

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Thursday 3 July 2014

Culture and Sport

Portfolio

1. My vision for the portfolio is structured around widening interest, enjoyment and participation in culture and sport, and strengthening the foundations of our culture and sport for the future. This vision supports the Government's cross-cutting priorities of tackling poverty, improving health, raising educational attainment and supporting jobs and growth.

Priorities & Progress

Jobs & Growth

2. Research by ECOTEC in 2010 estimated that the historic environment sector contributes approximately £840m to Wales Gross Value Added (GVA), equivalent to 1.9%. The Wales Visitor Survey for 2013 indicates that visiting a castle or historic attraction is by far the most frequently mentioned specific reason for visiting Wales among overseas visitors, featuring in 61% of trips. Cadw has established a strong working relationship with Visit Wales to align strategic priorities and combine tourism efforts. This includes Cadw's key role in a £4m high-profile joint marketing campaign promoting EU-funded Environment for Growth (E4G) projects.
3. Cadw is also managing a Heritage Tourism Project (HTP) to develop heritage tourism in Wales. The project is largely funded by the Welsh Government and from EU Convergence Funds, and aims to maximise the economic value of heritage by increasing the number, length and value of visits to Wales. The project began in 2009 and will run until March 2015 and is worth a total of £19m. It has enabled Cadw to establish strong partnerships with stakeholders and communities, as well as helping develop the offer and product at key sites, to generate extra visitors and revenue for Cadw and the communities which will depend upon its sites for tourism profile and ancillary visitor spend. A research project by Cardiff Business School at six large sites associated with the HTP in 2013 found an average of £6.95m added GVA per site, of which £1.75m GVA was directly attributable to the site – the six sites were: Blaenavon Ironworks, Caernarfon Castle, Caerphilly Castle, Conwy Castle, Harlech Castle and St David's Bishops Palace.
4. The National Park's contribution to our economy was the subject of Arup's report of 2013. Key findings included that the Parks contribute over half a billion pounds

GVA (1.2 % of the Welsh economy); they receive 12 million visitors a year who spend an estimated one billion pounds during their visits.

5. Wales' Coast Path is a tremendous asset. Cardiff Business School survey data from 2013 also showed that between September 2011 and August 2012 there had been 835,000 overnight stays and 1.6 million daytrips by adult visitors to the Path. Overall expenditure impacts of visitor spending were estimated as £32.2m of additional demand to the Welsh Economy. The economic activity resulting from the completion of the Wales Coast Path accounted for approximately 730 'person-years' of employment.
6. Our National Museum's St Fagans site was voted the favourite visitor attraction in the UK by readers of Which? magazine in 2011. Which? also awarded it their coveted Recommended Provider status. The £25m St Fagans redevelopment project is therefore a significant commitment to the development of Wales' tourism industry. Construction is due to commence on the project by autumn 2014 and be completed by 2017. The project will generate an estimated 130 FTE jobs during construction and 49 FTE permanent jobs, directly and indirectly. It will support apprenticeships, training and 1,000 volunteer opportunities once completed. The project will create significant additional income for the Cardiff area and signpost visitors to other heritage attractions across Wales.
7. In addition, the National Library of Wales and Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales have developed important partnerships with other countries including China, USA, Argentina and Japan. A range of activity has taken place or is underway – high profile exhibitions of art from Amgueddfa Cymru's collection touring to four American art galleries; Patagonia 2015 celebrations; exhibitions to and from China; and development of collaborative dialogue with Shanghai Library. These raise the profile of Wales and Welsh culture across the globe bringing economic development opportunities.
8. International activity by our artists and art organisations, both professional and amateur can and does raise Welsh profile on the world stage. Promotion is also supported by the many festivals, across a wide range of genres held annually across Wales. We saw the success of Womex in Cardiff last year. This year sees the celebration of the birth of Dylan Thomas with events both here in Wales and internationally. Next year marks the 150 anniversary of the arrival of the Welsh in Patagonia. Celebrations both here and in Patagonia will involve our art organisations.
9. In terms of skills and employment, Cadw has a number of projects underway supporting traditional building and conservation skills, including apprenticeships and working with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) on a conservation skills project involving short course training for around 140 participants in the financial year 2014-15. The project is based at three sites, one of which is run by Cadw. Cadw is also working with heritage partners to offer apprenticeships and training placements in traditional building skills and tour guide training. This will include a focus on target areas; linked to Communities First clusters and projects helping to deliver my Community Archaeology Framework.

10. Volunteering is important in moving people closer to employment. As well as opportunities at St Fagans, Amgueddfa Cymru is working on involvement in the certified Millennium Volunteering scheme for people under 25 and carrying out accredited outreach programmes, e.g. through the Open College network.
11. Sport Wales has introduced a more structured volunteering system with time-bounded opportunities for training, corporate involvement and, in some cases leading to accreditation. My Department also facilitated joint working between the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) and Communities First to develop an apprenticeship programme for young people living in Community First Cluster Areas who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).
12. Our Public libraries are working closely with partners such as Jobcentre Plus to assist people back into work. Many libraries offer tailored sessions to assist people to search online for jobs, complete their CVs and increasingly important assist access to services such as Universal Jobmatch.
13. The National Library of Wales' European funded 'DigiDO' project is supporting creative and cultural industries in convergence areas to take advantage of the digital expertise of Library staff, and to utilise the digital resources the Library's collections to create new products. It has supported over 80 business to date and given them the tools to be able to compete both locally and globally - accessing specialist advice and knowledge on a range of issues from copyright, licensing and IT, through to digital capture, digital storage and preservation to searching current resources.

Educational Attainment

14. Together with the Minister for Education and Skills, I plan to jointly make a statement about the Welsh Government's proposed *National Plan for Creative Learning* this summer. The Plan will set out the detail of how the Welsh Government, the 4 local authority education consortia, the ACW and other partners will implement the 12 recommendations of Professor Dai Smith's independent report into '*Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales*' (issued Sept 2013). This follows-on from the joint response we issued in March this year.
15. My department has also been working very closely with the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) over the last year on the development of a Physical Literacy Programme for Schools (PLPS). As part of this work, Sport Wales has been tasked by DfES with developing a physical literacy framework. The framework will be tested with schools involved in the new PLPS: Targeted Intervention Support Programme for Schools (TISPS); TISPS's aims to motivate children and young people in deprived communities to engage in sport and physical activity - encouraging a change in attitudes for life. The framework will be considered by Professor Graham Donaldson as part of the current curriculum review in Wales. We expect this work to make a big difference to those schools chosen to take part. It will focus on schools facing the most challenging circumstances; schools involved will be monitored regularly to help ensure the support delivers real improvements.

16. On 19 March I launched the every child a library member project which is taking place in 6 pilot authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Powys, Swansea) with automatic library membership for year 4 pupils (ages 8-9). The aim is to encourage reading for pleasure in children which research shows is fundamental to subsequent life chances and increasing literacy levels.
17. There were 85,435 Lifelong Learning visitors to Cadw sites in 2013-14. Self-led learning visits are free of charge. In addition Cadw's own staff and specialist contractors delivered a range of learning activities on site and in the classroom.
18. Cadw is working with a number of partners including Communities First Clusters across Wales on projects that develop numeracy and literacy, transferable skills and learning through creative and cultural experiences in a historic environment. Some projects include large numbers of participants. Others, such as work with Pupil Referral Units, concentrate on smaller numbers.
19. The Community Archaeology Framework, which I launched in July 2013, aims to make archaeology accessible to all members of society. As such, Cadw's Community Archaeologist has been working in conjunction with special education workers across Rhondda Cynon Taf to help break down barriers to heritage. Through 'Learning Steps', a community education programme for adults with learning difficulties, and with Ysgol Tŷ Coch Special Needs School, Tonteg, Pontypridd, archaeology has been taken to members of the community who have not previously had an opportunity to learn about and experience it. Workshops are designed to introduce archaeological objects through a fun and engaging voyage of discovery in which participants are able to learn new things about the past and demonstrate new and improved social, literacy and numeracy skills.

Tackling Poverty

20. In March I was pleased to receive Baroness Kay Andrews' report on Culture and Poverty. Culture and heritage can help to build people's confidence, raise aspirations and inspire people to engage with learning and contributes to regeneration of our most deprived communities. My Department is working with departments within Welsh Government and with external partners to develop an approach to implementing the recommendations made in the report. We aim to publish in the autumn.
21. Cadw continues to take steps so that historic sites are increasingly accessible and enjoyable to visit - for visitors and for people who live in Wales and specifically targeting family and low income audiences. This includes working with a number of communities and arts organisations to enable heritage sites to be used for local cultural events. Cadw runs more than 200 events each year across Wales, including participative activities, tours, talks, living history and live performances. Cadw is careful to link its events to the interpretation plans at its monuments and to align them to Government learning, inclusion and tourism priorities.

22. ACW has developed a successor to its *Reach the Heights* arts programme – to be known as Momentum. In partnership with Communities First a number of young people at risk of becoming NEET and disengaged will partake in more intensive arts based activity. To date 14 projects across Wales are underway.
23. Welsh Government funding is also supporting the work of the charity Kids in Museums. The charity runs *Taking Over Museums* day in Wales, when children and young people are invited into Welsh museums to take up a variety of roles including front of house, providing guided tours, answering the phone etc. This is part of a wider strategy to build sustainable links between local museums and young people in their communities. In 2013, over 700 children and young people took part across Wales.
24. All public libraries in Wales provide free assisted access to computer hardware, software, the internet and increasingly, Wi-Fi. Public libraries across Wales deliver 1.9m hours of free public Internet use annually. They are also a key partner in assisting Communities 2.0 to deliver their programme of developing people's ICT skills. Increasingly the availability of computers and assistance is required to access Jobcentre Plus services and benefits entitlement.

Health & Wellbeing

25. This last year has seen a significant reorientation in policy, to focus more on people with the most sedentary life-styles, where the health benefits and links with poverty are strongest. Tackling this challenge will be the focus of a Physical Activity Action Plan, due to be published shortly, the result of the work of the Physical Activity Executive Group (PAEG), including the Health Minister Mark Drakeford.
26. We have worked with the Premier League to invest in a programme to deliver high quality curriculum time coaching aimed at improving physical literacy and fundamental movement skills. Overall the programme aims to benefit 9,000 pupils in South Wales from 190 schools per year. This project will bring in over £500,000 of Premier League funding.
27. In the autumn of 2013 I announced the introduction of a Capital Loan Scheme aimed to improve leisure provision throughout Wales. This £5m pilot scheme offers local authorities the opportunity to bid for an interest free capital loan for the development of leisure provision within their areas.
28. The Active Travel (Wales) Act is a key government measure aimed at transforming Wales' approach to travel. For many in Wales, a barrier to achieving the recommended level of physical activity is the time it requires to incorporate this extra activity into a busy life. A real benefit of enabling active travel is that it allows people to make walking or cycling part of their daily lives by substituting these modes of travel for motorised travel. If the facilities are in place, it enables people to be active without significantly changing their lifestyles or routines.

29. Enabling people to walk and cycle more frequently does not just benefit the individual, it benefits wider society. For example, it is estimated that the NHS in Wales spends £1.4m a week (£73m a year) on treating diseases resulting from obesity. A healthier, more active, population would reduce this requirement considerably, allowing for funding to be used to improve services.
30. Walking and cycling more frequently also benefits general wellbeing - physical and mental health. It can also help encourage social inclusion and a help individuals feel part of a local community to a greater extent than if they only drive through their local neighbourhood. Active travel offers a more affordable means of travel increasing access to work and thus helping tackle deprivation. The most sustainable way out of poverty is work.

Legislation

Heritage Bill

31. I shall be introducing the Heritage Bill to the National Assembly next Spring.
32. It will contribute to three principal outcomes:
- more effective protection for listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments;
 - greater transparency and accountability in decisions taken on the historic environment; and
 - improved mechanisms for the sustainable management of the historic environment.
33. It will form part of an integrated body of legislation, policy, advice and guidance that will make important improvements to the existing systems facilitating increased social, economic and environmental benefits to the people of Wales.

Access to land and water

34. During the review of legislation relating to access and outdoor recreation I and my officials met with a number of interested groups with a view to gathering evidence and seeking early views on ways in which we could seek to increase responsible access to the outdoors. As a result of these discussions I will be launching a Green Paper following the Summer recess to seek views on improving public access to land and water.
35. I am keen that we put forward proposals that complement other Welsh Government priorities such as Active Travel, and continue to improve the progress achieved across the Welsh Government in developing Wales as a leader in outdoor recreation provision.
36. I will also be issuing a Green Paper on community growing and improved access to allotments before the summer recess.

National Parks (Governance review)

37. It is also my intention to commission a governance review of the management of designated landscapes in Wales. This will be the vehicle for considering recommendations on this issue made by the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. I indicated the overall approach in debate recently in the Assembly and I will set out the approach in more detail soon.

John Griffiths AM

Minister for Culture & Sport

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