

Dear Minister,

We write to you to express our alarm that the publishing industry in Wales is facing a proposed cut of 10.5%. This comes after a decade in which there has been a 37% cut in real terms.

This cut is a dire threat to publishing in Wales. The pressure on publishers is already unsustainable, with staff burning out under the pressure of working with minimal levels of funding and staffing.

We urge you to afford the Welsh publishing sector the same protection as other Welsh-language organisations such as the Urdd, Welsh for Adults Centres and the Mentrau Iaith. The materials produced by the publishers are essential to the work of each of these, given the integral part that literature plays in all cultural activity in Wales.

No cerdd dant music festivals or recitation groups could be held without poetry, it would not be possible to learn Welsh without novels, and intelligent conversations about Welsh politics, history and society could not happen without books. A threat to the publishing industry is a threat to all of this.

In the context of Welsh legislation such a cut goes against the objective of reaching a Million Welsh speakers, as well as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Books are an integral part of our cultural landscape; the side effect of such a long-term cut is a barren landscape, hindering Wales' creative, political, cultural and social potential.

We call on you to reconsider these cuts. The Welsh publishing industry is in a vulnerable position after years of cuts in real terms. The state has a duty to protect an industry that educates and engenders such social welfare through the production of quality books. The free market could not be expected to support books published in a minority language.

With thanks

Cwlwm Cyhoeddwy Cymru on behalf of publishers of Welsh-language books and reading materials