

Natur Greadigol Creative Nature



A Memorandum of Understanding

Date: 25th of September 2020



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Natur Greadigol / Creative Nature

A Memorandum of Understanding

Aims and Purpose

This Memorandum records the understanding of Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales in respect of their common objectives, matters of mutual interest and general principals of cooperation. Through this Memorandum of Understanding, both organisations wish to develop joint areas of working and enhance the delivery of mutual objectives by sharing knowledge and information. It is hoped that this will help both organisations reach more widely, nurture creative talent and develop greater understanding of the natural environment, and the value that the arts can bring to, or generate from, this.

Background

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 establishes a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, to achieve the seven well-being goals. The goals, together with the five ways of working provide a shared vision for the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards.

Natural Resources Wales

Natural Resources Body for Wales (Natural Resources Wales) is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body. It manages 7% of Wales' land area including woodlands, National Nature Reserves, water and flood defences, and operates visitor centres, recreation facilities, hatcheries and a laboratory. Its purpose is to ensure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used.

Natural Resources Wales has a duty to deliver Sustainable Management of Natural Resources. This was defined in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 as "using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide. In doing so, meeting the needs of present generations of people without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act."

Arts Council of Wales

The Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. It is also a Welsh Government Sponsored Body and is the official body that funds and develops the arts in Wales. It is the official distributor of National Lottery arts funding in Wales. Arts Council of Wales' vision is of "a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life and wellbeing of the nation". It has two priorities that underpin this vision, they are:

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

Council has also defined how it wants the Arts Council of Wales to behave in the delivery of these two priorities:

- Enabling the Arts Council of Wales to work more effectively, collaborating more imaginatively with likeminded partners across Wales

Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales feel that there is a clear synergy between their objectives and are already working towards improving the environmental, cultural, economic, social, physical and mental well-being of the people of Wales. It is opportune to look at shared agendas and consider how collaborative working will support both organisations to better deliver against individual well-being objectives. The partnership between the organisations is important because:

- Nature is at the heart of Wales's cultural identity.
- The future of our natural environment is a concern to us all and everyone needs to be working towards a more sustainable and carbon positive way of living.
- The arts provide creative ways of engaging people and communities with the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, developing increased awareness, providing new ways of expression and finding innovative solutions to environmental concerns.
- Nature is an inspiration to artists, performers, writers, poets, musicians and makers, and is a platform for many contemporary creative practices..
- There is the potential to grow the reach and audience of both the natural environment and the arts for longer term sustainability. .
- Both nature and the arts can help promote wellbeing and improve the quality of people's lives.

Vision

Creative Nature is a partnership between Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales to build the relationship between the arts, nature and Wales's outdoor spaces. Its vision is for:

- More people, particularly from under-represented groups, accessing the natural environment and the arts in new ways, benefiting from the combined effect that nature and the arts have on health and wellbeing.
- More people valuing nature and actively contributing to sustaining its future through engagement in creative activity.
- Increased economic activity in key parts of Wales, where the benefits are most needed, raising aspirations to both sustain local businesses and artistic career pathways.
- A cultural sector that recognises the value of the natural environment as a platform for delivering artistic and cultural activity and utilises the arts for wider social, ecological and environmental awareness and benefit.
- An environment sector that recognises the value of the arts and utilises them and culture professionals to give a voice to underrepresented groups on important social, ecological and environmental issues.

Collaborative Working

Through collaborative working, Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales will aim to achieve the following:

- Support the creation of high-quality artwork situated in, and/or concerned with, the natural environment, offering appropriate opportunities across artforms.

- Support the development and delivery of transformational opportunities for artists and, through them, engaging the people of Wales in a conversation about the future of our natural environment.
- Support the cultural sector to adopt sustainable practices and mitigate environmental impact
- Collaborate on research that explores the combined benefits of art and nature on people's wellbeing, strengthening respective advocacy roles.
- Explore opportunities to develop new multi-sector ways of working by sharing resources, knowledge and experience (e.g. facilitating peer to peer learning and professional development opportunities).
- Share audience/visitor data to build an understanding of the current, and potential future, use of the natural environment for the arts.
- Produce a shared communications strategy for Creative Nature, enabling both organisations to present the initiative internally and externally.

Furthermore, Natural Resource Wales will:

- Where possible, make the public land that it manages available to the cultural sector as a venue, or resource for research and development.

Arts Council of Wales will:

- Advise Natural Resources Wales as it develops its programme of work (to include those projects it funds through the National Lottery), helping it to reach effectively across artforms and supporting the creation of a national, regional and local site-based offer.

Governance

To support the delivery of the vision through collaborative working, a cross organisational steering group will meet biannually, with additional meetings taking place regarding joint business and work programmes as-and-when required. Progress will be reported through existing arrangements, as well as through updates provided to the respective Executive Teams. Any joint objectives will be agreed by each organisation's respective governance mechanisms, taking account of financial constraints and obligations; and the delivery of strategic priorities.

Legal Status

This Memorandum of Understanding is a statement of intent to foster genuine and mutually beneficial cooperation, it is not a commitment by either party to allocate funds or resources. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed as creating any legal relationship between Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales but rather a commitment to work in sustainable ways to deliver on shared environment, cultural and wellbeing priorities.

Natural Resources Wales and the Art Council of Wales, as Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, are accountable to Ministers and the Welsh Government. The parties recognise that any relevant requirements in these legal duties and governance arrangements take precedence over this Memorandum.

Duration and Review

This Memorandum of Understanding is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorised officials from Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales. This Memorandum of Understanding shall become effective upon signature by the authorised officials from the Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales, as dated on this document, and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent.

Primary Contacts

Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales will each nominate a primary contact. These primary contacts will be responsible for encouraging a fluent and (where the commercial interests of the parties allow) transparent relationship between Natural Resources Wales and the Arts Council of Wales, resolving difficulties and monitoring the smooth operation of this Memorandum.

Signatories

This Memorandum of Understanding is made on behalf of:

Natural Resources Wales



Clare Pillman
Chief Executive Officer
Natural Resources Wales

Arts Council of Wales



Nick Capaldi
Chief Executive
Arts Council of Wales

Photography:

Cover top left: Egin, Vikram Iyengar ©Steve Peake

Top right: Fair winds and following seas, Dave Appleyard ©Janet Baxter

Bottom: Frank, The Jones Collective and Plastique Fantastique

©Studiocano.co.uk