's Land Use Planning Policy – *Planning Policy Wales* - and circular guidance which explain the need to protect a listed building's historic and architectural character. In line with the circular guidance, applications for lbc need to be supported with strong evidence to justify the proposed works and this should extend to an examination of any less intrusive alternatives, where these are available.

While it is an objective of the Welsh Government's policy to secure the conservation and sustainable use of historic buildings, there will very occasionally be cases where demolition is unavoidable. Listed building controls ensure that proposals for demolition are fully scrutinised and justified before any decision is reached. In determining applications for total or substantial demolition of listed buildings, authorities should take into account the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and to the value derived from its continued use, the adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use and the merits of alternative proposals for the site.

### **Cadw's Role in Listed Building Consent**

Procedurally, a Council is able to refuse listed building consent without reference to my officials in Cadw, although there is a right of appeal against any refusal to the Welsh Ministers, in practice, the Planning Inspectorate. However, if a Council is minded to grant listed building consent it must firstly notify Cadw so that the application can be considered for call-in and determination by Welsh Ministers. Applications that are called-in are those which give rise to exceptional significance or controversy.

### **Delisting**

There is no statutory right of appeal against listing but my officials in Cadw are always happy to review past decisions in the light of new evidence that was not available at the time of listing. Requests are considered in light of published circular guidance which explains that any evidence must relate to the special architectural or historic interest ascribed to the building and not to its current state of repair. If any objection to listing relates to the building's condition, the cost of repairing or maintaining it, or for plans for redevelopment, the appropriate application should be made under the listed building consent procedures.

### **Listed Building Statistics**

Some 30,000 buildings across Wales have been protected through listing by Cadw as nationally important buildings of special architectural or historical interest. 493 of these are listed as Grade I; 2,127 listed as Grade II\* and 27,343 listed as Grade II.

Buildings are listed in three grades which reflect their relative importance at the national level. Grade II listed buildings represent those that are of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them; grade II\* listed buildings are important buildings of more than special interest and grade I listed buildings are exceptional. Grade I and II\* listed buildings represent the top 10% of all listed buildings in Wales.

There are currently 3153 listings in Wales related to religious buildings. The vast majority are churches and chapels but occasionally, other structures such as gates or religious statues will also be listed. There are 214 listed Grade 1, 525 listed Grade II\* and 2414 listed Grade II.

There are 874 listed chapels in Wales, 41 listed chapels in Swansea. Of the 874 listed chapels, there are 12 at grade 1, 74 at grade II\* and 788 at grade II.

***Active Travel Bill - update on where local authorities are in producing their two maps (current walking and cycling provision and establishing a long-term plan for their networks)***

Cardiff, Swansea and Newport have all produced maps of existing cycle routes in their areas. As far as I am aware, no local authorities have produced an integrated network map. At the moment local authorities are not required to produce maps, as the legislation has not yet been passed by the Assembly.

We are working with local authorities and the WLGA in developing guidance to support the delivery of the active travel Bill, so local authorities will be aware of what mapping is required and when it will need to be delivered.

The vote on general principles of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill was on 4 June, and Stage 2 began on 5 June. The Bill is anticipated to receive Royal Consent in November, and is provisionally due to come into force in early 2014.

***An update on the timescale and delivery plan of the Task and Finish Group on Schools and Physical Activity***

The Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group chaired by Baroness Tanni Grey Thompson is due to publish its report very shortly. The Minister for Education and I will consider the report's recommendations and respond in due course. The group's role is to make innovative and practical recommendations on further developing the role of schools in increasing levels of physical activity in children and young people.

***How we are endeavoring to ensure that play is separate from organised recreation and sport***

"Creating a Play Friendly Wales" the Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on assessing for sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas, clearly sets out the separation between play and organised recreation and sport. The play sufficiency assessments required under the new duty prioritise freely chosen play opportunities as set out in the Welsh Government Play Policy. They also need to cross reference to other assessments and provision of opportunities for structured recreational activities covering, leisure, sport and culture. This is in recognition of the importance of all these opportunities in children's lives and to avoid duplication by utilising existing information.

The Welsh Government approach fits with the recent General Comment on the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 31 on children's right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

