

A Library for Wales and the World

—Strategic Plan 2021-26



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd
ar gael yn y Gymraeg.

This document is also
available in Welsh.



_Foreword

This strategic plan will take us from 2021 through to 2026. It is an ambitious plan that provides a clear, coordinated and prioritised focus and direction for everyone involved in the organisation over the next five years.

Regardless of the significant progress made over the years, we enter this new chapter with hunger and determination to achieve even more. Our plan points to a future where we will continue to use our unique range of skills and expertise to cultivate and care for the nation's memory, lay the foundation for a knowledge economy, empower learning and research, and be at the heart of national life.

We will achieve our ambitions through our commitment to be an open, innovative and progressive organisation. This is the only way we'll create a library for Wales and the world.

At a time of immense challenge but tremendous opportunity, we are fortunate to have our rich history and culture and a clear sense of purpose as the bedrock of this plan. The National Library of Wales is home to a significant part of the nation's memory. It is both a vast reservoir of knowledge and a

centre point for activity that empowers the people of Wales with a deep awareness of their past, an understanding of the present, and inspiration to shape their future.

Our plan reinforces what already makes the National Library of Wales distinctive: our approach to celebrating diversity of the Welsh experience, our commitment to social responsibility, our scale and breadth, a culture of collaboration and innovation, and our unrivalled location.

We enter this new strategic cycle with the realisation that we will, of course, be agile and adaptable to external change. While the plan is broad in its scope, we will hold on to the clear objectives and ambitions outlined in this document. This unwavering commitment will help ensure that we move closer to realising our long-term vision of delivering change for the better for everyone in Wales.

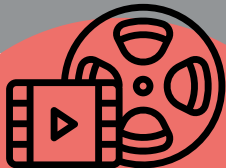





60,000
works of art



1,500,000
maps



2,134,000
metres of
film



950,000
photographs



150,000
hours of
sound

1,900
cubic meters of
archives – that
means around
25,000
individual collections



6,000,000
books and
newspapers



40,000
manuscripts



_Our journey

This strategy builds on the success of the last five years and the ten-year vision that was presented in **The Nation's Memory: Informing the Future: 2017-2021 strategic plan.**

We have witnessed a number of notable achievements during this time, including:

- **Over 6.1 million visits** to our websites and online resources between **April 2017** and **October 2020**, and an increase of **57%** between **April 2017** and **April 2020**.
- A substantial increase in the collections available digitally, by digitising physical materials, collecting e-publications and archiving websites. A total of **7 million digitised items** are now available through our newly-designed catalogue.
- An **award-winning** volunteer programme enriched our collections and, more importantly, transferring new skills and confidence to participants.
- The Places of Wales website to share the work of more than **1,300 volunteers** who contributed to the Cynefin tithe map project and a platform for future crowdsourcing projects.
- Our contribution to Welsh Government's Wales Remembers programme to commemorate the centenary of the First World War and collaboration with the Wales at Peace project to digitise and transcribe the Welsh National Book of Remembrance.
- Sharing more than **17,000 digital objects** on Wikicommons, which led to their use in Wikipedia articles in **185 languages worldwide** which were viewed around **18 million times** a month in **2020**.
- Securing funding for the establishment of a National Broadcast Archive for Wales, the **first of its kind in the UK**.

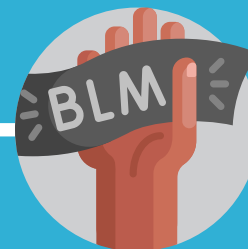


_A changing world

This strategic plan has been developed at a time of profound change and consideration will need to be given to the following factors if we are to achieve the vision and objectives.

- The direct impact of grant funding on our capacity and services and the increased importance of income generation and fundraising
- Changes to higher education in Wales and opportunities to support digital scholarship
- The introduction of the pioneering new Curriculum for Wales in schools throughout Wales
- Our response to the Black Lives Matter movement and the need for inclusion and diversity in our collections and activities
- The UK's exit from the European Union and the importance of international relations
- Climate change and our contribution to environmental sustainability
- The economic challenge caused by the global pandemic and its far-reaching consequences.
- The impact of Covid-19 on people's health, income, job security and social contacts.
- New digital technologies, the challenges they present and the opportunities they offer in collecting, preserving and giving access to knowledge
- Low social mobility by international standards
- Advances in technology and the changing nature of work.

To respond effectively to these challenges, we will need resilience, agility and the drive to change for the better.



_How we formed our strategic plan

In 2020, the National Library of Wales set about developing a clear and ambitious plan. This strategic plan was developed following extensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders.

Following the launch of our Strategic Vision 2021-26 and the accompanying call for contributions, we received written feedback and facilitated a series of workshops with stakeholders.

The National Library of Wales also welcomed the independent Tailored review which involved a thorough and detailed analysis of the state of play and the challenges faced by the organisation.

The review was facilitated by Welsh Government and outlined clear recommendations. These recommendations have informed the development of our strategic plan.

We would like to thank everyone who gave their time to share their comments on the Vision and contributed to shaping the Library's future in this way.



_Our mission

Our mission and core functions are the same now as they have always been. In line with our Charter we will continue:

“to collect, preserve and give access to all kinds and forms of recorded knowledge, especially relating to Wales and the Welsh and other Celtic peoples, for the benefit of the public, including those engaged in research and learning.”

Our Core Functions

Collect

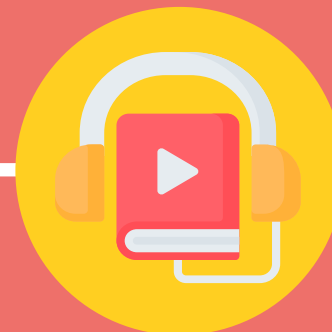
The National Library of Wales is Wales’s only legal deposit library. This status affords us the right to claim a free copy of every print and digital publication (including websites) published in the UK, forming the core of a research collection of international standard. Our collections include tens of millions of books, manuscripts, archives, maps, pictures, photographs, newspapers, sound and film, and is growing continuously.

Preserve

We specialise in the physical and digital conservation of collections and knowledge in both physical and digital form. Due to the skill, knowledge and commitment of our workforce, along with our infrastructure and facilities, we are able to ensure that the knowledge entrusted to our care continues to be available for future generations.

Give access

We aim to give the widest possible access to our collections within our building in Aberystwyth, on sites in other parts of Wales, on our websites and through other online platforms and channels. We are always seeking new opportunities to present our collections to users, participants and audiences through activities such as exhibitions, events, volunteer projects, and an education service to schools throughout Wales.



_ Towards the future

The way we deliver our mission has and continues to change with time as we respond to the changing world around us.

This Strategic Plan sets out the priorities for development that will ensure that we continue to deliver our mission effectively over the next five years and beyond.



_A Library for Wales and the World

Our primary responsibility is towards the people of Wales today along with future generations. Our actions will reflect this alignment with the interests of Wales, along with our responsibility to deliver our mission effectively and sustainably.

Well-being

The National Library of Wales is a library for the whole of Wales, and contributes positively to global well-being. We have a key contribution to make in achieving the seven goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Social impact

We will promote an equal, fair and inclusive society, working to eradicate poverty, and provide a safe platform and space where we can have a healthy, honest and open discussion about all aspects of Welsh life.

Sustainability

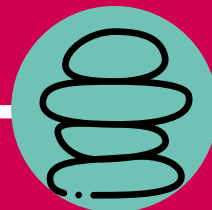
We accept our responsibility to respond to the global climate crisis by mitigating the environmental impact of our operations.

Diversity

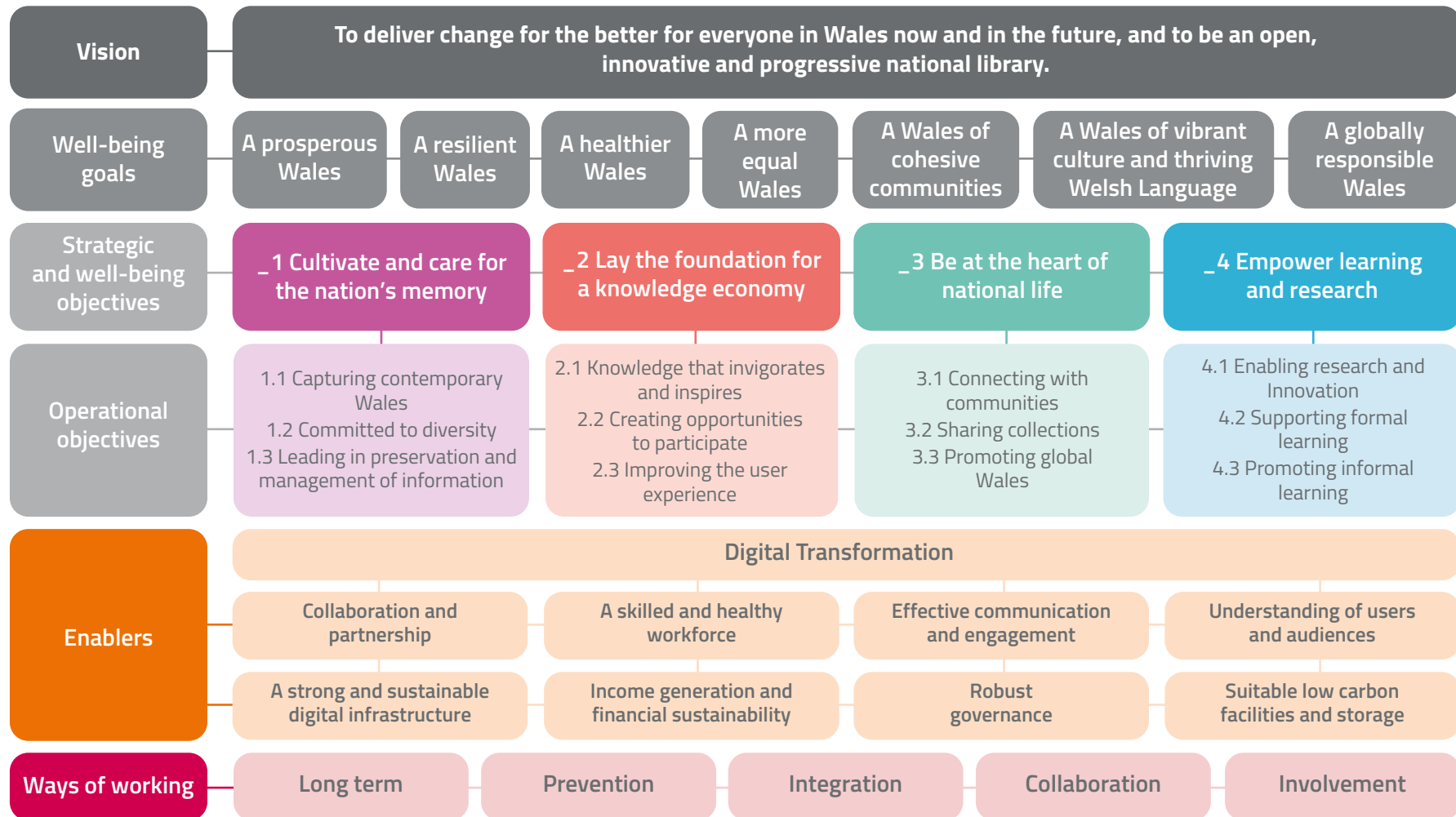
In collecting, preserving and giving access to knowledge, we are committed to working towards diversity, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the people of Wales, and to ensuring that our collections and services are accessible to everyone of all backgrounds and abilities.

The Welsh language

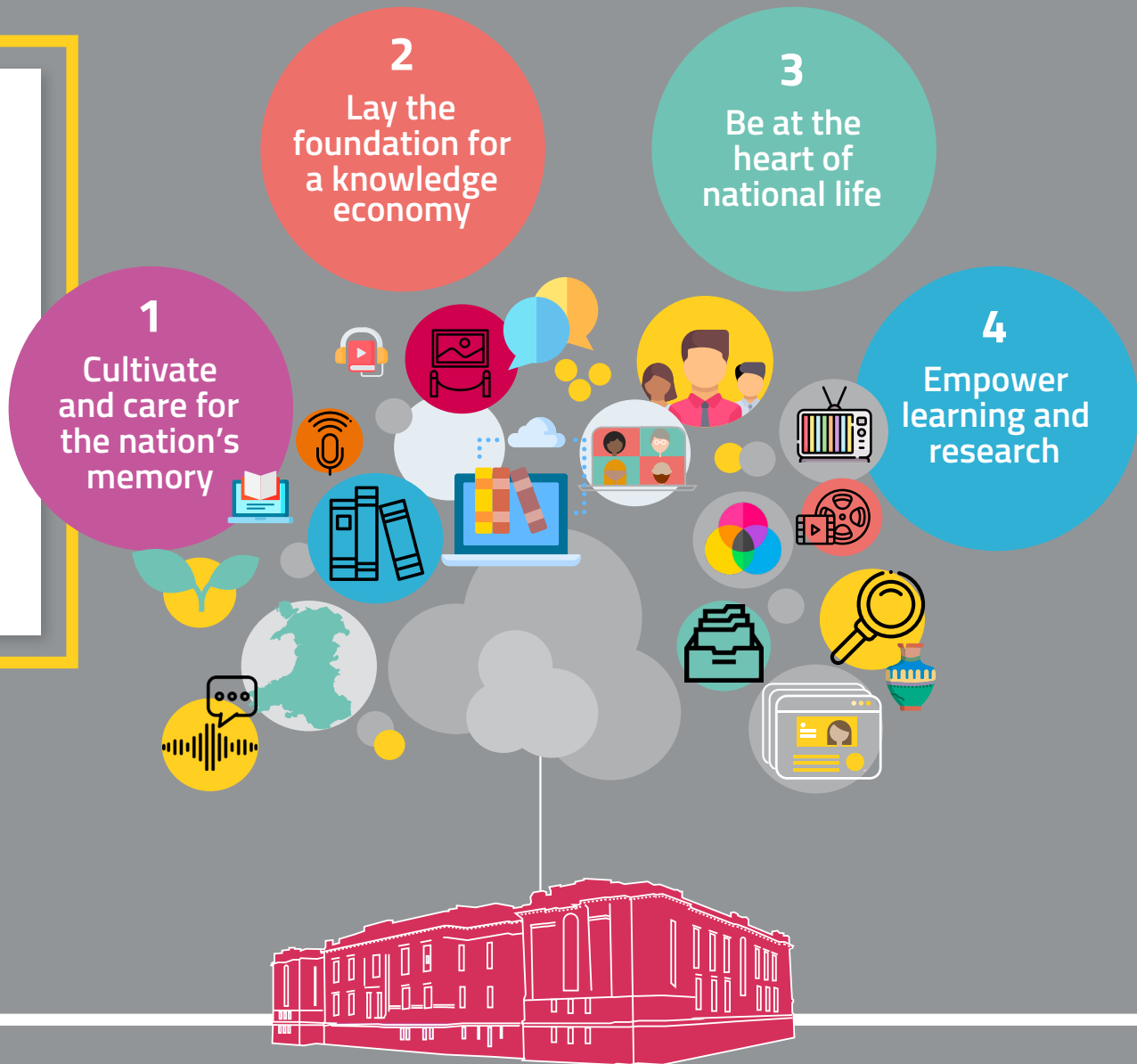
We will promote the Welsh language and encourage its use in all of our activities.



_An overview of the strategic plan 2021-26



_ Strategic and Well-being Objectives



_1. Cultivate and care for the nation's memory

1.1 Capturing contemporary Wales

Prioritising the task of capturing the diverse experiences of contemporary Wales.

- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language
- A more equal Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will develop and invest in the work of collecting and preserving digital materials in various formats
- We will establish a National Broadcast Archive that will be a rich and comprehensive record of life in the 20th and 21st Centuries
- We will deliver guidance and advice on conservation and raise awareness of the risks of losing the national memory in the digital age
- We will develop our relationships with libraries, archives, museums and others in the heritage sector as we collect the nation's memory.



Cultivate and care for the nation's memory

1.2 Committed to diversity

Ensure that our collections are representative of all aspects of Welsh life and history, especially individuals and communities which have been underrepresented.

- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

How will we achieve this?

- We will foster our connections with ethnically diverse communities across Wales
- We will work with these communities as we continue to develop our Collections Policy
- We will review the way in which our collections are described, interpreted and promoted.

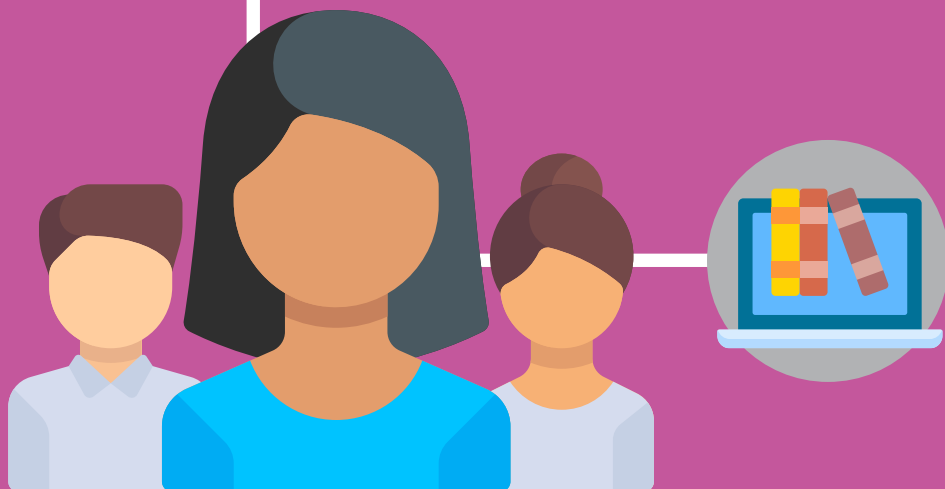
1.3 Leading in preservation and management of information

Continue to maintain and develop our infrastructure and expertise in the conservation and management of both physical and digital information, providing guidance for the sector in Wales and contributing to international developments.

- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales
- A prosperous Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will invest in the cultivation and transfer of physical and digital conservation skills within the Library and across the sector
- We will invest in the development of our technical infrastructure as a trusted home for our digital collections
- We will support other organisations with the preservation of digital collections
- We will share good practice in information management, conservation and collections development internationally.



_2. Lay the foundation for a knowledge economy

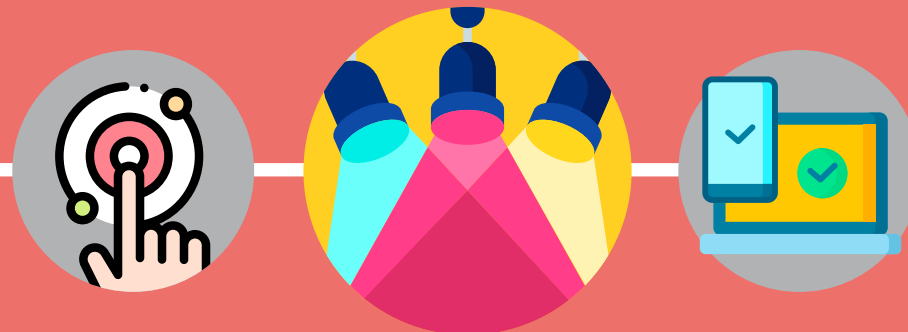
2.1 Knowledge that invigorates and inspires

Facilitate digital access to collections, considering from the outset the demand and potential use.

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

How will we achieve this?

- We will continually review the way we describe collections, to provide effective access and highlight 'hidden' collections
- We will improve access to physical collections by continuing our digitisation programme
- We will seek opportunities to increase the use of collections by businesses and the creative sector
- We will work to ensure that information is available in an open and accessible format.



Lay the foundation for a knowledge economy

2.2 Creating opportunities to participate

Enable public participation in the development of the national memory, contributing to the well-being of Wales and the world.

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language

How will we achieve this?

- We will continue to offer a range of volunteering opportunities at Library sites
- We will increase opportunities for volunteering and engaging with the collections on a digital basis, using approaches such as crowdsourcing
- We will support national and international participatory programmes and projects.

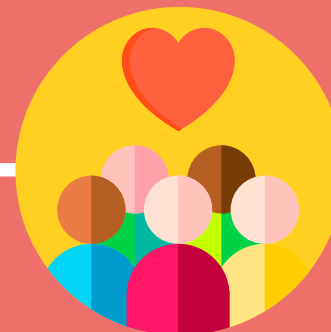
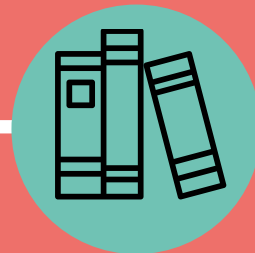
2.3 Improving user experience

Improve the quality of the visitor experience, both online and on-site, across our locations, developing the Library as a destination.

- A more equal Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more prosperous Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will develop new and innovative ways of widening access to knowledge
- We will ensure that user feedback and the voice of the user are central to the development of our services
- We will invest in the building in Aberystwyth as a visitor destination, where visitors from Wales and the world can research, discover and enjoy.



_3. Be at the heart of national life

3.1 Connecting communities

Build and support networks and communities based on our collections and services, and the culture and heritage of Wales more widely.

- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

How will we achieve this?

- We will invest in our relationship and connections with individuals and communities with the aim of increasing the value and impact of our collections and services
- We will establish connections with new communities and audiences
- We will consider all opportunities to expand our connections with public bodies and organisations throughout Wales and further afield
- We will improve access and connections across Wales through the activities of the National Broadcast Archive.



Be at the heart of national life

3.2 Sharing collections

Introduce our collections and services to new audiences and communities across Wales and provide a space, both online and on-site, to interpret and discuss aspects of Wales's past, present and future.

- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A globally responsible Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will share our collections widely and openly with the aim of achieving the greatest reach and deepest engagement
- We will develop methods and channels for acting in collaboration with the public to jointly interpret our history and culture
- We will hold exhibitions and events on themes that are timely and relevant to Wales today.

3.3 Promoting a global Wales

Celebrate and promote the culture of Wales globally, share and market Wales as a nation, promote cultural exports, promote intercultural and economically advantageous dialogue and strengthen the economy of Wales.

- A globally responsible Wales
- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language

How will we achieve this?

- We will promote the Library's sites as cultural destinations
- We will develop and deliver an International Strategy and collaborate with Welsh Government and other organisations to promote Wales on a global stage
- We will continue to foster and strengthen our relationship with the Welsh diaspora.



_4. Empower learning and research

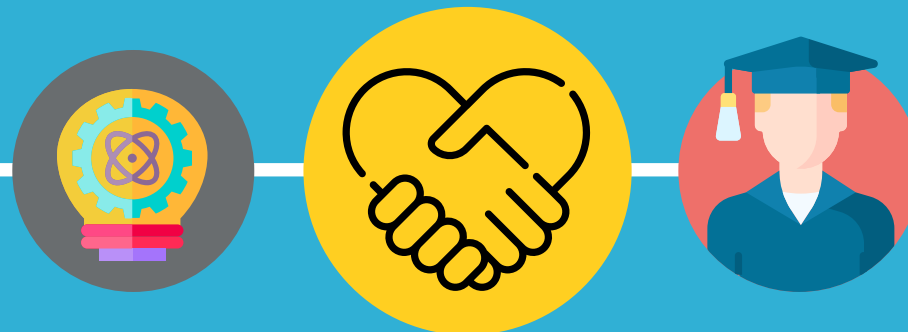
4.1 Enabling research and innovation

Support higher education and academic research, collaborating in research fields based on our collections or relevant to aspects of Wales.

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving language
- A globally responsible Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will foster a relationship with Higher Education Institutions and research teams interested in the collections
- We will explore and experiment with new technologies as means of enhancing access and research, supporting aspects such as geodata, artificial intelligence and adopting concepts such as 'collections as data'
- We will collaborate with partners and stakeholders with the aim of establishing an accredited trusted digital repository as research infrastructure.



Empower learning and research

4.2 Supporting formal learning

Support education in Wales, especially the Curriculum for Wales and post-16 qualifications in schools and colleges.

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A more equal Wales

How will we achieve this?

- We will continue to contribute to the development of the Curriculum for Wales
- We will continue to increase our own range of digital learning resources in collaboration with partners
- We will invest in our services for schools and post-16 education.

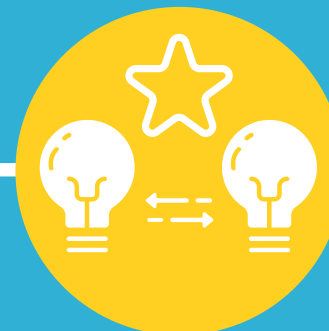
4.3 Promoting informal learning

Provide pathways to our collections, enabling informal and lifelong learning, creative practice and continuing professional development.

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language

How will we achieve this?

- We will develop a programme that supports informal learning and foster skills and transfer knowledge
- We will increase the interpretative content available online as resources for informal learning
- We will explore opportunities to work in partnership to support informal learning in communities across Wales.



_How our strategy contributes to the well-being of future generations

		Strategic and well-being objectives	A prosperous Wales	A resilient Wales	A healthier Wales	A more equal Wales	A Wales of cohesive communities	Culture and thriving Welsh Language	A globally responsible Wales
_1 Cultivate and care for the nation's memory	1.1	Capturing contemporary Wales		✓	✓	✓		✓	
	1.2	Committed to diversity				✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.3	Leading in preservation and management of information	✓	✓					✓
_2 Lay the foundation for a knowledge economy	2.1	Knowledge that invigorates and inspires	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	2.2	Creating opportunities to participate	✓		✓	✓		✓	
	2.3	Improving user experience	✓		✓	✓			✓
_3 Be at the heart of national life	3.1	Connecting communities			✓		✓	✓	✓
	3.2	Sharing collections			✓	✓	✓		
	3.3	Promoting a global Wales	✓	✓				✓	✓
_4 Empower learning and research	4.1	Enabling research and innovation	✓	✓				✓	✓
	4.2	Supporting formal learning	✓	✓		✓	✓		
	4.3	Promoting informal learning	✓		✓		✓	✓	

_ Enablers

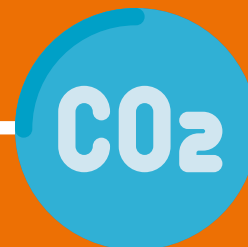
What we need to deliver our strategic plan.

Digital Transformation

Digital technology is central to realising this Strategy. Although we have for decades been innovators in the field of digitisation in cultural heritage, these technologies will need to permeate all of our activities and services to enable us as an organisation to achieve our objectives more efficiently and effectively. We will embrace this opportunity in the years ahead, combining digital skills and tools with new ways of thinking and working, and contribute to the delivery of the Digital Strategy for Wales.

Combined with this digital transformation, we will need the following to enable us to deliver this plan.

- Collaboration and partnerships
- Effective communication and engagement
- A skilled and healthy workforce
- Robust governance
- An understanding of users and audiences
- A strong and sustainable digital infrastructure
- Suitable low carbon facilities and storage
- Income generation and financial sustainability



_ Ways of Working

We will enact the five ways of working of The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act to ensure that we apply the Sustainable Development Principle in working towards our Strategic and Well-being Objectives:

Long-term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help the Library meet its objectives.

Integration

Considering how the Library's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on its other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

Collaboration

Acting in collaboration with any other person who could help the Library to meet its well-being objectives.

Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the Library serves.



