

# THE AGILE LIBRARY

## The Library's Strategy 2011 - 2012 to 2013 - 2014

February 2011



# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The National Library of Wales is one of Wales's major national institutions.
- 1.2 The Library is a central **cultural institution**. It serves as a collective long-term memory for Wales, and helps to define, for the people of Wales and for the world, part of what is meant by 'Welsh culture' or, more properly, 'Welsh cultures'<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3 It is also an important **knowledge institution**. Thanks in large part to its status as a legal deposit ('copyright') library<sup>1</sup>; it has a key role to play in building an economy and a society in Wales based on knowledge and information.
- 1.4 This plan attempts to plot a course for the development of the Library over the next three years (2011-2012 to 2013-2014, starting in April 2011).

It proposes a strategy that seeks to preserve the essential current work of the Library, while continuing the process of unlocking the vast potential the Library possesses for enriching the people of Wales through the application of efficient business processes, for the benefit of wider audiences and new users.

- 1.5 The following sources have been utilised in the creation of this plan:
  - the Royal Charter which established the National Library and which continues to govern its functions<sup>2</sup>
  - the previous Strategy, which covered the period 2008 – 2009 to 2010 – 2011 and which contains a number of long-term developments that remain relevant for the future<sup>3</sup>;
  - consultation sessions conducted with the Board of Trustees, the Advisory Body and the Library staff;
  - the responses to the public consultation held at the end of 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 gives the Library the right to claim, free of charge, a copy of every printed work published in the United Kingdom and Ireland; future secondary legislation will extend the operation of this right by stages to categories of non-print materials.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Charter\\_2006.pdf](http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Charter_2006.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/nlw\\_strategy\\_s.pdf](http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/nlw_strategy_s.pdf)

## 2 The Library's mission and character

2.1 The fundamental nature of the Library's work was determined by the Royal Charter that established the Library's existence in 1907. The new wording of the Charter gives as the Library's functions:

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.

It is the Charter that is the basis for a number of the Library's key features:

- its emphasis on material of Welsh (and Celtic) interest
- its wider collecting responsibilities (based on legal deposit and purchase)
- the fact that it collects material in such a wide variety of media
- its mission to support researchers and those in education

2.2 The National Library is an Assembly Government Sponsored Body, and receives Grant-in-Aid annually from the Welsh Assembly Government. The relationship between the Library and the Assembly Government is defined by the revised *Management statement and financial memorandum*.

### 3 Principles and values

3.1 The existence and work of the Library depend on certain principles and values, shared by those who govern it, work in it and use it. They are seen as complementary to the values and principles of the Assembly Government in guiding the Library's work.

3.2 The Library has a vital role as a collector and guardian of the intellectual record of the life of Wales and the Welsh people. This is important in itself, and is also an important element in defining the cultural identities of the country.

The new political status of Wales is a product of, and will itself contribute to, a renewed concern with cultural identities. The Library is likely to have an important part to play in reflecting, recording and even forming those identities.

3.3 This intellectual record is not confined to any particular medium, format, period or language.

From its inception the Library has been more than what is conventionally recognised as a 'library', that is, a collection of printed works. It stores a wide – and still widening – range of formats capable of carrying intellectual content. Among these are: books and periodicals, manuscripts and archives, pictures, photographs and maps, sound and moving images, and electronic material.

3.4 This record of the 'matter of Wales' (and of the other Celtic countries) is, however, part of a wider, indeed worldwide, domain of recorded knowledge, produced in many languages and over many centuries, which the Library attempts to represent in its collections for the benefit of its users.

The Library's wider collections, mainly acquired in print form through legal deposit, are essential to its ability to support study and learning, not only in Welsh or Celtic domains, but also in a very wide range of other subjects.

3.5 The Library's collections and services exist to meet the needs of all who can benefit from them.

The Library is proud of the fact that it is a public library, in the sense that any person aged 16 or over is welcome to obtain a reader's ticket that will enable them to use its collections for reference purposes with little formality and without charge. Among the groups that make use of the Library at present for consultation and reference are academic and personal researchers, students and other learners, businesses, the media, and visitors from Britain and overseas. This right of unrestricted access is part of the democratic rights of citizens in pursuit of information, knowledge and enlightenment, and contributes to the promotion of 'social inclusion'.

3.6 The Library has a duty not merely to 'hold its doors open', but to encourage awareness and use of its collections and services, by all the means at its disposal.

In the past, personal visits to the Library in Aberystwyth were usually necessary to take advantage of what the Library had to offer; in future, remote, and especially digital, networked access will become more significant. Already remote (including online) uses of the Library greatly outnumber visits in person.

- 3.7 The Library has an important role, as the largest and most significant institution of its kind in Wales, in leading, co-ordinating and supporting the development of library and archive services in Wales. This is not an optional part of its mission, but an essential role in a country where library and archive services tend to be small and scattered. (Although this role has been modified by the status of CyMAL as a strategic body in these areas, it continues to be an important one.) It will work closely with CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales in fulfilling this role.

In its turn the National Library is part of a wider, interlocking structure of library, information and archive institutions in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. It co-operates with them to make the best use of the resources that are available to all.

The Library looks after the resources in its care – its building, collections, staff, finances and facilities – with a constant eye on managing them effectively and efficiently.

- 3.8 Underpinning the Library's principles and values is the need to promote, develop and maintain the principles contained within the Wales Spatial Plan and the Sustainable Development Action Plan for Wales.
- 3.9.1 In everything it does - whether answering enquiries, publishing books, mounting exhibitions, or any other relevant activity – the National Library aims for the highest possible standard.

As a body that has the transmission of knowledge at the heart of its mission the Library aims to excel in communicating effectively with everyone in its orbit, including its users, staff and partners.

## 4 Core functions

4.1 The essence of what the Library does is contained in its five 'Core Functions'. These set the minimum boundaries of its policies and practice.

The Core Functions are defined below, indicating in each case the main method by which they are performed.

### *Collecting*

4.2 Collecting materials by legal deposit, purchase, donation, bequest, exchange and deposit, in accordance with agreed collection development policies.

4.3 This function is carried out through:

- assembling as complete a collection as possible, in all media, of published material relating to Wales (and to a lesser extent the other Celtic countries), including printed and electronic publications and sound and moving image material;
- maintaining (mainly through legal deposit and purchase) the most comprehensive collection in Wales of printed material published in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and of research material from other countries;
- developing collections of unpublished materials relating to or deriving from Wales, including archives and artistic works;
- accessioning, processing, cataloguing and storing material acquired in the most efficient way.

### *Preserving*

4.4 Preserving and conserving materials in the collections.

4.5 This function is carried out through:

- ensuring environmental, storage and handling conditions favourable to the continued preservation of materials;
- intervening to conserve materials and thus to arrest deterioration or repair damage;
- transferring information, in some cases, to more suitable preservation formats.

### *Giving access and information*

4.6 Providing satisfactory access for Library users to its building, collections and services, and adequate information about them.

4.7 This function is carried out through:

- continuing investigation, monitoring and analysis of user needs;

- providing access to public spaces, collections and facilities within the Library's building;
- providing document delivery, enquiry and information services to those wishing to use the Library, in person or remotely;
- providing easy access to catalogues and lists of the Library's collections, and published electronic resources, and surrogates of selections from them.

### *Publicising and interpreting*

4.8 Raising awareness of, and disseminating knowledge of, the Library's work and collections.

4.9 This function is carried out through:

- mounting material on the Library's website;
- issuing guides, leaflets and other publicity material;
- staging exhibitions and educational activities derived from the collections;
- arranging lectures and seminars.

### *Professional collaboration*

4.10 Collaborating with, and where appropriate giving leadership to, related professional and other bodies in the fields of library and information services, archives, records management, museums and galleries.

4.11 This function is carried out through:

- acting as a focal point for library and archive bodies in Wales;
- working with bodies in Wales, in Britain and beyond to pursue co-operative initiatives and partnerships, and to advance professional practice.

### *Supporting functions*

4.12 The Library underpins the performance of these five core functions through the following 'supporting functions':

- management and development of its staff;
- budgeting and control of, and accountability for, its financial resources, and income generation and fundraising;
- maintenance and development of the Library's information and communication technology infrastructure;
- maintenance and development of the Library's building and its facilities.

## 5 Long-term vision

### 5.1 How does the Library see its role in ten years' time?

Briefly, as a thriving, relevant and well-respected educational, cultural and information resource for the people of Wales and the rest of the world.

### 5.2 The following will be among the Library's defining characteristics in 2020<sup>4</sup>:

- the level of recurrent resources will be substantially smaller than at present: the running costs budget will be lower, and fewer staff will be employed; more of them will be concerned with serving a remote audience and fewer will be engaged in processing collections and items within them;
- some services will have ceased or will be provided in a different (more efficiently delivered) way;
- although material will still arrive in physical (principally, paper) form, the digital component of accessions to the collections will increase substantially, mainly thanks to full electronic legal deposit, but also as all kinds of acquisitions become electronic in form;
- existing collections will be better known and better used, thanks mainly to better metadata management and more extensive digitisation;
- the Library's utility to learners and teachers will be better exploited, an early relationship with the Library being continued throughout life;
- the Library will be better integrated with other information and archive services within Wales, through, for example, the development of a national electronic library.

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<sup>4</sup> For further information please refer to the document *Twenty-twenty: A long view of the National Library of Wales* (2010) <http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/Vision.pdf>

## 6. The Main Developments

We know that the next three years will constitute a period of saving and contraction as a result of the cuts in public spending and we will need to respond to this in a number of ways. But we are also determined that the Library will not stand still, but will continue to develop and move in new directions. These two factors are reflected in the developments listed below. Being flexible is a consistent theme throughout, as we face great uncertainties.

### *Institutional Flexibility*

#### 6.1 Developing our staff

If the Library continues to utilise its current procedures, a static workforce may result. The Library wishes to ensure a flexible workforce by:

- introducing generic jobs and skills that will enable us to invest more specifically in the development of our staff, thus expanding their experience and professional skills;
- encouraging innovation amongst our staff by acknowledging the wealth of their skills and information;
- revising the training programme in order to ensure that it will satisfy the needs of the Library during this period;
- revisiting the principles of the succession planning process to ensure business continuity in the future;
- responding to the desire for better efficiency and flexibility that is driving the management developments proposed for the period, for example by implementing the competencies framework.

#### 6.2 Amending our business processes

We will develop and implement a Business Transformation Programme that will enable us to introduce and implement lean management processes, thereby making better use of all our assets. This program is expected to produce efficient working processes together with significant financial savings. It is also likely to contribute to the Assembly's efficiency programs.

#### 6.3 Collaboration

The Library has developed and fostered a long and firm tradition of co-operation with a wide range of other organizations within Wales and beyond. We anticipate that it will be essential for the Library to continue to work closely with other significant bodies to achieve its objectives in the future. However, funding and resource restrictions will force us to consider carefully any proposed new partnerships during the period. The key partnerships will be as follows:

##### ***Strategic partnerships***

- The Welsh Assembly Government: a new government will come to power during 2011 and we will be required to contribute and respond to its new strategic agenda;
- The British Library and the other legal deposit libraries;

- International and British audio-visual organisations, such as the BFI;
- National Museum Wales, especially in the context of ‘The People’s Collection’;
- Local libraries, archives and museums, and by contributing to the possible developments regarding the development of a national electronic library and the revision of the local library structure;
- Aberystwyth Strategic Regeneration Area Partnership.

#### ***Operational partnerships***

- other public organisations;
- The Welsh Assembly Government;
- schools and institutions of further and higher education;
- international libraries;
- media companies (television, radio, print and online).

#### 6.4 Responding to unexpected developments

It is inevitable that we will be presented with unexpected developments and opportunities during the term of this strategy. Our ability to exploit such opportunities must be assessed in terms of the benefits that arise from them and the impact major developments will have on other services of the Library. It must be acknowledged that we will not be able to enter into some partnerships or projects unless adequate additional funding can be secured.

#### 6.5 Developing our technologies

We will continue to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise in the fields of digital and technological developments in order to offer better and more cost-effective services:

- the recipient of the University of Wales Chair in Digital Collections is expected to set the direction of aspects of our digital developments;
- the Web Strategy will be revised, and will build on the work already achieved in improving the ability to interact with our users, as well as exploiting new online technologies;
- more online services will be provided for our users, including the promotion of electronic resources, the use of new interfaces (e.g. Find My Past), and the expansion of the QuestionPoint service;
- the Information and Communications Technology Strategy will be revised.

#### 6.6 Taking advantage of financial and commercial opportunities

We will:

- ensure fiscal flexibility and apply for external funding for essential developments;
- continue to attempt to generate income, for example, by licensing digital content, developing the ‘Digitisation for Business’ project (ERDF) and explore the possibilities regarding charging for some services;
- continue with our fundraising activities.

## 6.7 Maintenance of the building

During this period we will undertake small-scale modifications and improvements to the Library building.

## *Flexibility of Information and Content*

It is anticipated that the ways in which demand for and the provision of information are made during this period will change dramatically. Our response to these expectations must be flexible:

### 6.8 Moving quickly towards the digital

- there will be a greater emphasis on collecting and republishing digital materials;
- we will develop our digitisation programmes, including the Theatre of Memory<sup>5</sup> (digitisation of the Welsh print legacy);
- we will begin implementing electronic legal deposit as soon as Parliament has confirmed the necessary Regulations.

### 6.9 Adapting our collection methods

We will implement our new Collection Policy. This responds to a new generation of users and the users of the future who will expect online access to all our information. As a result:

- we will be more selective in that which we collect in its printed form;
- we will receive many more publications and archives that exist only in an electronic format; our ability to access this information, and protect it for the future, will be crucial;
- an unprecedented growth in the number of electronic resources that are available outside the building is anticipated; the challenge for the Library will be our ability to offer access to them.

### 6.10 Improving ways of discovering our resources

We will implement our Resource Discovery Strategy by:

- aggregating metadata, for example through COPAC, OCLC WorldCat, Europeana;
- sharing metadata, so that it can be discovered easily via search engines such as Google;
- devising a plan that will enable us to manage our physical and digital backlogs;
- simplify the processes that enable us to capture and create metadata, and make them cheaper.

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<sup>5</sup> For further information about this project please refer to *The Theatre of Memory: Putting Wales in print on-line* (2007) [http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/theatre\\_of\\_memory.pdf](http://www.llgc.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/pdf/theatre_of_memory.pdf)

## 6.11 Storage and ensuring future use

The need to ensure the permanent and sustainable preservation of, and access to, our physical and digital collections persists:

- following our current space audit we will consider the different options available to us regarding traditional storage methods, both within and without the building, and implement the best options;
- we will provide suitable digital storage for the electronic collections and also possibly for materials belonging to other organizations.

## *Flexibility in our Relationship with our Users*

Library users, be they readers within and visitors to the building or remote users, define the Library's value. We will endeavour to ensure that users and prospective users are central to our thinking and activities.

## 6.12 Collecting and monitoring information about our users

We will collect more information that is relevant to our users' attitudes towards and expectations of the building, the collections and our services, and ensure that our strategies and policies reflect their needs. We will:

- examine the interface between our digital collections and the users;
- enhance their experience of using our systems, for example, through our search mechanisms;
- conduct a review of our exhibition programme;
- ensure that our users' wishes help to drive our digitisation programmes.

## 6.13 Encouraging contributions from our users

We will aim to encourage our users to contribute to the Library in new ways:

- by volunteering in a number of ways within the building;
- by contributing information – such as metadata – from afar;
- by disseminating knowledge and awareness of the Library's activities locally and remotely.

## 6.14 Increasing the number of users

We will aim to attract more users by:

- expanding our educational appeal at every level;
- increasing the number of remote users by enabling them to register with the Library at the same time as registering with their local library or archive.

## 7 Resources

### 7.1 Resources available to maintain current activity

The Library depends mainly on the Welsh Assembly Government for its funding, although it also attracts funding from a number of other sources including grants from other bodies, income from trading activities and its own charitable funds.

Grant in Aid (GIA) from the Welsh Assembly Government is summarised in the table below:

	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000	2012/13	2013/14
Base budget	10,972	10,972	10,746	10,525
Reduction	(40)	(226)	(221)	(4)
<b>Gross GIA</b>	<b>10,932</b>	<b>10,746</b>	<b>10,525</b>	<b>10,521</b>
Less income	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)
<b>Total Running Costs</b>	<b>10,532</b>	<b>10,346</b>	<b>10,125</b>	<b>10,121</b>
Capital grant	891	550	550	550
Specific Capital grant – Legal deposit	-	100	630	-
Strategic Capital Investment Fund	1,000	-	-	-
Collections Grant	611	305	305	305
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>13,034</b>	<b>11,301</b>	<b>11,610</b>	<b>10,976</b>
Cost of Capital and Depreciation	3,600	1,250	1,250	1,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,634</b>	<b>12,551</b>	<b>12,860</b>	<b>12,226</b>

The capital grant and the collections purchase grant are cut substantially from current levels. It will be difficult for this level of resources to cover the basic ongoing needs of the Library. The running costs budget is also being reduced in cash terms and once the impact of inflation is taken into account the effect will be significant.

The Library's expenditure and income for the period is summarised as follows:

		2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000
<b>Running costs</b>				
	Expenditure:			
	Salaries	8,681	8,450	8,400
	Other costs	2,129	2,129	2,129
	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>10,810</b>	<b>10,579</b>	<b>10,529</b>
	Income:			
	GIA	10,346	10,125	10,121
	Fees and charges	400	400	400
	Reserves	64	54	8
			-	-
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>10,810</b>	<b>10,579</b>	<b>10,529</b>
<b>Capital</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,180</b>	<b>1,050</b>
	Income			
	GIA	650	1,180	550
	Private Funds and fundraising	572	-	500
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,180</b>	<b>1,050</b>
<b>Collections Purchase</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>574</b>
	Income			
	GIA	305	305	305
	GIA – running costs	200	200	200
	Private funds and fundraising	69	69	69
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>574</b>
<b>Gross Budget</b>		<b>12,606</b>	<b>12,333</b>	<b>12,153</b>

## 7.2 Resources needed to realise future developments

The expenditure and income detailed in section 7.1 is available to cover the basic operational needs of the Library. In order to complete the additional developments listed in section 6, these will either have to be completed within existing resources, or if additional expenditure is required, then savings will be required elsewhere in the budget.

The cut in GIA from the Welsh Assembly Government for running costs, capital and collections purchase grant over the period of this strategy present a major challenge to the Library. These cuts come after a prolonged period when the resources provided by the Assembly have fallen progressively in value in real terms. Therefore, if the Library is to make a meaningful attempt to implement the new developments then

- resources will need to be redirected internally, and
- additional sources of funding must be attracted.

In order to meet the financial challenges the Library has been implementing - and indeed will have to continue with - a programme of business process re-engineering. This will focus on the use of lean management techniques in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

This programme will require a detailed examination of all business activities, and the total value of savings created each year will need to be around £200K. In addition to this, other resources will need to be relocated and/or repurposed as processes and working practises are changed.

This is an ambitious target and means that the Library's existing operations and staffing costs will need to be closely examined. Opportunities to relocate or reorganise staff must seek to maximise reallocation of resources. It is certain that the number of staff employed will decline: where possible this will be done through natural wastage, however this may not always be possible.

The Library will seek to maximise the amount it generates through its commercial activities. Currently this is set at £400,000 per annum, but in the current economic climate it will be a challenge if this level can be maintained over the period. The Library's fundraising activities will provide an opportunity to explore new projects financed by grants and donations from other sources. The Library's existing charitable private funds will continue to provide support for running costs, the capital programme and purchases for the collection.

The Library will continue its contributions to the pension fund and by the end of the period of this strategy it is estimated that the deficit will either be largely, or completely, eliminated. This will relieve some of the financial strain on the Library and the staff in future years.

## 8 Performance indicators and targets

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to measure the Library's progress in providing its services and in progressing new developments. They are listed in the Library's annual *Operational Plan*. In the case of the Service Performance Indicators targets are proposed for each of the three years. Development Performance Indicators are liable to change from year to year.

## 9 Research and evaluation

One of the primary duties of the National Library is to support research. Through its Chair in Digital Collections it contributes to research itself, in the field of the creation and use of material in digital form. It also conducts applied research and evaluation to ensure that its main activities are carried out in an informed and well-monitored way. This is done through:

- a continuous programme of reviewing and monitoring specific functions and activities;
- the use of standard project planning methodologies for all major project developments;
- the use of performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, and including user surveys.

## 10 Risk management

The Library maintains a *Risk Register* and keeps it continually up to date. This lists all major risks facing the Library in the performance of its core functions. To each risk is assigned a type, a rating of its impact and probability, and an overall rating, together with a description and a statement of how each risk is being managed.

Regular reports on the *Risk Register* are made to the Library's Audit Committee.