

Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DB/00125/24

Chris Delaney
Development Officer, on behalf of the committee
Federation of Museums and Galleries of Wales

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20 February 2024

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30th January regarding the impact of budget cuts on the museum sector.

On 19 December, we set out our spending plans for 2024-25. The draft Budget was developed amidst the toughest financial situation Wales has faced since the start of devolution. As a result of inflation, the Welsh Government's overall budget is worth £1.3 billion less in real terms than when it was set in 2021. Wales' settlement, which largely comes from the UK Government in the form of a block grant, is not sufficient to respond to the extreme pressures that public services, businesses and people are facing. The grant has not been uplifted by the UK Government to recognise the current economic context.

As a result, we remain in an extremely challenging financial position, but we are continuing to work closely with our cultural institutions to support them assess the options available. I have also agreed with the Plaid Cymru Designated Member that the revenue allocated to delivering the culture strategy in 2024/25 will be re-purposed to mitigate against the impact of job losses at Amgueddfa Cymru and the wider arts sector.

Wales' museums are an integral part of our society. The Welsh Government values the important role they play in our economy and wellbeing and I was very impressed by the diversity of the work our museums are engaged in during the Museums at the Senedd Day last October.

All Ministers have had to make stark and painful choices and we have radically reshaped spending plans to focus funding on the core public services. I appreciate the significant financial pressure local authorities are under and that they are having to make very difficult decisions. The Welsh Government works as the museum development agency for Wales and my officials are working with local museums to explore support and solutions to budget pressures ahead of a challenging year.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

This year, we have made significant investment in programmes to support the development of our museum. For example, we have funded the Group for Education in Museums (GEM) to support museums to respond to the new Curriculum for Wales. We have also funded the bilingual, dementia-friendly resource House of Memories Cymru, the Welsh Museums Festival and delivered £289,000.00 to independent museums in response to rising economic pressures and the need for the sector to continue its recovery post-pandemic through our Cost of Living Grant scheme.

We will be publishing our final Budget on the 27 February. Although we are facing extremely challenging economic times, I will continue to do all I can to support our museums to continue their work for the benefit of the people of Wales as outlined in our Programme for Government commitment to invest in our museums.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Bowden', written in a cursive style.

Dawn Bowden AS/MS

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