

# Set in Stone?

## A report on who gets remembered in public spaces

March 2021



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## A report on who gets remembered in public spaces

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# About the Committee

The Committee was established on 28 June 2016. Its remit can be found at:  
[www.senedd.wales/SeneddCWLC](http://www.senedd.wales/SeneddCWLC)

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## Committee Chair:



**Bethan Sayed MS**  
Plaid Cymru

## Current Committee membership:



**Mick Antoniw MS**  
Welsh Labour



**John Griffiths MS**  
Welsh Labour



**Carwyn Jones MS**  
Welsh Labour



**Helen Mary Jones MS\***  
Plaid Cymru



**David Melding MS**  
Welsh Conservatives

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\*From 26 February 2020 - 8 January 2021 Helen Mary Jones was Acting Temporary Chair of the Committee.

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## Chair's foreword

The question of who we remember in our public spaces is an emotive one. It evokes ideas of who we were, as well as who we are, as a society.

In Wales we were shocked by the events in the summer of 2020 and the tragic death of George Floyd. The wave of protest that followed also ignited a debate around who we remember in our public spaces.

There is much in our history to be proud of, but that pride we all feel should not blind us from some of the more egregious events that have also taken place in our past – the legacy of which is still being felt today.

This report seeks to take a strategic view of the issues based on first principles. We make a total of 9 recommendations which address the current debate around who we remember. We found that more needs to be done to raise awareness of our history – including some of the more difficult and painful legacies of the past.

Local communities should have the final say on acts of commemoration in their area. However, we have found that more could be done to empower our communities to arrive at collective decisions relating to existing public commemorations. Steps must be taken by the Welsh Government to facilitate this including through agreeing new guidance for local communities.

We also looked at the use of criteria for judging the appropriateness of acts of commemoration. There is naturally a sometimes irreconcilable subjectivity to these judgements. However, we believe that there are clear benefits to designing criteria that provide a good indication as to whether a commemoration is likely to be appropriate or not.

Looking ahead to the future, this report calls on the Welsh Government to harness the energy and vigour of debate around commemoration to bring about positive change in the longer term. Many groups of people are rarely, if ever, represented in our public spaces. We need the Welsh Government to lead a national conversation – in partnership with charities, local authorities, museums and heritage organisations and others – on how to address this.

During this inquiry some have expressed fears that to topple a statue is to “erase history”. Those fears can be misplaced. As one of the witnesses to our inquiry, Bill Jones, put it:

“Nid hanes yw cofeb; mae gan gofeb hanes.”

“A commemoration is not history; a commemoration has history.”

This work has been illuminating and challenging in equal measure. We are extremely grateful to all those who took part in the inquiry for aiding the Committee in this important area of work.

**Bethan Sayed MS**

Chair of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1.** The Welsh Government should publicise the work of the Legall Audit of Commemoration through a programme of community engagement and public awareness-raising..... Page 16

**Recommendation 2.** The Welsh Government should leave ultimate authority for decisions relating to contentious statues, monuments or commemorations with local authorities and communities. However, there are some important processes and principles which should apply and which the Welsh Government should provide leadership and guidance to local authorities and other public bodies on, which are set out below..... Page 16

**Recommendation 3.** The Welsh Government should create a comprehensive “one stop shop” guidance document for local authorities and public bodies relating to acts of commemoration in Wales. The guidance should include:

- advice on best practice for consulting local communities;
- advice on participative methods for engaging ‘harder to reach’ and minority groups;
- advice on involving specialist opinion, including local historians.

..... Page 28

**Recommendation 4.** The Welsh Government should agree criteria for inclusion in the guidance document which can be used as a “diagnostic checklist” by local authorities and relevant public bodies in determining whether to consult on relocation or greater contextualisation of a statue or commemoration. This checklist of criteria should adapt existing examples of good practice and should include:

- Whether the person is of historical significance?
- Whether this person has had a national impact or a significant positive impact on his or her field?
- How was this person viewed at the time and how are they viewed today? Do they provide a good example to people?
- How is this person viewed across communities – including minority communities and groups?

- Has this person made a contribution to the well-being and happiness of the public? ..... Page 29

**Recommendation 5.** In instances where contentious statues have been identified: local authorities and public bodies should engage local communities, experts, and historians to agree greater provision of information and contextualisation. The Welsh Government should set out a clear policy position with regard to this..... Page 30

**Recommendation 6.** The Welsh Government should set out in its response to this report what assessment it has made of the financial implications of removing statues (in instances where local communities have earmarked a statue for removal) and how it will work with local authorities and heritage bodies to ensure they have the resources they need to undertake further work in this area. .... Page 30

**Recommendation 7.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to identify ways in which the current under-representation of particular groups can be addressed with a view to commissioning new statues or commemorative art works in Wales.....Page 36

**Recommendation 8.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to identify suitable locations for future statues or commemorative art works of national significance in Wales to tackle the under-representation identified in this report. ....Page 36

**Recommendation 9.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to create a new, national plaque scheme of public commemoration in line with the principles and criteria outlined in this report..... Page 37

# 1. Introduction

## Background

1. In June 2020 the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry to look at the way historical figures are remembered in Wales' significant public spaces.
2. In looking at this issue the Committee was keen to explore how society determines who gets remembered; what principles might be used to determine acts of commemoration; and the process that could, or should, be followed if people want individual instances to be removed or changed.

## Aims of this report

3. This report is structured in three distinct chapters. The first chapter looks at the debate around current acts of commemoration in Wales. The second chapter looks at how communities and public authorities can be better supported when dealing with instances of contentious statues or commemorations. The final chapter looks ahead and offers ideas for how we commemorate in future.

## Evidence gathering

4. To gather evidence for this inquiry the Committee ran a consultation from 12 August 2020 to 26 October 2020 and received a total of 22 submissions.
5. The Committee held a series of oral evidence sessions with historians, public authorities, local government and others.
6. A full schedule of oral evidence is provided as Annex A and a list of written submissions received is provided as Annex B.
7. The Committee also gathered people's views through a series of 10 online focus groups and agreed to publish a summary of these focus groups in January 2021.

## 2. Current acts of commemoration

Recent events have brought about a renewed interest in our statues, monuments and other public commemorations. This renewed interest has been accompanied by questions, often difficult, about today's society, our sense of history and our relationship with the past.

### The debate around commemoration

8. At the heart of this issue is the question of who gets remembered, and what is commemorated in our public spaces.
9. For many the protests that took place across Wales, the UK and across the world last summer in response to the death of George Floyd ignited a wider look at statues and the individuals who have been immortalised in bronze or marble.
10. The Committee heard powerful testimonies relating to the need for greater recognition and awareness of the role racism and exploitation has played in the past, the legacy of which remains in Wales today. Hadassah Radway of Race Council Cymru illustrated the point through describing her own experiences:

“I am of Jamaican descent; I was born in Jamaica and I am a descendant of the slaves. So, my ancestors went through the atrocities of the human indignity that happened to our people. And my parents came here after being invited to come and work[...]However, throughout our lives and my life in Wales—and I must say I love being in Wales, I love living here, but, throughout that period of time, even as an educated person, there is still this underlying factor that black people, being me, are not given the same latitude, the same dignity as white British, white Europeans, and all of that stems from slavery, the enslavement of African people.

And these statues that we have now, and street names after these people who benefited from enslaving others and cruelly beat them, and getting proceeds from that, I think is repugnant, it's abhorrent, it still has an impact on black people. And when we see these statues, when we see these street names, I believe that, from grass roots, they will say the impact they have on their mental health and well-being, because these remind us that there was this time in history when we

were treated as cattle, when we were treated as shackles, when we were treated as property. And the people who were complicit in that have been commemorated with great honour and privilege. So, for me, it started an impact, and I think that we need to be looking at how does this still affect people—black people—in this country and worldwide.”<sup>1</sup>

**11.** Professor Merfyn Jones stated that the “whole extraordinary explosion of protest and of discussion and debate that’s happened on both sides of the Atlantic” showed that Wales and the UK still “have not come to terms with the extraordinary impact of slavery and slave trading on the British economy”<sup>2</sup> and the role of Britain as an imperial power.

**12.** The historians who gave evidence to the Committee all agreed that there are a range of complex issues associated with public commemoration. Professor Merfyn Jones told us that he was “dubious about the value of public statues” and that “today’s heroes become tomorrow’s villains.”<sup>3</sup>

**13.** Similarly, Professor Bill Jones stated that:

“Although I have a background in heritage, I am doubtful as to how valuable statues are, and how many people pay attention to them. I think one issue here is that some of these statues and memorials, for reasons of history, are in very prominent positions, and some of them can create ill-feeling, and that ill-feeling is highlighted because these statues are in prominent positions in our cities, towns and villages.”<sup>4</sup>

**14.** Dr Sarah May, Swansea University, argued that “the practice of representational statues of individuals as a method of establishing commemoration in community space” dates largely from the eighteenth century and “there’s part of me that wants to say we have to give the whole idea of that kind of commemoration up as a bad job and try to look at how else we might use our public space to represent contemporary community values”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 122 to 123 - 3 December 2020

<sup>2</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 61 and 62 - 26 November 2020

<sup>3</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 16 - 26 November 2020

<sup>4</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 19 - 26 November 2020

<sup>5</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 10 - 15 December 2020

**15.** Participants in the Committee’s focus groups similarly wrestled with the difficulties in determining who gets remembered and the views expressed often reflected a broad spectrum of opinion.<sup>6</sup>

## The Legall Audit of Commemoration in Wales

**16.** Before embarking on this inquiry, the Committee wrote to the Welsh Government to ascertain whether an inventory of statues in Wales could be created. In July 2020 the First Minister announced the creation of a Task and Finish Group charged with carrying out “an audit of public monuments, street and building names in Wales associated with the slave trade and the British Empire”.<sup>7</sup> The Task and Finish Group comprised historians, academics, and local government representatives and was chaired by Gaynor Legall.

**17.** The Task and Finish Group’s report was published on 26 November 2020. In the accompanying Written Statement, the First Minister said that “the audit has shown the slave trade and colonial exploitation were embedded in our nation’s economy and society”.<sup>8</sup>

**18.** In total the Legall audit identified 209 monuments, buildings or street names, located in all parts of Wales, which commemorate people who were directly involved with slavery and the slave trade or opposed its abolition.<sup>9</sup> They included:

- 13 monuments, buildings, or street names commemorating people who took part in the African slave trade;
- 56 monuments, buildings, or street names commemorating people who owned or directly benefitted from plantations or mines worked by the enslaved;
- 120 monuments, buildings, or street names commemorating people who opposed abolition of the slave trade or slavery;

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<sup>6</sup> Focus Group Summary

<sup>7</sup> Welsh Government, ‘The Slave Trade and the British Empire An Audit of Commemoration in Wales’

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Welsh Government, ‘The Slave Trade and the British Empire An Audit of Commemoration in Wales’

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- 20 monuments, buildings, or street names commemorating people accused of crimes against Black people, notably in colonial Africa.

**19.** In terms of the methodology for the Task and Finish Group's report, Gwilym Hughes, Head of Cadw, explained that all the information was already in the public domain and taken from source material.<sup>10</sup>

**20.** Many of the witnesses who gave evidence to the Committee agreed that the Legall audit was an important and valuable piece of work.

**21.** During the Committee's session with Race Council Cymru and Black Lives Matter, witnesses on behalf of both organisations welcomed the audit "as a step in the right direction".<sup>11</sup> However, both cautioned that in their view this should mark the beginning, rather than the end of the process. Nelly Adams of the campaign group Black Lives Matter explained:

"[...] the audit, I think, is purely raising awareness at the moment; I wouldn't say that the audit is of great benefit or has done anything. However, as far as I'm concerned right now, all the audit has done is highlighted how many slave owners are being commemorated in and around Wales and also street names—everything else that goes with it. But, I mean, a good start—it's a good starter for 10, as far as I'm concerned."<sup>12</sup>

**22.** During the Committee's session with the Task and Finish Group and Cadw, Gaynor Legall agreed that it was inappropriate for there to be 13 commemorations to participants in the slave trade in Wales and that the purpose of her audit was to understand better the role of those individuals.<sup>13</sup> She also recognised that more work would need to be done following publication of the audit.<sup>14</sup>

**23.** Furthermore, she spoke of the impact that she hoped the audit would have in terms of the debate:

"[...] we are all sinners and saints, and I think we're at a point in the development of our understanding of the world that we live in where

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<sup>10</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 17 – 3 December 2020

<sup>11</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 112 – 3 December 2020

<sup>12</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 114 – 3 December 2020

<sup>13</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 9 – 3 December 2020

<sup>14</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 27 – 3 December 2020

we're more open to hearing a full truth—you know, a warts-and-all approach. So, I think the time is right for us to give all the information about individuals that have been commemorated and allow people to have that discourse and to come to conclusions. I would guess that there will not be a clear conclusion about lots of them, but the conversation is needed. I think the conversation will be beneficial to our understanding of what we mean by equity and diversity, as well.”<sup>15</sup>

## The principle of removing statues

**24.** The Committee heard a spectrum of views regarding the principle of removing statues ranging from blanket opposition to the removal of any statues to others who questioned the purpose and relevance of statues in their entirety.

**25.** The Committee received 21 written submissions from individuals, the overwhelming majority of which were opposed to both the suggestion of removing public monuments and to the Committee carrying out this piece of work.<sup>16</sup> The written evidence received included objections on principled grounds and arguments that doing so was akin to “erasing the past”.<sup>17</sup>

**26.** One individual stated that:

“Where there has been consensus in the past to erect a statue, that in itself is an historical event and fact. To think of tearing it down and erasing it is to destroy the artefact and event from historical study and preventing greater analysis and understanding for future generations.”<sup>18</sup>

**27.** Another written submission from an individual stated:

“Removing heritage, however offensive sets a bad precedent. We cannot escape our history or the complex beings who shaped it. Retaining statues, place names and heritage whilst fully exploring the complex stories of who we are and how we came to be must be the optimal solution. Either pull every statue down (I am sure I can find something distasteful about any person in history) and accept that only the perfect should be commemorated, or accept we are complex

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<sup>15</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 47 – 3 December 2020

<sup>16</sup> See [consultation responses](#)

<sup>17</sup> See [consultation responses](#)

<sup>18</sup> [CWLC STAT02](#)

beings with a complex past and display the facts surrounding every person.”<sup>19</sup>

**28.** Richard Bingley, of the campaign group Save Our Statues, argued for the need “to understand the genuine breadth of public opinion out there and what we perceive to be the strength of opinion in favour of supporting the existing cultural heritage.”<sup>20</sup>

**29.** Sara Huws, of the East End Women’s Museum, expressed concerns that statues are being used “as a proxy to discuss political issues of the day”. Ms Huws said:

“[...] we are perhaps asking local authorities to take some moral stance here, but these stances have been made already. Go to any local authority website and there will be a statement against slavery. They will have dignity and respect policies. They will have equality policies, anti-bullying policies. The moral ‘virtues’ are already in place across local authorities, and statues, perhaps, shouldn’t be an exception in that, but there is also a very strong precedent to undo historic decisions. If you take as a comparison mature trees—historical trees in Cardiff—we know that they’re good for us. They have never been involved in slavery at all. We oppose their felling, and people make a lot of noise about that, but councils continue to do it. So, if you look at something like that that’s certainly a community asset, there is a precedent to undo these historical decisions across Wales as a whole. So, I would be guarded in treating statues as an exception just because they are so symbolic.”<sup>21</sup>

## Our view

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The outpouring of anger and protest following the death of George Floyd in the summer of 2020 has given new importance and urgency to the work of assessing the relationship between the past and the present. As a Committee we feel it important to reaffirm our rejection and condemnation of racism and intolerance in all its forms and recognise the need to bring difficult issues relating to our past to the forefront of the debate.

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<sup>19</sup> CWLC STAT21

<sup>20</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 216 – 3 December 2020

<sup>21</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 31 – 10 December 2020

In carrying out this work, we set out with the aim of taking a strategic view based on first principles and to shed a light on the issues and how they relate to Wales.

We heard polarised views, some of which are based on claims that our statues, and historic works are under attack. During our work we have not come across any evidence which substantiates these claims. Instead, we heard thoughtful, often powerful arguments around the need to engage with these issues collectively.

There is much in our history to be proud of, however, we should not shy away from addressing the more difficult questions in our past and its legacy today. Furthermore, at its heart there are important and sometimes complicated moral questions, and it is clear to us that the tone of the debate on this matter should reflect this seriousness and complexity.

Wales and the UK have not done enough to come to terms with the impact of slavery, nor considered fully the legacies of empire on our history. This report later sets out some ideas as to how this can be rectified.

The Legall audit of commemoration is a vital piece of work and an important first step in enhancing our understanding of how Wales' past shapes the present. It will also undoubtedly guide us as we look to shape the future. We note that the report identifies 13 commemorations to people who took part in the African slave trade in Wales today. Furthermore, we note the Welsh Government's intention to use the audit as a starting point for further work in this area. We agree that this further work should include a programme of community engagement and awareness-raising.

Ultimate authority for decisions relating to contentious statues, monuments or commemorations should rest with local authorities and communities. There are however some important processes and principles particularly around consultation and engagement, which we feel should apply and we those out in later chapters of the report.

**Recommendation 1.** The Welsh Government should publicise the work of the Legall Audit of Commemoration through a programme of community engagement and public awareness-raising.

**Recommendation 2.** The Welsh Government should leave ultimate authority for decisions relating to contentious statues, monuments or commemorations with local authorities and communities. However, there are some important

processes and principles which should apply and which the Welsh Government should provide leadership and guidance to local authorities and other public bodies on, which are set out below.

### 3. Supporting communities in determining who gets remembered

Communities should be at the heart of decisions regarding who gets remembered in our public spaces but we heard calls for greater leadership and a framework to help shape those decisions.

#### Engaging with communities

**30.** The Committee received a significant amount of evidence which called for meaningful consultation with communities on what should be done in terms of public commemoration, particularly in instances where there are problematic or contentious statues.

**31.** The historian Abu-Bakr Madden Al-Shabazz stressed that engagement with local communities was key and highlighted shortcomings in terms of the approach to the statue of Edward Colston in Bristol as a lesson for public authorities. Mr Al-Shabazz said:

“I do know, personally in Bristol, there have been debates with the local councils and with heritage—and all these other types of organisations in order for it to come down. And the local people of Bristol were not listened to. This is the thing—they were just not listened to. And many of the people in those seats of position were either voted in by them or whatever the case may be. So, there needs to be more moral responsibility taken by people who are put in those positions. And if they’re in the position of responsibility, they need to be in the position of accountably as well, not brushing it to one side.”<sup>22</sup>

**32.** Similarly, Dr Simon John of Swansea University, said that “what can prevent that kind of pent-up frustration with a particular example from reaching such a point, is, I think, if a process is clearer to a community of people about how they register their discontent, their dissatisfaction, or the offence that they take from particular monuments.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 163 + 164 – 26 November 2020

<sup>23</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 209 – 26 November 2020

**33.** Professor Martin Johnes, of Swansea University, also argued that the toppling of the Colston statue in Bristol “happened because the local authority did not respond, over a whole series of years, to responses from the local community to do something about it”. Professor Johnes added that:

“Maybe the best thing that can come out of this is instructions to local authorities that history is controversial and it is emotional, and people’s daily lives are affected by the way that their history and our collective history is presented, and if a complaint is made to a local or national authority, it should be taken seriously and listened to. That doesn’t mean that it has to be acted upon, because people will complain about all kinds of different things, but authorities have to listen.”<sup>24</sup>

**34.** Richard Bingley, of Save Our Statues, emphasised the importance of consultation with local communities in determining any action relating to statues and monuments.<sup>25</sup>

**35.** Sara Huws underlined the importance of consultation and avoiding “tokenistic participation” by the community in such activities.<sup>26</sup>

**36.** In considering the next steps for the Legall audit, Gwilym Hughes, Director of Cadw, explained that “the task and finish group members were very adamant that there needs to be a significant element of public consultation and the public need to be involved in these decisions about what steps we should take when dealing with potentially contentious commemorations.”<sup>27</sup>

**37.** Participants in the Committee’s focus groups felt there was a need for “an open and transparent process” when reviewing current or future commemorations and that every effort should be made to ensure “trust between participants taking part and public authorities”.<sup>28</sup>

## Use of criteria

**38.** In the terms of reference for this inquiry, the Committee asked people to submit their views on:

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<sup>24</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 163 – 26 November 2020

<sup>25</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 211; 216-218 – 3 December 2020

<sup>26</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 103 – 10 December 2020

<sup>27</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 52 – 3 December

<sup>28</sup> Focus Group Summary

“What principles should be followed when public authorities decide who should be remembered in public spaces? How should they consider issues such as:

- The historical significance of the person;
- The continued influence of this person;
- The national impact of this person;
- His/her Impact on his/her field;
- How this person was viewed at the time;
- Whether this person provides a good example to people today;
- The architectural significance of the monument;
- The impact on minority groups and views of the act of commemoration.”<sup>29</sup>

**39.** Views regarding the adoption of fixed criteria for judging acts of commemoration were mixed, ranging from those who supported the Committee’s proposed approach, to those who questioned the usefulness of such an approach.

**40.** In their written submission, Women’s Archive Wales endorsed the Committee’s proposed list of criteria and argued that decisions should be taken based upon “fixed criteria and common set of rules”.<sup>30</sup>

**41.** Councillor Cefin Campbell, Executive Board Member on Carmarthenshire County Council, was in favour of the use of fixed criteria although he acknowledged that this could be difficult because “our views of famous people are subjective”.<sup>31</sup>

**42.** Professor Martin Johnes, Dr Simon John, of Swansea University, and Abu-Bakr Madden Al-Shabazz all argued against using a set of fixed criteria for deciding

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<sup>29</sup> Link to the consultation page

<sup>30</sup> [STAT14 - Women’s Archive Wales \(Bilingual\)](#)

<sup>31</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 151 – 10 December 2020

who gets remembered. Rather, they argued that each act of commemoration should be judged on its own merits.<sup>32</sup>

**43.** Bill Jones, Emeritus Professor at Cardiff University, supported the use of fixed criteria in general terms while also judging each case “on its merits”.<sup>33</sup> Professor Merfyn Jones also supported the use of criteria to “guide people’s decision making” but cautioned against being “too restrictive”.<sup>34</sup>

**44.** Dr Sarah May argued against the use of fixed criteria stating that “having fixed sets of criteria implies a fixed response to commemorative space, and I think that you really are not wise to go down that route.”<sup>35</sup> Similarly, Helen Molyneux<sup>36</sup> expressed concerns that “the danger with any set criteria is that, (a), you lose the creativity in the process, and secondly, I think it then becomes too bureaucratic.”<sup>37</sup>

**45.** Sara Huws highlighted the example of Namibia which, since gaining independence in 1994, has been dealing with the legacy of statues of its colonisers. She told the Committee that “the phrase they have used in their rationale” is that “these are figures that are no longer of monumental significance”. She added:

“when we’re talking about what we’re doing with a statue, it isn’t about erasing history, it’s not about deleting these people. It’s to say, ‘Of course, these people played a role in history, but they’re not the people who we literally put on a pedestal anymore’.”<sup>38</sup>

**46.** Gwilym Hughes, Head of Cadw, agreed that the establishment of criteria “was undoubtedly an option” but that “much wider public consultation” to ensure that decisions are supported by local communities was also “really, really important”.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 144 +145; 149; 151 – 26 November 2020

<sup>33</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 22 – 26 November 2020

<sup>34</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 35 – 26 November 2020

<sup>35</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 94 – 10 December 2020

<sup>36</sup> NB: Helen Molyneux submitted her views in a personal capacity

<sup>37</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 96 – 3 December 2020

<sup>38</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 64 – 10 December 2020

<sup>39</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 59 – 3 December 2020

## The Blue Plaque Scheme

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**47.** Richard Suggett, of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments ('the Royal Commission'), stated that broad criteria and guidelines were already in use elsewhere in the sector. Mr Suggett highlighted the example of the London Blue Plaque scheme, first introduced by the Greater London Council and now run by English Heritage. Mr Suggett explained:

"There are three or four principal criteria. One is that the person nominated has to be reasonably well known, has to have some sort of public profile, public presence. The second one is really very interesting, and that is the person nominated has to have made a contribution to the well-being and happiness of the public. That's a very interesting one. And thirdly, the person nominated has to have made some achievement in his or her own field.

Now, they do rule out some categories. They're against tokenism. The person nominated has to make an achievement in his or her own field... Then the nominations go to a panel. The panel is composed of historians ... [who] sift the applications and then further research is required to firm them up, and within two years a plaque can be awarded."<sup>40</sup>

**48.** Mr Suggett suggested that the criterion of "contribution to well-being and happiness" while challenging, could be "profitably adopted".<sup>41</sup>

**49.** In terms of process, nominations can be submitted by the public, in line with the English Heritage's evaluation criteria. Any nominations that meet the criteria will be considered by the Blue Plaques Panel of experts, which meets three times a year.

## Guidance to local authorities

**50.** The Committee heard calls for guidance on how local authorities, who are responsible for maintaining the statues and deciding place names, should deal with commemorations of contentious individuals.

**51.** One of the historic individuals commemorated in Wales who has received a great deal of public interest is Sir Thomas Picton. He was the most senior officer to

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<sup>40</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 240 – 242 – 3 December 2020

<sup>41</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 264 – 3 December 2020

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die at the Battle of Waterloo and was regarded as a war hero by the people of Wales.<sup>42</sup> However, evidence of crimes and brutality during his time as Governor of Trinidad have also prompted a reassessment of his legacy.

**52.** In Cardiff, following a resolution of the Council, a statue to Picton in City Hall has been covered up while the authority awaits permission from Cadw to remove the statue entirely.<sup>43</sup>

**53.** Another memorial to Picton – an obelisk in Carmarthen – has also been the subject of debate. Cllr Cefin Campbell, of Carmarthenshire County Council, spoke to the Committee regarding his experiences. He explained that – in response to significant public interest – the local authority established a task and finish group with a broad remit of looking at racism, representation and diversity in a number of areas such as the school curriculum and recruitment.<sup>44</sup> In terms of the Picton monument, the local authority consulted with residents via a questionnaire and received nearly 2,500 responses.<sup>45</sup>

**54.** Cllr Campbell stated his view that:

“all local authorities, would welcome some clear guidance on how local authorities in the future should undertake consultations like this, or should go about tackling some of the issues around public commemorations and statues and so on within their boundaries. It is a bone of contention; it does raise a great deal of tensions for and against, so clear guidance from Welsh Government, I think would be greatly welcomed.”<sup>46</sup>

**55.** The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) similarly told the Committee that “how society commemorates historical events or individuals through public monuments is a sensitive and significant matter” and welcomed the Committee’s work and hoped that it would “help to shape policy in this area”.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Welsh Government, ‘The Slave Trade and the British Empire An Audit of Commemoration in Wales’

<sup>43</sup> BBC News, [Statue of slave owner Thomas Picton to be removed from Cardiff City Hall](#)

<sup>44</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 155 – 3 December 2020

<sup>45</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 141 – 3 December 2020

<sup>46</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 163 – 3 December 2020

<sup>47</sup> Welsh Local Government Association - Additional Information

**56.** Reflecting on the experience, Cllr Campbell also outlined some of the potential difficulties in handling such an emotive subject:

“[...] we had very many people of a military background writing to us. I know some of them personally, and I have great respect for them as individuals, and they were sincerely of the opinion that we needed to look at Picton solely as a military hero, and that doing anything to draw attention from that would detract from that military background, and because they had served in the armed forces, the navy or whatever else it may have been, that they felt that any slur on Picton was a slur on their calling as veterans and so on and so forth. And I accepted that as a sincerely held opinion. But, of course, what we argued was, well, yes, we have to accept that Picton was a war hero, but we cannot forget that he also had a different, more colourful history related to cruelty and violence against slaves, and that it would be unfair and unethical of us to ignore that part of his history.”<sup>48</sup>

**57.** The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip, Jane Hutt MS, told the Committee that the WLGA had been involved in the Welsh Government’s Task and Finish Group on Commemorations and have asked “whether we can provide advice and guidance, because many local authorities are undertaking those reviews”.<sup>49</sup>

### To what extent is (re)contextualization appropriate?

**58.** Views differed on the extent to which recontextualization should be used in instances of contentious statues or commemorations although most of the evidence did support greater provision of information alongside statues and other memorials.

**59.** Professor Deian Hopkin argued for much great contextualisation in instances of controversial or contentious statues through the use of digital technology.<sup>50</sup>

**60.** Historian Abu-Bakr Madden Al-Shabazz expressed his support – in instances where contentious statues remain – for “recontextualization with a true narrative”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 186 – 3 December 2020

<sup>49</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 53 – 28 January 2021

<sup>50</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 79 – 26 November 2020

<sup>51</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 142 – 26 November 2020

**61.** Dr Simon John, of Swansea University, highlighted some of the difficulties inherent in the process of recontextualization:

“Adding a plaque that explains who the person—if it’s a controversial figure—was; what they did that might be considered positive; what might be considered negative—again, this is a subjective process where things are up for debate. Do you say that Picton was a heroic warrior first or do you say he was a slave trader first? It comes down to that level. So, just to flag up, I’m not offering any easy solutions for any particular monument, and again I’d emphasise each monument deserves to be considered on its own merits. But, just to emphasise that each step and each solution offers pitfalls in terms of how you actually apply this process of contextualisation.”<sup>52</sup>

**62.** Dr Nick Hodgkin argued in his written submission that “where problematic statues remain, some acknowledgement of the wider contexts ought to be inserted - an explanation of the debate or the controversial history.”<sup>53</sup>

**63.** In the case of Sir Thomas Picton in Carmarthen, the local authority’s Task and Finish Group concluded that the memorial “should remain, and should not be repurposed, renamed or altered.” However, the Group did acknowledge that “steps needed to be taken as a matter of priority to reflect recent global events and reconsideration in view of the history of Sir Thomas Picton.” The Group recommended new information boards be “prominently placed” with information “encompassing his military career as well as his known links with slavery”.<sup>54</sup>

**64.** Jane Hutt MS, told the Committee that how we interpret statues and other commemorations digitally could be key. The Deputy Minister said:

“We’ve already mentioned the fact that we can now, with digital means, have QR codes and we can have interpretation. That was considered in the audit and you will be considering it yourselves in terms of what you do about existing memorials ... is it appropriate there, and if it is, is there going to be some explanation of the historical relevance in the interpretation. That should be certainly part of the scope of the next phase of work. Because it is history and we’ve got to acknowledge that it’s history, but can it be a tool to educate and inform

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<sup>52</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 186 – 26 November 2020

<sup>53</sup> CWLC STAT06

<sup>54</sup> Carmarthenshire County Council ‘Equality and Diversity Task & Finish Group (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) – Interim Report’, November 2020

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our children and young people and our citizens and visitors to Wales?  
But not just there on its own without that kind of interpretation.”<sup>55</sup>

## Removing statues

**65.** There was no consensus on the question of what to do with a contentious statue following a decision by a local community to remove it.

**66.** Professors Merfyn Jones, Bill Jones and Richard Suggett of the Royal Commission cautioned against removing statues with a view to destroying them.<sup>56</sup>

**67.** In response to a question of how other countries have dealt with removing statues Professor Deian Hopkin stated:

“But I do think that other nations have been far more aware of this as an issue. Germany, certainly, has been aware of this because they have had to face a very difficult and complex history. Some nations, unfortunately, haven’t actually faced up to these issues, and there are certain countries in eastern Europe that are slipping back in terms of their awareness. It’s important that we realise that this is a global issue. [...] we do have to seek examples of the best way of dealing with these issues, whilst realising that in all nations there is debate. In all nations there are people who want to preserve these statues and people who want to see them gone.”<sup>57</sup>

**68.** Some witnesses, including Sara Huws and Simon John, highlighted potential problems with relocating contentious statues to museums. Sara Huws explained that due to financial cuts to the heritage sector, museums need to be “very, very judicious in what they acquire”. Sara Huws said:

“There’s been a lot of inflated discussion about these statues, but I wonder, again, two years down the line, how many people really would want to see this? Would it be a headliner exhibition that people would be queuing around the corner to see? Would museum, library and

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<sup>55</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 46 – 28 January 2021

<sup>56</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 88, 89, and 91 – 26 November 2020; paragraph 289 – 3 December 2020

<sup>57</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 96 – 26 November 2020

gallery budgets be better placed—? Would it be more cost efficient to do something different?”<sup>58</sup>

**69.** Dr Simon John argued that placing contentious statues in a park or museum could be displacing the problem and drew comparison to the experience of Belgium in tackling its colonial legacy. Dr John said:

“[...]one solution that’s been put forward in some instances is: okay, when you have a problematic monument, pack it up and move it to a museum. In the case of Picton, just across the road to the national museum, that’s an option. What closer study, what closer critical analysis of this—particularly in the Belgian context—would show is that this just moves the problem to a different place. It doesn’t solve it. So, museums themselves, they’re not neutral, unreflective institutions; they have political agendas to fulfil as well.

A case in point is that, in central Brussels, there’s a 100-year-old museum devoted to the Belgian colonialist experience in Africa, and for a long time, this was a museum intended to justify and legitimise that experience. It’s only in the past few years that the authorities in Belgium have started to say, ‘Well, actually, this museum in itself needs to be decolonised.’ So, I sense the relocation-to-a-museum solution might seem, on the face of it, to be a good and appropriate proceeding. In fact, I think what you’re doing is you’re deferring the debate—you’re parking it in a different location.”<sup>59</sup>

**70.** Representatives from Race Council Cymru and Black Lives Matter both supported the concept of the removal of statues of “oppressors”.<sup>60</sup>

**71.** Professor Martin Johnes stated that he had “no problem whatsoever with a statue being removed or destroyed” and that “we knock down historical buildings all the time”.<sup>61</sup> He also highlighted the fact that “museums struggle with finances” and with space and “if we take down a statue because communities are offended by it, unless it has some great artistic merit in itself, is there anything wrong with just getting rid of it?”.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 83 – 3 December 2020

<sup>59</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraphs 184 + 185 – 26 November 2020

<sup>60</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 132 – 3 December 2020

<sup>61</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 190 – 26 November 2020

<sup>62</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 191 – 26 November 2020

**72.** Similarly, Helen Molyneux suggested unless a statue has intrinsic artistic value then public authorities should consider using the materials or money that could be raised from disposing of them to do better and more creative things.<sup>63</sup>

## Our view

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### Engagement and guidance

We received a wealth of evidence that emphasised the importance of proper consultation and meaningful engagement with communities in instances of contentious statues or commemorations.

In keeping with our view that ultimate decision-making authority should rest with local communities, we would argue that more could be done to empower communities to arrive at collective decisions relating to existing public commemorations in their area.

Local authorities and communities need more support to deal with these issues. We commend Carmarthenshire County Council for getting to grips with the issue in its locality through meaningful community engagement and note that other local authorities are undertaking similar exercises.

**Recommendation 3.** The Welsh Government should create a comprehensive “one stop shop” guidance document for local authorities and public bodies relating to acts of commemoration in Wales. The guidance should include:

- advice on best practice for consulting local communities;
- advice on participative methods for engaging ‘harder to reach’ and minority groups;
- advice on involving specialist opinion, including local historians.

There was mixed evidence in relation to the agreement of criteria for judging current and future commemorations. While some argued that such an approach would be unnecessarily restrictive, others argued that they could play a meaningful role in supporting public bodies to navigate these issues. Furthermore, we note that the use of criteria is already taking place in the

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<sup>63</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 119 – 10 December 2020

heritage sector, with the blue plaque scheme being one notable, successful example.

We acknowledge that there is sometimes an irresolvable subjectivity to judgements about the appropriateness of acts of commemoration. However, we believe that there are clear benefits to designing criteria that provide a good indication as to whether a commemoration is likely to be appropriate or not. Such a list could provide a “diagnostic” tool or checklist for use by local authorities and other public bodies and would help local communities to make decisions on who gets remembered.

In developing this guidance, the Welsh Government should ensure that relevant parties are properly consulted. One potential option would be for the relevant committee of the Sixth Senedd to convene a conference or symposium involving the WLGA and local authorities, heritage bodies and museums, charities, community groups and others to discuss these issues further.

**Recommendation 4.** The Welsh Government should agree criteria for inclusion in the guidance document which can be used as a “diagnostic checklist” by local authorities and relevant public bodies in determining whether to consult on relocation or greater contextualisation of a statue or commemoration. This checklist of criteria should adapt existing examples of good practice and should include:

- Whether the person is of historical significance?
- Whether this person has had a national impact or a significant positive impact on his or her field?
- How was this person viewed at the time and how are they viewed today? Do they provide a good example to people?
- How is this person viewed across communities – including minority communities and groups?
- Has this person made a contribution to the well-being and happiness of the public?

### **Removing and (re)contextualizing**

We do not think it is inevitable to destroy statues that are deemed to be contentious and are earmarked for removal from public spaces by local communities. Instead, in the first instance we would urge giving full

consideration to the range of other options available such as greater provision of information and contextualisation.

**Recommendation 5.** In instances where contentious statues have been identified: local authorities and public bodies should engage local communities, experts, and historians to agree greater provision of information and contextualisation. The Welsh Government should set out a clear policy position with regard to this.

There are risks associated with placing ‘toppled statues’ in museums, particularly in an era of static or shrinking budgets. If the Welsh Government agrees to support local communities in relocating contentious statues to our museums, then this must be accompanied by appropriate funding.

One alternative, and potentially more cost-effective solution, would be to create an outdoor park or public space where fallen monuments could be curated alongside information and contextualisation that deals with the contentious aspect of that statue or commemoration although the evidence received was inconclusive as regards the merits of this approach.

**Recommendation 6.** The Welsh Government should set out in its response to this report what assessment it has made of the financial implications of removing statues (in instances where local communities have earmarked a statue for removal) and how it will work with local authorities and heritage bodies to ensure they have the resources they need to undertake further work in this area.

In considering the role of our museums in this debate it is worth noting that there may be instances where contentious artefacts exist in national museum collections. While we did not consider such instances in great detail, we agree that the Welsh Government should ensure that our museums or national institutions properly consult with communities on the continued retention and/or display of these artefacts in line with the principles identified in this report.

## 4. Education and future commemoration

Opportunities lie ahead to find new and innovative ways of celebrating our diverse history and culture. The Welsh Government should take a lead, and work with communities, to celebrate Wales and Welsh life.

### Education and awareness

**73.** A significant number of witnesses commented on the positive “awareness raising” role of current debates around who gets remembered.

**74.** Professor Merfyn Jones highlighted the importance of raising awareness:

“[...] we need to raise awareness so that the wider society can understand the importance of the pain that many of these images create—but we need to raise awareness, rather than destroy statues. But, as Bristol has demonstrated, we may need to topple some of these statues in order to raise awareness.”<sup>64</sup>

**75.** The role of education was a key theme for the Committee’s focus group participants. One focus group participant said:

“I think to some extent a lot of this recontextualization actually comes back to education. We need to re-educate ourselves on what the whole idea is behind our commemoration. It seems as though we’ve forgotten, and it’s interesting that because the whole reason why we put these statues up was because to try and help us remember so that we would have a living memory.”<sup>65</sup>

**76.** Another participant said:

“I think they (the statues relating to slave trading) teach us about who we are as a country, our history and how far we have come as a country. Things have changed and I think it reminds us of the past and kind of gives us a warning that it should never really happen again. The minute you start just deciding to tear that away, you are not giving other

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<sup>64</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 26 – 26 November 2020

<sup>65</sup> Focus Group Summary

children and young people in society a proper education about history.”<sup>66</sup>

**77.** Another participant argued that “we need to look at our past, try to understand it” and that failure to do so “is dangerous because I think it will just breed more ignorance and lack of understanding.”<sup>67</sup>

**78.** Professor Merfyn Jones argued that the memorial in Caernarfon to the South African War encapsulates the complexity of public acts of commemoration:

“There were the two factions, but there is only one commemoration. So, the commemoration is there to the war, but there is nothing there to commemorate the fact that the local MP was opposed to that campaign. And that’s why some of these things are so difficult to encapsulate; you need the context and you need education around these issues.”<sup>68</sup>

**79.** Professor Martin Johnes argued that “ultimately, it does all come down to education and teaching people about things that happened and teaching people to ask questions and to think about the connections between the past and the present”. He also raised concerns that the new curriculum for Wales “doesn’t go far enough, and if there are certain things that happened in our collective past that we want every child in Wales to know, the only way to ensure that is to put it on the national curriculum, and we have shied away from doing that.”<sup>69</sup>

**80.** Richard Suggett, of the Royal Commission, agreed that:

“there is certainly scope in the curriculum for discussion about colonialism and slavery. But I think, more broadly, public engagement means some sort of public debate, and that’s what’s happening in Bristol in the We Are Bristol movement. Public memorials do, or can, form a focus of debate. Once it’s pointed out that a person commemorated may be controversial, then people do engage with that. So, yes, not simply in the curriculum, but outside the curriculum too.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> [Focus Group Summary](#)

<sup>67</sup> [Focus Group Summary](#)

<sup>68</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 81 – 26 November 2020

<sup>69</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 178 – 26 November 2020

<sup>70</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 257 – 3 December 2020

**81.** James January-McCann, of the Royal Commission, argued that local history needed “to be part of the education curriculum too, so that people are aware of the history of their localities, so that they can then have those discussions.”<sup>71</sup>

**82.** Gaynor Legall, Chair of the Task and Finish Group on Commemorations, explained the positive role of raising awareness for community cohesion. Gaynor Legall said:

“The consequences of the British empire are embodied in me; I’m here because you were there. And to help issues that are to do with cohesion, that are to do with identity and are to do with pride in your country. I’m very proud to be Welsh, and I’ve learned about Wales, the good and the bad, and I’m still learning about it and I find it fascinating, and I’m sure that, given the opportunity, others will. We need to help young people understand the way in which the world was connected then and the way in which the world is connected now. And I think that history is best when you learn from it, and so we need to—and we’re exposing more as there is more research. We find out a fuller picture of history; we’re not rewriting it, we’re just adding to our knowledge, and increased knowledge is only a good thing, as far as I’m concerned.”<sup>72</sup>

**83.** Uzo Iwobi, adviser to the Welsh Government, highlighted the duty under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to create a more equal Wales and that this required “a clear-eyed understanding of the legacies of the slave trade and the British empire and all it stood for.”<sup>73</sup>

## How we commemorate in future

**84.** The Committee heard many ideas and proposals for how Wales could move forward with commemoration in future.

**85.** One of the prominent omissions in terms of statues in Wales, was the lack of a statue of a named woman (although plans are progressing to inaugurate the first – a statue to teacher Betty Campbell in Cardiff’s Central Square).

**86.** Sara Huws illustrated the problem stating that “there are only three statues of black women in the whole of the UK—there are more named statues of goats

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<sup>71</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 260 – 3 December 2020

<sup>72</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 81 – 3 December 2020

<sup>73</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 70 – 28 January 2021

than there are of women of ethnic minorities.” Adding that only “nine per cent of statues in Britain are of named women.”.<sup>74</sup>

**87.** Professor Deian Hopkin compared the 32 named streets in the UK for Emmeline Pankhurst, and the 131 streets (three of which are in Wales) named for Lord Curzon who “fought against women’s rights”. He added “we’ve commemorated those who’ve opposed progress more than those who’ve advocated it.”.<sup>75</sup>

**88.** Professor Bill Jones stated that he had “a great deal of sympathy with the idea, criticised by some, that we should move away from statues of individuals and look at having a more artistic memorial, rather than a traditional statue, because that can represent more groups within society, rather than just looking at individuals.”<sup>76</sup>

**89.** Focus Groups participants suggested a wide array of individuals who would be suitable for commemoration including Aneurin Bevan, Luisa Calderon, Leo Abse, and Jan Morris. However, generally participants favoured the future commemoration of groups rather than of individuals.<sup>77</sup>

**90.** Many of the participants identified groups that were underrepresented and noted that commemorations are currently limited to one particular social class and group. One participant said:

“Usually commemoration is of white, non-disabled, straight men. We are missing certain social classes. We need statues of influential people of different races. Women who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. Disabled people. Positive diversity in all its facets in Wales.”

**91.** More broadly, Gaynor Legall told the Committee that in carrying out their review they found a range of people who are currently excluded from public commemoration. She said:

“One of the areas that we identified whilst compiling the audit and report was that there is no commemoration of people with a disability, hardly any commemoration of black people, and very, very few commemorations of women. Those people have been excluded

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<sup>74</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 52 – 3 December 2020

<sup>75</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 42 – 26 November 2020

<sup>76</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 40 – 26 November 2020

<sup>77</sup> Focus Group Summary

because they weren't included, and so, I think if we're going to develop something that is new, we need to address it from a new standpoint, and the standpoint of Wales as a nation: what we see as important, how would we like to commemorate those individuals, and to make sure that we don't exclude the people who historically—we're talking about bringing history into the future—have been excluded from recognition, never mind commemoration."<sup>78</sup>

**92.** Helen Molyneux argued that public authorities could think “far more creatively” about how they use money obtained from developers through the planning system for local good works (sometimes called section 106 agreements).<sup>79</sup> She also highlighted the example of Cartagena in Spain and the way in which Spain has successfully and creatively used art to commemorate its people, culture and history in a coordinated way.<sup>80</sup>

**93.** Jane Hutt MS identified the empty Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square and its “rolling programme” of art and commemoration as one potential model that could be pursued in Wales.<sup>81</sup>

## Our view

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To be commemorated with a statue, a plaque or memorial in our public spaces is a rare and unique honour. This debate – and indeed the findings of this report – show that the conferring of such an honour can be contingent and contested, whether at the time by contemporaries, or after time has allowed for further reflection or reassessment.

In thinking about the future of how we commemorate individuals in Wales, we subscribe to the principle that in many instances our statues have a “leasehold” on our public spaces rather than a “freehold”. In other words – what people at one point in time thought deserved commemoration is important, but it is not necessarily what people think is worthy of commemoration now. While we should not dismiss the views of previous generations lightly, we should also not think that the decisions of previous generations have a permanent claim on finite space in our public realm.

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<sup>78</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 57 – 3 December 2020

<sup>79</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 58 – 10 December 2020

<sup>80</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 59 + 60 – 10 December 2020

<sup>81</sup> Record of Proceedings, paragraph 18 – 28 January 2021

There are clear gaps and glaring omissions in who is currently remembered in our public spaces. Women; disabled people; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people; LGBT+ people; and others are rarely, if ever, represented. We would like to see this situation improve and draw attention to the fact that there is no shortage of ideas or public interest and enthusiasm in these matters when the question is asked, as the recent example of the campaign “Monumental Welsh Women” has demonstrated. We would also like to encourage the Welsh Government and others to give full consideration to other forms of commemoration beyond traditional statues to include public art works or sculpture.

**Recommendation 7.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to identify ways in which the current under-representation of particular groups can be addressed with a view to commissioning new statues or commemorative art works in Wales.

**Recommendation 8.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to identify suitable locations for future statues or commemorative art works of national significance in Wales to tackle the under-representation identified in this report.

Education and awareness raising of our history will be key to moving forward in this area. There are existing commemorative plaque schemes in Wales but these have usually been limited in scope to a particular locality or subject.<sup>82</sup> We consider there to be an opportunity for the Welsh Government (and its successor in the Sixth Senedd) to harness the energy and vigour of current public debate about our past and who gets remembered to institute a new, national ‘Plac y Ddraig’ scheme of public commemoration in line with the principles and criteria outlined earlier in this report. Instituting a “national conversation” on the initial tranche of plaques for such a scheme would help to further raise awareness of our history and how it relates to the Wales of today and the Wales of tomorrow.

The creation of the scheme should be accompanied by appropriate funding, with each local authority area taking part in the first tranche of commemorative plaques within a national framework overseen by the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government should also invite all partners, particularly local authorities, heritage organisations and museums, and the third sector play an active role in

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<sup>82</sup> Examples include: Blue Plaques | Visit Rhondda Cynon Taf, South Wales ([rctcbc.gov.uk](http://rctcbc.gov.uk)); [Swansea Blue Plaques](#); [Purple Plaques – Remarkable Women in Wales](#) and others around Wales

design and implementation of such a scheme and in moving this agenda forward.

**Recommendation 9.** The Welsh Government should work in partnership with local authorities, charities, and the heritage sector to create a new, national plaque scheme of public commemoration in line with the principles and criteria outlined in this report.

## Annex A: List of oral evidence sessions.

The following witnesses provided oral evidence to the committee on the dates noted below. Transcripts of all oral evidence sessions can be viewed on the Committee's website.

Date	Name and Organisation
26 November 2020	<b>Professor Bill Jones,</b> <b>Professor Merfyn Jones</b> <b>Professor Deian Hopkin</b> <b>Professor Martin Johnes,</b> Swansea University <b>Dr Simon John,</b> Swansea University <b>Abu-Bakr Madden Al-Shabazz</b> <b>Richard Suggett,</b> Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments Wales <b>James January-McCann,</b> Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments Wales
3 December 2020	<b>Gwilym Hughes,</b> CADW <b>Gaynor Legall,</b> Audit of Commemoration in Wales Task and Finish Group <b>Hadassah Radway,</b> Race Council Cymru <b>Nelly Adam,</b> Black Lives Matter <b>Richard Bingley,</b> Save Our Statues
10 December 2020	<b>Sara Huws,</b> East End Women's Museum <b>Dr Sarah May,</b> Swansea University <b>Helen Molyneux,</b> Monumental Welsh Women <b>Councillor Cefin Campbell,</b> Carmarthenshire County Council
28 January 2021	<b>Jane Hutt MS, Deputy Minister and Chief Whip,</b> Welsh Government

	<b>Uzo Iwobi,</b> Welsh Government <b>Emma Bennett,</b> Welsh Government
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## Annex B: List of written evidence

The following people and organisations provided written evidence to the Committee. All Consultation responses and additional written information can be viewed on the Committee's website.

Reference	Organisation
<b>STAT01</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT02</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT03</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT04</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT05</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT06</b>	Dr Nick Hodgkin
<b>STAT07</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT08</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT09</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT10</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT11</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT12</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT13</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT14</b>	Women's Archive Wales
<b>STAT15</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT16</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT17</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT18</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT19</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT20</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT21</b>	Response from an individual
<b>STAT22</b>	Response from an individual