

Transforming the Cultural Landscape of Wales



The Arts Council of Wales

We are the country's official funding and development organisation for the arts. Our principal sponsor is the Welsh Government. We also distribute funding from the National Lottery and raise additional money where we can from a variety of public and private sector sources.

People in Wales enjoy and take part in the arts in large numbers. The arts are an essential part of national identity. The arts illuminate and bring substance to the wide range of activities that underpin public life. From arts and

health to cultural tourism, public art to town centre regeneration, the arts bring meaning, authenticity and enjoyment to our everyday lives. They create and sustain jobs, enrich education, bring people together, improve our quality of life. The arts matter. And it's why our vision is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the well-being of the nation and its people.



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Cover: Image courtesy of MOSTYN

Right: Heatherwick Studios, Aberystwyth Arts Centre (image: James Morris)

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We want people in Wales to be inspired by the arts and excited by the opportunities they have to enjoy and take part in the arts. One of the ways we do this is by helping to create arts buildings and facilities that are distinctive, intriguing and engaging.

In Wales we have a network of leading arts centres, galleries, venues, large and small threaded around the country. For many people in Wales, their routine engagement with the arts is through one of these places. At their best, these organisations pursue excellence in

all that they do. But they are also inseparable from the communities in which they're located and to which they relate. Promoting diverse programmes of high quality activity, these organisations act as cultural entrepreneurs, commissioning and curating new work, exploiting this work (through touring or co commissioning), and providing the space, opportunities and services that help artists to develop and grow their work.

This publication offers just a flavour of some of that activity.



Aberystwyth Arts Centre

Aberystwyth Arts Centre is the primary venue for live arts in mid West Wales. It is managed and operated by the University of Aberystwyth. The Arts Centre is a vibrant focus for the arts presenting a regular programme of high quality music, theatre and dance (including its highly popular summer musical that plays for 4-5 weeks) and an ongoing programme of education, workshops, dance and other participatory activity. It also presents a regular programme of contemporary exhibitions in its two gallery spaces, runs a variety of dance classes daily and its cafe with views out to sea is a popular campus meeting and social space. The Arts Centre is an important focus and support for artists and creative businesses in West Wales and a vital contributor to the visitor economy of the area.

The Arts Council of Wales provided capital funding towards the Centre's iconic creative industries project that created 12 independent creative studios located in an elevated leafy location on the campus close to the main arts centre building. Designed by nationally-renowned, award-winning architects and designers the Heatherwick Studio (famous for several works of national prominence including the London Olympic flame sculpture), the buildings were designed in a strong metallic foil that reflects light across the site, and are both functional and sculptural.

The Creative Studios Project was designed to develop Aberystwyth Arts Centre's role as a creative hub for arts businesses, arts development agencies, artists and craft workers. In providing workshop/studio space for creative businesses and arts practitioners the Arts Centre has created a focus for the creative industries in an area where the dispersal and isolation of artists and creative

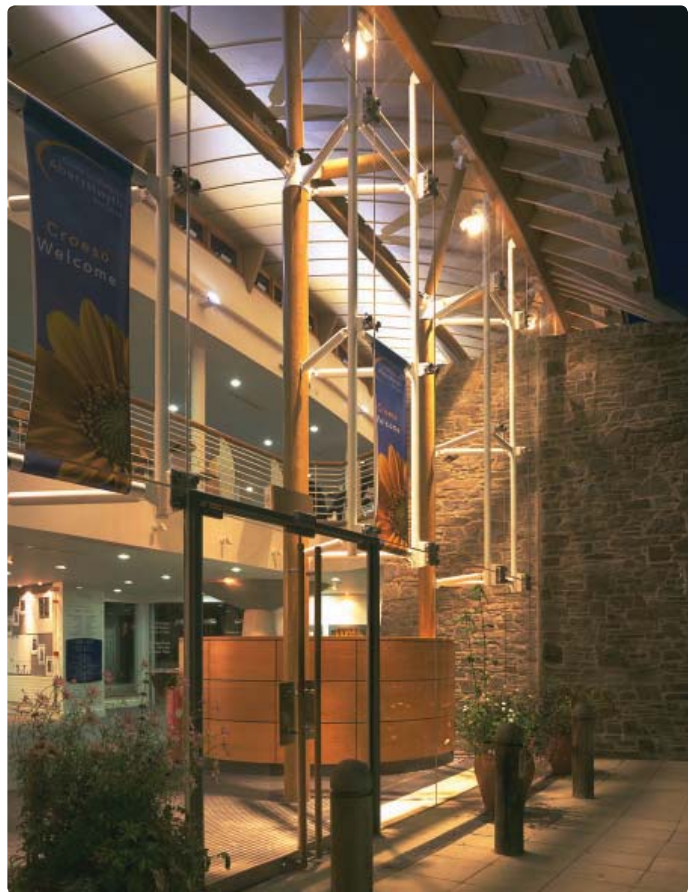
businesses is an important issue. The mix of resident artists and businesses is a unique feature of this development with both new and established occupants interacting together in a stimulating environment to realise their economic and creative potential

The Creative Studios Project cost £1.4 million and was made possible by support from Aberystwyth University, the Arts Council of Wales Lottery Fund and the Welsh Assembly Government. The Units were one of only 18 buildings in the UK and Ireland to receive a 2011 Civic Trust Award and the only building to be chosen from Wales. The Creative Units have also been awarded a RIBA Award for buildings that have high architectural standards and make a substantial contribution to the local environment.

The Arts Centre is now planning a further capital scheme to refurbish its main concert/theatre space and create new production facilities to ensure that the Centre is able to maintain its position as a leading presenter and producer of high quality live arts. The innovative studios attract considerable attention from other agencies and visitors from all over the UK and have helped to raise the profile and reputation of the Arts Centre as a focus for innovative contemporary art and design practice nationally and internationally.



Aberystwyth Arts Centre
(images: Robert Williams)



Ballet Cymru

Ballet Cymru was established in 1986 to be a beacon for quality classical ballet in Wales and the UK. It is a classical dance company that is committed to innovation in dance and classical ballet, working with the very best choreographers, designers, composers and musicians. Ballet Cymru has always strived to produce new and exciting productions and to venues throughout Wales and beyond and engages in collaborative partnerships with a variety of Welsh artists including Sinfonia Cymru, Cerys Matthews, Catrin Finch and Llŷr Williams.

This is a company with well-connected community roots. Its education work is supported through the Paul Hamlyn Foundation DUETS programme in collaboration with Rubicon Dance. It also runs an established Ballet Associate Programme and an international summer school. Ballet Cymru has achieved national acclaim and since gaining revenue funding status from the Arts Council of Wales, has begun to realise its potential as a national company for Wales.

For over 28 Years the Company dreamt of having its own premises. It received Capital Lottery funding of £353,000 from the Arts Council of Wales to assist with the purchase and refurbishment of premises in the Rogerstone area of Newport and to create a suitable dance/rehearsals studio both for its professional activity and education programmes. The project, costing £589,000, was also supported by a number of successful funding applications to trusts and by numerous individual donors.

In March 2014 the Company started rehearsals in its new purpose-built and fully accessible dance studio. It not only provided a much better space in which to work but also reduced studio and other costs.

The purpose-built facility is used regularly by The Royal Academy of Dance and the Cecchetti Ballet Society. Hirers now book the studio months in advance and the space has been used to find talented young dancers for the Cardiff production of Matthew Bourne's *'Lord of the Flies'*.

Various organisations and independent artists have hired the space generating new income of over £10,000 in 2015. In addition, the Company is now taking steps to create a more sustainable and eco-friendly building that will reduce costs. It has signed up to the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Charter ensuring that the company continues to challenge itself to be an exemplar in this area.

The Company won the Best Large Scale Dance Production for *Romeo and Juliet* at the Theatre Critics of Wales Awards in 2014 and has been nominated Best Independent Company 2015 by the Critics Circle National Dance Awards. Ballet Cymru is committed to developing diversity in the arts and for many years has worked inclusively (e.g. the inspirational project *'Stuck in the Mud'* in collaboration with GDance). Ballet Cymru receives financial support from Newport City Council, several trusts and The London Ballet Circle.

This project is helping Ballet Cymru to raise the quality of its work; reduce its operating costs; generate new income and funding; support other dance companies and independent practitioners; and develop a centre of excellence in dance, offering accessible quality training programmes. Furthermore by its presence and activities in Newport it is contributing the cultural regeneration of Newport and supporting the City's regeneration.



- ▲ Ballet Cymru Studio
- ▶ Celtic Concerto
 Ballet Cymru, Catrin Finch & Sinfonia Cymru
Traces Imprinted by Marc Brew
 Ballet Cymru
 (images: Sian Trenberth)

Chapter

Chapter is one of the leading centres for new and contemporary multi-artform arts practice in the United Kingdom. It has a national and international profile and links to contemporary arts practice across Wales, the UK and internationally. Based in a residential area in west Cardiff, Chapter is an arts laboratory located in a living community. It presents and produces international art, performance and film in a variety of spaces and is home to a number of leading arts companies and practitioners.

Though located outside the city centre, Chapter is deeply rooted in its community and renowned for its dynamic social space. It is used by people from all walks of life and functions as a social centre for the locality. As the lead independent cinema for Wales it receives £200,000 a year from the British Film Institute. It also project manages Coreo Cymru – The Creative Producer for Dance in Wales. Chapter is the lead partner for British Dance Edition in March 2016 with investment partnership that includes support from both Arts Council England and Creative Scotland for the festival.

Chapter also operates a separate creative industries complex. Providing workspace for over 30 arts and media enterprises, it generates significant annual income which is reinvested in the cultural programme. This resident and vibrant creative community injects additional energy into Chapter, forming alliances, new creative collaborations and business ventures. Chapter also accommodates a wide assortment of conferences, seminars and meetings and is a popular resource for the City's voluntary, educational and commercial sectors.

Chapter's large, rambling former school building is demanding in terms of maintenance and operation. Capital funding of £2.1m from the Arts Council of Wales supported a £3.5m capital scheme involving the re-design of the foyer and cafe areas and modest works to improve the building's facilities and operation.

The enlarged cafe and patio is the social and operational heart of Chapter, seating in excess of 120 people in a friendly and accessible space with free wifi. This important communal space is used for formal and informal meetings and get-togethers as well as by audiences and workshop participants. It is a significant generator of income and a major component in the building's appeal as a commercial and conference venue.

Following its major capital refurbishment trading activity was transformed. Chapter Trading (its trading subsidiary) now generates turnover in excess of £1.7m of which over £340,000 is paid as a management fee to the charity. It also generates around £200,000 a year in hires, hospitality and associated income; plus income from theatre and cinema ticket and shop sales. Annual footfall for Chapter is around 750,000.

Chapter is a significant employer in the city and spearheads the development of the burgeoning creative industries sector, employing 120 people across the charity and trading company. Taken with employees of the resident creative companies based at Chapter, close to 300 people directly work out of the hub. Investment by the Arts Council of Wales has been crucial in supporting a scheme which is now underpinning the sustainability of Chapter.



- ▲ Chapter
(image: Robert Williams)
- ▶ *I loved you and I loved you*
Coreo Cymru's Development Commissions
Programme of Sweetshop Revolutions
(image: Danilo Moroni)

Galeri

Galeri opened in 2005 as a multi-functional arts and creative enterprise centre located on Caernarfon's Victoria Dock. The centre includes a 400 seat theatre; two studios; 24 work and hire units; 8 soundproofed rooms; 2 large meeting rooms; a bar; and a café. In 2009/10 the theatre was extended to accommodate larger theatre productions. Galeri presents a regular programme of exhibitions, live professional and community performances and film. The centre also runs workshops and educational programmes including SBARC! for young people, and is home for 15 independent arts and creative industries businesses.

Galeri was conceived as an integrated arts and creative industries centre with a strong focus on local regeneration and support for the creative sector in Gwynedd. The capital project grew out of the work of Cwmni Tref Caernarfon Cyf, a not for profit community enterprise operating as a Development Trust. This regeneration agency worked to restore and re-develop redundant properties in the old town of Caernarfon and to bring them back to life as retail and workshop facilities. Cwmni Tref Caernarfon changed its name to Galeri Caernarfon Cyf in 2006.

Over a number of years the Trust's work in the community helped to identify a significant and active community of arts, crafts, media-based and other creative businesses and individuals. The Caernarfon area lacked an up to date venue for live arts and exhibitions and the capital scheme was developed to bring together these two main areas of creative activity. A key aim of the organisation is to: *'implement sustainable projects in an integrated way to realise the cultural, economic, and*

environmental potential of the local community and its environs.'

Cwmni Tref Caernarfon Cyf wanted to make a tangible contribution to the local economy and sustainability was at the core of the capital scheme. The concept for Galeri was therefore based on an integrated facility combining creative industries space, activity space and a venue for live arts and exhibitions, allied to a strong catering and retail offer.

The development of Galeri became a catalyst for the eventual re-development of Victoria Dock pre dating and complementing present day plans for retail, catering and hotel facilities being developed on the site. Within walking distance of the old town and castle, Galeri, with its attractive dockside cafe with views out to sea, is now a popular visitor destination supporting both the daytime and night time economy while addressing the needs of its resident community through its creative programmes.

Galeri is now embarked on a phase 2 scheme to create a new 2-screen cinema and enhance its cafe. This will enable it to meet local demand and present a more sustainable film programme that will expand cultural provision and generate financial surpluses for the centre. Funding from the Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government Vibrant and Viable Places has been secured. To date the Arts Council of Wales has invested £3.26m towards total capital project costs of £8.2m.

In 2013 Galeri won the Welsh Social Enterprise Award in recognition of its hard work and achievements.



' implement sustainable projects in an integrated way to realise the cultural, economic, and environmental potential of the local community and its environs.'



- ▲ Galeri, Caernarfon (image: Robert Williams)
- ▶ SBARC! (image: courtesy of Galeri)



MOSTYN

The MOSTYN Art Gallery was established in 1901 by Lady Augusta MOSTYN. It re-opened in 1978 after a period of closure as a centre for contemporary art, as the result of a campaign led by painter Kyffin Williams. Following the award-winning re-development in 2010, the gallery reopened to wide acclaim. With over 10,000 of its annual visitors aged under 18, MOSTYN brings contemporary art to new audiences, through a vibrant programme of exhibitions and engagement.

The gallery plays an important role in supporting the Llandudno tourism industry welcoming around 80,000 visitors annually, with a further 20,000 attending offsite programmes and exhibitions. The RIBA Gold Medal-winning building harmoniously merges the gallery's original 1901 terracotta façade and galleries with stunning new gallery spaces, a café and high quality street level retail space that attracts a wide range of customers.

MOSTYN has had an energising effect on the cultural, social and economic regeneration of Llandudno and the region. It boasts economic benefit (GVA) that returns £3 to the locality for every £1 of public investment. The £5.3 million redevelopment of MOSTYN was supported with £3.26m Arts Lottery funding from the Arts Council of Wales. It is estimated to have supported over 60 person years of construction employment. The gallery now also directly employs 17 full-time equivalent posts.

The development has fired new creative energy and ambition into MOSTYN. In 2013 MOSTYN and Oriel Davies co-curated the critically acclaimed and highly popular Wales in Venice Pavilion at the 55th Annual Venice Biennale – with *'The Starry Messenger'*, an exhibition by Bedwyr Williams. Closer to home,

in 2012 MOSTYN partnered with local farmers and two international artists to curate a large-scale installation on the life and history of local farming. In 2013 MOSTYN launched the first guest-curated LL AWN – Llandudno Arts Weekend held annually in public spaces and empty buildings across Llandudno.

MOSTYN's shop, gallery café and room hire contribute to a quarter of the gallery's operating budget. By supporting the commercial development of local artists and designer-makers, MOSTYN aims to secure a stable revenue stream. MOSTYN's café, Caffi Celf, is a social venue in its own right with increasing use as a function venue.

MOSTYN is now one of 34 galleries participating in the Plus Tate UK national network of galleries and art centres that includes major regional galleries like Baltic, Turner Contemporary Margate, Ikon Birmingham and Hepworth Wakefield. This programme links a group of extraordinary visual arts organisations benefitting from Tate's collection, scale, brand and expertise. The network creates access to work of national standing and helps to develop organisational resilience.



- ▲ MOSTYN, Llandudno
- ▶ Gallery 1
(images © MOSTYN)
Guillermo Weickert & Maria Cabeza de Vaca
LLAWN03 (image: Paul Sampson)

Theatr Mwldan

With the support of £3.45m of Arts Lottery capital programme Mwldan has over the past 10-15 years been transforming itself from a small-scale arts theatre/centre into a dynamic and highly successful community enterprise with total capital investment of £9.7m. As a result of the initiatives it has taken and the investment secured, over 300,000 people now pass through Mwldan each year generating an annual turnover in excess of £1.2m, of which 75% is earned income.

Mwldan is much more than a venue for live arts and exhibitions. Two of its three auditoria function as cinema spaces with weekly screenings of a wide range of film, including first releases, 3D screenings and live digital broadcasts from national and international companies. This was made possible by Arts Lottery capital investment enabling Mwldan to create a third auditorium and present over 3,000 screenings a year. Mwldan also presents a year-round professional programme of live arts across all artforms, including nationally and internationally renowned performers and companies.

Mwldan is multi-faceted; it works with established and emerging performers and collaborates with other companies and venues to produce and tour World and traditional music and theatre. Following a successful commission of Billy Cobham and Asree in 2007, it has since commissioned and toured Catrin Finch working with other musicians such as Senegalise kora player Seckou Keita. All told, it has managed over 60 tours to venues throughout Wales the UK and internationally. It has developed this strand of work into a full artist management and touring support service and, through its *'Song Chain'* project, works to develop and tour talented young musicians.

Mwldan is also developing its own record label.

Mwldan supports the local economy through its programmes and activities, but also, through its own subsidiary company Theatr Mwldan Media Development, operating the creative business centre created with Arts Lottery capital funding in 2002/3. This facility provides administration and workshop accommodation to several local businesses and third sector agencies including Archi-Tech (architects); the Teifside advertiser (newspaper); Blue West, a marketing research company; and SEL Internet. The centre's studio is hired out on a daily basis to a local dance school.

Mwldan is an ambitious, outward-looking organisation. It has not only played an important role in supporting and contributing to the social, economic and cultural regeneration of the area, but has reached out across Wales in supporting other venues and creative practitioners. It led on a national film initiative to install digital projection equipment in theatres and arts centres across Wales, with successful projects undertaken at Taliesin Arts Centre, the Torch Theatre, Theatr Harlech and Wyeside Arts Centre, Builth. Further developments are underway in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Blaenavon and Barry. These developments will underpin the viability of film exhibition at all the participating venues ensuring the highest standards of digital connectivity. Just another example of Mwldan's progressive and collaborative approach and commitment to creating a sustainable business model.



- ▲ Auditorium, Theatr Mwdan
(image: Robert Williams)
- ▶ Catrin Finch & Seckou Keita
(image: Andy Morgan)

Pontio

Pontio is a as new concept for a University campus-based arts complex. Created by the University of Bangor, it reflects the innovation and serendipity which can occur when the arts and sciences occupy the same space. Pontio replaces the former Theatr Gwynedd and was designed as a *'world class Performing Arts and Innovation Centre . . . a cultural beacon for Wales, a champion of the Welsh language and a hub for the local community.'*

The Pontio concept promotes learning and research, stimulating new creative activity by bringing together the worlds of arts, science and technology in new and explorative partnerships. This impressive facility is raising Bangor's profile, promoting the investment and regeneration possibilities in North Wales.

Pontio is the facility that the local community has lacked. It provides a range of arts facilities with a 'flexible multi-functional theatre' seating up to 480; a 120-seat studio; 200-seat cinema; and an external performance space.

The performing arts centre will present the best national and international arts companies with a range of other high quality professional touring theatre and music alongside its well established concert series. Work developed in the community or presented by local organisations and student productions will also be an important part of the programme mix. Community engagement is at the heart of Pontio's work and the venue is playing an important role in Welsh language theatre and arts.

Pontio is an important new gateway for businesses to access the expertise and facilities available at the University. The innovation space will encourage companies to develop

new ideas and bring them to market. Pontio aims to create lasting impact with the business community.

Pontio sits on the hillside between the main University campus and the city centre; its street level entrance is within walking distance of the town centre. The building creates a bridge (pontio) between the University and the community and the landmark Grimshaw design and prominent location make a powerful statement about the University's commitment to the cultural life of the community.

Pontio is a £50m development supported with EU Convergence funding and by the Welsh Government, with £3.25m of capital funding from the Arts Council of Wales. The Arts Council of Wales has played a key role in working with the University and Welsh Government to ensure that scheme has been delivered to the highest standards.

The initial response to Pontio which opened in autumn 2015 has been overwhelmingly positive with much praise for the building and high levels of attendance at performances. Signature programming has included a commitment to circus and outdoor work with Pirates of the Carabina; NoFit State and Tipping Point Aerial Theatre all featuring in the inaugural season. And for those with more traditional tastes there has been Ruby Wax, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Theatr Genedlaethol's epic stage adaptation of 'Chwalfa' and Ysgol Tryfan's highly ambitious school production 'Bancsi Bach'.



- ▲ Pontio, Bangor
(image: Eye Imagery)
- ▶ Pontio's arts mission

'To create an artistic programme of the highest quality which is innovative, ambitious and one which resonates and is relevant to our communities.'

Riverfront

The creation of The Riverfront, a new 21st century theatre and arts complex on the riverside in Newport, is at the forefront of a major programme of city regeneration. From its opening, the venue has provided a varied programme of live and visual arts of exceptional quality for a local community that had not seen live professional arts in the City on a regular basis for many years.

The Riverfront welcomes over 90,000 people a year and has provided a large number of careers for local people and hundreds of creative opportunities and support to local artists and creative companies. Alongside theatre, dance and music of all genres, The Riverfront also presents a successful annual family pantomime, comedy and cinema screenings. The venue's studio spaces are used by Newport based artists (Mr & Mrs Clark, Tin Shed Theatre Company and Flying Bridge Theatre Company), and was for many years the home of Ballet Cymru. Arts participation and development programmes are central in ensuring The Riverfront is a hub for local communities, schools and families and the cafe overlooking the river is a popular destination for meetings and informal get-togethers.

The Riverfront is an outstanding contemporary building that provides a landmark entrance to the City, promoting Newport as a cultural destination to rival other cities with more established arts venues. As one of the first new buildings of the riverside regeneration, Riverfront was a catalyst development; a raft of other developments have followed.

Completed projects and investments have delivered a huge transformation for the City including a world class university campus; state of the art business premises; new railway

station; revamped market; new bus station; iconic architecture and a new waterfront district with homes and leisure opportunities. Construction of Friars Walk, Newport's new retail and leisure scheme has just opened. When fully complete it will bring more well known names to the city centre including Debenhams; Next; Nando's; Prezzo; and Cineworld. Investments totalling £250m will give a fresh momentum to the City's regeneration with 1,300 new jobs created.

The Riverfront is part of an ongoing and successful programme of revitalisation that has seen the Ryder Cup and 2014 NATO Summit taking place at Newport's Celtic Manor Resort. It is inconceivable that the City could have been without a major cultural centre when welcoming such high profile international visitors. Furthermore the location of the venue close to the new University building is helping to make Newport an appealing option for students in the competitive Higher Education market.

The £35m capital scheme, supported with £8.4m of Arts Lottery capital funding, demonstrates how a cultural initiative can help to kick-start and underpin a wider programme of regeneration. Originally directly managed by Newport County Borough Council, The Riverfront is now run by an independent trust, Newport Live, established by the Council and continuing to inspire local communities in Newport and beyond.



- ▲ Riverfront
(image: Chris Morse)
- ▶ *TIR* - Ballet Cymru featuring Cerys Matthews
(image: Nicolas Young)
Mr & Mrs Clark
(image: Toby Cameron & Riverfront)

Ruthin Craft Centre

Ruthin Craft Centre is the foremost centre for applied arts in North Wales and a gallery and organisation of international standing and reputation. Opened by Denbighshire County Council in 1982, the Centre operated for over 20 years out of modest facilities consisting of a series of low rise units used as studios spaces for makers. The building lacked coherence and was of generally low quality, notwithstanding the excellent reputation it had for its creative programmes.

In 2008 the centre was transformed through a major re-development of the buildings to create a more integrated structure with three new large high quality galleries; a stand-alone cafe in which 2D work is displayed; 6 artist studios and workspaces; and an enlarged and re-designed retail area selling high quality contemporary crafts and linked to the galleries. Other new facilities included an education workshop, artist residency studios and office accommodation. The Arts Council of Wales contributed capital funding of £3.24m towards total project costs of £4.66m.

The Centre presents a changing programme of exhibitions showing the very best jewellery, ceramics, glass, textiles and many other craft forms from Wales, the UK and around the world. It curates major exhibitions, some of which provide unique showings of work in the UK, that have generated a profile and awareness of Wales as a place that generates and welcomes artistic practice of the highest international standard and ambition.

The Craft Centre is open 362 days of the year and attracts around 80,000 visitors including people interested in contemporary crafts from all over Wales and further afield. It is an important visitor attraction, bringing people

from up to two and a half hours away into the Town and providing the main destination in Ruthin for tourists coming from England. A Tourist Information Point is located within a Cultural Gateway unit and the Centre's website attracts 36,000 hits a year, both from tourists and people accessing its online resources.

It also provides an ongoing programme of talks, workshops and events including its extensive education programme and work with schools providing a range of learning programmes for all ages and abilities with artist-led workshops and masterclasses. The programme offers teachers creative tools and support to develop their own learning practices and the opportunity to work directly with artists/makers. The Centre employs 12 permanent staff equivalent to 9 full time posts, plus freelance technicians, exhibition curators and educators etc.

In addition to its excellent programme of exhibitions, the craft workshop spaces provide opportunities for visitors to see makers at work and can purchase work direct from their studios. There is also dedicated workshop space for artists in residence to create work on site and contribute to programmes. The Centre is an internationally recognised creative hub for the arts and is considered to be the 'National' Centre for Applied Arts & Craft in Wales.



- ▲ Ruthin Craft Centre
- ▶ Claire Curneen, Welsh Collection II
(images: Dewi Tannant Lloyd)

Tŷ Newydd

Tŷ Newydd is the National Writing Centre of Wales and is run by Literature Wales, the national company for the development of literature. During the late 1980s the owners started to restore the house and grounds and, working with the Welsh Arts Council and with writer Gillian Clarke and others, Tŷ Newydd was launched as Wales' writing centre in 1990.

Tŷ Newydd is a Grade II* listed building, built in the fifteenth century as a timber framed house and then re-developed in several later periods. It was the last home of former Prime Minister David Lloyd George and still retains the recognisable touches implemented by architect Clough Williams-Ellis, famous for his quirky Italianate village Portmeirion.

Thousands of aspiring and emerging writers have passed through Tŷ Newydd which specialises in residential creative writing courses both in the English and Welsh language. Groups and individuals from Wales, the rest of the UK and beyond have spent time together under the tutelage of professional writers such as Gillian Clarke, Seamus Heaney, Carol Ann Duffy and Owen Sheers.

A major redevelopment in 2005 costing £4.2m and supported with £1m from the Arts Council of Wales, saw the building of the conservatory and the reconditioning of many rooms and the house's ancient outbuildings. A significant proportion of the capital monies spent (approx. 65% - £35,000) went to local suppliers and artists (e.g. architects, builders, blacksmiths, landscape gardeners, slate craftspeople, potters, visual artists). In 2015 the interiors were updated and new artistic works commissioned thanks to a further Arts Council Lottery award of £30,000, and grants from the Ashley Family Foundation and the Welsh

Academy. This additional investment helped improve the hospitality and the flexibility of communal areas and of the residential spaces.

Modest Arts Council of Wales investment has made the project possible helping Tŷ Newydd to achieve increased levels of attendance and trading activity with a higher quality and range of programmes. The project has made an impact on local tourism and regeneration by restoring and revitalising an important heritage building and centre.

Investment has improved the appeal of Tŷ Newydd to commercial bookers for corporate training courses. 2015 bookings were higher than the previous year, and increased attendances and hires will generate income for new courses. The increased participant numbers will directly impact on local tourism with most residential participants coming from outside the locality. New initiatives are also encouraging greater engagement with the local community, the Lloyd George Museum and with Portmeirion.



Ty Newydd Writer's Centre
(images courtesy of Literature Wales)

Valleys Kids

Valleys Kids is a pioneering community organisation that works in and with disadvantaged communities in the former coalfields areas. The organisation began as Penygraig Community Project in 1977 with 2 jobshare staff and a handful of volunteers, working predominantly with disaffected teenagers in a cellar of the Penygraig Probation office. This has developed into a wide range of support services run by, and for, the local community.

In 1999 the Project became Valleys Kids and the ArtWorks Project was developed with Arts Council Lottery funding. ArtWorks has developed some of the most innovative arts practice with young people in Wales. Valleys Kids works in isolated and deprived communities often with few amenities and resources. It uses the arts an effective means of engaging local communities and inspiring confidence and self-belief, working to equip people, and young people especially, with the skills needed to build fulfilling lives and communities.

In 1980 the congregation of the disintegrating Soar Baptist Chapel gave their building to the Project. It was converted into the Ffrwdamos Centre by volunteers and using job creation schemes, re-opening as a community venue in 1987. Between 2005 and 2007 the building was developed with over £3m of capital investment, supported by £1m from the Arts Lottery capital programme. In 2009 Valleys Kids was chosen to be one of the five Cultural Olympiad Projects in Wales, linking the Valleys with Townships in Cape Town, South Africa. This culminated in the Mzansi Cymru project and production at the Wales Millennium Centre with performers from South African Townships and the Valleys, featured in a BBC Wales Documentary.

Soar Chapel has been re-imagined as a building for the 21st century; an impressive local landmark at the centre of Penygraig. With its glazed atrium beaming out light it is an old building with a new meaning and purpose and an inspirational expression of confidence. It is a contemporary statement in a community where many buildings have lost their functions and modern buildings of quality are a rarity. The development has had a knock-on effect to the whole of the centre of the town, directly contributing to the regeneration of the main street, now bustling with few empty shops and an active traders group.

Arts Council of Wales investment was crucial in enabling the project to proceed at a time when it was struggling to close its funding gap. It is an excellent example of how Arts Lottery funding has been used with other partners to make things possible.

In 2008, Valleys Kids was the UK winner of the British Urban Regeneration Award for Community Inspired Regeneration. But growth and ambition does not end there.

In 2011 it raised £500,000 to purchase the Old Pop Factory (now the Factory) in Porth to establish a Hub for the Creative Industries.

Valleys Kids is now an associate with 'Tate Exchange' the UK wide collaboration with the Tate Modern in London.



- ▲ Soar Chapel, Valleys Kids
(images: Jon Card)
- ▶ Torchbearers
Mzansi Cymru project, Valleys Kids
(image: Glenn Edwards)

Wales Millennium Centre

The creation of the Wales Millennium Centre, a World class performing arts centre, was a bold statement of confidence in Welsh culture and represented a leap forward in the emerging regeneration of Cardiff Bay's former dockland. This majestic building, the largest live arts venue outside London, spearheaded the creation of a new and vibrant area of the City and set a standard for all other developments in the area.

The Centre now stands at the centre of this popular tourist area with its many restaurants, and other attractions, as a beacon for the area. It has played a major role transforming the landscape in this part of the City, presenting the very best of UK and international live arts to audiences from across Wales and beyond, including long runs of top West End hits, (UK tours of *Wicked* and *The Lion King*). The Centre attracts world renowned performers and companies, from Carlos Acosta to The Mariinsky Theatre and Cape Town Opera.

Additionally, it provides resident company, Welsh National Opera, with production, technical, rehearsal and administrative facilities equal to that of any opera company in the World. Seven further cultural organisations reside at the Centre: the National Dance Company of Wales; the BBC National Orchestra of Wales; the Urdd; Literature Wales; Hijinx; Tŷ Cerdd; and Touch Trust.

The Centre also programmes a wide range of free activities including live performances, cultural festivals (Black History Month and Diwali), and family craft activity. Events often reach out of the building into the surrounding Cardiff Bay area with open air performances and festivals, such as the popular summer Blysh festival. These additional events and

activities create a vibrancy and focus for visitors, animating the Cardiff Bay waterfront.

Committed to inspiring young people and providing life changing opportunities through the arts, the Centre has engaged with over 200,000 participants to date through workshops, school engagement and numerous ambitious projects, including outreach work with children in Wales' most deprived communities.

Since opening the Centre has presented over 4,000 shows and activities with over 1 million visitors annually; it is estimated to generate over £78m per year for the local economy and provides over 1,000 jobs. It is Wales' number one visitor attraction, and the UK's third most popular cultural attraction outside London.

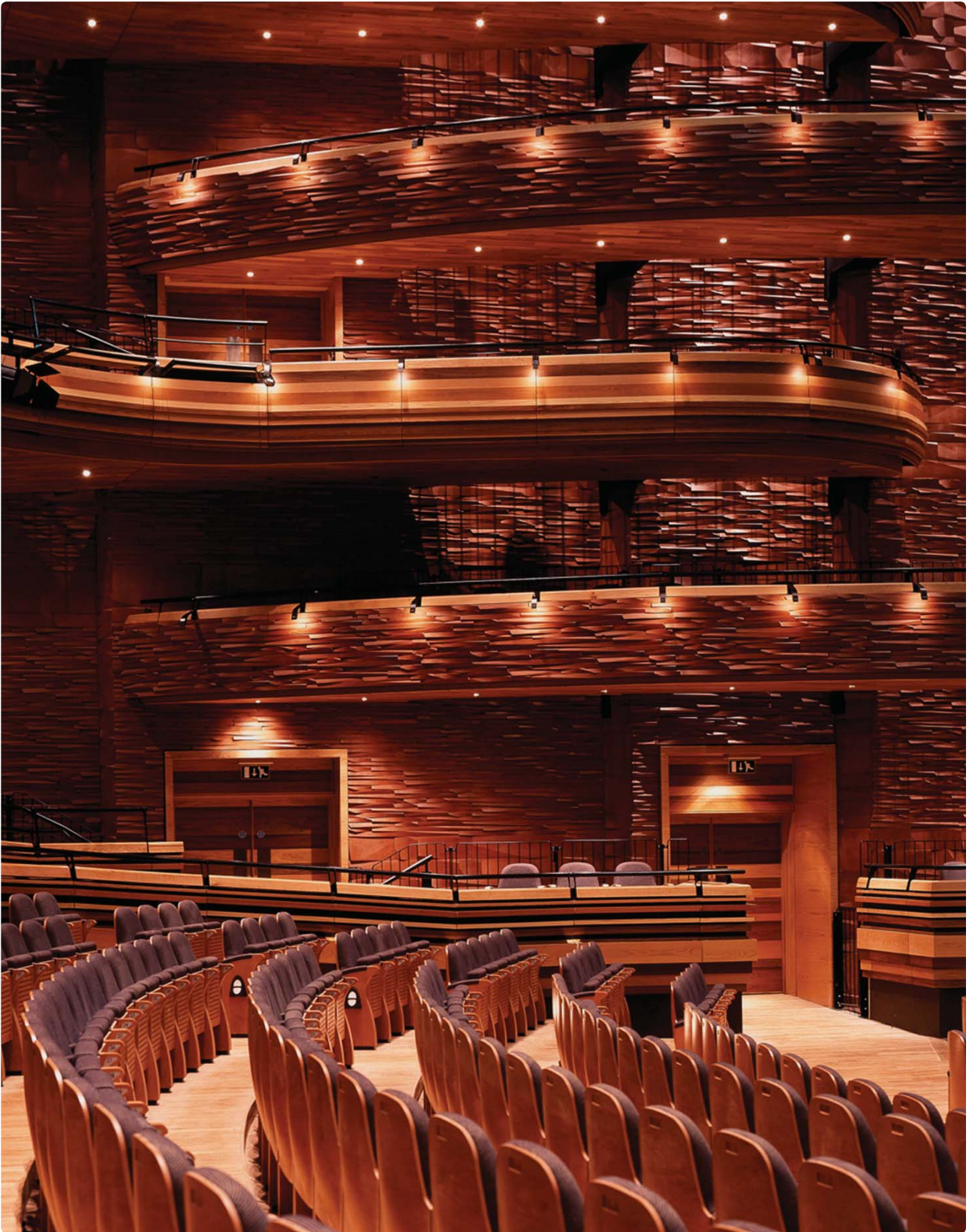
Arts Council of Wales financial support has given the peace of mind and confidence to plan and invest in this national asset for the long-term. As a direct result of regular and ongoing capital support, it has been possible to maintain the Centre to a truly world-class standard, leading to peer-recognition and internationally recognised awards including the British Institute of Facilities Management and the Queen's Award for Enterprise for Sustainable Development. Wales Millennium Centre is highly proactive in sharing knowledge on running a sustainable, creative organisation at conferences and summits around the World. From Indonesia to Mexico and New York, the centre is raising the profile of Wales and Welsh culture and contributing to the development of the arts sector globally.



▲ Wales Millennium Centre
(image: Sandra Duncan)

► Black History Month
(image: John Collingswood)





Auditorium, Wales Millennium Centre
(image: Chris Colclough)