

3rd Connected Communities Heritage Network Symposium

20 minute Paper proposal: The People's Collection Wales; converting Cultural Policy to Community Provision

In 2014 the Welsh Government announced a new policy initiative "Fusion: Tackling Poverty through Culture". This initiative challenged cultural and heritage organisations in Wales to work together to deliver transformational change, and inspire people to learn, gain skills, and build aspiration, ambition and prospects. Now the small team that deliver the People's Collection Wales is working across Wales to try and achieve these objectives.

Through a programme of training, assistance and partnership the People's Collection Wales is working with groups, societies and individuals to help them build their collections and tell their stories. The PCW has established a growing network of Digital Heritage Stations in a variety of public facilities throughout Wales, providing permanent access to equipment and people trained to assist with the digitization process. The PCW also offers free equipment loans to enable digitization and recording by groups and communities, along with free basic training to ensure the digitization process is conducted to approved standards. Advanced accredited training courses in digitization for Cultural Heritage have been developed by the PCW, enhancing the skills and CVs of those who participate, and are supplemented with online training packages curated by PCW staff.

The PCW seeks to innovate and pioneer new approaches to both record and present Wales' cultural heritage. In 2015 it has pioneered the use of community-curated iBeacon networks to deliver proximity based interpretation via its Culture Beacon platform. Through Culture Beacon, the PCW hopes to spread the benefit of cultural tourism more widely; encouraging visitors to gain a deeper appreciation of Welsh communities, culture and heritage, and to stay longer, spend more and explore more widely.