



LLYFRGELL GENEDLAETHOL CYMRU
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES

Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy

October 2017

1. Purpose

This Strategy discharges the duty to consult placed on the Trustees of the National Library of Wales by Statute 6(1) of the Supplemental Charter of the National Library of Wales, which states:

The Trustees are to:-

(a) adopt a scheme prescribing arrangements to enable the Trustees to:

(i) regularly consult with the public and with bodies having an interest in the furtherance of the objects of the Library, and

(ii) identify persons qualified and willing to provide support and advice to the Library in connection with the furtherance of the objects of the Library.

(b) implement the scheme referred to in the previous sub-paragraph and keep its terms under regular review and if thought fit from time to time amend the said scheme.

Accordingly, this Strategy sets out the principles which the National Library of Wales will follow when consulting and engaging with the public to achieve one of our core values, which is to provide excellent service to all our users by understanding their interests and needs and making sure that people are aware of the services we provide onsite, online and at any other facility. It also outlines the methods we shall use for public consultation and engagement in order to maintain a mutually beneficial dialogue between the Library and the audiences we serve. Maintaining dialogue with our current and potential users and wider audiences enables us to provide communities and individuals in Wales and beyond with what they want and need, thus enriching lives and improving life chances, supporting learning and research, and helping us to understand how to provide the best service for everybody. In addition, the practical steps we have already taken to ensure that consultation and engagement is a core part of our work and the user experience are outlined, as these enable us to build on past success and ensure that future consultation and engagement will be more strategic and effective.

This Strategy focuses on consultation and engagement in the context of organisations within the culture and heritage sector, where this work is essential for developing and serving their audiences as well as developing their own services. The primary aims are mutual understanding,

collaborative working and shared benefits. There is obviously a close relationship between this Strategy (which is required under the Supplemental Charter) and the Library's Marketing Strategy, which will also communicate what we can offer diverse communities and audiences and plays an important role in ensuring that people are well informed about our services and policies. Both Strategies will function in parallel in a mutually supportive way.

Statute 6(2) provides that the Trustees may establish advisory or consultation bodies to assist and advise the Trustees. This was the basis for establishing the Library's External Advisory Body in 2006. Having regard to the increasing complexity of the Library's work and associated needs for public consultation and engagement the Trustees have decided not to exercise this power further and to adopt a broader and more flexible approach.

2. Context

The National Library of Wales ('the Library') is Wales's pre-eminent library and archive and one of Wales's great cultural institutions. It is a massive information resource and treasure house on all subjects, especially the recorded cultures of Wales, and freely accessible to everyone. It was established by Royal Charter in 1907 and currently functions under the most recent Supplemental Charter granted by Her Majesty the Queen on the 19th of July 2006, which made changes to the governance arrangements following devolution of government from Westminster to Wales. The Library is also a registered charity (number: 525775) and a Welsh Government Sponsored Body (WGSB). For these reasons the Library balances the responsibilities of fulfilling the 'objects' of its Charter and Charitable status, which reflect its foundation purpose, with the priorities of Welsh Government's agenda through the principles of arms-length government.

By today, the Library has two dimensions - a splendid physical building in Aberystwyth housing print, manuscript, visual and audio-visual collections, and an online library and gallery available through the internet. In addition to its unparalleled foundation collections of manuscripts and early publications, and unique acquisitions in many formats over more than a century, it is also Wales's only Legal Deposit Library, having been one of the UK's very small number of Copyright Libraries since 1911. Under the Legal Deposit Libraries Act (2003), the National Library of Wales is able to request a copy of every book published in the UK, extended since 2013 to electronic material.

The Library's primary 'object' (core purpose), as expressed in the 2006 Supplemental Charter, is: *'to collect, preserve and give access to all kinds and forms of recorded knowledge, especially relating to Wales and the Welsh and other Celtic peoples, for the benefit of the public, including those engaged in*

research and learning.'

Since its foundation, the Library has continued to collect and preserve Wales' 'documentary' heritage and pioneer new ways of enabling wider access to our rich national collections. Our founding purpose and vision was to ensure that Wales' unique history, culture and heritage, which has been documented in many different formats and media over many centuries, will always be available to enable everyone to understand who we are, to explain our shared historical and cultural legacy which has shaped us as a nation over many centuries, and to encourage research and learning. Our collections are also an important source of knowledge about the wider world, both historically and for contemporary society.

This vast treasure house of books, manuscripts, archives, maps, pictures, photographs, newspapers, sound and film requires careful and effective long-term management and preservation measures to maintain the collections, provide accurate catalogues and discovery aids for the content, and ensure easy access both onsite in Aberystwyth and beyond. Digital delivery offers increasing opportunities to provide access to collection items across Wales and worldwide.

Our five core functions are:

- Collecting Wales's documentary heritage
- Preserving this heritage in all formats
- Providing access and information
- Supporting learning and interpretation
- Collaboration and development with those who share our aims across Wales, such as libraries and archives, National Museum Wales, RCAHMW, universities and colleges.

Our core values and principles are:

- Public benefit
- Citizen engagement
- Stakeholder consultation
- Inclusivity and respect
- Democratic accountability

At the heart of the Library are its rich and diverse collections, some of which have been 'inscribed' in UNESCO's Memory of the World register and many have been digitised or created in digital formats and are freely accessible online. Our collections include:

- Printed works: books, periodicals, newspapers and other printed material amounting to about 6m volumes.
- Manuscripts: 30,000 items, the oldest dating from 113 AD, and including the earliest literature of Wales and early British and European texts.
- Archives: 15km, 2,500 collections, including the Welsh Political Archive, estate records, records of the Court of Great Sessions and the Church in Wales, all wills proved in Welsh dioceses before 1858, modern literary papers and the archives of Welsh organisations and businesses
- Maps: over 1.5m, and thousands of atlases.
- Pictures: 50,000 works documenting Wales, mainly through landscapes and portraits.
- Photographs: 950,000 prints, negatives and transparencies - the largest collection in Wales.
- Microforms: e.g. of newspapers, archives and family history sources.
- Sound and moving images: 7m feet of film, 300,000 hours of video, 250,000 hours of sound recordings, 200,000 items from the ITV Wales Archive, and thousands of records and tapes.
- Electronic material: millions of digital objects, including CD-ROMs, e-books, e-journals, websites, electronic archives and digitised items.

Our original Royal Charter and Charitable 'objects' remain central to our regular Strategic Plans and continue to guide our priorities and working methods in caring for these rich, diverse collections and providing access and public engagement. Innovation and growth are also important to ensure that we contribute effectively to national life and meet the cultural, learning and research needs of the people of Wales at all levels.

3. Our approach to consultation and engagement

The National Library of Wales recognises that in this rapidly changing world organisations such as the Library need to explore new methods of engagement in order to be relevant to, and representative of, the diverse communities that we serve wherever they may be – whether in or beyond Wales and including the Welsh diaspora and interested researchers worldwide who are able to enjoy virtual services and activities. Flexible consultation and engagement processes are therefore essential to achieve shared objectives, satisfy needs and enable people and communities to benefit from what the Library can do for them. For these reasons we aim to be flexible in our approach to all aspects of this work according to need, while also responding to developments in best practice and changes in public expectation.

We are also mindful that 'Community engagement' is a two way process between communities (both geographical and communities of interest) and the Library to develop good relationships with audiences and that it is not a static process. Our programmes will therefore have clear objectives and benefits for all who participate, thus enabling the Library to be more relevant to community interests and to understand those interests.

Engagement will be underpinned by four core values that reflect those defined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2):

- People should have a say in decisions that affect their lives
- Public opinions will contribute to decisions
- People will receive the information they need to participate fully
- Participants will be told how their input has affected decisions

When planning consultation and engagement regarding strategic and operational decisions, the level of public engagement will be determined, ranging from basic information to seeking views through advisory roles and expert panels.

4. Collaboration and partnership

We must always ensure that the Library, as a national cultural institution, is relevant to national life and that our activities, services and events reflect what the people of Wales want and need from us. But we cannot act alone at all times. Working closely with partners in fulfilling this strategy - and making the most of our different strengths - is extremely important. At the same time, community engagement processes bring us closer to communities and individuals so that we can reveal the rich potential of our collections and services.

Strategic partnerships need to demonstrate how our work adds value to shared objectives and outputs. In particular, we offer strengths and expertise in cultural, historical and heritage education and learning, research in many fields and at all levels, managing and delivering digital information, language and bilingual provision and other Celtic cultures. We also hold collections that reflect the world and provide a broader understanding of life outside Wales.

Over the last five years we have sought to create a more dynamic relationship with our audiences, as reflected by the emergence of the Education Service, Digital Access Unit and volunteering scheme. In fostering new relationships with the visiting public and the private and public sectors, the Library is increasingly perceived as an active rather than passive institution; a producer as well as supplier of knowledge and experience. The following case studies illustrate significant recent expansion in the way we interact with our audiences and influence the public sphere, facilitated by increasing experience and confidence and by forging mutually beneficial relationships with outside parties. Although many such links are becoming visible through more formal arrangements and greater advocacy, others have been in use on an ad hoc and informal basis.

Case Study 1: Our volunteering scheme has allowed the Library to engage new audiences. It has been engaging with volunteers since 2012 in the belief that participating in cultural activity boosts skills, engagement, self-esteem and aspiration, and enhances workplace and social skills, whilst also contributing to the Library's strategy increase access to its collections. The scheme won the prestigious national Archive Volunteering Award, sponsored by the Archives and Records Association in 2016 and the judges were particularly impressed with the wide community collaboration and support.

Case study 2: Working in partnership with Scottish Power, our Education Service has delivered a programme of outreach events with schools in Fusion Programme Areas across Wales, including the Collect, Create, Innovate project, which gave pupils the opportunity to collect, digitise and produce online resources about their locality. This excellent partnership has also enabled us to work with schools to produce a booklet based on the Library's collections and supported Welsh Baccalaureate students with their individual projects. Significant highlights include the 'Masterpiece in School' days when JMW Turner's Dolbadarn Castle was taken from its home in the Library into schools.

Case study 3: In 2014 the Library appointed its first Wikipedian in Residence. Since then we have engaged with a wide audience to gather content and helped to train new Wikipedia editors who have created hundreds of new articles, thus leading the way in promoting open access to Welsh cultural heritage. 15,000 digital images from the Library's collections have already been shared on open license via Wikimedia Commons, and Library images used in Wikipedia articles have been viewed nearly 200 million times. Collaboration with new audiences, both individuals and organisations, has resulted in the gathering information that might otherwise be lost.

In addition, the Library has embraced new responsibilities to protect the well-being of future generations through fulfilling the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and working in partnership with the Welsh Government to improve our services to the people of Wales. Responding positively and enthusiastically offers new opportunities for public engagement.

5. Examples of outputs and results 2017-2018

- Supporting the 'Fusion Programme: Creating opportunities through culture' in Fusion Partnership areas and increasing our contribution to activities;
- Supporting bilingual activities in Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd and other areas;
- Developing the Masterpieces In School programme which takes our treasures into classrooms;
- Delivering the new bilingual crowdsourcing platform for 'virtual' volunteer projects and identifying partners in Fusion Partnership areas;
- As part of establishing the National Broadcast Archive, negotiating with partners to establish three Digital Hubs outside Aberystwyth (the Library will host a fourth)
- Expanding our Volunteer Programme to offer more opportunities for digital volunteers
- Collaborating to establish/manage the National Digital Library to ensure excellent service to the people of Wales.
- Providing exciting bilingual exhibitions and events.
- Working in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council to establish a new cultural centre in Haverfordwest in 2018.
- Continuing support for the strategic partnership to deliver the People's Collection Wales by promoting community digital hubs and training skills.
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6. Developing our consultation and engagement

Community engagement is the first step in two-way dialogue and consultation with communities. We as an organization aspire to benefit our communities, but the Library also has a duty to consult and hold dialogue with its customers and implementing this strategy is a key part of this duty.

The *IAP2* sets out principles for public engagement and our strategy sets out the practical steps we shall implement to ensure that dialogue and consultation is an integral and permanent part of our work and of the user experience.

We shall:

- listen and respond to people's views and concerns through dialogue
- involve people in decisions about changes to our services and policies
- improve our accessibility and accountability to the people of Wales and wider audiences
- build trust and support

In return, we shall gain and share benefits by:

- understanding how to better serve individuals and communities
- identifying wisdom and experience in individuals, stakeholders and experts
- discovering new ideas and solutions
- understanding the diversity and strength of views
- recognising what the people of Wales want from their National Library
- enabling people to share and express views on proposals that affect them
- balancing different perspectives
- improving decision-making processes and decisions
- enabling public ownership of decisions
- improving trust in decision makers
- making legitimate and sustainable decisions
- strengthening the sense of citizenship
- increasing participation in democratic processes

7. Empowerment through collaboration and engagement

Promotion, dialogue and consultation alone will not necessarily bring benefits to our communities or to the Library. We shall therefore involve members of communities, working with and empowering them to contribute to the well-being of individuals, communities and our work.

This Consultation and Engagement Strategy will serve as a vehicle to engage with communities and extend our services in many contexts, especially the Fusion Program: Creating opportunities through culture, and in Fusion Partnership areas. There will include a strong focus on supporting bilingual

activities - initially in Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd. We will also develop the highly successful Masterpieces in School programme, in which we take our treasures into classrooms, and increase the over-all level of our contribution to Fusion Program activities.

In addition, we will work closely with Cadw, National Museum Wales, the Royal Commission and the trade unions to develop the Historic Wales strategic partnership and innovative ways of strengthening our provision of cultural and heritage services, sector skills, and improving sector resilience to counteract reduction in public funds.

Establishing four Digital Hubs in Aberystwyth, Wrexham, Carmarthen and Cardiff to provide public access to the entire broadcast archive of BBC Wales and developing the National Broadcasting Archive at the Library is a further golden opportunity to increase our presence across Wales and take advantage of unparalleled opportunities for public involvement and engagement. The recent special partnership with Pembrokeshire Library and Pembrokeshire Council in the exciting development in Haverfordwest provides yet further opportunities to increase our presence and work in that part of southwest Wales.

Other wider initiatives include support for further tourism themes in Wales, namely the Year of Legends in 2017 and Year of the Sea in 2018, to increase the number of people using and engaging in our services, and collaborate with the National Eisteddfod, CADW, National Museum and Royal Commission to develop the 'Lle Hanes' on the festival field and the activities associated with this important development. Continuing collaborative work with partners on implementing and developing the People's Collection programme also provides the Library with excellent opportunities for engagement.

8. Methods of Consultation and Engagement

This Strategy has already indicated that, as the Library's needs and functions develop and public attitudes evolve, we must increase flexibility in our methods of consultation and engagement to ensure their effectiveness. This will be achieved by adopting a range of methods and a flexible, adaptable system that is beneficial to all concerned. The overall purpose is to make a difference for both the Library and the participants while also ensuring that we follow best practice and ethical principles.

These various methods will provide genuine opportunities for consultation and engagement and encourage participation by all who have an interest in, or who would be affected by, the Library's decisions and activities. Disadvantaged communities and minority groups will be encouraged to participate,

and barriers avoided through careful planning. Consultation and engagement also will be part of the Library's planning processes, including resource allocation.

8.1 Management Principles

We recognise that individuals are motivated to participate by a variety of reasons, but all views will be respected. The Library will ensure that those who lead the consultation and engagement activities can explain the purpose and process clearly, have good knowledge of the subject and are able to respond to questions. Stakeholders and participants will be given the information they need to make informed contributions, and all processes will be monitored and evaluated to ensure effectiveness. Similarly, all feedback will be evaluated and results shared with participants to demonstrate how their involvement has helped to shape developments.

Personal data obtained during these activities will be managed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (and any subsequent legislation) and ethical principles. Participants will be informed about how the information they provide will be used and that personal details will not be disclosed without consent. Where young people are involved, the consent of parents/guardians will be sought.

8.2 Methods

When planning consultation and engagement for a particular purpose, the Library will use stakeholder analysis to identify relevant groups and appropriate methods. A range of methods will be used for each project, and the location and geographical spread will be determined by the purpose, subject and nature of the activities.

Observation

Observing how people approach a facility or move around a space is a good starting point, because it often raises questions that need to be asked and resolved through dialogue, such as focus groups or workshops.

Consultation Documents

These are regarded as one of the most conventional engagement tools and used to set out proposals/plans and related questions. Whether in paper or electronic formats, they offer a starting point for developing proposals and raising public interest, but they do not necessarily

encourage engagement. They are most effective for gathering opinions about straightforward issues that are well understood or for gaining detailed input from qualified/experienced stakeholders, but they also complement other methods.

Open and Public Meetings

In the present context, 'open meetings' are usually defined as those which the public are free to attend as observers. For example, meetings of the Library's Board of Trustees are open to the public, who attend as non-participatory observers who witness the proceedings. By contrast, 'public meetings' involve direct engagement and may be fully participatory: they should not only be widely advertised but key stakeholder groups should be invited, thus enabling information to be presented to, and considered by a wide audience in open dialogue. They are particularly helpful for engaging broadly with a wide audience, sharing information and consulting with large numbers. This interaction also facilitates positive relationships with stakeholders, networking and useful publicity.

Expert Panels

These are more formal methods of consultation and engagement, which are used to explore issues in depth and make recommendations. They often share specific interests and areas of expertise, including academic, professional or location, but may also be more generally recruited to serve as Citizens' panels. Careful recruitment is particularly important to ensure that representation is balanced and appropriate according to need and purpose. Issues which benefit from panel consideration include testing initial ideas/plans; developing specific ideas; building relationships and advocacy potential; engaging stakeholders in challenging issues to address questions and concerns; gathering specialist opinion to inform projects or activities; and maintaining relationships. Panels may meet in person or be consulted via electronic media, either on a 'task and finish' basis or longer term.

Workshops

These are flexible and may be one-off or continue alongside other engagement methods. They are particularly useful for bringing together a range of perspectives, building relationships; and enabling stakeholders to make joint decisions on key points, actions and implementation. They also serve as regular public engagement tools with stakeholders.

Focus Groups

This method brings together individuals who are related or segmented by type and is helpful for piloting plans, materials or methods of presentation and seeking feedback. The purpose is to engage with participants who reflect the targeted end-user of a product or service by

enabling them explore and test it, consider how it is presented, and express their views. Several focus groups with similar participants may be run in parallel and the results compared. Each group should not exceed 20 participants and all invitees are expected to contribute.

Questionnaires and Surveys

These tools are used to gather statistical and quantitative information on specific topics or more general feedback, and may be paper-based or electronic. Both can be used for various purposes, such as gathering large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data; views on a range of options; anonymous responses; or responses given at different times for personal convenience. In all cases it is important to use representative samples. Questionnaires may be designed for self-completion or completion by an interviewer.

Online communication

Sharing information on particular subjects through the Library's website, blogs, social media and email is part of engagement and building relationships. Email is particularly helpful in maintaining personal contact and dialogue with stakeholders. These communication methods facilitate engagement with stakeholders at relatively little cost, share and distribute information, maintain contact, and receive comments and feedback.

Traditional methods

These methods for seeking public/stakeholder opinions include comment books at exhibitions etc., and feedback forms at events. The purpose is to gather feedback on quality of service, contact details if wished, or opinions on specific experiences. General events and activities also provide public engagement opportunities. Outside agencies may also be asked to undertake consultation and visitor profiling.

9. Supporting Consultation and Engagement

Library staff maintain secure databases for this purpose, including individuals who have requested information from us or agreed to take part in a consultation. All personal data is managed in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and ethical principles, and the Library is alert to any changes in information legislation.

10. Networks

A database of networks within and beyond the heritage/cultural sector will be established to log where to find best practice and generic information on public engagement and consultation. Internal staff networks will share best practice and develop skills. In retaining its Customer Service Excellence accreditation in 2017, the Library showed exemplary evidence of its excellent relationship with its users. However, to improve this relationship even further and to ensure that the Library's consultation and engagement practices provide us with the required evidence to improve our services, the Library will forge links with the Visitor Studies Group (VSG), which aims to be the 'voice of visitor studies'. It is a 'national group of engaged professionals who support each other to achieve best practice in this area. The VSG advocates best practice by representing opinion and expertise, participates in debate and impacts on policy and strategy across the cultural sector. The Library will also collaborate with Participation Cymru, which works with the voluntary & public sector to deliver public engagement services to organisations actively engaged in developing citizen engagement.

11. Staff training

A bespoke programme of staff awareness and training will be developed during 2017-2018, with the aim of introducing the theory and practical tools for engagement and consultation. This will be further supported by individual sessions for staff on specific projects, as well as developing further workshops to deliver new elements and initiatives. Staff are encouraged to participate in external training and networking events, especially those which will be delivered by the Visitor Studies Group and Participation Cymru.

12. Operational Planning and Evaluation

An operational plan for consultation and engagement will be developed by February 2018 to provide structured details to the Board of Trustees on how this Strategy will be achieved. Performance indicators will be agreed and reviewed annually.