

2019/2020

Organisational Report #4

Period covered: 1 January – 31 March 2020





COVID-19 Statement

Similar to most Arts and Cultural Organisations in Wales and beyond, Literature Wales' progress against its 2019/2020 targets has been affected.

Whilst we took the decision to close our offices at Cardiff and Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre and postponed any directly delivered activity which would have involved face-to-face contact, we responded to the uncertain situation in a manner which enabled a significant proportion of our services to continue to be delivered.

For example, in March alone, our **Children's Laureate's Weekly Challenges** webpage received just under **1,000 page views**, with equally impressive engagement figures on social media. @Laureate_Wales earned **42K impressions** and had over **2,000 additional profile views** than the profile's monthly average. @BarddPlant earned over **22.5K impressions** and saw an increase of **52% in profile mentions**.

In addition, the launch of our new tranche of **Writer Commissions** saw over **2,300 individuals** visit the website for more information, and **119 individuals engaged** with the application form. We received **51 eligible applications** and **will award 10 writers commissions** from a variety of backgrounds and stages of their career.

The start of 2020/2021 will see Literature Wales continue to adapt whilst identifying the most effective and sustainable methods to support the writers and creative audiences of Wales and ensure that **literature continues to empower, improve and brightens lives**.

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How to read this report

- This report is an amalgam of the **ACW Funding Requirements** proforma (which focuses on our three Key Measures of Success plus two additional items) and **our internal reporting requirements** on both the organisational impact and outcomes we hope to achieve, plus our **operational Measures of Success** and **Learning Points**.
- Whilst it focuses on **progress from 1 January – 31 March 2020**, it also offers accumulated progress since 1 April 2019.
- The targets featured are **for year 1** (2019/2020) of the 4-year lifespan of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. These targets represent our ambitions, linked to the projects in our current activity and operational programme and current demographic, political, economic and social trends. Some of our projects are dependent on sourcing additional external funding, and some may be adapted or become unfeasible during the development process. Some projects will be affected by factors outside our direct control. For these reasons, **these targets are a forecast of what success will look like and may be subject to reasoned revision**.
- The SLT receives this report plus another at a more granular project level which focuses on monthly progress towards project KPIs and project learning points. The Management Board can request to see this as required and may choose to do so periodically as best practice.

Highlights

Organisational

- **Literature Wales adapts and responds to COVID-19** launching new initiatives including Writer Commissions (10 x £500) that aim to provide emergency funding for freelance writers
- **Organisational Review** successfully completed under the leadership of the CEO with support from staff and Board.

Activity

- Successful recipients of the **2020 Writers Bursaries and Mentoring Scheme** announced and gained impressive support and encouragement from the sector. Out of 186 applications, 25 writers from a range of backgrounds were selected to receive support from Literature Wales.
- **Writer Training Days** in Cardiff and Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre were popular with positive feedback from attendees.
- The announcement of **Wales Book of the Year 2020** judges alongside the launch of the new Children & Young people's category.
- Ysgol Talysarn pupils and their families were welcomed to **Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre** for a St David's Day workshop.
- **Literature for Well-being** funded projects successfully delivered, including the 'Speak to Me' project celebrating creativity and social cohesion with Pontypridd residents and Syrian Refugees.
- FAW and Literature Wales launched an exclusive Cymru Euro 2020 Poetry Competition (postponed) as part of the **Children's Laureate Wales** and **Bardd Plant Cymru** projects.

Operational

- **COVID-19 Risk Assessment** produced with input from all staff members to establish clear and concise control measures to minimise any potential organisational damage. It will be regularly updated in the coming months.
- Updated **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020-2023** produced to solidify our Representation & Equality Tactical Priority as a result of various learning points during the past year.
- Literature Wales is one of five new **Client Partners to receive financial investment** from the Rhys Davies Trust following a successful funding application.



“Poems are to be shared,
they find the people who need them,
and the award has unraveled a wider
platform for my words...”

Alex Wharton

Successful poets selected to receive the **Rising Stars Wales Award 2020** announced and winner signed with publisher.



25 successful writers selected to receive sustain support as part of the **2020 Writer's Bursaries and Mentoring Scheme**.



Cwrs Ysgrifennu i Oedolion Ifanc 2020

Debut Welsh-language Writing for Young Adults course at **Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre** attended by 11 emerging writers.



The 2020 **Mentoring Scheme** saw 10 emerging writers attend a week-long bespoke course at Tŷ Newydd.



Wales Book of the Year 2020 new Children & Young People's category and judges announced.



Literature Wales offers **facilitation support** to new partner, Penguin Random House, as part of their 'WriteNow' Scheme.



Children's Laureates launch weekly challenges to encourage children to have fun with creative writing at home.



Aberystwyth News magazine features an article on the impact of a **Literature for Well-being** funded project.



Children's Laureate for Wales & Bardd Plant Cymru projects collaborate with FAW for children's poetry competition.

Organisational Impact & Outcomes

	Target for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
Organisational Impact	We will be on our way to empowering, improving and brightening the lives of our clients, contributing to their greater well-being and that of Wales' society, economy and culture	The first round of baseline results for our Longitudinal Survey 2019-2022 have now been collected, and the data has already presented some interesting findings. To summarise, nearly all clients reported increased self-confidence as a result of engaging with or delivering an opportunity delivered or supported by Literature Wales. It seems that the responsibility of having a facilitatory/ambassadorial role enables writers to feel a sense of “as a writer and a teacher on being invited to run a workshop”, alongside seeing their craft “in a more professional capacity [which has] allowed... the time to work on my skills in delivering workshops”.	2019-22 Longitudinal Survey
Organisation al Outcomes	Our clients will be on their way to having: ▪ Improved spoken and written skills ▪ Increased self-confidence ▪ Increased employability ▪ A decreased sense of isolation ▪ A decreased risk of, and increased resilience to, mental illness ▪ Exposure to new worlds, philosophies, cultures ▪ Increased ability to empathise ▪ Increased multilingual skills	In both surveys, half of the group had applied for new roles or had undertaken further professional development within 6 months of engaging with Literature Wales. In addition, since first engaging with Literature Wales, 8 of the 10 writers had submitted their work to creative writing competitions, won any literary awards, or published their work. Clients commented on their levels of creativity, with one in particular noting that their “creativity has definitely increased due to the opportunities I've had from Literature Wales. I've been able to improve my creative practice in schools and try out different workshop activities”. Those from under-represented backgrounds generally felt less included in Wales' culture and were the least likely to feel comfortable expressing their identities and participate in cultural activities. However, one client noted that the “Platforming Under-represented Writers Scheme has definitely encouraged me to have confidence in my voice and ability to give back to the community”. The participants have directly acknowledged the importance of the support received from Literature Wales staff members, with one client noting that “every interaction I've had with the staff has been encouraging, boosting and helpful”. Three new clients have been selected to participate in the Longitudinal Survey 2020-2023.	6

Organisational Outputs

Activity Key Measures of Success: **Participation**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
The proportion of Wales' population participating in creative writing has increased by 0.6 percentage points to 8.8% by 2020 , equating to an extra 20,700 people	The Arts Council of Wales Omnibus Survey on arts participation for 2019 will be published in April/May 2020. This may be delayed somewhat due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	As left.	Arts Council of Wales Omnibus Survey on arts participation
At least 106,000 creative participants and audience members engage in our activity annually	During 1 January – 31 March 2020, 14,300 creative participants and audience members engaged in Literature Wales' activity. Due to COVID-19, this figure decreased in March. Our perennial participation projects also came to an end.	In total, 82,435 creative participants and audience members engaged with Literature Wales in 19/20.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
At least 17% of our creative participants identify with one or more of our Target Client Characteristics	The Equality & Diversity form has now been finalised and distributed to a representative sample of participants . Due to COVID-19, many of the workshops have been postponed. We are in the process of establishing a framework to collect data from those that engage with our digital commissions.	As left.	Our project progress and evaluation reports and Equality & Diversity monitoring
At least 17 creative participants are directed to our writer development opportunities annually	A total of 161 creative participants were directed to our writer development opportunities during the above period. For example, an under-represented writer who attended a variety of Literature Wales delivered and supported events as a participant was encouraged to apply for our Writer Commissions and was successful.	During 19/20, 518 creative participants were directed to our writer development opportunities.	Our project progress and evaluation reports

Organisational Outputs

Activity Key Measures of Success: **Writer Development**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
We provide at least 140 creative and professional opportunities for early career writers annually	We have provided 70 creative and professional opportunities to early career writers . For example, 11 writers were selected to take part in our debut Welsh-language Writing for Adults course tutored by Bethan Gwanas and and Manon Steffan Ros in collaboration with the Books Council of Wales.	293 creative and professional opportunities have been provided in total. Our emphasis on early career writers as part of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan has enabled us to expand our network and knowledge of upcoming talent to develop in those that will represent our literature culture in the future.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
There are at least 5,000 unique page views of our online writer development information annually	Our online writer development information has received 10,659 unique page views in the above period.	In total, we our online writer development pages received 35,169 unique page views and 31,562 total page views in 19/20. This data, alongside audience demographics and interests, will inform the development of our Writer Resources and Information project.	Google analytics
A total of 4 young writers (aged 16-30) are provided with sustained support annually	75 young writers under 30 have been provided with sustained support from Literature Wales since January. This includes figures from the 2020 Writers' Bursaries and Mentoring cohort and those who engaged with courses and activities at Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre over an extended period of time.	140 young writers have benefitted from receiving sustained support from Literature Wales. Many of these writers have been identified through our Talent Scouting operational project, or as a result of our wider network.	Our project progress and evaluation reports

Organisational Outputs

Activity Key Measures of Success: **Wales' Literary Culture**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
At least 15 established writers and 17 literary works are engaged in high-profile projects annually	65 established writers and 21 literary works have engaged in high-profile projects. In February 2020 it was announced by the First Minister of the Welsh Government that Ifor ap Glyn, the National Poet of Wales, was a finalist in the Culture category of the 2020 St David Awards.	In total, 250 established writers and 244 literary works have engaged with high-profile projects as a means of promoting Wales' Literary Culture.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
We will collaborate on and facilitate at least 2 partnership and exchange projects outside Wales annually	We collaborated on 5 partnership and exchange projects outside of Wales. Alongside the British Council Wales, Welsh Government and British Council Ireland, we are collaborating on a multilingual event called 'Mothertongues' for the prestigious Cuirt International Festival of Literature. Originally due to take place in Galway, Ireland, the festival will be delivered online in April.	21 partnership and exchange projects outside Wales have received Literature Wales support in 19/20.	
Through our intervention, at least 2 commissions per year are awarded to established writers by other organisations	16 commissions were awarded to established writers by other organisations. We recently relaunched the GCSE Resources for students studying independently at home as a result of COVID-19. Since the initial launch in September 2019, the resources have received over 25,000 page views.	43 commissions have been awarded to established writers by other organisations.	
A minimum of 2 early career writers engage with our high-profile opportunities annually	23 early career writers engaged with our high-profile opportunities. We have seen a variety of budding writers respond to our Children's Laureates.	54 early career writers have engaged with our high-profile opportunities in total.	

Organisational Outputs

Operational Measures of Success: **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
70% of our data from our activity and operational projects is stored in our central monitoring & evaluation (M&E) hub	The data stored in our central M&E hub has increased by approximately 10 percentage points in the above period (from 55 to 65%). This is as a result of our new monthly data collection methods as part of the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. Staff are required to input data on a monthly basis. This includes postcode data for activity and tracking the development stage of our projects.	To date, approximately 65% of data is stored in our M&E hub.	Our project progress and evaluation reports and annual MARCOMMs survey
1 Annual Report communicating our impact has been circulated	We are currently planning the 2019-2020 Annual Report with financial statements, which will be publicly available in autumn 2020. We will also launch a soft campaign with headline data in early summer.	1 Annual Report (2018/2019) communicating our impact has been circulated.	
12 monthly and 4 quarterly evaluation reports have been produced	This is the fourth quarterly evaluation report. We've established a standardised, monthly internal data collection system after amalgamating all reporting requirements. From now on, public versions of the quarterly evaluation reports will be made available on our website. We have now established a simple format for the SLT to receive a monthly progress report during 2020/2021.	4 quarterly evaluation reports and 0 monthly evaluation reports have been produced to date.	
70% of new or perennial projects are pitched to SMT, and all reference learning points from our analysis	We are revising our pitching system as a result of the changes to our delivery programme due to COVID-19.	To date, 75% of the new projects we are working on have been proposed and discussed at SMT meetings.	

Organisational Outputs

Operational Measures of Success: **Human Resources**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
40% staff have attended at least 3 cross-team training sessions	No cross-team training sessions have occurred in the above period. We will continue to actively seek opportunities for our staff members to access a range of sessions that can increase professional development and organisational knowledge.	A total of 8 cross-team training sessions have taken place, attended by an average of 80% of staff .	Our project progress and evaluation reports
At least 2 staff have benefitted from sustained professional development opportunities (e.g. courses)	2 staff members are benefitting from sustained professional development during this period. Our Finance Officer is about to complete an AAT Level 4 accountancy qualification and our Creative Intern is undertaking a programme of training and business mentoring as part of the Arts & Business Creative Internship Scheme.	A total of 3 staff members have benefitted from sustained professional development .	
Staff job satisfaction ratings have increased by at least 7%	A staff well-being survey will be conducted after the Organisational Review and as part of the Staff Well-being Plan. This will provide baseline data for this target.	As left.	Company culture analysis as part of the Staff Well-Being Plan and the PDRs
At least 5% of our employees, volunteers, contractors and Directors identify as BAME and 5% have disabilities, and 1 of these is in a senior position on the staff and Board (pending vacancy availability)	11.45% of our employees, volunteers, contractors and Directors are individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and 3 of these are in senior positions. 3% of our employees, volunteers, contractors and Directors have disabilities.	As left.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
We will have worked with at least 7 volunteers	We have worked with 18 volunteers in the above period across a variety of our projects.	We've worked with a total of 81 volunteers since 1 April 2019.	

Organisational Outputs

Operational Measures of Success: Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre Business

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
Friends of Tŷ Newydd Scheme launched, and at least 30 new Friends join	Due to COVID-19 the Friends of Tŷ Newydd scheme, which will operate alongside the Friends of Literature Wales, is currently on hold.	As left.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
New specifications of works created by architects for urgent repairs needed on the conservatory	This is being discussed with architects, with the approximate fee forecast within the 2019/2020 Tŷ Newydd Works cost centre.	As left.	
2 bedrooms refurbished to a high-standard	No bedrooms were refurbished in this period.	1 bedroom has been refurbished to a high-standard.	
At least 85% of Tŷ Newydd Course attendees agree that their visit helped them progress as an author, and 90% state that they will return to the centre in the future	86% of Tŷ Newydd Course attendees agreed that their visit helped them progress as an author, and 97% stated that they will return to the centre in the future	As left.	

Organisational Outputs

Operational Measures of Success: **Governance & Consultation**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
Survey a representative pool of at least 70 individuals from stakeholder groups and representing strategic partners at least once a year	Whilst we achieved this target in December 2019 , additional small-scale surveys have been produced to capture the impact of our work on certain stakeholder groups. For example, 83% of a sample of organisations that received our sector facilitation support agreed that it contributed to stimulating new literary activity provision in Wales.	1 stakeholder survey has been completed by a sample of 85 individuals .	Our project progress and evaluation reports
Interview or discuss our work with a representative network of at least 15 Critical Friends at least once a year	There have been no Critical Friends interview during this quarter. The Senior Leadership Team will reassess their current network in 2020/2021 to identify opportunities to recruit new Critical Friends.	In total, we have met with 17 Critical Friends since 1 April 2019.	
Convene 2 Management Board Advisory Group meetings, 10 SMT Operations meetings and 1 cross-staff Creative Planning session annually	2 Management Board Advisory Groups (COVID-19 Emergency Board Meetings) and 17 SMT Operations Meetings (COVID-19 Meetings every other day) were convened. The March Creative Planning session has been postponed due to COVID-19.	In total, 5 Management Board Advisory Group meetings, 24 SMT Operations meetings and 1 cross-staff Creative Planning session have taken place.	
Share analysis of stakeholder feedback via monthly and quarterly evaluation reports, and reference it in decision-making	In the previous Organisational Report #3, we trialled including Organisational, Operational and Activity level Learning Points which were a result of stakeholder feedback . We will continue to do this in the 2020/2021 Reports.	As left.	Project pitches and meeting minutes

Organisational Outputs

Operational Measures of Success: **Sector Facilitation**

Targets for 31 March 2020	Current Progress 1 January – 31 March	Overall Progress 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020	Method of data capture
Directly deliver no more than 10 projects annually	Literature Wales is currently directly delivering 10 projects . However, due to COVID-19, we are reassessing each in response to COVID-19.	Since April 2019, Literature Wales has been directly delivering 10 projects in total.	Our project progress and evaluation reports
Support at least 20 partner-led projects as facilitators or secondary partners annually	We have supported 17 partner-led projects as facilitators or secondary partners. The past year has seen Literature Wales working with a variety of high-profile partners. For example, Penguin Random House approached in December 2019 to ask for support for their popular 'WriteNow' Scheme. We offered advice on working in Wales, the interests of Welsh writers and Communications support.	Overall we have supported 98 partner-led projects as facilitators or secondary partners.	
Provide funding and/or in-kind support to at least 150 individuals, groups and organisations annually	During the above period, we provided 193 hours of funding or support for 111 organisations or individuals . In February, our Programmes and Communications Co-ordinator attended the Scottish Literature Now event in Hamburg. Literature Wales decided to be part of the delegation to collaborate, discuss and broker and nurture relationships with our international partners; with the view to look at the feasibility to host, present or contribute to a potential Symposium on Welsh and Wales-based literature, in a similar format.	In total, we have completed over 953 hours of sector facilitation to 718 individuals, groups and organisations .	
Have stimulated at least 4 new self-run sustainable literary projects in areas of need	We have stimulated 3 new self-run sustainable literary projects in areas of need since January.	Overall, 17 new self-run sustainable literary projects have been stimulated in areas of need since April 2019.	

Evaluation

Organisational & Operational Learning Points

Organisational Learning 1 January – 31 March

- Due to **COVID-19**, alongside other Arts and Cultural organisations in Wales, we have adapted quickly and efficiently to a new way of working during these uncertain times in order to continue to deliver activity across Wales.
- The **well-being of our staff** is a priority for the organisation whilst we work remotely. Testing different modes of communication between staff members on a daily and/or weekly basis has enabled us to maintain a supportive team environment.
- A variety of stakeholders have acknowledged our increased **transparency in sharing frequent organisational** information with the sector and audiences. We will continue to publish our progress and share insights with colleagues and audiences and regularly seek ways to evolve our communications.
- Overall, 2019/2020 has been a successful development year for Literature Wales. We will continue to **pilot or support new activities and operational projects** to ensure we are working in the most effective and sustainable manner and reassess each project against KPIs to ensure delivery models are suitable.

Operational Projects 1 January – 31 March

- Producing realistic **financial scenarios** in response to COVID-19 is giving us a clearer indication of how we can best shape a new activity programme for 2020/2021. We need to make both financial and strategic decisions based on these circumstances.
- We need to continue to update our **COVID-19 Risk Assessment** to ensure we are clear of the potential risk and opportunities that may arise in the upcoming months.
- Our 19/20 benchmark data showed us that we underestimated our organisational outputs in creating our **Organisational Measures of Success**. We will use the figures to update our measures of success for the next phase of our Strategic Plan 2019-2023 to strive for greater success.
- Our Strategic Plan 2019-2022, alongside input from Critical Friends, Directors and clients created a strong foundation for Objectives and Key Messages within the **MARCOMMs Plan**. We will use this feedback as we develop an innovative and bold Communications Strategy for 2020-2023.

Evaluation

Activity Learning Points

Activity	Learning Points 1 January – 31 March	Future Actions / Recommendations
Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre	Although we took the difficult decision to close Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre , we were keen to deliver activity to remote audiences to ensure the centre stayed relevant and active. By surveying a sample of our audience to discover their thoughts, we gained an idea of how we could best connect with clients over the upcoming months.	We will use this feedback to develop and deliver new exciting activities (e.g. online poetry masterclass) to entertain, inspire and empower our audiences whilst the centre is closed.
Cymru Euro 2020 Poetry Competition	We joined forces with the Football Association of Wales to launch an exclusive Cymru Euro 2020 Poetry Competition as part of our Children's Laureate for Wales and Bardd Plant Cymru projects. This is the second time working with FAW and both projects have attracted heightened attention from audiences on social media and the press.	It would be beneficial to continue to partner with high profile organisations outside of the arts and culture sector to access a range of audiences and to boost our organisation profile.
Participatory Writer Call-out	Our pilot call-out for writers to apply to deliver Lit Reach projects or register their interest to work with us in the future did not receive as many applications as we'd hoped for. The call-out was slightly difficult to develop and we often struggled to be clear on both the short and long term opportunities we were offering.	We should closely monitor the applications and success of future call-outs to establish a clear framework of how talent scout early career writers and offer professional development opportunities.