

From: Lorena Troughton

Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 9:37 AM

To: Jewell, Delyth (Aelod o'r Senedd | Member of the Senedd) <Delyth.Jewell@senedd.cymru>

Subject: Toriadau i gyllideb y Sector Treftadaeth / Heritage Sector budget cuts

Dear Delyth Jewell MS

We are writing on behalf of the Prospect branches at the National Library of Wales, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales to express our grave concerns about the predicted cuts to our budgets.

As you may be aware, all heritage bodies are currently facing substantial cuts to our budgets in the coming financial year and possibly the next. We are expecting cuts of between 10.5% and 22% to our Grant in Aid. This follows over a decade of austerity, chronic underfunding and cuts, sitting in contrast to the Scottish Government's decision to invest in the heritage sector by awarding a 4.2% increase.

While we recognise that Welsh Government is currently having to make difficult financial decisions, these grants form a relatively small proportion of Welsh Government's expenditure, amounting only to around 0.02% of their overall budget. However, the impact of these budget cuts will have a catastrophic effect on the heritage and culture sector in Wales.

The cuts will result in a severely reduced workforce, leading to a permanent loss of specialist skills and expertise. This will affect the ability of all bodies to conduct our services and activities, potentially endangering the missions of the Royal Charters.

These specialist skills, expertise and knowledge are essential to undertake the basic functions of looking after, protecting and providing access to national collections, Welsh heritage and the delivering the science underpinning nature conservation in Wales. Without them, this may no longer be possible.

All three bodies also provide other essential services and make invaluable contributions to life in Wales. We provide free access to information and knowledge; through events and activities, we contribute to improving well-being and health; and our activities with schools, colleges and universities enhance education in Wales. We also directly contribute significantly to the economic development of Wales by attracting millions of visitors every year.

Furthermore, the cuts will jeopardise our ability to undertake many important activities that contribute to the Welsh Government's own goals and legislation, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Environment (Wales) Act, the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan and the programme for government.

Without urgent intervention, heritage and culture as well as environmental resiliency in Wales may be damaged beyond repair. We write to you therefore, to ask for your support in imploring the Welsh Government to reverse their decision to cut funding and to help us save heritage and culture in Wales.

Julian Carter (Chair of Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales Heritage Section)

Katherine Slade (Secretary of Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales Heritage Section)

Megan Ryder (Chair, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales)

Meilyr Powel (Secretary, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales)

Siôn England (Chair, National Library of Wales)

Lorena Troughton (Secretary, National Library of Wales)