

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / The Culture, Welsh Language and
Communications Committee
Independent Review of Support for Publishing and Literature in Wales
Ymateb gan Sophie McKeand, Awdur Ieuencid Cymru / Evidence from Sophie McKeand Young
People's Laureate Wales

I am writing to express my dismay at the omission of what I believe are vital elements in the recent Independent Review of Support for Publishing and Literature in Wales.

As the current Young People's Laureate Wales, a freelance performance poet and workshop facilitator, who has spent nearly a decade working with poetry in the community I have been heartened by Literature Wales' inclusive and supportive approach to encouraging Wales' wider community to feel they have part to play in Wales' literary culture. In order to engage with 'hard to reach' groups Literature Wales employs a number of innovative approaches and artists that encourage participation, with excellent results.

I am especially proud of my past work of engaging young people from the fringes of Welsh society such as the Gypsy Roma Traveller community and young parents and know that, however talented some of these young people are, they would not engage simply through buying a book. Literature is important in that it encourages us to grow empathy and employ emotional intelligence but it does not need to be confined to one single format (i.e. A book). Yes books are important but if we are going to continue to inspire our next generations we need to support Literature Wales' initiatives that reach out to the wider community and allow people who might never have considered themselves to be writers (or readers!) the opportunity to immerse in our beautiful art form in all her myriad and dynamic forms.