

TABERNACL, ABERTEIFI / CARDIGAN
Cynllun Busnes /Business Plan



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Mission Statement

To purchase a vacant Chapel, Vestry and Chapel House on Cardigan High Street to create –

1. Wales' first designated poetry centre consisting of a poetry library, poetry exhibitions , which will include work by poets with association to Wales, regardless of language. There will be facilities to hold seminar, classes and discussion, both in -house and online.
2. Relocate the Public Library to a more central place in town and co-work with the Mobile Library ensuring that the poetry books use is physically accessible throughout 1783 km², Ceredigion.
3. Create a community hub where people can meet up and chat in a warm non commercial setting in the centre of town.
4. Combine the library with a place to hold cultural events.

Vision Statement

‘Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi, gwlad beirdd...’

‘The land of my fathers are dear to me, land of poets...’

The purpose of this project is to provide a focal point for one of Wales’ most iconic arts, its poetry – the first venue of its type in Wales. A home for the rich, diverse poetry heritage that Wales possesses. A place where every member of the public can walk in and be embraced by poetry, the beauty of its form and the history and knowledge it encapsulates. A library archive would be the basis of the centre, but letters of support from as far afield as the USA and Australia has shown the importance of an online presence. Digitalisation of poetry work is crucial as is the creation of online seminars and presentations. The pandemic highlighted the importance of online resources at a local level, it allowed those who would not usually be able attend workshops to access facilities at home. Online access to poetry, events, seminars, discussion groups will mean that people across the world can be involved And learn about the rich culture of Welsh literature. For such a thing to develop it must have a focal point, a home, and since Cardigan is the home of the first National Eisteddfod it is fitting that the first Welsh Poetry Centre resides in Cardigan.

The grandeur of a 19th century chapel lends itself to such a centre. Its acoustic excellence is ideal for the spoken word and the large arch windows bathe the building in natural light. The ground floor with its imposing organ is an inspiring setting for the library and the embracing balcony would take you on a journey through the exhibitions. The vestry is an ideal size to hold workshops and discussion groups and the chapel house would house resident poets who would use the facility to share their craft and knowledge.

With the empty chapel being located on the High Street, it is fast becoming an eyesore. Many people who pass by everyday have some links to the chapel and are saddened by its current state. The renovation of the chapel would naturally have an extremely positive social impact. Having Wales’ first poetry centre in Cardigan would instil a sense of pride in the local people and the area would also benefit financially as a result of increased footfall associated with such a centre. The advantage of such a centre would not be limited to the immediate vicinity, its creation would also enhance Wales’ cultural standing on an international level.

Background



Dic Jones, or Dic 'Yr Hendre' has been described as the 'greatest of the Anglo- Welsh , Welsh language poets'. Born in 1934 at Penygraig , a smallholding near Tre'r-ddôl, Ceredigion. After leaving school at 15 he spent his entire life toiling the land at his 80 acre farm, Hendre, at Blaenannerch near Cardigan. He was taught 'cynganedd', Welsh alliterate poetry, by Alun 'Cilie' and he won the Urdd National Eisteddfod chair on five separate occasions, a record to this day. He won the chair at the National Eisteddfod of Wales in 1966 with his poem 'Cynhaeaf' Harvest which is regarded as the greatest poem that the competition has ever produced. After publishing many books he received an honorary MA from the University of Wales for services to Welsh Literature. In 2008 he was elected Arch Druid, the first farmer to hold the office. He died on the 18th August 2009 and was buried in the cemetery of Blaenannerch chapel.

In 2017 the 'Hendre family' approached 4CG(Cymdeithas Cynnal a Cefnogi Cefn Gwlad/ Society to Sustain and Support the Rural Countryside), they had made the difficult decision to sell the farm Hendre and were looking for a safe location to store Dic Jones' library. A collection of over 800 volumes with a strong focus on Welsh language poetry, 20th century poets of the immediate Teifi Valley area. The collection also contains a complete run of the 'Cyfansoddiadau a Beirniadaethau' (Composition and Criticism) dating from 1926 to 2018. Doctor Rowan O'Neill was employed by 4CG to collate the library collection and to look in to different concept possibilities in which the books could be used. This resulted in Rowan and two 4CG directors travelling to the Seamus Heaney home place in Belloghy, Northern Ireland, the Linen Hall Library and the Titanic Experience. Rowan who visited the National Poetry Library at the Southbank Centre in London and a library being set up in the London Irish Centre. Other 4CG directors also visited MOLI(Museum of Literature Ireland).

As a result of these trips two things became apparent, firstly the location which 4CG had in mind wasn't suitable, being too small and in a bunkhouse common room. Secondly, there is a distinct lack of such centres in Wales, celebrating its literary culture, especially poetry. The lack of a suitable location resulted in the idea was shelved and the Dic Jones library was placed in safe storage.

In 2022, during a C.A.S. (Cymdeithas Aberteifi Society) meeting it was raised that the Tabernacl chapel was on the market. A few of the trustees knew of the Dic Jones library and the idea of the poetry centre was reborn. 4CG were approached and were really enthusiastic about the concept. It was decided to proceed with the following structure. As 4CG had greater experience in property purchase and development, they would buy the site. The building would then be leased to C.A.S for peppercorn rent. C.A.S would set up working group consisting of C.A.S trustees and members of the public to oversee the project but any developments must be approved by both C.A.S trustees and 4CG directors.

Appendix A- please contact uernant@yahoo.co.uk as file exceeds 5MB limit -Inventory of the Dic Jones Collection

Who are 'we'?



In May 2010 a derelict site came on the market in the centre of Cardigan. It consisted of a house, two carparks and Farmers Co-op Shop and store. There were rumours of out of town developers wishing to purchase the site for Social Housing Development. It was felt that losing such a site to such a scheme would have a detrimental effect both socially and economically. A small group of locals decided that the future should be in the hands of the people of Cardigan and went about to set up a cooperative organisation to raise money to purchase the site, and 4CG was born.

4CG stands for Cymdeithas Cynnal a Cefnogi Cefn Gwlad – Society to Sustain and Support the Rural Countryside. Over £220,000 was raised through a share offer and with a bank loan the site was purchased in December 2010. In May the following year the car parks opened offering cheap parking to encourage shoppers to return to the town centre. In July 'Jig-so' a children's centre moved in to the site and an Eco Shop opened in April 2012. Since then five social housing flats have been purchased and recently the old Cardigan Police Station and Courthouse have been acquired and have been converted in to a 40 bed bunkhouse which will be opened in Spring 2023. During this time 4CG have won many awards for their community initiatives including the TA (Town's Alive) Award in 2013 and runners up in the Great British High Street.

With its wealth of knowledge and experience in property development and community integration 4CG is ideally suited to oversee the Poetry Centre project. For a more comprehensive list of its activities see <http://www.4cg.cymru/projects>

C.A.S (Cymdeithas Aberteifi Society/Cardigan Civic Society)

History and Aims

In September, 2016, there was a day conference held in Cardiff of members of Wales' Civic Trust at which 22 Towns had representation. Kathleen Martin attended as Chair of Cwmdeithas Aberaeron Society but there was no representation from Cardigan, the town where the first Eisteddfod was held in 1176, and a town with huge maritime history, it having been the largest port in Wales in the mid 1800s.

On 14 September 2016, a meeting was held in 4CG office with town councillors, teachers, historians, an archivist, clergy and residents attending.

The result of that meeting was a decision to form Cardigan Civic Trust / Cymdeithas Aberteifi Society –with the aims of being bilingual, civic-minded and non-political.

It would be 'working with other community groups of all ages to promote pride in the town and its surrounds – its past, its present, its future through its heritage, history, natural history and architecture, to promote high standards in planning and to secure the preservation, protection development and improvement of features of historic or public interest'

An invitation to a public meeting resulted in over fifty people attending with 3 officers and 8 Trustees being appointed. CAS held its first AGM in February 2017.

Activities / Projects

We have up until COVID held monthly talks and town walks led by local historian Glen Johnson, throughout the summer months .

During COVID , when activities were put on hold , we had an annual membership of around 30 persons
Each Trustee took on board a project :

- 3-D map is being created using the knowledge of researcher Father Seamus Cunnane and members of the local U3A and senior school pupils
- The archives of the late Father Cunnane are being catalogued with the help of Ceredigion Records Office and County Archivist , Helen Palmer
- The Towns Finger Posts provided for visitors to the town
- Better town maps and information in the town car parks was undertaken , this funded by the Town Council
- Work with local group Small World Theatre to arrange workshops / organise / promote and help acquire funding for the Christmas Lantern Parade in December
- Help fund and develop an informative Cardigan App working with local communities and the County Council
- Rediscover the part of the Pilgrims way – Bardsey Island to St Davids – which passed through the area from Mwnt Church to St Marys Church
- Develop and place around town a series of traditional Blue Plaques marking places of lost historical interest in the town
- Celebrate over a period of a week the Bicentenary of the ship Albion, sailing from the port in April 1819, with 120 emigrants across the Atlantic to form a Welsh settlement in New Brunswick, forming a life-long link with the Welsh Society there.
- The latest project is to buy through major funding, the disused Presbyterian Tabernacle Chapel and buildings in the High St to develop a Welsh Poetry centre and Community Hub

CAS will be responsible for the day to day running of this major project, details of which are to be found in the business plan.

The Working Group

Sian Collins
Clive Davies
Ceri Wyn Jones
Joanna Jones
Meirion Jones
Richard Jones
Adrian Lawes
Kathleen Martin

Appendix B – please contact oenant@yahoo.co.uk as file exceeds 5MB limit

The Material

Wales boasts an unbroken poetic tradition that dates back to the sixth century, when Aneirin and Taliesin wrote their odes in praise of warriors and princes and in lament of lost battles. It is a tradition that survived the Norman Conquest and the Acts of Union, flourished in the face of colonization, industrialization and globalization and continues to tell the story of the people of Wales and of a way of life that is constantly changing. It has even survived attempts to extinguish the very language that is its life breath.

Wales can also boast that its poetic tradition has its own unique verse form, namely *cynghanedd* ('harmony'), a sophisticated system of rhyme and alliterative sequences that first flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in the work of poets like Guto'r Glyn, Iolo Goch and, most famously, Dafydd ap Gwilym. Originally the preserve of the courts of the princes and nobility, *cynghanedd* has over the centuries been democratized, as witnessed by the poetic community that grew around Cilie farm, just north of Llangrannog, in the twentieth century, establishing a tradition of *beirdd gwlad* ('country/rural poets' or 'poets of their locality') who recorded the comings and goings of their people in poems as finely crafted as those of the court poets of the late middle-ages. Notable inheritors of this tradition were literary giants T. Llew Jones and Dic Jones, and though it is not peculiar to South Cardiganshire, it is a tradition that continues to flourish here in the work of the excellent Idris Reynolds of Brynhoffnant. Like T. Llew and Dic, Idris is also a good example of a poet whose craft was honed and whose reputation has been enhanced by poetic competitions, like the popular *Y Talwrn* contest on BBC Radio Cymru and the National Eisteddfod, where winning the Bardic Chair or the Bardic Crown competition is still regarded as the highest accolade a Welsh poet can receive. (It was at Cardigan Castle in 1176 that the first national eisteddfod was held, under the auspices of the powerful Lord Rhys.)

The twentieth century also gave us a number of other literary giants whose work is still read today, still studied at school and in universities and still performed in public. From T. Gwynn Jones, T. H. Parry-Williams and R. Williams Parry at the beginning of the century to Gwyn Thomas, Menna Elfyn and Alan Llwyd at its end, the poetic tradition was both maintained and enhanced.

Until the twentieth century, it was a poetic tradition that was almost exclusively a Welsh-language one (Henry Vaughan [1621-1695] being a notable exception), but English-language poetry in Wales has been quick to make its mark since, giving us our first global poetic superstar, Dylan Thomas, not to mention the likes of R. S. Thomas, Idris Davies and Nigel Jenkins. Today, in an increasingly diverse scene, the voices of Gillian Clarke, Tony Curtis and Robert Minhinnick continue to be heard alongside a newer generation, many of whom are already well established, poets like Owen Sheers, Jonathan Edwards Rhian Edwards and Hanan Isa, not to mention Gwyneth Lewis, Samantha Wynne Rhydderch and Deryn Rees-Jones.

The 1960s and 1970s were decades of political and cultural awakening in Wales, characterised by the formation of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith* ('the Welsh Language Society') and *Plaid Cymru's* first parliamentary successes. This was reflected in the Welsh-language poetry that straddled the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, much of it inspired by the work of Gerallt Lloyd Owen and of the protest movement, from which emerged a more confident assertion of who and what we are. This period also saw the emergence of more and more women writers, as characterized in 2001 when Mererid Hopwood became the first woman ever to win the Bardic Chair at the National Eisteddfod. It was a period which saw poets, like the itinerant poets of old, taking their work to the highways and byways, touring the country, performing their work in public and reasserting the social role of poetry as a means of convening and entertaining communities. And, for all the exciting new opportunities afforded by new media, it may well be that

poetry needs more than ever to occupy public spaces, to be heard aloud, to be discussed in person, to be a shared and social experience.

The Poetry Centre

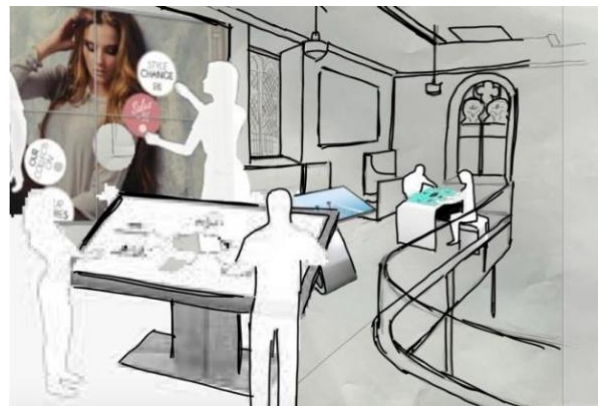
The Tabernacl is located on Cardigan High Street SA43 1JL. There is a large public car park to the rear of the building. To the front there is disabled parking and a public bus stop 20 feet from the chapel entrance. There are two entrances to the chapel and three small ante chambers at the entrance. Cardigan Town Council clerk has shown interest in renting one of these, another is available, whilst the third will be an office for the site curator. The main ground floor covers an area of 220sq metres. The organ will remain unchanged as will the pulpit and front pews. The remainder of the pews will be removed and taken to the furniture department in Coleg Ceredigion where the students will transform them into book shelves for the library. It is important to re use as much as possible thus ensuring that the area will keep its 'chapel ambience'. The ground floor will be open to the public and divided in to four parts.

1. The poetry library – using the Dic Jones Collection as its base. Some books will be kept under lock and key, others would not leave the building but can be used as research, the rest would work as a standard library.
2. The town library
3. Work stations, including tables, chairs, photocopiers and scanners.
4. A small second hand bookshop run by volunteers.

The bookshelves will be placed on wheels and when required can be moved to the sides. This frees up a space for a 180 seated event area. The impressive organ makes the area an ideal wedding venue and the vaulted ceiling gives excellent acoustics for concerts. It is widely regarded as the best acoustic building in Cardigan.



LIBRARY / BOOKSHOP/WORK STATIONS



UPSTAIRS INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION AREA

Access to the balcony level would either be the stairs or a lift located to the left of the organ. The pews would be removed and the floor levelled off to create an exhibition space of 135 metres square. The exhibits would be wherever possible engaging and as hands on as possible using modern technology to bring poetry to life, through digital interpretations and virtual reality technology. Our partners, Barddas and University of Wales Trinity would help devise these exhibits which would be changed every nine to twelve months. Preliminary talks have taken place with other home nations poetry centres with the aim of working together. It is also hoped to set up subsidiary poetry centres in Wales. A network could be created, with travelling exhibits from one area to the next, ensuring that poetry becomes more accessible throughout Wales, each group focussing on its own local traditions and sharing it with the rest of Wales and beyond.



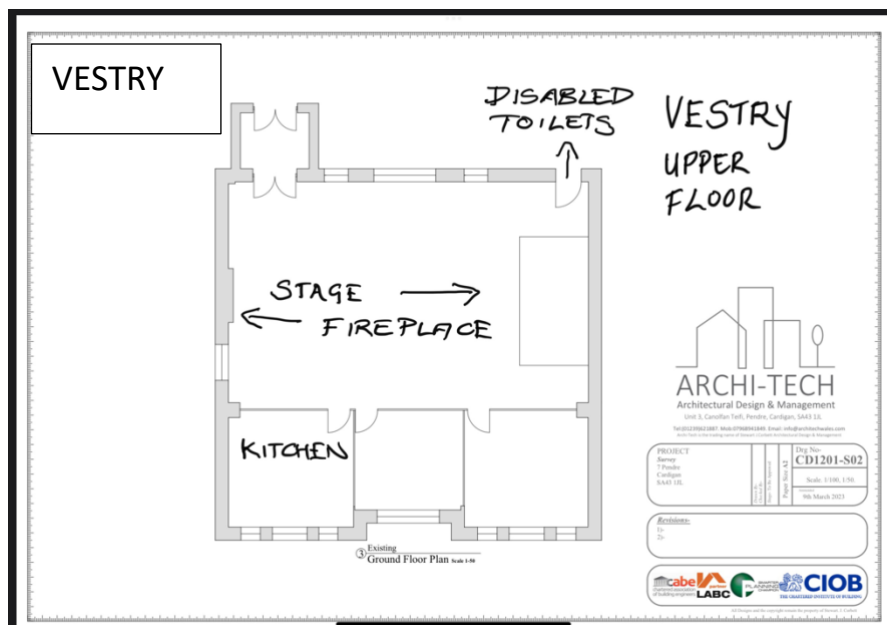
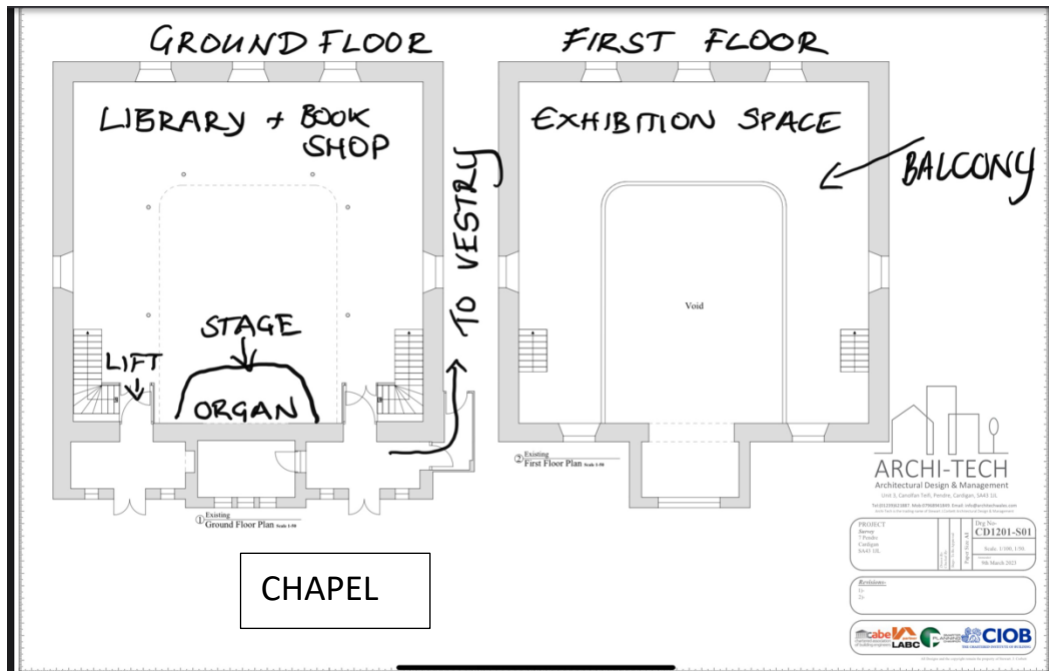
The vestry consists of three floors, the top floor is one large room, a kitchen and two smaller rooms. In the past this area has been used for coffee mornings during the day , and in the evenings it has been used as a rehearsal area for local amateur operatic groups and the Gwyl Fawr local Eisteddfod. During the recent pandemic it became clear that Cardigan, the second largest town in Ceredigion, lacked a community hub and the Tabernacl vestry is the ideal location for such a place. During the day it would be an ideal location for people and local groups to meet. It is hoped to reinstate the wood burning stove to create a relaxed atmosphere. In the evening this area would be used to hold poetry seminars, discussion groups with resident bards staying at the Chapel house.



These events could also be online giving access to people throughout the world. 4CG have recently opened a bunkhouse located 100 metres from the Chapel. This opens up the possibility of having weekend poetry retreats. When not in use this space could also be rented out.

The middle floor consists of a large function room, a storage room, kitchen and toilets. It is currently used twice a week as a youth centre for the Mount Zion church. This area again would be for rent with some groups already expressing interest. The ground floor garage is currently empty, Carnifal Aberteifi, in conjunction with the town council and the Town Decorations committee have shown an interest in renting this site with the aim and help of Cardigan Art Society of transforming the towns bins and benches into poetry inspired works of art.

The Chapel house is a small two-bedroom semi detached house located on Cardigan High St. During high peak times it would be rented out to generate income. Off peak it would be used to house a resident Bard who would give talks on their work.



STRATEGIC AIMS

This is our Strategic Plan for the development of the Tabernacl, Cardigan poetry centre. This will form our plan for business continuity whilst also adopting new outcomes and outputs, to reinforce and build on our successes. The four key strategic aims are:

Aim 1

- Continue to build unique resources of recognised excellence for poetry
- To build and sustain a national poetry resource for Wales, physical, digital and virtual, caring for Wales' poetic heritage in the context of an international collection.
- To be the authoritative provider of poetry expertise, with a reputation for providing a professional and accessible service to a wide range of users from academic to general public
- To provide a choice of methods and formats to access a comprehensive range of quality poetry resources in a changing technological landscape.
- To achieve a high profile as a specialist library in the Library and Information Service environment.

Aim 2

Enabling as wide an audience as possible to access the benefits of poetry by

- Creating a broad variety opportunities for people to connect with poems in their everyday environments and in changing circumstances.
- Acquiring and making our collection available through an attractive, varied, wide reaching and inclusive programme of poetry based events in both Welsh and English.
- To provide opportunities for shared enjoyment of poetry.
- To collaborate with other organisations to extend our reach and create pathways into poetry.
- To provide physical and digital platforms for poets to share and contextualise their work.

Aim 3

Nurturing creative language and reading skills

- To raise the profile of poetry in schools and to motivate children and young people to enjoy poetry and use it to enrich their learning, develop their language skills and facilitate self expression.
- To support teachers and school librarians across Wales to develop their capacity, confidence and creativity in teaching poetry across the curriculum, through access to a wide range of relevant texts and teaching strategies .
- To provide opportunities outside formal education for the nurturing of creative language and reading skills through poetry, including a variety of informal learning opportunities at the centre and online for people of all ages and abilities.
- To raise the profile of poetry, poets and specifically contemporary poets living in Wales, both within and beyond the formal education sector.

Aim 4

Engaging with the national and international community

- To build a worldwide audience for Welsh poets and an audience for international poetry in Wales.
- To facilitate international, in-depth, poet-to-poet encounters.
- To raise the profile of the Welsh Poetry Library nationally and internationally.
- Creating exhibitions which can also be sent on the road to enable a wider audience in communities where museums and galleries are too distant to attract rural dwellers.

An example of a poetry mural created with the local primary school in Cardigan.



Active Supporters

Barddas - Established in 1976, Barddas is the name given to the Cymdeithas Cerdd Dafod, a society that exists to promote Welsh-language poetry and poets, often with particular emphasis on works written in cynghanedd, the harmonic verse form unique to Welsh poetry.

It publishes a lively quarterly magazine (also called 'Barddas'), edited by prominent Welsh poet and musician Twm Morys who succeeded the prolific Alan Llwyd in 2015.

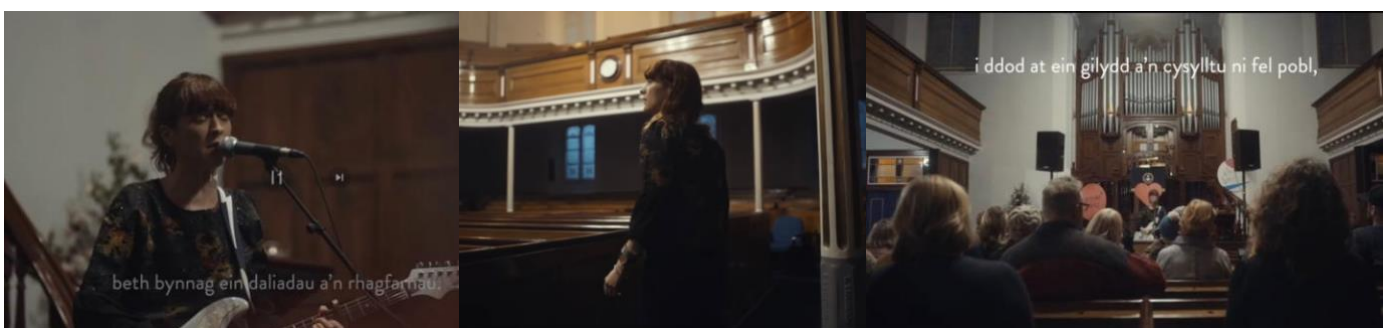
Barddas has its own publishing house, Cyhoeddiadau Barddas, the leading publisher of Welsh-language poetry in Wales, though it also publishes literary biographies, coffee-table anthologies and critical works. It puts on events like the annual, week-long and highly-popular Ymryson y Beirdd competition held at the National Eisteddfod, as well as organising an annual poetry festival, Gŵyl Gerallt, named after Gerallt Lloyd Owen, a major poet who was also well-known to audiences as the Meuryn (presenter, judge and jury) of Y Talwrn on BBC Radio Cymru between 1979 and 2011. Barddas has also established a fund in Gerallt's name to support young poets.

Whilst Barddas has its own podcast, it also helps, in conjunction with the BBC, to run Radio Cymru's 'Bardd y Mis' scheme (established in 2014), whereby, every month, a new poet is chosen to appear on a variety of radio programmes, performing new poems, often responding to the events of the day or the themes of the programmes.

Cardigan Town Council- A project the town council are currently looking into is to provide a speaker system throughout the High Street. The aim is two fold, firstly to provide a method of giving commentary during events such as Barley Saturday, the carnival and the lantern parade. Secondly, working with the poetry centre is to provide a public jukebox. This jukebox would be located in the Chapel entrance and would contain works by local artists both music and poetry which is then broadcasted along the high street. This would give Cardigan a unique high street experience, celebrating its local culture and giving artists greater.

The Book Council of Wales are partners as well as Cardigan College of Further Education.

Please see letters of support.



Tabernacl being used as a venue for [@othervoices](#) [@lleisiauerail](#)

Similar Projects

Research Trip to Ireland for Y Gair project (Tabernacle Poetry Centre)

In November 2019 as part of research for forming a Poetry Centre , a funded trip to visit similar centres across Northern Ireland. The trip also included meeting the staff and how these project/centres came together.

Seamus Heaney HomePlace , Bellaghy

Seamus Heaney HomePlace is an award-winning, purpose-built arts and literary centre developed by Mid Ulster District Council.

The HomePlace takes you on an inspiring journey through the life and work of one of Ireland's greatest writers.

Situated between Heaney's two childhood homes at Mossbawn and The Wood, and only a few hundred yards from St Mary's Church, Bellaghy, which he chose as his final resting place, HomePlace is at the heart of the area that inspired so much of the poet's work.

It's a place where you can sense the warmth of Heaney's relationships with local people and landscapes; where you can immerse yourself in the Nobel Laureate's literature. It has won a number of prestigious Awards since opening to the public in September 2016. .

The exhibition demonstrates Seamus Heaney use of language and how where he was raised influenced the words he used in his work. During the visit we met with director of the centre and the Poets nephew.

The Linin Hall, Belfast

The Linen Hall is the oldest library in Belfast , there since 1788. They have various collections which are curated, promoting the pursuit of knowledge and preserving our world-renowned collections.

The Linen Hall Library, Belfast, is a lead partner in the The National Collection of Northern Ireland Publications which collect every book, pamphlet, journal and periodical published in Northern Ireland since January 2000, preserving them for posterity and make them available for consultation by the general public., provide assistance with collecting and preserving the collection, and a dedicated repository has been set up within the Linen Hall Library to house the collection.

During our visit we met and discussed with two of the curators their work and technology used for gathering and cataloguing the collections.

During a Trip to Dublin in February 2020 and again in September 2022, representatives of 4CG and Cymdeithas Aberteifi Society (C.A.S.) visited the newly opened **Museum of Literature Ireland (M.O.L.I.)**

On the second visit met with Directors of the M.O.L.I. who shared details of establishing the museum, the challenges they faced with the building and funding and the technology for the exhibitions.

Web :

[Seamus Heaney HomePlace | Co. Derry | Northern Ireland](#)

[Homepage - The Linen Hall, Belfast](#)

[MoLI – Museum of Literature Ireland – A museum of literature for the world’s greatest storytellers](#)

Risk Assessment

1- The biggest risk is that the Presbyterian Church does not sell the Tabernacl to us either because it has a better offer elsewhere or decides on another ecclesiastical use. If this were to be the case CAS/4CG would be left looking for another suitable venue in the town. Such an outcome could substantially delay the project.

We still await plans of the building so that we can have conversion drawings made

2- The building survey could throw up structural problems of which we are unaware meaning that more money might need to be raised or that the expenses of remedying the problem makes the project unviable with this building. As the building closed in November 2022, issues such as damp due to their being no available heating needs further investigation.

3 - Grant funders approached might consider the project ill-conceived, outside their declared areas of interest or more than they would be prepared to grant. That would result in delays to launching the project,

4- Energy costs rise to such an extent that the project needs to draw up new financial costings

5- Potential tenants withdraw their interest leaving us with a shortfall in income.

6- Fewer volunteers come forward to staff the building

| Risk | Likelihood of risk 1-5 | Impact of Risk 1-5 | Severity Rating | Mitigation Action |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1.The Tabernacl is sold to someone else | 3 | 5 | 15 | Project put on hold until another site is found. Other alternatives in the town have been identified. |
| 2. Building survey shows major structural issues | 2 | 4 | 8 | Ensure sufficient funds are available. Possible rejection of site. |
| 3. Grant funders reject project. | 2 | 5 | 10 | Target a large number of possible grant funders linked to various elements of the project. |
| Building materials costs rise severely placing pressure on the budget. | 2 | 3 | 6 | Budget accordingly to recent trends. Ensure all work is quoted and contracted. |
| Energy costs rise to such an extent that the project needs to draw | 3 | 2 | 6 | Ensure correct budget forecasting. Insulate the buildings, walls, |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| new financial costings. | | | | floors and ceilings. |
| Potential of tenant withdrawal leaving a shortfall in income. | 2 | 2 | 4 | Create a good tenant relationship. Have a good variety of tenants and number of tenants. |
| Fewer volunteers come forward to staff the building. | 3 | 1 | 3 | Create a good volunteer relationship. Employ staff and ensure site is less labour dependant. |

Sustainability

Architects are tending to the view that re-purposing a building rather than knocking down and building anew is something that has a smaller carbon footprint and is less intrusive particularly in a high street.

The concept of a poetry/community centre has deliberately waited for an available building that could be adapted rather than building a purposed built centre.

Within the chapel buildings, it is planned to re-use as much of the interior fittings as possible in the creation of new furniture for the centre. Thus the existing pews will be re-purposed as shelving for the poetry books and pamphlets, exhibition stands and seating.

Coleg Ceredigion students will remove the pews, converting them to new furniture such as bookshelves and seating for the benefit of occupants.

As energy consumption in an old building can be high, part of the business plan is to use as much renewable energy as it is possible so conversations have been had with both the Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth and Deep Green Technologies Ltd about alternatives to the current energy source which is mains gas.

The advice from the building survey will allow a greater list to be compiled of what can and cannot be re-used. Where additional items need to be brought in, initial focus will be on local architectural reclamation yards and local suppliers thus lessening the transportation requirements for the conversion of the building.

In preparing the digitisation of poetry texts and creating animated stories from some, we are mindful that changing technologies might render the digitisation we create redundant in a short period of time. We plan, therefore, to seek professional advice on the creation so that we don't have to re-invent the wheel every few years but still manage the interpretation up-to-date.

Structural Survey

Appendix C – please contact oenant@yahoo.co.uk as file exceeds 5MB limit

Independent Site Valuation

Appendix D – please contact oenant@yahoo.co.uk as file exceeds 5MB limit

Community Engagement

Discussions have taken place with many groups within the community including Literature Wales, Barddas, Small World Theatre and Cellar Bards to gather their feelings on such a venture. Positivity and assistance was offered by all.

In addition conversations have been held with Ceredigion County Council and Cardigan Town Council. Letters from each supporting the project are to be bound in the appendix. From Crymych Community Council came advice on fundraising and it freely made available its plans for converting a chapel in the village of Hermon for social housing and as a community centre.

In Newport, Pembrokeshire, a community led funding exercise to successfully purchase the ironmongers in the village was watched and lessons learnt from that project have been incorporated in our thinking.

Other social organisations in the town and the adjacent hinterland have been contacted as well such as the Cardigan Community Bookshop which has agreed to donate books from its stock that are relevant to Tabernacl. The executors of Father Cunane's estate,(Parish priest and Cardigan historian), have donated all the poetry /literature books he owned to the new centre.

Community support

Initial reaction by the community and further afield has been positive. Please see **Appendix D** – Letters of Support - please contact uernant@yahoo.co.uk as file exceeds 5MB limit

The Tivyside Advertiser has published articles on the project and no dissenting letters have been received by the publication. An interview given to S4C ran in December 2022 also produced no dissenting voices.

Listed below are links to the media stories that have been run concerning the closure of the Tabernacl and our attempts to develop a poetry centre

<https://www.tivysideadvertiser.co.uk/news/23100957.cardigans-tabernacl-chapel-can-national-poetry-centre/>

<https://flexexamples.com/the-chapel-of-the-tabernacl-of-cardigan-may-be-a-national-center-of-poetry/>

<https://old.springnews.co.th/host-https-www.tivysideadvertiser.co.uk/news/23100957.cardigans-tabernacl-chapel-can-national-poetry-centre/>

<https://www.tivysideadvertiser.co.uk/news/23085822.cardigans-iconic-tabernacl-chapel-set-final-service/>

<https://www.westerntelegraph.co.uk/news/23091775.sorrow-cardigans-tabernacl-chapel-consigned-history/>

<https://www.tivysideadvertiser.co.uk/news/19701359.regrets-expressed-cardigans-tabernacl-chapel-goes-sale/>

<https://faithalivechapelstanwell.com/cardigans-iconic-tabernacl-chapel-prepares-for-final-service/>

<https://www.thenational.wales/news/19703400.regrets-expressed-aberteifis-tabernacl-chapel-goes-sale/>

Richard Jones promoting the project on National TV



International support

From across the Irish Sea, both the Museum of Literature in Dublin and the Seamus Heaney Homeplace in Bellaghy, have offered support in setting up Tabernacl. In England, the National Poetry Library has confirmed its support.

A Facebook page and simple website has been established and will be launched in conjunction with local press coverage.

In the March issue of the North American, Welsh newspaper - Ninnau,/Y Drych - an article appeared outlining our project. The newspaper has offered to carry updates on our progress in establishing a poetry centre."

Appendix E - see attached letters of support. This confirms that the support is not just from the local community but from further afield as well.

Part of the money derived from grants will be used to create a more substantial website upon which exhibitions, news and events can be streamed not just around Cardigan and surrounding towns but to supporters throughout the UK and elsewhere.

Ninnau Article outlining the Tabernacl project – March/April 2023

Celebrating the Spoken Word

By Adrian Lewis

In the Mid-Wales town of Cardigan, a group of enthusiasts are in the process of creating 'Awen Tabernacl', a Welsh Poetry Centre.

Why?

Because Wales has no poetry or spoken word centre. This is despite the fact that Wales has donated the eisteddfodau to the world - that unique celebration of poetry and the voice.

Since the dawn of time, poetry and the spoken word have been the method by which the deeds of our predecessors and our culture has been handed down from one generation to another. Up until the printed word, this storytelling is all that we have to show what our ancestors thought and did and, in the Celtic nations, those early recorded poems such as *Armes Prydein* are key to our culture.

We are lucky that the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth holds amongst its many millions of acquisitions any number of poems but its academic approach can deter us ordinary mortals from exploring our heritage despite the fact that poetry in Wales is not limited to what in England might be called the intelligentsia.

Poetry in Wales is as familiar to the ordinary person as is rugby and St David's Day.

Scotland has the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh and Ireland has Poetry Ireland.



Awen Tabernacl, Cardigan

In England there is the National Poetry Library in London and Northern Poetry Library in Morpeth along with any number of university add-on institutions but in Wales, a dedicated home is lacking.

In conjunction with Cymdeithas Aberteifi and a local charity, 4CG, we feel that Wales with its rich poetry tradition should have a designated poetry centre, especially considering every other home nation has at least one.

Why in Aberteifi/Cardigan? The town boasts a strong literary tradition with the first recorded eisteddfod held in the

town in 1176. The Lord Rhys invited poets and musicians from throughout the Celtic world to parade their skills as is recorded in the *Brut y Tywysogyon*. This key Welsh document is even believed to have been written in the county. And, probably the most famous of early Welsh poets - Dafydd ap Gwilym - is buried within its boundaries.

West Wales and the Cardigan hinterland has been a source of inspiration to many artists, poets, and musicians.

Small villages and towns celebrated their own poets with chairs and honours and,

although many of these local activities have been lost to time, we have already started contacting families with poet traditions to support us and loan the miniature chairs that were often awarded.

Awen Tabernacl would be the first location to try and bring as much of this tradition together and provide facilities to everyone not just academics. And what could be more fitting to have it in the town of the birth place of the eisteddfod, Cardigan.

The poetry centre would be located on Cardigan High Street, within the Tabernacl Chapel the town's oldest Nonconformist chapel and one of the earliest sites of dissenter worship in Wales.

That the poetic tones used by the dissenters in a chapel that we hope will become a poetry centre seems destined.

It would house a poetry library, exhibitions, digital interpretations and an event area. Poets can record their works with as many as possible being loaded and available internationally on the Awen Tabernacl website. Visitors wouldn't just hear the Welsh language as it is taught but as people use it so dialects and regional changes would be collected.

In the adjacent vestry, seminars, poetry experiences and discussions would be held by the resident poet-in-residence.

We should like as many of you as are able to send us an e-mail supporting the idea in concept so that we can demonstrate to the Welsh government and grant-funding organisations that the project doesn't just have local or Welsh appeal but international interest as well. Email us at oernant@yahoo.co.uk with your support.

The 'Hendre' family have already offered the loan of the library of the late Arch druid Dic Jones as a base for the poetry library. Preliminary links have been made with the Museum of Literature in Dublin and the Seamus Heaney Homeplace in Bellaghy, both of which have offered their support.

Support has also come from Gwyneth Lewis, the first Welsh poet laureate and Ceri Wyn Jones, a two time bardic chair winner. Local groups, councillors, senedd members and MP's are supporting our campaign as well as Coleg Ceredigion, who will undertake some of the alterations to the Tabernacl, and the University of Wales Trinity St David who will help with the digital experience.

A few moments of your time in penning an e-mail supporting us would mean so much to us as we try and create a unique centre celebrating Wales's most iconic cultural art - it's poetry.

PROJECT COSTS

Purchase Cost

£200,000

Renovation Costs – Estimated a year and a half to complete building project work.

Chapel - EXTERNAL

Scaffolding - £21500

Re-roofing of chapel roof - £38000

Overhaul of chapel gutters and down pipes - £6000

Restore windows, retaining stained glass - £6000

Replace defective joinery - £2500

Take out entire flat roof over entrance lobbies and replace and treat for dry rot - £2500

Carry out repairs to defective re-rendered areas to front of chapel - £15000

Chapel - INTERNAL

Remove dry lining to chapel lobby - £8500

Replace internal joinery - £4500

Carry out repairs to chapel ceiling - £1000

TOTAL COSTS

£105,500

Vestry – EXTERNAL

Scaffolding - £18500

Re roof vestry incorporating additional second hand Welsh slate - £35000

Overhaul all vestry gutters and down pipes - £3000

Replace timber windows - £6400

Replace rotten joinery and porch structure to vestry - £7500

Vestry – INTERNAL

Repair defective ceiling in vestry - £1000

Overhaul fireplace and chimneys - £4000

Replace render to right hand gable - £6000

Roof insulation over vestry - £2000

Electrical works - £6000

Heating and plumbing works provisional - £6000

Decoration - £4000

Contingencies - £20000

TOTAL COSTS

£119,400

ADAPTATION TO POETRY CENTRE

Additional roof insulation over chapel - £2500

Remove pews on ground floor and upper balcony - £2600

Supply and fit lift - £24000

Insulate internal walls of chapel - £18000

Form level balcony area with glazed balustrade - £25000

Electrical works - £10000

Underfloor heating incorporating air source and solar - £45000

Internal decoration - £20000

Contingencies - £30000

TOTAL COST

£177,100

Refurbishment of Cottage for letting purposes - £5000

TOTAL Cost of Project - £487,100

Startup costs and projection balance

| Cash flow by quarter yr | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| year of purchase | qtr 1 | qtr 2 | qtr 3 | qtr 4 | Total |
| Income | | | | | |
| house rental | 1560 | 1560 | 1560 | 1560 | 6240 |
| Mt Zion Youth Club | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |
| Crowd funding for digital software | | 5000 | | 5000 | 10000 |
| Total | 2060 | 7060 | 2060 | 7060 | 18240 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| purchase of buildings | 200000 | | | | |
| legal fees | 3000 | | | | |
| conversion/refurbishment | 100000 | 100000 | 100000 | 107000 | 610000 |
| Deficit to be covered by fundraising | | | | | 591760 |
| Cash flow by quarter yr | | | | | |
| 1st year of trading | | | | | |
| Income | | | | | |
| House let 50% of year | 2000 | | | 2000 | 4000 |
| Mt Zion Youth Club | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |
| Cardigan Town Clerk rent | 845 | 845 | 845 | 845 | 3380 |
| Friends subscription 250 @£20 | 2000 | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 5000 |
| Founders subscription 200 @£50 | 5000 | 2500 | 1250 | 1250 | 10000 |
| Exhibition | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 8000 |
| Events | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 5000 |
| Venue hire | 500 | 1000 | 500 | 500 | 2500 |
| Poetry Class | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 4000 |
| Town Council Grants eg library support | | 1000 | | 1000 | 2000 |
| other grants for events | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 1500 | 5000 |
| Vestry tenant rental | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | | 6000 |
| | | | | | 56880 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Energy & maintenance | 3125 | 3125 | 3125 | 3125 | 12500 |
| Insurance - liability/buildings | 1000 | | | | 1000 |
| Curator | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 40000 |
| Curator travel and expenses | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |
| Exhibition costs | 2500 | 1000 | 750 | 750 | 5000 |
| Digital support/creation costs | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 10000 |
| | | | | | 70500 |
| Deficit to be covered by fundraising | | | | | 13620 |
| Cash flow by quarter yr | | | | | |
| 2nd year of trading | | | | | |
| Income | | | | | |
| House let 50% of year | 2000 | | | 2000 | 4000 |
| Mt Zion Youth Club | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Cardigan Town Clerk rent | 845 | 845 | 845 | 845 | 3380 |
| Friends subscription 300 @£20 | 5000 | 400 | 300 | 300 | 6000 |
| Founders subscription 240@£50 | 9000 | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 12000 |
| Exhibition | 3000 | 3500 | 3000 | 3000 | 12500 |
| Events | 2000 | 2000 | 1400 | 1400 | 6800 |
| Venue hire | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 5000 |
| Poetry Class | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | 6000 |
| Town Council Grants eg library support | | 1000 | | 1000 | 2000 |
| other grants for events | 1250 | 1250 | 1250 | 1500 | 5000 |
| Vestry tenant rental | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | | 6000 |
| | | | | | 70680 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Energy & maintenance | 3750 | 3750 | 3750 | 3750 | 15000 |
| Insurance - liability/buildings | 1000 | | | | 1000 |
| Curator | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 40000 |
| Curator travel and expenses | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |
| Exhibition costs | 2500 | 1000 | 750 | 750 | 5000 |
| Digital support/creation costs | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 10000 |
| | | | | | 73000 |
| Deficit to be covered by fundraising | | | | | 2320 |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Cash flow by quarter yr | | | | | |
| 3rd year of trading | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Income | | | | | |
| House let 50% of year | 2000 | | | 2000 | 4000 |
| Mt Zion Youth Club | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2000 |
| Cardigan Town Clerk rent | 845 | 845 | 845 | 845 | 3380 |
| Friends subscription 360 @£20 | 6000 | 400 | 400 | 400 | 7200 |
| Founders subscription 300@£50 | 12000 | 1000 | 1000 | 1000 | 15000 |
| Exhibition | 3000 | 3500 | 3000 | 3000 | 12500 |
| Events | 2000 | 2000 | 1500 | 1500 | 8000 |
| Venue hire | 1500 | 1500 | 1250 | 1250 | 6000 |
| Poetry Class | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | 1500 | 6000 |
| Town Council Grants eg library support | | 1000 | | 1000 | 2000 |
| other grants for events | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 3000 |
| Vestry tenant rental | 1500 | 1500 | 1800 | 1800 | 6600 |
| | | | | | 75680 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Energy & maintenance | 4250 | 4250 | 4250 | 4250 | 17000 |
| Insurance - liability/buildings | 1000 | | | | 1000 |
| Curator | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 40000 |
| Curator travel and expenses | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 | 3000 |
| Exhibition costs | 2500 | 1000 | 750 | 750 | 5000 |
| Digital support/creation costs | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 | 10000 |
| | | | | | 76000 |
| Deficit to be covered by fundraising | | | | | 320 |

N.B

We should see growth between year two and three because we will be in a better position to forecast increase, working and developing areas that are more profitable, as well as a better understanding of our costs. As further insurance to help the project grow, crowdfunding could be introduced in year 2 and 3 to generate another £5000 per annum.

Possible grants

Cynnal y Cardi have granted us funding for a feasibility study with 4CG agreeing to loan us the shortfall. This and the crowdfunding project mentioned above, will also allow for a building survey to take place as well.

For the purchase, building alterations and running costs, the following grant funders have been identified as potential funding providers.

Community Ownership Fund - a UK wide fund set up to help communities take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of closure, It will run until 2024/5 but communities would need a strong case as to why an asset should be bought.

Community Renewal Fund - levelling up fund by investing in people, places, businesses and communities improving everyday life across the UK.

Community Facilities Programme - grants can be up to £300,000. It is a rolling capital grant scheme. Grants must be used to fund the purchase and/or physical improvements to community facilities. No grant greater than £300,000 in any three-year period.

Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) promotes the conservation of historic buildings by providing advice, information and financial assistance in the form of development grants and large low-interest loans to charities and other not-for-profit organisations, for projects involving the sustainable new use of a building which is listed, scheduled or in a conservation area.

Khoo Teck Puot UK Foundation - Among its aims is the promotion and advancement of the arts, culture or science; an outside choice but grant requests seem to have been few and far between and during COVID so funds have grown.

National Lottery Grants for Heritage - (up to €250,000 by delegated process monthly otherwise by committee if more needed.)
Building conversion

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation donated £180k for Manchester Poetry Centre and has supported poetry prizes.

Bloomberg Philanthropies - helps cultural centres stay up to date with relevant new technology — such as audio guides, mobile apps, and location-aware navigational tools — to transform the visitor experience which fits our plan to provide poetry and exhibitions to a wider audience in wales and elsewhere through digital interpretations.

Curatorial Activities

John Ellerman Foundation - average grant £90,000 and grant can be spread over a

number of years. Applications must show a minimum income level before consideration can be given.

Idlewild Trust for curatorial support as it supports young people entering heritage/arts jobs

Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Ideas and Pioneers Fund -grants of up to €15,000 to support applications that focus on early stages of exploring ideas

Heritage Innovation Fund; up to £25,000 to scope new ways of providing services.

Scottish Power Foundation - Grants between £35,000 and £250,000 To protect and safeguard artistic and cultural heritage and supporting local development. plans to widen geographic area for grants.

GC Gibson Charitable Trust may be suitable for the presentation of the Ballad of the Albion as a one off grant as it has a marine heritage behind its donations.

Literature Wales - to help in the recording of works by poets.

Heritage Lottery Fund - Sharing Heritage (grants between £3,000 to £10,000) for any not-for-profit group wanting to explore, share and celebrate their community's heritage. Forward Arts Foundation promotes public knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of poetry in the UK and Ireland. Programmes include National Poetry Day, the Forward Prizes for Poetry and the Forward Book of Poetry, an annual anthology of the year's best poems.

Historic Buildings Maintenance and Repair Capital Grant Programme - assistance towards the maintenance and repair of historic community assets, such as village and community halls, institutes and libraries. A grant of 75% of grant eligible works up to a maximum of £25,000 per property is available for a range of small scale maintenance and repairs

Conclusion

This project is designed to give the poetry of Wales a home, a place that is accessible to all and a place where people can come to learn, study or just enjoy Wales's most iconic art, its poetry.

Locating it in Cardigan, the birthplace of the National Eisteddfod, would enhance the identity of Cardigan's cultural heritage, whilst serving as an additional tourist attraction to the town thus supporting a coastal community which like others throughout Wales has suffered declining fortunes over the years. It would also provide an indoor attraction sadly lacking in the town in the periods of inclement weather as well as an out-of-season attraction.

Having this project located in the town centre would effectively support the economic community of largely independent traders and allow the exploration of new ways of providing non-statutory local services.

It is hoped the final centre structure will allow the creation of the first community space in Cardigan, currently there are very few in the town.

Using digital technology will enhance the visitor experience and provide better engagement but Tabernacl will bring more than poetry centre to Cardigan.

Using digital technology will enhance the visitor experience and provide better engagement in the town but, just as importantly, it will provide the opportunity to take the experiences to other parts of Wales in conjunction with streaming technologies and other community buildings throughout Wales.