# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Publication of the Arts Council of Wales and Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales Widening Engagement Action Plan** |
| **DATE** | **01 February 2022** |
| **BY** | **Dawn Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip** |

Further to my Written Statement in September 2021 ([Written Statement: Widening access to the arts in Wales (6 September 2021) | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/written-statement-widening-access-arts-wales)) I am updating Members on the publication of the [Widening Engagement Action Plan](https://arts.wales/resources/widening-engagement-action-plan-2022-25) by Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales and the Arts Council of Wales.

The action plan has been developed in response to three reports jointly commissioned by the two organisations in 2020, to identify how they can widen engagement with people and communities they consistently fail to engage in their work. Re:cognition, Richie Turner Associates and the Welsh Arts Anti-Racist Union respectively considered an area of semi-rural poverty; deaf and disabled people and cultural and ethnic diversity. They were published in August 2021 (<https://arts.wales/news-jobs-opportunities/widening-engagement-research>). Each raised challenging issues, not just for Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales and the Arts Council of Wales, but for all of us.

Our Programme for Government is founded on distinctively Welsh values of community, equality and social justice. We believe the arts and our wider cultural heritage should be available to all to enjoy and learn from and we are committed to widening access. I have therefore been very clear that the response from our sponsored bodies to these challenges must be robust, effective, and must reflect the priorities I set out for them in their new remit letters – including to celebrate diversity, improve access and participation for all, address all inequality and directly contribute to delivering an anti-racist Wales.

My officials have worked closely with Amgueddfa Cymru and the Arts Council of Wales to support them in the development of their Action Plan and I have met the leaders of both organisations to ensure they fully understood the priority placed on addressing these issues, by the Welsh Government as whole and by me.

I welcome the steps they have now taken to respond to the recommendations in the three reports and to set out realistic plans to take forward this vital work. I now expect and look forward to the delivery of the necessary actions set out in the Action Plan. The Welsh Government will support both organisations to deliver these actions, to help improve access to the arts and heritage throughout Wales.