

A Wales where literature  
empowers, improves,  
and brightens lives.

# Literature Wales' Strategic Plan 2022-2027



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## From the Chair & Board of Trustees

Literature has the power to connect us at a time of increasing division and global insecurity. The stories we read, hear, and tell each other can help us to explore the complexities of our lives and make sense of the world. Now more than ever we need this power of literature in our lives.

At Literature Wales we have always strived to be radical in our approach and ambitions. The great Welsh philosopher and critic Raymond Williams said that “to be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing.” We are committed to the far-reaching transformation of our literary culture. Our advocacy for the Welsh language and for the diverse and vibrant culture of Wales are the foundation stones upon which we have built our organisational goals, each one of which aligns with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

As this Strategic Plan shows, we are equipped to embrace the ongoing challenges of the world, and ready to deliver projects that provide for those who've historically been under-represented in our literary culture. As an agile organisation that welcomes change, we will ensure that our strategy evolves alongside the fast-paced sector within which we work, so that we can develop new opportunities for our writers and reflect the needs of our readers and audiences.

We want all our writers to be agents for change. Specifically, we will empower those who have been forgotten in the past to write their own futures; working with us to develop and deliver a literary culture which reflects the lives and experiences of our diverse and multilingual nation. For children and young people literature is a playground for the imagination. Their concerns can be expressed through literature, and we want them to shape it so that their voices speak to present and future generations.

Literature is a key driver in our economy. Writers, who contribute to a broad range of creative industries, including film, gaming, theatre, and publishing, will be crucial to Wales's economic vitality. We know that the work we do – in partnership with people, communities and like-minded organisations and allies – helps to make Wales and the world a better place. Consequently, we also want literature to play a more prominent role in our everyday lives, guiding us to improve our well-being and achieve a fairer and greener future.

This strategy sets out the structure and methods we will use to achieve these ambitions, as well as the partnerships we will be developing to ensure the sustainability and legacy of our work. Gathering the right information and evidence is vital to develop projects that will broaden participation in and access to literature. We have also developed robust systems for measuring the impact of our work and communicating it effectively. This allows us to better understand the ways literature can enhance and transform lives, and advocate for its use across many sectors and policy areas, including health and well-being, education, tourism, and local regeneration. We all have stories to tell, as well as the basic human need to listen and learn from each other. Literature can help us to be open-minded, more empathetic and resilient. Through literature we can travel the world in our imaginations without leaving our homes, and the creative acts of reading and writing bring light in dark days, making hope possible for each and every one of us.

Dr Cathryn Charnell-White, Chair

## Executive Summary

Our vision is a Wales where literature empowers, improves, and brightens lives.

In this new Strategic Plan 2022-2027, we set out our ambitions for a Wales where literature represents our diverse voices, supports our well-being, and raises awareness of the climate emergency.

All our activity will be informed by research, allowing us to reach the people who need us most with projects that truly meet their needs. Our evaluation will support a culture of continuous improvement in our sector and help us to target our own support ever more effectively.

We have identified **three priorities** to focus on and invest in, which aim to create change in society through literature:

- **Representation and Equality** – Shape a sector that supports equal access for all by addressing historical and structural inequalities and platforming diverse voices
- **Health and Well-being** – Support the well-being of individuals and communities, using the healing potential of literature to enhance services
- **Climate Emergency** – Use creativity to educate, explore and challenge, increasing knowledge of the climate emergency and inspiring lasting change

We will deliver these priorities through our **three strands of activity**, which is how we create a vibrant literary society:

- **Participation** – Enable more people in Wales to discover the joys of actively participating in literature, inspiring communities and increasing access to our work
- **Writer Development** – Develop and support a skilled and visionary workforce in the literature sector, by providing opportunities, increasing potential, and championing fair employment practices
- **Wales' Literary Culture** – Celebrate the diverse range of contemporary writers and the literary heritage of Wales with the world by creating a platform for a literature which is more relevant and accessible to a wider audience.

Our advocacy for the Welsh language and for the diverse and vibrant culture of Wales are the foundation stones upon which we have built these goals, each one of which aligns with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

We recognise that as Wales' national literature company, we have a responsibility to demonstrate the highest standards of operational governance, and to demonstrate our values in all the work we deliver and support.

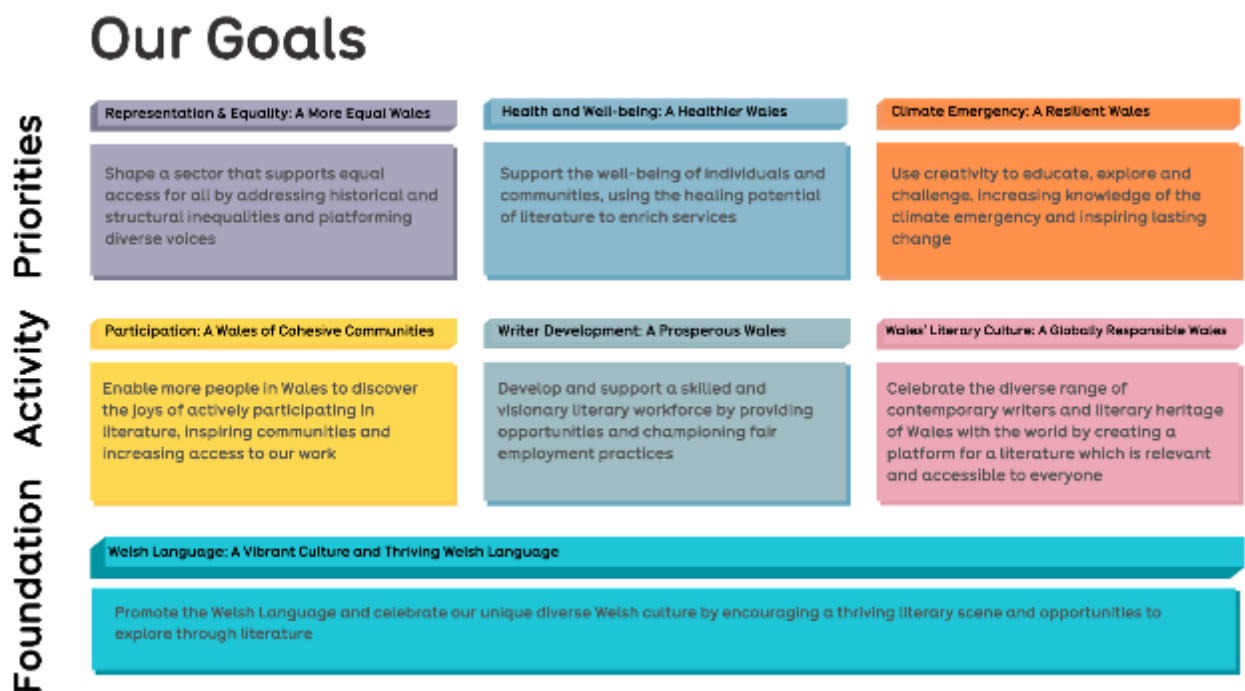
# Our Strategy

The change we seek to deliver

Our projects are designed to make a difference. Through literature, we help to shape and improve our society, economy, and culture. We do this because literature, in its great variety, has the power to connect communities and bring comfort, inspiration and hope to those who need it most.

Our vision is a Wales where literature empowers, improves, and brightens lives.

Based on our understanding of the power of literature to transform and improve lives, we have chosen goals that reflect our ambition and aspirations for Wales. They align with the Seven Well-being Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure that **everything** we do helps to achieve one or more of these goals.



## Turning insight into action

Insight into our audiences, our programmes and our success will drive a constant cycle of continuous learning for every project we deliver, as our interpretation of data informs our strategic plan.

Project insight cycle:



We will measure our progress through a robust **Impact Plan** which provides a framework to monitor, evaluate and communicate our work.

Each project that we deliver will have **Goal Indicators** which allow us to identify and communicate the strategic impact of our work at a detailed level. We will collect, analyse, and report on this data four times a year through our **Impact Reports**.

Click here to see our [Impact Plan](#).

## Assessing Need

### How do we know what we know?

Since its inception, Literature Wales has worked hard to represent the needs of Wales. With the support of the Arts Council of Wales' Resilience Programme, we have transformed our internal processes and have looked at home and abroad to create a programme of support for the sector that provides for the people of Wales and is admired across the world.

We have consistently collected data and engaged in research initiatives. Research is key to understanding the best ways for us to support a Wales where literature empowers, improves, and brightens lives. It clarifies where our money should be spent, and where our expertise should be shared, to have the most impact.

We commissioned our first **State of the Nation** research project in 2021 which has given us a better understanding of the country's relationship with writing and reading. For example, findings told us that 68% of Wales' population had read a book in the past year, with paperback fiction (particularly in the crime and thriller genres) being the most popular choices. We also found that keeping a diary is the most popular form of creative writing, with 18% of Wales' population keeping a diary (and 53% of those that do writing in it once a week or more). Subject to funding, we intend to commission a similar piece of research biannually. This regularity will ensure we map a contemporary and true landscape of Wales' literary habits as well as persistent barriers under-represented individuals and communities face.

We've also undertaken research with Aberystwyth University during summer 2022 to understand fair fees for literary work, allowing us to support writers and ensure they are paid properly. The guidelines based on this piece of research will be collated and published in Summer 2023.

Through our annual Stakeholder Survey and our project-specific consultation processes we're in regular contact with the communities we seek to work with. This ensures that co-creation is at the root of our activity. We will continue to value stakeholder input and identify trends in opinion across Wales so that our offer remains relevant, exciting, and valuable to our participants and audiences.

Over the next three years, we will continue using research to refine our activity, making sure it is the best fit for audiences, writers, and readers. We will align our offer with the needs of the nation.

Namely, we intend to work in partnership with a university to deliver in-depth research into the impact of literature on individual and community health and well-being.

This research will not just benefit us. When it will be useful to do so, we will share our findings widely and support the whole sector to introduce change where needed. We have

a responsibility to identify gaps where we, as a sector, could prioritise support. By providing meaningful and insightful data, and blueprints for how to reach new audiences and roll out new ways of working, we will facilitate change.

## Our Commitment to the Welsh Language

The Welsh language belongs to each of us, whenever and however we become acquainted with it. Anyone involved with Literature Wales will benefit from the Welsh language, whether they are fluent, use a handful of words or expressions, or are completely new to the language and curious to know more. In partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh we will be offering intense Welsh-language learning opportunities for our writers and facilitators, and our staff members will be encouraged and facilitated to become more fluent and confident Welsh-language speakers.

Like every modern and creative language, the Welsh language changes and adapts as new generations embrace it. Over the years, a variety of accents and dialects have enriched our literature: from Dewi Emrys to Megan Angharad Hunter, from Y Wenhyseg to Wenglish, Welsh-language words and phrases are music to our ears and feed our imaginations. We will celebrate our unique literature traditions, whilst also making them relevant and exciting for new generations, for example by running intense *cynghanedd* development programmes for emerging poets, and bringing under-represented Welsh-language writers together to form collectives, networks and to tour productions to inspire others. Children and young people will be one of the most important groups in our work in promoting a contemporary literature scene through the Welsh language. Literary ambassadors – from characters in new books for children, to Bardd Plant Cymru, to local laureates – will act as role models, promoting the relevance of the language to children from all backgrounds in all parts of Wales.

The Welsh language isn't an isolated element of our work. Rather it is the foundation for all our activity and key priorities; it underpins our values. Building on this strong foundation we will work towards achieving our goals (p. 5), and strive for a more equal, resilient and healthier Wales. A truly central part of our mission is to work towards a Wales where the Welsh language thrives, and literature **represents our diverse voices**. For this to become a reality, we will work with partners to identify and platform Welsh language speakers within under-represented groups in our literature. We will recognise the Welsh language as a fundamental part of the world's linguistic ecology and as a minority language, placing it central to our work in inspiring individuals to act against **climate justice**. And we will use the language to support the **well-being** of individuals and communities, ensuring projects and facilitators are available for those needing support and comfort through their mother tongue.

Our [Welsh Language Development Plan](#), commended by the Office of the Welsh Language Commissioner, is an important resource which shows our commitment to the language. It goes way beyond our statutory responsibilities, and considers our duty – but also great privilege – to promote the Welsh language in the face of the disappointing 2021



National Census results showing that only 17.8% of people in Wales were able to speak Welsh. It identifies areas we can improve, as well as good practice that we can share with others, which we do regularly through discussions about the Welsh language and its culture within our sector and within the public sphere. Language and landscape are closely intertwined, and in a similar vein, the Welsh language is a thread running through Literature Wales' vision of a Wales where literature empowers, improves, and brightens lives.

## Literature Wales and the World

Literature Wales is an outward-facing organisation, and we want to celebrate the literature, culture, and languages of Wales with the world. We also want to share good practice and learn from other organisations who share our values and who are delivering groundbreaking work in literature development. However, our focus on climate justice and our Environmental Policy supports more creative ways of ensuring Wales reaches the world, without the need to increase our carbon footprint in travelling far, and especially by not using air travel for our work.

Whilst some of our other colleagues in the arts tour large-scale music, theatre or dance productions across the world, our artform lends itself well to reaching all corners of the globe without the need to travel. For example, our aim is to raise the profile of Welsh writing and writers by ensuring robust development pathways and programmes for writers to reach the top, and working to support partners such as Wales Literature Exchange to ensure that the diverse writers of Wales receive support to translate their books into several languages. Also, the recent increase in the use of digital platforms such as Zoom makes it easier for our writers to perform and take part in global events from the comfort of their own homes. When assisting event organisers to feature writers of Wales, we will encourage the platforming of Welsh-language artists, those who have previously been under-represented in the representation of Welsh literature across the world, and those who share our beliefs in climate justice and the power of literature to improve and brighten lives.

We will also continue to work closely with Hay Festival to support their International Fellowship programme, advocating for ambassadors who represent our common values to take part in Hay Festival editions around the world to increase Wales' artistic profile internationally. For 2022-23, our National Poet Hanan Issa was awarded the Hay Festival fellowship, representing Wales but also the aims of the National Poet project in Mexico, Spain, Peru and Colombia.

Another ambassador for Wales and its literatures is our Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre. Guests from all corners of the world visit the centre annually, and as well as enjoying writing workshops, spending time at Tŷ Newydd offers people an introduction to the Welsh language and our unique traditions and culture. Beyond our open course programme, the centre is also often a base to welcome international writers who visit through some of our partners' projects, for example the British Council will bring a group of young Zimbabwean and Welsh female writers together to the centre in the spring of 2023. From

2023-24, we will be working more closely with our partners in the sector to encourage partnership work at Tŷ Newydd between Welsh and international writers to work on collaborations, and to share good practice. We will also work to strengthen our relationship with our sister organisations in Scotland, Northern Ireland, England, and Ireland – facilitating exchanges, sharing research, and aiming to champion each other's diverse literature and writers across the world.

Our Laureates will continue to be central to our international work. In 2023-24, National Poet Hanan Issa will explore how to share the ancient Welsh craft of the *cynghanedd* with both non-Welsh speaking communities in Wales, but also (virtually) with poets across the world who are experts in different and unique forms of performance poetry. Our current Bardd Plant Cymru continues to develop a close relationship with the Laureate na nÓg, the Irish children's poet laureate who writes in Gaelic. And in 2025-26, both our Children's Laureate and Bardd Plant Cymru will lead a national project exploring links between English, Welsh and other languages spoken by young people in Wales – exploring Wales' place in the world, and the wonderful influences of the world on Wales.

# Our Priorities

## Representation and Equality

### **Representation & Equality: A More Equal Wales**

**Shape a sector that supports equal access for all by addressing historical and structural inequalities and platforming diverse voices.**

Our main goal is to better represent the diversity of Wales in its literature. We will continue to focus our work for people who are under-represented and who have experienced historical and structural inequalities, racism, ableism, and discrimination.

For these individuals and communities, we will further increase the number of opportunities available to develop creatively and professionally, and seek out emerging literary talents to be supported and platformed. Wherever possible, we will work closely with people who have lived experience of under-representation and inequality to co-create opportunities and activity.

### **What will we do?**

We will support opportunity:

Working in partnership with grassroots organisations, communities, activists, and charities, we will develop and deliver projects that have measurable positive impacts. We will also offer our support and backing to those who are leading the way on pioneering initiatives for under-represented groups.

We will research:

We will focus on better evidence-gathering to identify where the biggest barriers remain to engagement in creative writing and other literary activities, and where we can champion individuals and organisations striving to bring about change.

We will nurture an inclusive literary ecosystem:

Achieving a better ecosystem of under-represented voices inspiring others is a long-term goal and we're committed to driving systemic change. People who currently don't see themselves in the literature they read and hear should be able to see writers with similar lived experiences in published books, in performed work, as community champions, as workshops leaders, creative writing tutors, and laureates.

## Health and Well-being

### Health and Well-being: A Healthier Wales

Support the well-being of individuals and communities, using the healing potential of literature to enrich services

The COVID-19 pandemic has suddenly and profoundly affected the ways people are able to engage with one another. Whilst lockdown measures have disappeared, society has changed – with more staff working from home, and some previous social spaces and events still not recovered nor returned. These changes intensified already high levels of social isolation and loneliness for many in the UK. Increased loneliness in turn impacts on mental health and well-being, leading to extra pressure on the health sector and on the economy. The challenges of the increased cost of living have also impacted heavily on society.

Taking part in creative writing and reading has been clinically proven to be beneficial to our well-being, both physical and mental. Literature is a powerful economic tool which can be used to positively address some social issues and can contribute to improving the lives of people in Wales.

### What will we do?

We will work towards a healthier Wales:

By upskilling more facilitators with under-represented lived experiences, we will facilitate and deliver participation projects across a wide range of communities, schools, and healthcare services, to help create a healthier Wales and use the power of literature to address health and well-being issues including anxiety, depression, loneliness, and isolation.

We will measure the impact of literature:

We will set measurable outcomes for our projects to increase the skills, confidence, and abilities of participants to actively take part in their community, gain employment or perhaps to achieve better learning outcomes in school.

We will forge successful partnerships and create infrastructure:

We will expand and build on our partnerships in the health and conservation sectors, including local health boards, the National Trust, and WWF Cymru, to ensure that our projects have a lasting impact. Together with the wider arts sector, we will explore ways to embed literature within social prescribing programmes as preventative, curative and palliative treatments, and work to upscale successful pilot projects to the whole of Wales.

# Climate Emergency

## Climate Emergency: A Resilient Wales

Use creativity to educate, explore and challenge, increasing knowledge of the climate emergency and inspiring lasting change

Wales' literature is deeply embedded in the landscape. From the hustle of Tiger Bay to the highest peaks of Eryri, our land is more than a background setting, it's a character. Poets have been composing whilst working the land for centuries, and our place names are intertwined with old legends and tales.

Literature Wales acknowledges and recognises the climate and nature emergency and its devastating impact on our world and the lives of people, with the poorest hardest hit. We understand that our impact on the environment is not restricted to Wales and there can be no climate justice if we do not act on the fact that the climate and nature emergency does not impact the world in a fair and equal way, with those people and nations that have contributed least to the climate emergency often being affected. We want to act where we can, to mitigate further escalation of the crisis and raise awareness through our work. We cannot align our work with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 without recognising the destruction of our environment and climate emergency in everything we do. We will work with partners and our audiences to aim towards a greener, fairer, and more prosperous Wales.

### What will we do?

We will amplify calls for change:

We will support the growing network of laureates in Wales and other inspirational literary figures to use their voices to call for change. We will work with partners including Natural Resources Wales, the World Wildlife Foundation, and the Future Generations Commissioner to create high impact, national programmes.

We will practice what we preach:

Our Sustainability Action Plan outlines strict operational measures to limit our carbon footprint and details how some of our creative projects can address the climate crisis thematically. Whilst being mindful of digital poverty and those less fluent in technology, we will reduce the carbon footprint of literary events by running virtual or hybrid events. We will ensure that more of our participation projects focus on the climate emergency, putting climate justice at the forefront of our offer to the public.

We will encourage localism:

Renewed focus will be placed on working locally and we will assist the development of resilient communities by supporting local literature events and meaningful literature for health and well-being projects. Through piloting new and innovative community projects, we will contribute to finding solutions which demonstrate that returning to normality post COVID-19 does not mean returning to the way things were before the pandemic.

## Strands of activity

Our work is structured around: Participation, Writer Development, Wales' Literary Culture. Through these tried and trusted areas of work, we will inspire societal change whilst creating a vibrant literary society.

### Participation

#### **Participation: A Wales of Cohesive Communities**

**Enable more people in Wales to discover the joys of actively participating in literature, inspiring communities and increasing access to our work**

Taking part in literature can be many things, from reading or listening to stories, writing creatively, contributing to workshops, or enjoying visits by authors in schools, communities, and festivals. It's integral to the culture of Wales, and before the COVID-19 pandemic there were over 150 local literature groups in Wales hosting workshops and events in their communities right across the nation.

We believe that everyone has the right to take part in and enjoy literature in all its forms, and we will work to ensure better access across the country. In doing so, we will look to widen engagement in literature, aware that discrimination and socio-economic disadvantage can be barriers to participation that we must work hard to overcome. As such, we will work with individuals and communities to shape and inform their own literature experiences.

#### Financial support:

Our Inspiring Communities Fund will offer financial contributions towards literature events, focusing on supporting activity which is either new or aimed at under-represented writers and audiences. The fund will grow from £15,000 in 2022-23 to £35,000 in 2026-27. We will update our application forms and guidance to encourage organisers to work across our three priorities and to embed our values in their planning to ensure events that are representative and diverse, accessible, sustainable, respectful of the Welsh language, and that the events promote the benefits of literature for health and well-being through their themes, or by bringing a community together to experience the joy of literature. Training and resources will be provided for organisers on running high quality events, and communication campaigns will run to address gaps in communities across Wales who are not using the fund, leading to targeted conversations and target funding to at least 50 community event organisers before the end of March 2027.

Partnership working:

We will make it easier for people to take part in literature activities by working with partners, often outside the arts sector, to support and develop grassroots projects in communities and schools, focusing on groups who will benefit most from the interventions.

Creating a community of skilled facilitators:

We will invest further in training opportunities for writers to equip them with the necessary skills to work with groups and individuals, including with people who have complex and challenging needs. From care homes to prisons, schools to cafés, and community halls to shopping centres, we will support the practices of writing poetry, capturing memories, creating comics, telling stories digitally, or sharing life experiences in a creative way, facilitated by skilled writers with relevant experiences.

#### **Example: Health and Well-being delivered through Participation**

The Inspiring Communities Fund will focus on supporting literature events which are beneficial to the health and well-being of individuals and communities, particularly those experiencing loneliness and isolation. We will prioritise projects that look to increase participation from underrepresented communities.

We will provide opportunities for people to articulate and express their emotions through words and to connect with each other through the sharing of stories and ideas, such as our Lit in Place project that uses literature as a conduit for intergenerational and hyper-local conversations about the climate emergency.



## Writer Development

### Writer Development: A Prosperous Wales

Develop and support a skilled and visionary literary workforce by providing opportunities and championing fair employment practices

We all have a story to tell. An individual's journey with literature can start from a very young age, from wrapping up warmly in the words of bedtime stories to creating a picture book in class with a teacher or a visiting writer. Others will find their love of literature later in life, attending a virtual writing course or a local library group and progressing to publish a book which might go on to be shortlisted for a major award. Together with a range of partners and funders, we will ensure that stepping-stones of opportunities are available for all who want to write, to express themselves, and to progress.

#### How will we deliver?

Creating and signposting opportunities:

Ensuring that writers of all ages, backgrounds, locations, and abilities have opportunities to improve their skills and develop their own literary ambitions. We will make sure that we support writers for the long-term and guide them towards the next steps in their progression.

Mentoring early career writers:

By offering shadowing and mentoring opportunities and courses we'll enable early career writers to hone their craft and learn from more experienced writers. We'll also encourage and facilitate peer-to-peer support and networks.

Industry advice:

For those ready to share their work, we'll provide information and guidance on how to navigate the literature sector. We'll offer support on how to find pathways to publication, access literary networks, events and public performances, gain recognition through competitions, professional development and more.

Mentor and manuscript feedback services:

Working with experienced writers and editors, we will offer emerging writers a paid service to receive feedback on their manuscripts in progress and/or bespoke advice on writing careers. Bursaries and/or subsidised sessions will be made available for writers on low income. This service will better prepare writers for submitting work for publication and/or taking the next step in their professional careers as writers.

Celebrating talent:

Wales' writers are ambassadors, taking tales from Wales to the world. We will celebrate our best writers and platform their writing talents at home and beyond.

#### Example: Improving Representation and Equality through writer development

Our flagship *Representing Wales* programme will continue to evolve and reach new audiences. We will continue to invest in a cohort of under-represented writers and provide a bespoke development programme based on the cohort's needs and interests – they will guide the content. In addition to co-creating with the writers, we will consult with partner organisations and other writers to ensure the programme covers a range of both creative writing and professional development support. This will create a pipeline of unique, diverse Welsh talent to represent our literature scene at home and internationally. Our involvement with the writers will not conclude at the end of the year-long project. Through a structured year-long after-care programme we will continue to offer bespoke development opportunities and following this we will continue to offer support to our *Representing Wales* writers for years to come and champion them as ambassadors for Literature Wales, as well as literature from Wales.

## Wales' Literary Culture

### Wales' Literary Culture: A Globally Responsible Wales

Celebrate the diverse range of contemporary writers and literary heritage of Wales with the world by creating a platform for a literature which is relevant and accessible to everyone.

Wales' literary culture is a huge economic and social asset, and one that allows us to take Wales to the world. We champion the writers of Wales to audiences at home and abroad, celebrate our rich cultural heritage and pave the way for the voices of the future. The work we deliver through Participation and Writer Development will contribute towards the growth of our literary culture.

### How will we deliver?

Providing platforms:

We will actively seek opportunities to platform Wales' literary talents, so they can act as ambassadors for Wales' literature, its cultures, and for the Welsh language. These include

our flagship Laureate roles (Bardd Plant Cymru, Children’s Laureate Wales and National Poet of Wales), and extending the impact of our Wales Book of the Year Awards.

Showcasing Wales to the world:

As well as supporting more of Wales’ communities to engage in the literary culture on their doorstep, we believe our literature deserves to be celebrated internationally. We will continue to celebrate the rich literary heritage of Wales, while looking to the future to a culture that represents the diversity of all its people.

Promoting a diverse literary sector:

Our work on increasing the diversity and representation of voices is bringing to the fore stories from different perspectives, communities, and backgrounds. From the memories of the Windrush generation in Newport, to a family’s struggle in emigrating from China to rural Powys – our identity as a country in all its incarnations and languages will increasingly be represented and celebrated through the literature we promote.

#### **Example: Plethu/Weave**

In 2020-2022 Literature Wales worked in partnership with National Dance Company Wales where 42 writers and dancers were paired to weave their craft together in original short films. A true collaboration, each film reflects the experiences, fears, and hopes of the diverse artists, and offers viewers a glimpse into our world at that moment in time. Some artists also created video resources or workshops to explore bringing movement and words together and encourage others at home to be creative, and support their well-being during COVID. Through this high-profile project, which Welsh Government championed, these artists were platformed widely, and have since been commissioned for other ambitious creative projects.

## People and Communities

We work with individuals and communities across the length and breadth of Wales. Some will use and benefit from our programmes and services. Some enjoy the creative content we facilitate and celebrate. Others support or fund us, enabling us to devise and deliver our activity.

The main groups we work with are:

- Writers
- Creative readers, audiences and participants
- Children and young people
- Communities and grassroots groups
- Influencers and partners

### Priority audiences

From a child to a climate activist, poet to government minister, we believe that everyone could benefit from engaging with literature in some way. However, to focus our work where it will have the most impact, we need to prioritise some individuals and communities. In Wales there are still significant differences in equality of opportunity to access and participate in culture and literature. To aim for equality and better representation within Wales' literary communities and culture, we will prioritise working with:

- Black, Asian and minority ethnic people
- people who identify as disabled or who have a long-term health condition
- individuals from low-income backgrounds

Our Audience Development Plan offers further details about the people and communities we work with, and explains how we hope to improve our relationship with current audiences, and reach those who are new to us.

# Sector Leadership

## Values

Literature Wales is a 'values-led' organisation – but what does that mean in practice? In [Our Pledge](#) we set out actions we take to work in line with our values. This includes everything from paying fair fees to freelancers to reducing our carbon emissions. We expect all our partners and stakeholders, creative participants, and audiences to respect them. These values will help develop a Wales where literature empowers, improves, and brightens lives, and will play a vital role in achieving our goals. Our full [Pledge](#) can be read online, and gives clear actions in the following areas:

### 1) Fair Work for Freelancers:

Literature Wales relies on freelancers to deliver our vision effectively. We care about treating this vital workforce fairly and ethically and are improving our practices every year. All freelancers (creative or otherwise) can expect opportunity, security, enjoyment, respect, and a voice in what we do.

### 2) Fair work for contracted staff:

We care about the health and well-being of our team and recognise the importance of sustaining a healthy, supportive, and inclusive culture, that is also reflective of the true nature of Wales' rich and diverse communities. Our approach to human resources is based on transparency, consultation, accountability, and learning. We will continue to develop, expand, and professionalise our approach in consultation with the team to support a sustainable working practice and business model. Fair Work is work that offers employees opportunity, security, enjoyment, respect, and a voice, whilst also managing and balancing the organisation's rights and responsibilities with those of its workers, to generate benefits for wider society.

### 3) Sustainability:

Literature Wales acknowledges and recognises the climate emergency and its devastating impact on our world and the lives of people, with the poorest hardest hit. We will act where we can, to mitigate further escalation of the crisis and raise awareness through our work. We cannot align our work with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 without recognising the destruction of our environment and climate emergency in everything we do. We will work with partners and our audiences to aim towards a greener, fairer, and more prosperous Wales.

### 4) Ethical Fundraising and Partnerships

We aim to be transparent about where our money comes from and how it is spent. Whilst our Ethical Fundraising policy contains several absolute no-gos (such as taking funding from people or organisations involved in the fossil fuel business, or on behalf of political parties), many potential funding sources lie in ethically grey areas. We have developed a

rigorous internal system for weighing up the potential benefits or adverse effects of funds, which is overseen by our Board of Trustees.

A lot of Literature Wales' work is delivered in partnership with other charities and businesses. Often our partners help us reach a particular community or are the experts in their field. It's important to us that our partners share our values and vision. That's why we have a rigorous process to develop partnerships, including a conversation at the outset about our values and delivery principles, which are then built into partnership agreement documents.

#### 5) Inclusion

We aim to establish a welcoming approach to bringing a diverse range of people together within the arts and literature sector – whether as writers, audiences, literature professionals, producers, staff, readers or participants – regardless of their background. We know that the sector still presents a range of barriers which prevent access to literature. Our <Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan> sets out the detailed actions we will take to ensure Literature Wales is as inclusive as possible. In 2023, this includes actions like providing access riders to all practitioners we contract, taking action to be anti-racist and targeted investment in under-represented communities.

#### 6) Communications

Literature Wales aims to ensure that all its communications are useful and relevant to its audiences, and that they can engage with it in the manner which best suits them. We endeavour to achieve **clear**, **concise**, and **correct** communications in all instances, whilst ensuring that the tone and content is appropriate for the intended audience.

#### 7) Transparency

Literature Wales recognises the need for transparency. We want to be accountable to our funders, stakeholders, and the general public. We will ensure relevant information is available to the public and we respond to reasonable requests for additional information in an appropriate manner.

## Our Legacy

As a national company for literature, we have a uniquely strategic overview with an emphasis on developing and supporting the sector, rather than simply delivering projects and programming events.

Wales has many literature and publishing organisations of all sizes and specialisms – from publishers to festivals to grassroots initiatives - and we are proud to be working within this vibrant sector. However, we acknowledge our duty as one of the Arts Council of Wales' eight designated national companies and our responsibilities to others in the sector in offering leadership and support where needed and sharing the learning we gather through consultation with Wales' writers and literary audiences.

We will use our resources to test ideas, structures and projects and scale these up to benefit more people than we could reach on our own. 2023-2027 will see us actively identifying ways to hand over ownership to writers, communities, and other organisations to create a Wales where literature represents our diverse voices, supports our well-being, and raises awareness of the climate emergency.

## Operational Priorities: Ensuring Resilience

Being able to deliver our Strategic Plan depends on our ability for dynamic, targeted, and effective operations.

During 2019-2022 our systems were overhauled, including the implementation of a new project planning and impact framework, new budget management processes and continual development of the risk register. We will continuously develop these following team feedback and training.

These measures have significantly improved the efficiency and efficacy of our work; however, continual development is needed to ensure Literature Wales remains stable in a constantly evolving world. We have identified nine areas of focus for 2022-2027:

Impact and Advocacy:

**We need to better communicate the impact of our activity.** Every statistic should have a story, and every story have a statistic, to make sure we can champion, communicate and evidence the benefits of accessing literature to everyone.

Understanding Need:

**We need to understand the barriers which prevent people from reading or taking part in literature events and activity.** We believe literature matters and we want everyone to be able to engage. For the next few years, we will focus on key under-represented groups and work hard to understand their lived experiences. We will use that research to influence our programmes and advocate for change.

Partnership and Legacy:

**We need to share the blueprints.** Literature Wales does not own literature in Wales. But we have a duty to lead the way and share what we've discovered and learned, for the benefit of the sector.

Human Resources:

**We need to nurture an inclusive, resilient and skilled team.** We will achieve this by ensuring our team has true diversity of skills and lived experience, and we'll prioritise looking after their mental health and well-being.

Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre – Operations:

**We need to future-proof Tŷ Newydd.** We can do this through upgrading the facilities and by building our capacity to ensure its creative and commercial offerings can include and appeal to more people, and place it at the heart of Wales' Literary Culture.

Climate Emergency:

**We need to make, and inspire, radical change.** We will consider the environmental impacts of all our operations; from the simple (e.g., commuting, printing) to the complex (e.g., supporting mental health and advocacy) to be as sustainable as possible.

Sector Consultation and Facilitation:

**We need to make sure voices from the sector are understood by our team and amplified to the nation.** We are the organisation for writers and readers across Wales and need to ensure that we, and all involved with literature in Wales, actively listen and respond to our writers, readers and creative audiences.

Building Capacity:

**We need to make sure we are ready for the future.** We will invest in our capacity to fundraise, research, and innovate digitally so that we better understand the sector and are ready for whatever the future brings.

Fundraising:

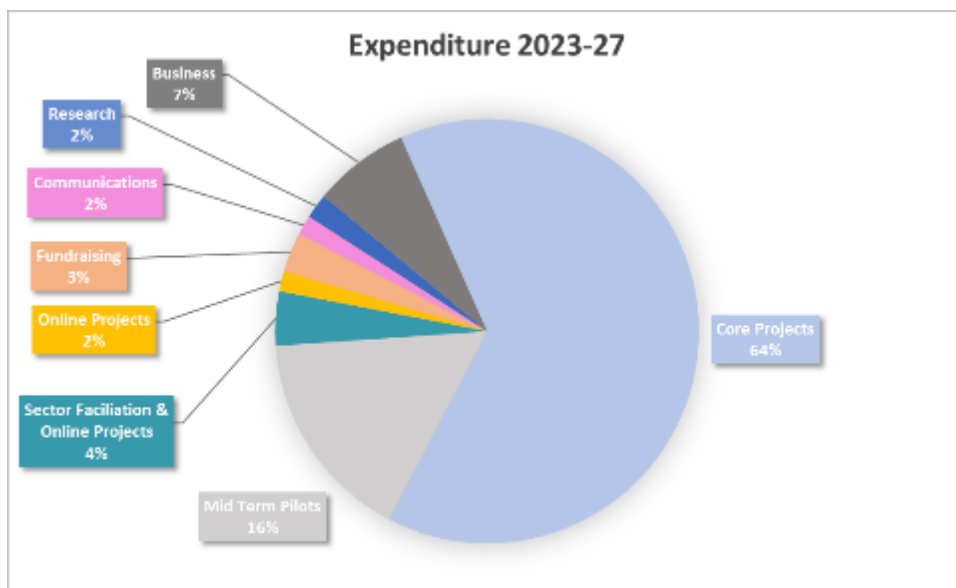
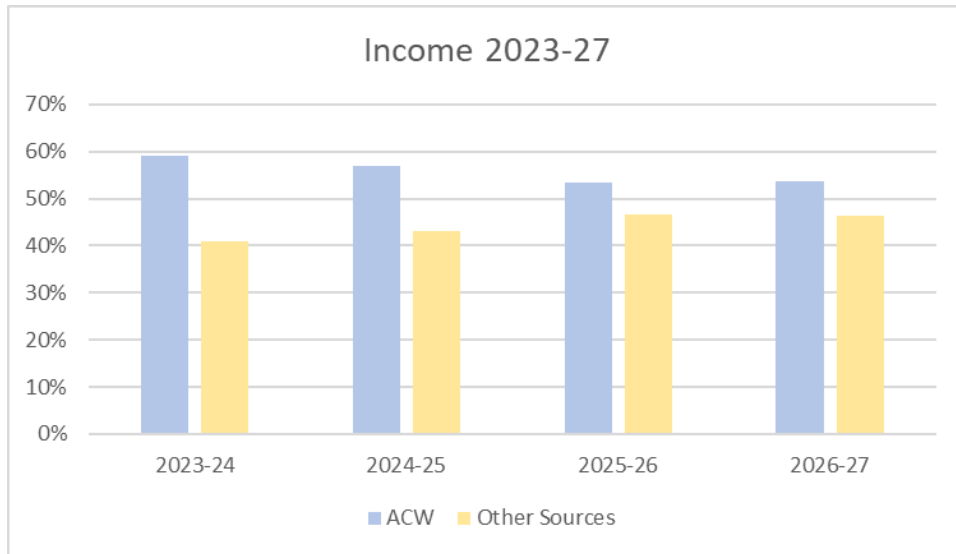
**We need to diversify our income streams** to reduce reliance on just one form of funding. We can do this by building our capability to raise unrestricted funds from various sources.



## Money

Literature Wales raises money from many sources, in order to deliver our work. As a charity, and recipient of public funds, we want to be transparent about where our money comes from, and how the money is spent.

Our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan relies on the following financial model (forecasted August 2021):



## **Directors**

Cathryn Charnell-White (Chair)  
Craig Austin  
Casi Dylan  
Jacob Dafydd Ellis  
Annie Finlayson  
Rachel Harries  
John O'Shea  
Delyth Roberts  
Owain Taylor-Shaw  
Christina Thatcher

## **Executive Director**

Claire Furlong

## **Artistic Director**

Leusa Llewelyn

## **Our Staff**

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## **With thanks to:**

### **Our Funders**

Arts Council of Wales  
Welsh Government  
The National Lottery

### **Our Critical Friends**

Sara Beer  
Kittie Belltree  
Darren Chetty  
Sadia Pineda Hameed  
Mererid Hopwood  
Matthew Jarvis  
Deborah Llewelyn  
Farrah Serroukh  
Kayley Sydenham  
Marvin Thompson  
lestyn Tyne  
Huw L Williams

### **And**

Rhys Iorwerth  
Gerri Moriarty  
Eluned Parrott

