



Drawing on Nature, Confluence, The Lab Haverfordwest

Arts Council of Wales

Sustainable Development Policy Statement

October 2019



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales



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What is Sustainable Development?

Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The main features of sustainable development are:

- it respects and cares for all kinds of life forms.
- it improves the quality of the human life.
- it minimises the depletion of natural resources

Scope

This policy statement sets out how the Arts Council of Wales implements its vision of developing and sustaining a creative Wales, where the arts are central to the life and well-being of the nation, in compliance with the Wellbeing Future Generations (2015) Act.

Background

In April 2015, The Welsh Government passed into law the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. The legislation aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, and strengthen governance arrangements within the public sector. Public bodies need to make sure that, when making their decisions, they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales (and indeed the rest of the world), both now and for future generations.

The legislation places a statutory duty upon public bodies in Wales - of which the Arts Council of Wales is one - to adopt sustainable development as the central organising principle upon which all other organisational decisions are made. We must provide evidence on how this is being implemented in practice to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.

To make sure that relevant public bodies are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven Well-being Goals. One of these Goals specifically refers to arts and culture – “a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language”.

The 7 key goals to improve the well-being of Wales:

1. A Prosperous Wales
2. A Resilient Wales
3. A Healthier Wales
4. A More equal Wales
5. A Wales of Cohesive communities
6. A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh language
7. A Globally responsible Wales

The Act also outlines 5 ways that public bodies need to think about to show that they have applied the sustainable development principle that will allow us work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing. These are

1. **Long term** – looking ahead to anticipate the outcome and the impact of actions for future generations.
2. **Prevention** – looking to do less harm and preventing problems
3. **Integrations** – finding better ways to integrate services and developments to maximise their impact whilst ensuring that arts' impact is integrated across the 7 goals
4. **Collaboration** – working together to maximise resources and achieve more.
5. **Involvement** – involving those that are the recipients of actions in their design, making sure that diverse voices are heard and listened to.

The positive role that the arts can play in the cultural, social and economic life of the nation sits comfortably with the well-being goals. There is virtually no aspect of public policy that need be untouched by arts and creativity. From community engagement to international relations; arts and health to cultural tourism; public art to town centre re-generation – the arts offer meaning, authenticity and enjoyment. The Arts create and sustain jobs, enrich education services, bring people together, improve our quality of life. A thriving arts sector committed to excellence and innovation that contributes to the cultural, social, economic and environmental well-being of Wales

There are too many barriers that prevent people accessing the arts, whether cultural, social or economic. Breaking down these barriers and bringing the arts to the people is one of our defining priorities, to facilitate access for everyone, whether practitioner, participant or audience member.

A resilient organisation is one that's embedded in its community it serves, focuses on its audience and adopts a business model that can withstand and adapt to change, whether planned or unexpected. It is an organisation that will withstand and deliver over the longer term.

In September 2018, we launched our new Corporate Plan 2018-23 – *For the Benefit of All*. In this, we set out in clear terms the route of our journey over the next 5 years, and a clear commitment to 2 key priorities

1. Promoting Equalities as the foundation of a clear commitment to reach more widely and deeply into all communities across Wales
2. Strengthening the Capability and Resilience of the arts, enabling creative talent to thrive

Our Council has also identified an action to support the delivery of these two:

3. Enabling the Arts Council to work more effectively, collaborating more imaginatively with like minded partners across Wales.

These three priorities align and endorse our statutory duty of promoting sustainable development. Therefore they are also our well-being objectives.

To ensure we meet these challenges, we apply the following principles:

Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will host open conversations focused on real issues to create, manage and deliver solutions that will last • We will develop long term relationships with both the experts and the customers. We will commit to people to help discover and build on strengths and increase trust
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We learn and improve only by taking risks. We will use feedback as a learning opportunity • We will minimise process to efficient levels that will allow achievement of outcomes through discovery, measuring success and learning lessons
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be generous with our time, effort and skills, while being clear about sustainable development principles such as the need for protection and enhancement of Wales' assets (social, physical and environmental capital)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will maximise use of existing information and data sources, integrating development and use of science and research into policy and delivery
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage Ministers early and secure their on-going involvement with officials and stakeholders. • We will explore the combined impacts of our actions in the real world: share our knowledge and develop integrated approaches to solve multiple challenges
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work together to increase interdependency between citizens and the public sector, promoting direct ownership and making use of personal and others' experience as equal participants • We will deliver by working with others to develop shared outcomes, projects and reporting mechanisms

Our Commitment to Sustainable Development

We regard the lawful and correct treatment of future generations as a fundamental obligation and we endorse and adhere to the Sustainable Development Principles set out above. Our staff are expected to do whatever is necessary to ensure compliance with WFG Act, and follow our Sustainable Development procedures through the five ways of working process.

The Arts Council is committed to full compliance with the Wellbeing Future Generations Act 2015 and the Council's work is monitored quarterly by the WFGA Monitoring Group. An annual report on Sustainable Development is presented to Council and published and a summary of this document is included in the Arts Council of Wales' Annual Report and Financial Statements.

Contact

Questions about sustainable development and requests for information should be directed in the first instance to Governance@arts.wales and marked for the attention of the Director of Arts Development.