

## Cadw

Pan-Wales heritage interpretation plan

Artistic responses to the landscape



# Interpretation plan

Version 2 (amended Nov 2012)



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**Artistic responses to the landscape**

***Trin y Dirwedd***  
***The Lure of Landscape***

**Interpretation plan**

Prepared by  
Touchstone Heritage Management Consultants,  
Red Kite Environment, Creu-ad and Peter Lord

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# 1 Foreword

Peter Lord, our expert advisor, has contributed this overview which begins with a quotation from the poet Gwenallt.

*Mor agos oedd y ddaear gynt,  
Mor agos â chymydog, ac yn siarad tafodieithoedd y Gymraeg ...  
Ac yn unigedd anhygyrch y mynyddoedd  
Codent lety i'r angylion rhwng deufyd.*

*Trowyd y ddaear yn labordy mawr ...  
Nid yw'r ddaear mwy yn siarad iaith gartrefol dyn ...  
Peilonau lle bu'r angylion  
A'r concrit yn cronni'r nant.<sup>1</sup>*

*The earth was once so near  
As near as a neighbour, and it spoke the dialects of Welsh ...  
In the inaccessible fastness of the mountains,  
We built a lodging place for angels between two worlds.*

*The earth has been turned into a giant laboratory ...  
No longer does it speak the homely tongue of man.  
Pylons now where angels were,  
And concrete damming up the stream.<sup>2</sup>*

## The fundamental role of artists

Through their perception of the land of Wales and what it signifies, artists have played a fundamentally important role in forming both the self-image of the Welsh people and the image of the nation as understood from the outside. In particular, writers (working in the Welsh and the English languages) and visual artists have created landscape images that both expressed the state of the nation and fed the process of its evolution.

Frequently, dominant understandings of the landscape expressed in the imagery of insider and outsider artists have not coincided. For insiders, the landscape of Wales has represented the national or local home, and so the relationship between land and human activity has tended to be a dominant concern, as in the poetry of Gwenallt. Often, it is familiarity that is imaged - though not always uncritically.

In the twentieth century we find this expressed in perceptions of agricultural communities in the work of two contemporary painters, Kyffin Williams and John Elwyn, and the early, mid-twentieth century, poetry of R S Thomas, for instance. For the same reason, sensitivities to the exploitation of the land have been intense and complex. The industrial landscape, in particular, has been perceived both negatively as a violation of nature and positively as the home of a remarkable and unique way of life. Many Welsh painters and writers have been concerned with exploring this paradox. In a few cases, most famously, perhaps, in *How Green was*

<sup>1</sup> Llinellau gan Gwenallt, o'r gerdd *Y Ddaear*

<sup>2</sup> Gwenallt, David James Jones, 1899-1968, lines from *Y Ddaear* [*The Earth*], translated from the Welsh.

*My Valley*, this concern has transcended the Welsh audience and become a part of popular perceptions outside Wales.

On the whole, however, outsiders have been excited by the unfamiliarity of the Welsh landscape. To the English traveller of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, Wales denoted difference - topographical, cultural and even temporal. To many of them, the place seemed a world apart, a kind of living archaeology. Nevertheless, the second half of the eighteenth century was also a time of creative interaction between insiders and outsiders, and a crucial phase in the evolution of tourism in Britain. Furthermore, the perceptions of the small number of interacting Welsh and English intellectuals and artists in the period would in due course influence understandings of the land, as landscape, throughout Europe and the United States.

Parts of Wales became what has been described as ‘the cradle of the Picturesque’, an aesthetic concept so influential that the use of the noun ‘picturesque’ subsequently widened from its narrow and abstruse meaning to become in general parlance a synonym for ‘beautiful’. At the end of the eighteenth century, J M W Turner produced Welsh landscapes that, because of the unique status he subsequently achieved in English art tradition, continue to affect the tourist’s image of the country. The idea of Wales as a ‘beautiful’ and ‘different’ place dominates present visitor perceptions, often at the expense of an awareness of the human cultures associated with the land.

In preparing its proposals for the interpretation of artistic responses to the Welsh landscape, the project team has been guided by an analysis of the body of work produced over the preceding three centuries by writers, visual artists, and sometimes also by musicians. Our understanding of the potential audiences has informed our proposals for delivery of the interpretation in practical and stimulating form.

## A thematic approach

*We will propose a thematic approach, delivered both nationally and locally*

It might be possible to interpret individual artistic responses to a myriad of particular sites throughout the country on a purely local basis. However, it is clear from our analysis of the material that artists, even when working in different periods and different parts of the country, have shared certain concerns, which arise from the particular circumstances of Wales. We identify our sense of the core matter of these concerns in the names of the themes. We might conceive of them as ‘storylines’.

Our analysis of the material leads us to propose four themes under the headings:

- ◆ The landscape as *history*
- ◆ The landscape as *nature*
- ◆ The landscape as *home*
- ◆ The landscape as *resource*

## A national narrative

*Taken together, these themes create an over-arching national narrative of the landscape.*

We will propose that the interpretation of particular sites is presented within this national narrative. Thus, for example, the theme of history binds together landscapes such as Dinefwr in south west Wales and Dinas Bran in the north east. In temporal terms, interpretation of the landscapes of the two areas links four late seventeenth-century paintings of Dinefwr, with a twenty-first century group of paintings of Dinas Bran by Eleri Mills. The literature and visual imagery of each theme manifests similar topographical and temporal national links.

## Delivering the themes

*Our analysis of the material in terms of local manifestations of national themes will lead us to the second core element of the proposal. 'Delivery' concerns how the story lines can be expressed.*

Reflecting the national and site-specific analysis of the material, we will propose a two-tier approach:

Firstly, we will propose that an organisation with national responsibilities produces or commissions, centrally, material that interprets the national narrative. Using both print and new media, interpretation should be accessible to visitors prior to visiting specific sites, on site, and for subsequent enrichment of their experience of the site.

Secondly, we will propose that the same or another organisation with national responsibilities supervises regional or site-specific interpretation. Commissioning may involve a wide range of interested parties, including governmental, institutional and voluntary organisations. Briefs for regional, area or site specific interpretation should not be proscriptive as regards form, but we will propose that certain criteria be applied to guide selection, including awareness of national narrative, historical sources and contemporary expression. To assist potential providers, we have offered an extended area study.

The body of our report will define the desired outcomes of the interpretation proposals in detail. In general terms, our aspiration is to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Welsh landscape as perceived both in Wales itself and by visitors from outside. Our intention is to draw visitors to particular sites, to enrich their experience while on site, and - by giving visitors a sense of how each site forms part of a nationwide network - to stimulate further exploration.

## 2 Introduction

Touchstone Heritage Management Consultants, Red Kite and Creu-ad wish to thank Cadw for inviting us to prepare an interpretation plan to explain and promote *Artistic responses to the landscape* of Wales. We should also like to thank Peter Lord for acting as our expert advisor, contributing to our deliberations and recommendations and contributing an overview of the plan's ambitions.

We are grateful to the many people we have spoken to, formally and informally, during the preparation of this plan. Appendix A lists a number of relevant sources.

We have chosen as a working title, *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* to capture the attraction which landscape has both to artists and to visitors. Landscape has inspired many painters, writers and musicians and, similarly, it is given as a principal reason for exploring Wales by most visitors.

### The brief

The brief (attached as Appendix B) sets out the objectives for the plan and places it in the context both of the *Spiritual and Inspirational Landscapes* interpretation strand (within the Pan-Wales heritage interpretation plan) and of the overarching interpretive strategy for all of Cadw's properties. It was confirmed in initial discussions that the *Artistic Responses to the Landscape* should be set within the overall background of Wales as a whole. That context encompasses both tangible and non-tangible elements of Welsh history, geography and cultural heritage.

Aesthetic appreciation of landscape is intensely personal, but there is a consensus about the link between specific visual subjects, such as the sea and mountains, woodlands and wildlife, and historic and contemporary buildings in their (sometimes designed) settings, and the aesthetic experience that they offer. That experience may be enjoyed in visual, aural, or simply 'spiritual' or abstract form.

Painters, writers, poets, composers and landscape designers have been most successful when the manifestation of their highly personal appreciation of landscapes has coincided with that of the general public, in whole or in part. The public's appreciation, in most cases, is both of the achievements of the artists in conveying the spirit of place and of the places themselves. The first may lead to the second or echo existing personal feelings, knowledge and experience.

The job of this interpretation plan is to consider more than three hundred years of responses, in art, music, literature and landscape design, to what are now historic landscapes - even from recent times - and how best to help visitors seek out, appreciate, understand and cherish these landscapes through the work of the artists (as a generic term) who interpreted them.

We hope that this plan will provide the framework for telling stories about landscape and art, literature, music, building and landscape design, will introduce narrative into the interpretation through its themes and will inspire both visitors and residents to develop further their own aesthetic appreciation of the unique, stimulating and emotively-charged landscape of Wales.

## Our considerations

In developing our approach, we have considered a range of issues, some of which were raised in our submission and others at the first briefing meeting. We have also taken account of the *Strategic Statement* on the Welsh Historic Environment issued in 2009 by the Minister for Heritage in the Welsh Assembly Government. It takes the broadest of views of what constitutes the historic environment and emphasises that it is a story both *of* people and *for* people.

History is as much about the ordinary as about the extraordinary in the past of any community. Most landscapes in Wales, except the most untameable or inaccessible, reflect the intervention of people at work and at home, at play and at prayer, and artistic responses to these landscapes inevitably embrace past actions and often present and ongoing ones. Even the majestic wild places are closely linked to human experience, endeavour and acclaim.

Part of the purpose of this plan will be to demonstrate that Wales is as rich in its artistic responses to landscape as it is in the landscapes themselves and we believe our choice of themes reflects this. The timeframe within which we have worked is broadly the last 300 years.

### ***Who are the audiences?***

The brief requires that we embrace a range of audiences in our proposals. However, the plan will give greatest consideration to the expectations and needs of the principal audiences - the independently-minded family and adult couples. Other audiences, including those with developed or special interests, will also be included in our proposals.

In order to reach visitors and residents, it will be important to consider where they are or will be when making decisions about visits, and therefore to relate interpretive material to a series of geographical areas and to make it available at a number of venues or 'hubs' in these areas. We have identified four areas, chosen to match the principal areas that have inspired responses from artists.

### ***Who are the artists and what are the landscapes?***

Throughout this report, we use the word artist to embrace painters, graphic artists, sculptors, photographers, film makers, architects and landscape designers, writers and composers. We use the word painter to refer specifically to those involved in that sphere of artistic work. In a similar way, we use the word landscape to embrace natural and semi-natural inland and coastal scenery, designed landscapes, buildings, urban settings and industrial sites.

We have tried to ensure that our proposals contain a balance between responses from all periods in the last three centuries and those in the present time, and between those from 'outsiders' to the Welsh landscape and those from Welsh, or Wales-based artists. The role of writers in Welsh needs to be given due prominence.

## 3 Our approach - a summary

### Artists, visitors and residents

More than three hundred years ago, the aesthetic delights of landscape began to lure painters, writers and travellers to explore Wales. In place of apprehension about the perils that wild places were thought to embrace came an appreciation of their natural splendour and appeal and, importantly, of the mythology and history which were represented in and by the landscapes. The lure of the landscape contained an element of magic and mystery for early artists who were drawn by the 'Celtic dawn' with its legends of heroes and fables of events long ago.

A movement born among a few intrepid artists, authors, poets and discerning travellers encouraged more of their fellows to join in a recording of the romance and drama of landscape. Mythology morphed into history and the great castles of early times, which seemed to grow out of their landscapes, were the subjects of many paintings and writings. The natural landscape, without its connotations of mystery and history, was increasingly seen as attractive and romantic and worthy of recording in paint or on paper. What began as the province of leaders of aesthetic opinion, and indeed fashion, started to embrace the wider public and heralded the birth of tourism in Wales.

The development of early tourism in Wales in the late eighteenth century is epitomised by the Wye Tour. The boat journey down the river by English travellers in the 1780s and 1790s, allowed passengers to see the surrounding landscape, notable buildings and early industry. The popularity of the Wye Tour increased after William Gilpin published his seminal *Observations*<sup>3</sup> in 1782. A combination of a growing awareness of the beauty of the Welsh landscape, which Gilpin considered to be 'picturesque', and the advent of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, which made travel in France near-impossible, meant that there was a ready market among the travelling English to visit Wales where they could see landscapes that echoed the 'romantic' and 'classical' landscapes that had been part of the Grand Tour made by wealthy young people of Europe as part of their education.

By the later part of the nineteenth century, with the advent of mass transportation, widely-granted holidays and improved incomes, people from many sectors of the population also found the lure of landscape drawing them to enjoy, appreciate and return to what is still popularly called 'scenery'. Even now, despite all the sophistications of life in the twenty-first century, the quality of scenery is still a dominant factor in decision-making about holidays and leisure trips, particularly in Wales and most other parts of Britain where the weather is not the primary attraction.

Landscape - or 'scenery' - is not simply a pictorial, intellectual or aesthetic experience; it is also - for many - an emotional experience, charged with a variety

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<sup>3</sup> *Observations on the River Wye and several parts of South Wales, etc. relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty; made in the summer of the year 1770.*

or highly personal connotations. And for people living in any landscape, it is what frames and even conditions the community in a variety of ways - it may be their home or their workplace, it may provide for leisure pursuits, it will certainly play a part in journeys and it will form an indefinable, but inherent part of the social and cultural fabric of community life.

This integrated concept of landscape and community is well represented by *cynefin*, a word often used by the painter Kyffin Williams and both questioned and explained by Moira Stone<sup>4</sup>:

*What is this notion, behind much of Welsh culture ... untranslatable by a single word into English ... although Heimat comes closest to it in German. It may incorporate different local details of language, perhaps, or agricultural practice, but the feeling is one recognised the world over - a sense of place, a feeling of being at home and a feeling of 'rightness'.*

This sense of 'homeland' is a very different, but complementary, sensation of landscape to the *genius loci*, the spirit of place, so paraded by the early artists of the Picturesque and Romantic movements who came to see and record landscapes. Author and historian Dorian Llewelyn says that the 'Welsh sense of place is a social or communitarian one rather than individualistic'<sup>5</sup>.

He differentiates between place and space, the former representing sites associated with people and their activities, the latter representing those without an obvious social element. He says that

*... an aesthetic-individualistic response to the place of Wales is noticeably more typical of non-Welsh writers on Wales than of Welsh writers, whose interests tend markedly towards the social and political'<sup>6</sup>.*

This is understandable and, in a sense unremarkable, and it is certainly reflected in the work of writers in many other countries when writing about their own *cynefin*, or *Heimat*. Some of these responses record the practical use of land and its appearance in the landscape. Farming and woodland are seen as an extension of the natural scene and recorded with affection while the exploitation of land for coal, slate, water, power, transportation and other 'industrial' uses can provoke negative responses.

It will be important, however, particularly in interpretation at a local level, to ensure that the responses to the landscape of Wales by Welsh artists are given due weight as well as recognising the important contribution of artists from further afield.

Wales, as much as any other part of the United Kingdom, has a variety of coastal and inland scenery that continues to lure visitors to appreciate and explore it - and that also plays a large part in the sense of affectionate ownership that communities have of their surroundings. That appreciation, and that sense of ownership, are as much emotional as rational, as much personal as public.

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4 Stone, Moira K, *Mid Wales Companion*. 1989, Anthony Nelson.

5 Llewelyn, Dorian, *Sacred places, chosen people - land and national identity in Welsh spirituality*. 1999, University of Wales Press

6 Ibid

The landscapes of Wales continue to attract painters and photographers, sculptors, authors, poets and composers, armed with their brushes, cameras, implements and pens. They come as professionals and amateurs and are joined by millions of ordinary holidaymakers who take photographs for their digital albums and to send to their friends. *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of landscape* is alive and well in Wales.

### 3.1 The responses as a narrative

The responses by artists to the landscape of Wales can be encompassed in one overarching narrative or story:

- ◆ Over several hundred years, the landscape of Wales has inspired artists of all kinds, from within and beyond Wales, to record their responses to its natural, historical, cultural and social qualities and characteristics; their responses can enhance people's enjoyment and understanding of the landscape.

Within this narrative, we have selected four themes to illustrate it and these are introduced in detail in Chapter 6. However, they can be summarised here:

#### *The landscape as history*

- ◆ Historical reference has been a powerful source of inspiration for artists whose depiction of Celtic legend, ancient history and great strongholds present the landscape of Wales as an evocation - and carrier - of a long and glorious past.

#### *The landscape as nature*

- ◆ The landscape of Wales as created by 'Nature' has inspired artists to respond both to its aesthetic qualities and to its 'spirit of place' and, in so doing, to guide and reflect public perceptions of landscape.

#### *The landscape as home*

- ◆ The deep-rooted connection between people in Wales with their landscape, their 'sense of home' has inspired artists to explore and evoke what is described by the word *cynefin* with its connotation of and familiarity and deep emotional attachment.

#### *The landscape as resource*

- ◆ The use of the landscape and seascape of Wales has produced a wide range of artistic responses from the empathetic, when representing, for example, the working countryside or coastline, to the confrontational, when describing or depicting its exploitation by extractive and other industries.

### 3.2 The value of the responses

The value of the artistic responses can be expressed as a series of benefits for residents and visitors. The responses by painters, photographers, writers, composers and other artists to the landscape of Wales:

- ◆ help people to appreciate the qualities and characteristics of the landscape and to understand it in many ways.

- ◆ help people to understand how the natural, historical, cultural and social heritage of Wales has altered over the years, and
- ◆ encourage people to take a greater interest both in painting, photography, writing, music and other arts and also in the landscape itself.

Understanding and appreciating these responses:

- ◆ encourages residents to develop an interest in the arts and develop a greater pride in their own area, and;
- ◆ encourages *visitors* to develop a greater interest in the arts and gain a greater enjoyment from their visits which they may extend.

The artistic responses can lead to other benefits, some of which may apply only to certain areas or be related to particular individuals:

- ◆ Understanding the way in which artists express their own identity through responding to landscape helps visitors to appreciate the importance of a sense of place.
- ◆ Comparing responses to a landscape in different media (an oil painting, a watercolour, a photograph, a collage, a novel, a poem, a song, an orchestral piece etc) can help people to appreciate different qualities of that landscape.
- ◆ Considering responses to different types of landscape (mountains, defended hilltops, rivers, coast, sea, woodland, working farmland, 'inhabited land', industrial areas etc) will help people to appreciate how landscape as a whole can evoke artistic responses.
- ◆ Appreciating the way in which artists have explored issues of conflicting demands upon, and uses of, a landscape will provoke thought on sustainability, stewardship and ownership and the 'value' of landscape in both material and aesthetic terms.
- ◆ The close association of individual artists to particular landscapes helps to develop an understanding of the aesthetic or cultural 'value' of such places that may otherwise be considered as 'ordinary'.

### 3.3 Regions and areas

We have chosen to segment the landscape of Wales into four regions and, within them, eleven areas. This arrangement embraces three elements:

- ◆ The broad landscape character areas that have been attractive to artists
- ◆ The main topographical regions of Wales
- ◆ The boundaries of tourism-promotion regions (and local authority areas)

These regions and their component areas are:

- ◆ North Wales - four areas: Isle of Anglesey, Llŷn, Snowdonia and Clwyd
- ◆ Mid Wales, one area, Mid Wales as a whole
- ◆ South West Wales - two areas: Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire

- ◆ South East Wales - four areas: Swansea and the Gower, the Valleys, Cardiff and the Wye Valley

A detailed but not prescriptive table of selected sites and responses is provided in Appendix C and we suggest that this can act as a resource for those who may be involved in implementing interpretation as an outcome of this Interpretation Plan. Our choice of the four regions and eleven areas has been dictated by a number of factors, particularly:

- ◆ Landscapes noted for responses to their aesthetic attraction
- ◆ Landscape noted for responses that reflect culture and conflict
- ◆ Landscapes noted for responses by particular artists

## 3.4 Landscape associations

These three factors do not constitute themes. They are simply the bases for reducing what would be a completely unwieldy list to one that is more manageable. The selection dovetails with the four themes we have chosen to embrace all the artistic responses

### *Landscapes noted for responses to their aesthetic attraction*

Within these areas, which embrace the *Landscape as history* and *Landscape as nature* themes, we have identified some specific sites and other more general landscape areas. In some cases, these reflect the popularity and inspiration that comes from a landscape that is acknowledged to be outstanding in some way - beautiful, dramatic, picturesque, mysterious, evocative or whatever.

For example:

- ◆ The **Snowdon mountain range** is visually exciting and memorable, known for its dramatic vistas and craggy peaks. Snowdon is, of course, the highest mountain in Wales and England.
- ◆ The **coastline of Pembrokeshire** is known for its dramatic cliffs, enclosed bays and the quality of its light. The coastline and its islands have always attracted artists and writers, many of whom have settled there.
- ◆ The **Wye Valley** has a reputation as a delightful, verdant and dramatic wooded environment with the interest of an early industrial landscape and the appeal of a tranquil and accessible river.

Over the last few centuries all these areas have been of interest or inspiration to visual artists and to writers and have attracted visitors from all over the world.

### *Landscapes noted for responses that reflect culture and conflict*

With these areas, which embrace the *Landscape as home* and *Landscape as resource* themes, we have again identified a number of specific sites. R S Thomas typifies the artist who is concerned with the cultural meanings of landscape and with what happens within it and to it. We have identified some sites because they are a focus for this kind of response.

For example:

- ◆ The **Preseli Mountains** in Pembrokeshire were Waldo Williams' home and the subject of some of his best-known poetry. He invested the Preselis with a spiritual quality and, as a result, it has become an inspiration for other writers, especially Welsh language poets.
- ◆ **Tryweryn** or **Capel Celyn** is not a familiar name to most visitors but it is mantled with meaning to many Welsh people for whom the name conveys a story of strife over a village drowned by a reservoir and typifies anger and resentment over decisions made about or for Wales by outsiders and the implicit denial of its cultural heritage.

- ◆ **Industrial landscapes** in the South Wales Valleys are areas with which visual artists and writers have had complex relationships. In the nineteenth century, a period of great industrial achievement, their work focussed on the high drama of furnaces and machinery; they tended to ignore the equally dramatic but less picturesque social conditions.

In recent years, painter and writers have looked at these industrial landscape from a social and realist viewpoint. George Chapman's paintings of the Rhondda Valleys emphasised the lack of colour, the harsh environment and the hard working lives. The poet, Mike Jenkins, describes the degradation of landscape and contemporary society in Merthyr Tydfil.

### *Landscapes noted for responses by particular artists*

Places often become well-known and visited because they are associated with noted people. Such places may have been a direct source of inspiration for artists, or a place in which they lived and which became a focus for some of their work.

For example, among twentieth-century painters and writers:

- ◆ **Kyffin Williams** lived on Anglesey and its landscapes form the subject matter of many of his paintings. We have therefore chosen 'Kyffin's Island' as a specific landscape around which to tell stories and because it also elicited responses from other artists.
- ◆ **Augustus John** and **J D Innes** painted in the area of the Arenig Mountains during a short period at the beginning of the twentieth century. For this reason, the Arenig have been included as a specific landscape in Snowdonia.
- ◆ **Dylan Thomas** is closely associated with Laugharne because he lived and wrote there although he didn't write much about Laugharne and it hasn't been the focus for other artists. It's the links with Thomas which justify its selection.
- ◆ **R S Thomas** lived in several places in Wales but his association with Llŷn and Aberdaron is well known. His writing is less about the appearance and appeal of the landscape than about the people, the issues and the cultural meaning of landscape.

## Different approaches

A further consideration in choosing landscape sites is that writers, musicians and visual artists tend to differ in their approach. Painters or photographers will focus, of necessity, on single but not always identified sites while writers tend to deal with more general and often unspecified landscapes. Musicians are likely to be more loosely attached to any one place and folk music usually relates a story of people in the landscape.

## 3.5 Delivery

Reference was made in the Foreword to two levels of delivery of interpretation:

- ◆ National level, under the direct responsibility of an appropriate organisation
- ◆ Site-related level, undertaken by regional or local organisations

We set out in Chapter 9 a range of interpretive media and mechanisms and ascribe them to appropriate levels of implementation. Allied to this, we propose that site-based interpretation about artistic responses to the landscape is delivered through a series of ‘hubs’ at places and / or existing facilities where there is a concentration of artistic responses as well as organisations and venues that are actively involved in the arts scene today. We have identified hubs in places where historical and contemporary artistic responses to landscape coincide or overlap with contemporary arts-based centres but have made no approaches to their owners or managers.

### 3.6 Area study

In order to demonstrate how the associations noted above, and the four themes we have identified earlier, can be made to work for a particular area, we have prepared a detailed area study for Snowdonia, which is set out in Chapter 10.

### 3.7 Links with other plans

In selecting locations for inclusion in interpretation, we have also considered where they might relate to other interpretation plans. For example, Bardsey Island is a key site within the *Celtic saints, spiritual places and pilgrimage* plan, Dolbadarn, Harlech, Dinefwr, Dryslwyn and other castles figure in the early plans for *Castles and Princes, the Princes of Deheubarth* and *Owain Glyndŵr*.

## 4 Stakeholders and initiatives

There are many organisations in Wales that can be regarded as stakeholders in the interpretive concept of artistic responses to the landscape and its implementation and they embrace a range of interests from policy makers and national institutions at one end of the scale to local arts centres and groups at the other. The list is not comprehensive but includes:

### National institutions

- ◆ Arts Council of Wales
- ◆ Cadw
- ◆ Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth
- ◆ Countryside Council for Wales
- ◆ Forestry Commission
- ◆ Mentrau Iaith Cymru
- ◆ National Library of Wales
- ◆ National Museum of Wales, and its satellite galleries  
Oriol Ynys Môn  
Oriol y Parc
- ◆ Royal Cambrian Academy, Conwy
- ◆ Universities
- ◆ VisitWales
- ◆ Welsh Assembly Government
- ◆ William Mathias Music Centre, Caernarfon

### Regional, local and community institutions

- ◆ Community arts groups
- ◆ Community councils
- ◆ Community development agencies
- ◆ Community galleries, museums and arts centres
- ◆ Landscape partnership schemes
- ◆ Local authorities
- ◆ Local authority galleries and museums
- ◆ Local colleges
- ◆ National park authorities
- ◆ Regional tourism partnerships

## 4.1 Current initiatives

Many organisations in Wales, including many of those listed in the previous section, are already engaged in activities that help to interpret culture and heritage for residents and visitors. National Parks, AONBs, Landscape Partnership Schemes and many community groups funded through the Rural Development Programme and the Heritage Lottery Fund are producing interpretive materials, organising activities or working closely with communities and interest groups.

Most of their work relevant to artistic responses to the landscape involves contemporary art and photography, either commissioning resident artists or encouraging groups to produce community art, but many have shown an interest in developing projects that relate more closely to the narrative of this plan. A selection of these organisations is described briefly below.

- ◆ **Adventa**, a community development project in Monmouthshire funded through the Rural Development Programme, focuses on developing projects and activities in four topics - activities in the landscape, churches, local foods, and arts and crafts. It has produced a churches trail leaflet for visitors and other guides that celebrate landscape and local arts and crafts.
- ◆ **Arriva Trains Wales** produced, in 2009, two leaflets highlighting the landscapes through which their services operate: *Cambrian Country Gazer* (Shrewsbury to Machynlleth) and *Cambrian Coast Gazer* (Machynlleth to Pwllheli) - *Bringing to life the view from the train window*.
- ◆ The **Arts Council of Wales** is the official public body charged with funding and developing the arts in Wales. It manages funds allocated to it by the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Lottery. The Arts Council funds a wide range of local, national and international arts activities, across the full range of the arts. This includes the performing arts, visual arts, and the crafts. The Arts Council provides annual revenue funding to around 70 arts organisations, and supports project-based activities through its Lottery funding schemes.
- ◆ The interpretation strategy of the **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority** [BBNPA] acknowledges the importance of artistic influences in the park, and presents themes and sub-themes that provide a framework for their interpretation. It includes Henry Vaughan (poet and doctor), Adelina Patti (singer), and William Williams Pantycelyn (writer of hymns), as well as contemporary artists, photographers, writers and film-makers that are associated with the area or who have been inspired by the Brecon Beacons Landscape. Although no interpretation has been produced to date on these themes due to lack of resources, the authority would like to pursue interpretation on the cultural elements of the Brecon Beacons story in the future.
- ◆ **Cadwyn Clwyd** is a rural development agency, funded by the Rural Development Programme. It provides guidance and support for the rural economy in Flintshire and Denbighshire and works with local communities to help with projects that benefit that economy. Two recent projects have helped develop local culture - a poetry project which has resulted in a series of posters and cards with poetry

written by members of the Cross Border Poets, and a public art sculpture facilitated by an artist to produce collage tiles for a branch of a supermarket.

- ◆ The **Caerdroia** project is deep in the Gwydyr Forest. It is accessed from the B5106 between Betws-y-Coed and Llanrwst. The name translates as ‘castle of turning’ or ‘labyrinth’. It was set up in 2005 by Theatre Cynefin, Golygfa Gwydyr and other community groups. In 2010, it won the *Best Cultural Achievement* award at the Conwy Pride of Community Awards. The projects on site include art, sculpture and performance installations as well as environmental activities.
- ◆ **The Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies** is a dedicated research institute of the University of Wales in Aberystwyth. It undertakes research in to the language, literature and history of Wales and the other Celtic countries. The Centre was lead organisation for the ‘Visual Culture of Wales’ project established in 1994, which published a three-volume history of the visual culture of Wales from the Celtic Christian period to the mid-twentieth century.
- ◆ **Chepstow Museum** is creating an exhibition about the Wye Tour which is due to open in April 2011. There will also be a series of celebratory events commemorating the tours during summer 2011 including re-enactments of the popular boat tours and excursions that took place along the river in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There will also be a celebratory event at Piercefield House in September 2011, again to celebrate the importance of the role the Wye Tour had in developing the Picturesque movement.
- ◆ The **Edward Pugh Project** in Denbighshire is developing a series of art events, trails, publications and a festival related to the work of Edward Pugh (1763-1813), the landscape artist and miniaturist.
- ◆ The **Forgotten Landscapes** project in Blaenavon, which is based in the Heritage Centre, focuses on restoration and interpretation of the post industrial landscape of the area. It has developed guided walks programmes that take account of the history of the area and works with local schools and communities on routes and walks leaflets. The Heritage Centre has also developed art and photography courses that help to celebrate the landscape, and led writing workshops. All activities are aimed at family audiences.
- ◆ The **Heather and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme** project, together with **Denbighshire Countryside Service** is developing projects and activities in the Denbighshire and Clwydian Range AONB areas including audio trails, long distance routes and interpretation projects. Although their focus is on Iron Age hillforts they are keen to develop other interpretive topics that could include artistic responses to their landscapes through a variety of art and craft media.
- ◆ **Literature Wales** is a new body formed from the amalgamation of Academi - the literature promotion agency and society for writers - and Ty Newydd Writers’ Centre. The new organisation represents the interests of literature in Wales, both nationally and internationally, and promotes literature activity. It provides bursaries, supports international exchanges, organises Young People’s Writing Squads and funds literary tourism through bus tours and walking tours. It is developing a programme of activities including a series of literary events at heritage properties to encourage creative interpretation of the sites by young people and adults, an expansion of the Young People’s Writing Squads and a

series of literary dinners, creative writing courses and conferences. Peter Finch, the Chief Executive Officer, is keen for Literature Wales to be involved in the implementation of this Interpretation Plan.

- ◆ The **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority** runs Oriel y Parc which is a visitor centre for the Park and a gallery and arts centre. Its exhibition of paintings by Graham Sutherland is of national importance. It runs activities for children, families and teachers, including artistic appreciation of nature and the landscape. It has commissioned artists in residence and would like to continue this in the future. It has worked with other organisations, such as Planed, on projects and activities. The authority would like Oriel y Parc to act as a hub for experiencing St David's and St David's Head.
- ◆ **The Snowdonia Arts Festival** is an annual event based in Betws-y-Coed. It brings together the work of contemporary landscape artists with a celebration and remembrance of the nineteenth century artists' colony in the town.
- ◆ The **Tirwedd Dyfi** project focuses on the links between the Welsh language and landscape in the Dyfi Valley. It has already resulted in a popular competition for a writer and photographer working together, in a programme of work with schools involving a poet and visual artist and in a series of literature based events. Ecodyfi is the Dyfi Valley regeneration organisation.
- ◆ The **Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd (River through Time)** Landscape Partnership Scheme project is based in Llandeilo. The project focuses on building and landscape conservation but also undertakes projects that encourage visitors to discover the landscape of the Tywi valley. The project has commissioned artists to work with communities to produce artwork and exhibitions that celebrate the landscape. It has produced a series of walks leaflets including a sculpture trail and a churches trail. It has also produced an illustrated guide - 'Exploration Tywi' - that encourages discovery of the valley, its culture and its landscape.
- ◆ **Hedd Wyn's Cottage** - partnership project in place to develop the site as a museum/visitor attraction celebrating this important Welsh Eisteddfod winning poet and commentator on WWI. The project received development funding in November 2012 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). This grant is the first round in a bidding process for £2.7m towards the project. The project team now has up to two years to submit more detailed plans to the HLF and apply for the rest of the funds.

## 5 Interpretive aim and objectives

We propose that the overall aim of interpretation implemented as an outcome of this Interpretation Plan should be:

- ◆ To help visitors and residents to appreciate and understand the responses of past and present artists to the landscape of Wales and to encourage them to visit and enjoy these landscapes.

### 5.1 Interpretive objectives

To support the aim, we propose that the interpretive objectives should include as many of the following items as practicable.

- ◆ To encourage visitors and residents to consider the works produced in response to the landscape of Wales by painters, photographers, writers, composers, landscape designers and other artists and, where appropriate, to compare the works produced in the past with the landscapes of today.
- ◆ To encourage visitors and residents to explore the contrasts and similarities between artistic responses to specific areas of the landscape by, for example, painters and photographers, or painters and writers, or writers and composers.
- ◆ To help visitors and residents, where appropriate, to understand and enjoy the work of landscape designers as a site-based response to enhance the natural landscape of the area and add aesthetic value to a home or estate.
- ◆ To encourage tourism, arts, community and other organisations to consider artistic responses to the landscape of Wales in their promotion and marketing and to help visitors to make connections between works and the concepts they portray, and the past and present social, cultural and physical landscapes.
- ◆ To encourage arts and community groups, and similar organisations, to exhibit and promote the responses of past and present artists to the landscape of Wales and to encourage residents to participate in understanding and promoting the connections between the works and the present landscapes.
- ◆ To encourage children, young people, and life-long learners to ‘stop and think’ and ‘see things with new eyes’, and to make connections between the illustrative qualities of artistic responses to the landscape and the physical and cultural geography, and cultural heritage, of the whole, or parts, of Wales.
- ◆ To help visitors and residents to understand and enjoy the contribution which artistic responses to the landscape make to an appreciation of the natural and wider cultural heritage of Wales.
- ◆ To relate, in tourism, arts-based and community terms, the interpretation of responses to the landscape to other aspects of the cultural landscape.
- ◆ To extend the knowledge and awareness of visitors and residents with a special interest in artistic responses to the landscape and in the landscape itself.

## 6 Interpretive themes

Our approach to *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative is based upon four themes which were paraphrased in Chapter 3. The responses, as a narrative, collectively embrace all types of responses to the landscape.

### 6.1 The landscape as history

This theme can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ Historical reference has been a powerful source of inspiration for artists whose depiction of Celtic legend, ancient history and great strongholds present the landscape of Wales as an evocation - and carrier - of a long and glorious past.

Much of the large body of eighteenth-century print-imagery of Welsh landscape incorporates historical reference, especially depictions of castles, though it is essentially similar in meaning to English topographical work of the same period. However, the landscape paintings of Richard Wilson differ profoundly from this tradition. In his Welsh works Wilson presented complex formal and historical allusions to Italian landscape, which carried political messages for those members of the patrician class, who were his patrons.

Wilson's *Castell Dinas Bran from Llangollen* conflated elements of Celtic legend and medieval history, as did *The Last Bard* of his pupil Thomas Jones, responding to the historical romanticism of Thomas Gray's celebrated poem on the theme. Wilson influenced the young Turner, whose most important early painting was the historical landscape, *Dolbadarn Castle* (1800). Similarly, Tintern Abbey achieved iconic status as a result of the attentions of both Turner and Wordsworth.

The works of other romantics dramatised the historical context of modern life, such as Julius Caesar Ibbetson's *Conway Castle. Moonlight at the Ferry*. Ibbetson was also characteristic of the Romantics in his use of the land itself as a symbol of the deep past, especially the mountains of Snowdonia, which writers and painters perceived as existing in a primitive, uncivilised condition, which suggested ancient history and Celtic legend.

The appeal of Celticism grew in strength through the nineteenth century. Both Clarence Whaite and Hubert Herkomer produced Celticist landscapes, and early twentieth century critics, writing in Welsh and in English, celebrated the notion of Celtic spirit in contemporary landscape poetry and painting. In the mid-twentieth century the literary and visual work of David Jones drew heavily on the idea of landscape as the carrier of history, and among painters of the present day, the landscapes of Eleri Mills have been deeply informed by historical reference.

## 6.2 The landscape as nature

This theme can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ The landscape of Wales as created by ‘Nature’ has inspired artists to respond both to its aesthetic qualities and to its ‘spirit of place’ and, in so doing, to guide and reflect public perceptions of landscape.

Perhaps, counter-intuitively, the imaging of the land as nature has often been the most intellectually complex of the themes, since it bears upon spiritual or religious issues, and issues of aesthetics. From an early date, through the poetry of John Dyer, for instance, it has been the area in which the Welsh landscape has achieved its highest profile outside the country itself.

The Wye Valley was the exemplar chosen by William Gilpin for the development of his theory of the Picturesque, and his concepts were famously applied by Thomas Johnes at Hafod. Initially among the intellectual community but ultimately at a popular level, the theory had wide ranging implications for the perception of landscape. Subsequent generations of artists developed variant aesthetics in Wales, most famously J M W Turner, but major works were also produced by his early rival, the Swiss painter Philippe de Loutherbourg.

The deep interest of David Cox in Welsh landscape led him to stay every summer for some twelve years at Betws-y-Coed (1844-56) and stimulate the creation of the first artists’ colony in Britain. Almost all of the leading Victorian landscape painters, such as Benjamin Williams Leader, produced major works there, many of them (notably Clarence Whaite) influenced by pietistic ideas of the land as the handiwork of God.

In the twentieth century, Welsh landscapes became laboratories for modernism - particularly the Arenig, in the hands of the Welsh painters J D Innes and Augustus John, and later Pembrokeshire, in the hands of the English painter Graham Sutherland.

## 6.3 The landscape as home

This theme can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ The deep-rooted connection between people in Wales with the landscape, the ‘sense of home’ has inspired artists to explore and evoke what is described by the word *cynefin* with its connotation of deep emotional attachment.

The Welsh word *cynefin* evokes in a way not easy to convey in English a sense of relationship, between people and the land they occupy, that is characterised by deep familiarity. It is a theme prominent in the literatures of Wales throughout the modern period, expressed in the mid-twentieth century in the Welsh language by the work of Waldo Williams, for whom his childhood home in the Preseli Mountains was the carrier of universal human values.

The painter Kyffin Williams expressed the notion as one of ‘a landscape with everything in it’, in contrast to a landscape observed as scenery, in the way of the

English artist in search of the Picturesque in the eighteenth century. It may be that the critic David Bell, writing in the 1950s, had sensed this common but particular thread within Welsh landscape painting, when he presciently referred to ‘Welsh Environmentalism’, to distinguish it from English tradition.

Among the most notable of the painters that he celebrated was John Elwyn, whose landscapes of rural Ceredigion were almost invariably also images of human community. Few outsider artists have empathised sufficiently with this perception to image it successfully, though there are exceptions. In the mid-nineteenth century, David Cox’s *The Welsh Funeral*, set in Betws-y-Coed, evoked the relationship between people and land with sufficient power to spawn a genre of Welsh funeral imagery. The picture was remarkable also for its appeal in England, where it came to represent the supposed piety of the common people of Wales.

In twentieth-century English-language literature, as both critic and poet Jeremy Hooker has been notable for his sensitivity to the concept of *cynefin*, which is strongly present also in the work of Gillian Clarke, the current National Poet for Wales.

## 6.4 The landscape as resource

This theme can be summarised as follows:

- ◆ The use of the landscape and seascape of Wales has produced a wide range of artistic responses from the empathetic, when representing, for example, the working countryside or coastline, to the belligerent, when describing or depicting its exploitation by extractive and other industries.

Images of the exploitation of the land are wide ranging. Especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they include the unambiguous celebration of icons of technology associated with economic development, notably the Pontypridd and the Menai Bridges.

However, the imagery as a whole is more often expressive of paradox. For instance, in the case of agriculture, the benign portrayals of the windmills of Anglesey by Harry Hughes Williams are balanced by the ambiguous response of R S Thomas to the agricultural community, and the outright hostility of Caradoc Evans.

In images of the extractive industries - slate in the north west, coal in both the north east and in the southern valleys - some writers and painters (Ernest Zobole, for instance) have found a lyrical beauty in the industrial and urban landscape that equates to the ruralism of Williams. More often, the tension between the threatening hardness of the created landscape and the warmth of its communities is simultaneously present, notably in the works of the many photographers of the documentary tradition who have worked in these settings.

The frequently politicised content of this imagery is not confined to industrial Wales, for the exploitation of agricultural land by outsiders for water and forestry has generated passionate and influential artistic responses in the photography of Geoff Charles and the writing of D J Williams. In the same way, the ‘drowning’ of Capel Celyn, to create a reservoir for Liverpool, prompted *Tryweryn* by poet Sally Roberts Jones.

## 7 Markets and audiences

Many organisations in Wales have knowledge of their visitor and resident markets at a local, regional or national level. Demographic profiles are available for Wales as a whole and for principal regions. Foreknowledge, desires, expectations, experiences and satisfaction levels of visitors have been widely surveyed but not a great deal is known about the personal aspirations and emotions of visitors to and within Wales. For a topic that is at least partially abstract, aesthetic and even philosophical as *Artistic Responses to the Landscape* there is little formal research upon which to base target audiences which are, as a result, generic rather than specific.

### 7.1 Markets

The tourism market in Wales is made up, predominantly, of visitors from other parts of the UK, substantially from the English Midlands. The great majority of visitors rate 'scenery' as a key component of Wales's attraction for them but the proportion of incoming tourists who have anything more than a passing interest in the landscape is not known. The list of 'top places' includes, of course, Snowdonia, the Pembrokeshire coast, the Wye Valley, the Gower and the waterfall country of the Brecon Beacons. These have attracted artists of all kinds for centuries.

Other important factors in the appeal of Wales are castles, great gardens and industrial heritage, many of which feature, directly or indirectly, in paintings, photographs, books, poems, songs and music.

Of the nine million visitors who come to Wales, around one million are from abroad, representing not only a significant market sector but also one that, in general, has an expressed interest in finding out about the country, its scenery, heritage, language and ancestors.

VisitWales welcomes all visitors, including those whose interests lie mainly in spending time, usually in modestly-priced accommodation, at the many coastal resorts. However, it is keen to attract many more of what it calls 'independently-minded' families - those who will seek out the special and often unique qualities of Wales.

Discussions with tourism marketing, arts organisations, community development organisations and other groups reveals more about the nature of the market, particularly for cultural tourism in Wales. Research carried out by the North Wales Tourism Partnership, for example, found that:

**29% of tourists** visited for a specific cultural activity and are the 'pure cultural tourists'. They are well prepared, they will have read information before their visit and know what they are coming for. They will visit specific sites or attractions for a purpose and will be focused in their visit itinerary. They visit for cultural enlightenment, as well as for entertainment. They tend to be older adults only.

**70% of tourists** are 'casual cultural tourists' or 'accidental cultural tourists'. For casual cultural tourists the cultural context is important but so are other non-

cultural factors. The destinations must have a variety of opportunities for activity and must include some shopping. Their purpose for visiting is for general interests with some cultural activity included. They are generally adults only or with older children.

‘Accidental cultural tourists’ pay little attention to specific cultural aspects before deciding where to go but are still interested in visiting a cultural site if it is within the area of their general visit. They will not have researched much before their visit and are happy to pick up information on the way that may encourage them to visit other attractions. They tend to be adults-only groups or families with older children.

The largest group of ‘cultural’ tourists are adults travelling as couples or in groups. They are mostly aged 35+ with or without children and in social groups A, B and C1.

This research also showed that the internet is now the most dominant source of information for finding out about destinations, and it’s used by people of all ages. People may start by searching tourist board sites but are comfortable using search engines for accommodation and independent review sites. An individual event may be the driver for planning a cultural visit but the general cultural backdrop for the destination is important for making a visit decision.

Other organisations consulted provided more anecdotal information about the market. Some people enjoy taking tours with specific topics - gardens, churches or other cultural topics - but most people are more relaxed about their visits, picking off destinations on a whim rather than as an organised visit. People who come to an area for another purpose are often interested in organised tours if they are available. During the Ryder Cup in 2010 many visitors, particularly from America, joined tours with topics such as churches, saints and genealogy.

Websites are increasingly drawing the interest of potential visitors. Sites that carry more of an explanation of culture, rather than simply information, are particularly useful. The ‘People’s Collection’ - [www.peoplescollection.co.uk/](http://www.peoplescollection.co.uk/) - provides high quality cultural interpretation that can help to increase people’s understanding about the culture of Wales and can also be a valuable part of the planning for a visit. ‘Inspirational Wales’ - [www.inspirationalwales.com/](http://www.inspirationalwales.com/) is another website which encourages ‘virtual visitors’ to explore the artistic heritage of South West Wales. In North Wales, [www.giantsnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.giantsnorthwales.co.uk) includes page on literary giants and those connected with the art of landscape.

Many organisations, including tourism partnerships and the community development projects, confirm that the Welsh landscape and its culture are the main attractions for visitors, with many enjoying the opportunities the landscape provides for activities and outdoor pursuits. Many people also like to sample a number of activities in one visit, which might include a tour of castles or gardens, a walk in the hills and a visit to a Cadw or National Trust site. There is opportunity to provide multi-layered web- and site-based interpretation that makes links between aspects of culture, heritage and landscape and provides a dynamic picture of culture and heritage in the Welsh landscape.

## 7.2 Audiences

We propose that the following audiences represent the principal target markets for the proposals in this interpretation plan:

- ◆ The independently-minded family, attracted to Wales (or to parts of Wales away from home) at least partly by its scenery, *and with at most a passing interest in, and knowledge of*, the landscape of Wales and / or the works of artists in response to the landscape of Wales.
- ◆ The independently-minded family, attracted to Wales (or to parts of Wales away from home) at least partly by its scenery, *and with an expressed or strong interest in, or knowledge of*, the landscape of Wales and / or the works of artists in response to the landscape of Wales.
- ◆ Adult visitors and residents *with at most a passing interest in, and knowledge of*, the landscape of Wales and / or the works of artists in response to the landscape of Wales.
- ◆ Adult visitors and residents *with an expressed or strong interest in, or knowledge of*, the landscape of Wales and / or the works of artists in response to the landscape of Wales.
- ◆ Visitors and residents with a special interest in the landscape of Wales in the context of their interest in the works of artists in response to the landscape of Wales.

It would be possible to make a distinction between those with, on the one hand, any level of interest or knowledge (or none) in the landscape of Wales, and on the other hand, any level of interest or knowledge (or none) in the works of artists in response to the landscape. In reality, it will be necessary for all interpretive media to address both groups, some or all of whom may have different levels of interest or knowledge between one aspect and another. A climber may know his or her mountains but nothing about art, a regular visitor may be an enthusiast for painting but know little about the landscape.

However, wherever it is practicable to provide a hierarchical approach, different types of interest can be addressed at different levels.

## 8 Our proposals

As we said in Chapter 3, appreciation of landscape is intensely personal, but there is a strong linkage between the sea and mountains, woodlands and wildlife, buildings in their (sometimes designed) settings and the aesthetic experience that they offer. In a different way, industrial landscapes, and landscapes that have been, or are being, used for human endeavour, have their own impact on people's sensibilities and sensitivities and can provoke a variety of responses.

Artists (in the generic sense) have been most successful when their appreciation of landscapes has coincided with that of the public - usually in conveying the spirit of place. In the case of painters, J M W Turner scores highly in the 'popularity stakes' as well as being an outstanding painter in watercolours and oils. Richard Wilson is a leader among UK landscape painters and Kyffin Williams is much-admired by many people for his contemporary depictions of his home island of Ynys Môn.

The work of distinguished travel writers such as Thomas Pennant, George Borrow and H V Morton has had a strong role in attracting visitors to Wales - as outsiders they represent one view of the landscape. In more recent times, Jan Morris has added to the canon of travel writing as an adopted Welsh writer.

Welsh writers, poets and composers from John Dyer to R S Thomas and Gillian Clarke evoke powerfully the *cynefin* factor, the innate sense of homeland, in their own characteristic ways.

Implementing this plan must help visitors seek out, appreciate, understand and cherish these special, different and memorable responses to the special, different and memorable landscapes of Wales. However, an interpretation plan that deals with aesthetics, personal responses to landscape and other non-tangible sensibilities has to be realistic in defining its audiences. Some visitors and residents may never be reached, or may be touched only tangentially.

### 8.1 The importance of storytelling

Our approach is based upon creating the greatest level of general interest and that must involve two key elements - storytelling and people. As a general rule, people react and respond more to other people than to anything else. People of all ages love stories and stories involving people have, therefore, the most impact.

We propose, therefore, that the interpretation of artistic responses to the landscape should be based on telling, primarily, stories of people in the landscape and, in support, stories of the landscape itself, where they add to appreciation and understanding. The people involved would be the artists themselves and, where appropriate, those with whom they came or come into contact.

We have determined that, for a variety of practical reasons, the interpretation should be based on four geographical regions. Within three of these, we have highlighted particular areas which were referred to earlier in Chapter 3:

- ◆ North Wales (Isle of Anglesey, Llŷn, Snowdonia, Clwyd)
- ◆ Mid Wales
- ◆ South West Wales (Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire)
- ◆ South East Wales (Swansea / Gower, Valleys, Cardiff, Wye Valley)

When interpretive media are being implemented, it is likely that the principles articulated in this plan may be applied to a specific area as well as, or instead of, to one of the regions delineated earlier. We have used the area study in Chapter 10 to demonstrate how this might work.

This does not preclude the use of other points of focus linked, for example, to the media used by artists (paint, print, photograph, song etc), to the chronology involved or, of course, to the artists themselves. Because the range of responses, artists and landscapes is so broad, there will be opportunities to deal with the overall narrative in a variety of ways at a variety of geographical levels.

However, for the purposes of demonstrating our overall approach, we have selected North Wales as a region in which a broad story of responses to the landscape could be told and this is set out below.

## 8.2 The power of the story

What is important in any interpretation is the quality of the story told, and that will depend upon the writers and designers chosen to implement this plan's proposals. If the title of this plan were applied, for example, to North Wales ...

### *Trin y Dirwedd* *The Lure of landscape*

#### Through North Wales with brush and pen

... we propose that the content of interpretive media should include, for example, but not necessarily in the following order:

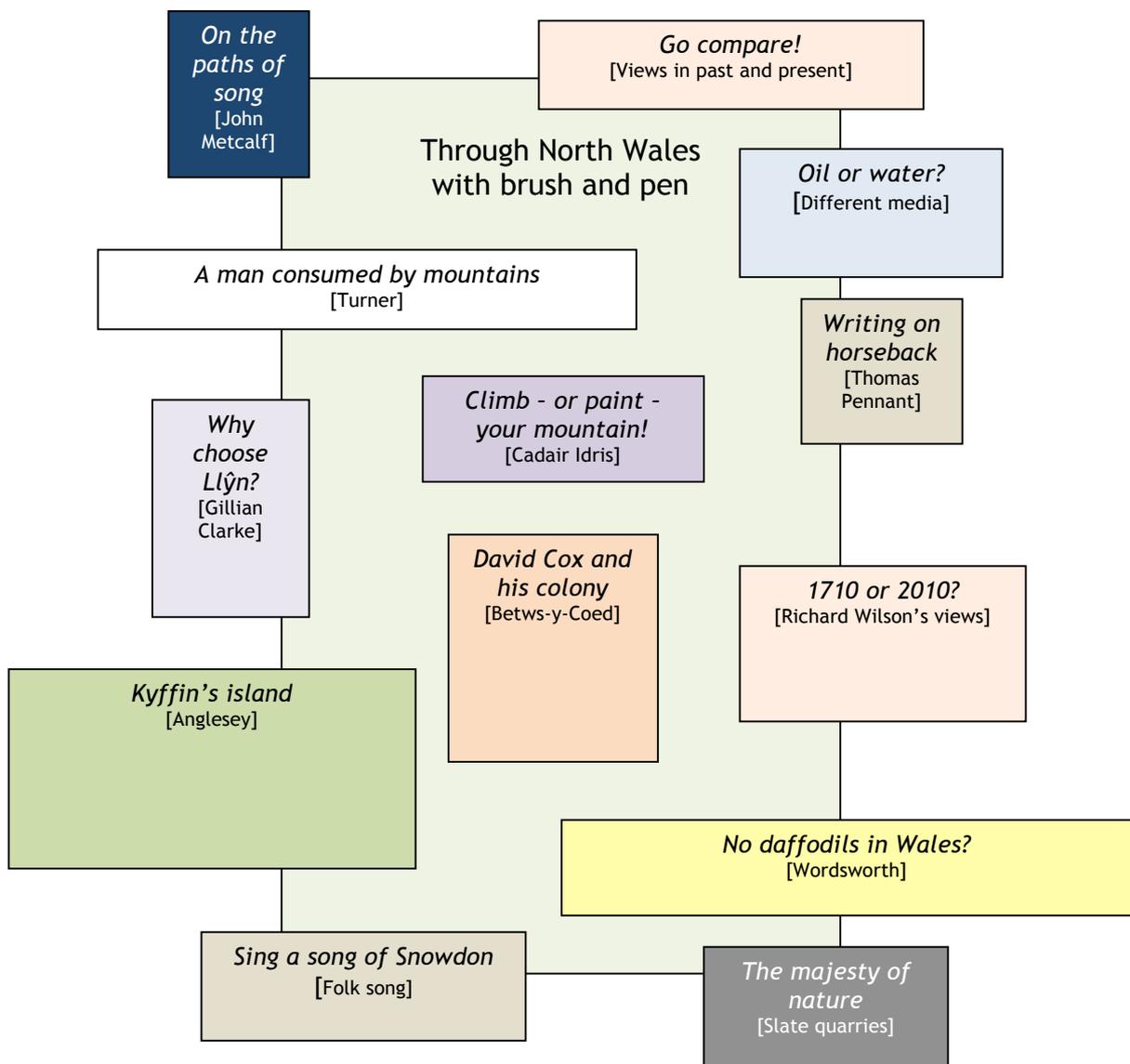
- ◆ *Biographical sketches of noted (or notorious) artists* whose work was or is a direct response to the landscape
- ◆ A *chronological* sketch of how artistic responses to the landscape have changed (or have not) over 300 years
- ◆ *Topographical* profiles of the key areas of landscape that have inspired or have continued to inspire artists and why they did or do so
- ◆ Examples of *media* employed from the simplest pen and brush sketch, through written materials to song and music and the use of modern digital recording
- ◆ Examples of *contemporary landscapes* that can easily be compared or contrasted with those depicted in the past

It will be important to weave a story around the chosen artists associated with an area in a broad-based, conversational way that includes anecdotes and tales as

well as artistic images. This approach is similar to the format of a television programme, a magazine article, or a website, effectively illuminating the overall narrative with sidebars, ‘pop-ups’, boxed sections, quotations and, of course, illustrations of the artistic responses themselves.

In visual terms, the approach should be full of interest with chosen highlights that will catch the attention of different readers of text or website. The same technique can be used in audio text with ‘digressions’ or ‘interruptions’ to the main flow to maintain the interest of different audience groups.

The following graphic is *not* a page layout but simply a visual representation of this approach. Where sound can be part of the individual example of interpretation, then music or song, or spoken passages of text or poetry, will provide an added dimension that will appeal to many if not to all.



This approach could be applied, in particular, to interpretive maps and to websites both of which we describe in detail in the next chapter.

In telling the story and introducing all the points of interest, it will be essential to involve visitors and residents by, for example:

- ◆ Encouraging them to visit sites and compare today's landscapes with those in the past, whether those painted, written or sung about
- ◆ Encouraging them to take photographs of landscapes used in paintings or of their choice and add them to the appropriate websites / add them to social networking sites / take them to a local arts centre / enter a competition etc
- ◆ Encouraging them to paint their own responses to landscapes used in paintings or of their choice and contribute them as above
- ◆ Encouraging them to write their own responses to landscapes featured in books / poetry and contribute them as above
- ◆ Encouraging them to compose their own poems or songs in responses to landscapes they choose and contribute them as above

## 9 Interpretive media

The potential range of media that could be used for interpreting *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* is considerable because of the unusual nature of the narrative which embraces a range of topics. Some media could be ‘dedicated’ to the narrative, in many cases a range of different vehicles could be used to interpret the themes, particularly when implemented by potential partners.

It will be important throughout that media always relate to a national overview - in terms of geography, time and artistic media, and that detailed interpretation about individual artists, places and responses is set in this context.

The range of organisations that could be involved in providing interpretation is also wide but we believe it is essential, because of the importance of the subject, that some media be produced at a national level by an appropriate organisation. This organisation could also, of course, guide others at a regional or local level, in implementing parts of the Interpretation Plan and, where appropriate, providing funding assistance.

We have divided our proposals between ‘conventional’ print-based and graphic media which continues to be sought and used by visitors (and residents), digital media which is increasingly used by people of all ages, often before visits are undertaken, and other mechanisms for interpreting *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape*.

The speed of development of digital media appears to be exponential at the moment but its overall role is now proven even if some equipment has not yet faced the test of time. Web-based interpretation is particularly appropriate for the target audiences of independently-minded families and adults.

It is important that media are available - and relevant - for use:

- ◆ Before visitors to a region or area set out; the better informed they are about possibilities and options for understanding artistic responses the more they will be able to enjoy and appreciate them
- ◆ During their visits in different forms; many visitors make instant decisions or change plans when alerted to something they were not aware of, or were not able to find out about before arriving
- ◆ After their visit; many visitors want to follow up aspects of what they have experienced and enjoyed when they get home and have more time for further reflection and investigation
- ◆ The use of Welsh

All media should be prepared in Welsh and English versions but it is essential that it should be written or compiled from a Welsh perspective and then interpretations in English prepared. Full use should be made of quotations from literature or other sources, in Welsh (and English), in text and in sound. Where text in English versions is quoted in sound, in Welsh, this should be clearly introduced to help non-Welsh listeners to acclimatise to the language before any translations are given.

## 9.1 Priority mechanisms

### National level

We propose that the following dedicated media, ie media solely or largely about *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape*, be considered within an overall menu of interpretive media:

#### *Interpretive maps*

We propose that four interpretive maps, one each for North Wales, Mid Wales, South West Wales, South East Wales, be produced in print for wide distribution centrally and regionally. The production of the maps could involve, for example, the regional tourism partnerships but should be overseen and managed by an organisation with national responsibilities.

Interpretive maps, of which an example is illustrated, combine a range of features:



- ◆ A brief introduction to the area or site and purpose of the interpretation
- ◆ A pictorial map of the location
- ◆ A series of topic-based interpretive ‘nuggets’ to illustrate the map
- ◆ A series of topic-based panels to provide additional background information
- ◆ Details of access by road, foot, cycle etc
- ◆ Sources of further information

The interpretive map principle is very close to that illustrated in the visualisation of content provided in Chapter 8. The range of content and the concentration on people makes it highly accessible and if one element does not catch immediate attention, others certainly will, depending upon users’ own interest.

#### *Promotional dispensers*

We propose that simple dispensers be produced to display and dispense the interpretive maps and which can be placed on counters etc at a series of proposed hubs and other outlets. The dispensers could be attached to an A4 backing board that introduced the concept and appeal of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape*. Their production could involve the same regional tourism involvement but again should be overseen by an organisation with national responsibilities.

#### *Websites*

We propose that, in parallel with the maps, a suite of websites be developed for the four areas. They should use the same content and graphics as the maps and be downloadable in sections to domestic printers, those located in hubs, and to MP4 equipment using Bluetooth or other means. As with the maps, the management of this project should be overseen by an organisation with national responsibilities to ensure that a national picture is presented.

However, the websites could be augmented by audio and video material including:

- ◆ Spoken excerpts from prose and poetry
- ◆ Excerpts from performances of music and folk song
- ◆ Archive material from television and radio

We also propose that each website has an interactive map to allow users to seek out information related to the place(s) they intend to visit which could provide specific interpretation material about *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape*.

## Local level

We propose that the following dedicated media, ie media solely or largely about artistic responses to the landscape, be considered:

### *Interpretive panels*

- ◆ On-site, self-contained panels. The panels should reflect the thematic approach but deal with only one or two elements of the narrative. They could be imaginatively designed but should add to the enjoyment of a site and not intrude upon it. Ideally, the panels would incorporate a solar- or battery-powered sound store with excerpts of music, song, prose or poetry. An example of an effective panel is shown.



### *Interpretive seats*

- ◆ Seats or benches, which are a response to the landscape. They should include a brief interpretive message and a sound store. The length of any text should be short but an interpretive panel could be incorporated.



## 9.2 Supporting mechanisms

### National level

We propose that the following be considered:

- ◆ Interpretive guide book / map for all Wales, printed and /or downloadable to printers from a parallel all-Wales website (which could incorporate the four regional websites referred to above)
- ◆ Links from all or some websites to webpages relating to individual locations, artists and media
- ◆ DVD versions of interpretive maps / websites with music, song, spoken prose and poetry

### Local level

- ◆ On-site installations other than panels and benches, providing a place for interpretive text with or without a sound store
- ◆ Commissioned installations embodying artistic responses to the landscape
- ◆ Downloadable portions of websites, incorporating video and audio, and suitable for uploading to MP4 players from a variety of local sources

### Other mechanisms

Other media which could incorporate elements relating to the topic, for example:

- ◆ Joint national or regional promotional initiatives with tourism partnerships and similar groups, arts and broadcasting organisations etc
- ◆ More general tourist and / or descriptive publications / websites / downloadable tours etc
- ◆ Interpretive panels on wider topics where it was appropriate to include references to aspects of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of landscape* themes
- ◆ Branded markers to link sites associated with one or more responses to the landscape
- ◆ Local initiatives with galleries, national arts organisations, community arts centres and other arts-linked organisations
- ◆ Guided tours and other activities such as art-based workshops at the locations for historic visual artists and their artwork
- ◆ National or regional schemes to commission contemporary responses to the landscape by painters, printmakers, photographers, authors, poets, composers, song writers etc which could be displayed with an explanation about the project in a variety of settings including local hotels, b&bs, pubs, shops etc and, of course, galleries and other public places

- ◆ Competitions open to the public as a whole or in sections to produce their own responses in pictures, photographs, words or music with winning entries displayed as above
- ◆ Invitations to the public to contribute to websites via social networking media which could be developed as exhibitions - either on-line or at specific venues
- ◆ Initiatives related to life-long learning courses both formal and informal
- ◆ Initiatives related to appropriate aspects of the school curriculum

### **Distribution points and *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of landscape hubs***

We propose above that the principal medium for ‘promoting’ *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of landscape* narrative and themes will be a series of interpretive maps, supported by websites. It is essential that there are easily-accessible distribution points for the maps. Many will be staffed but not necessarily by staff with any involvement in the arts

Because the themes are bound up with aesthetics and may not be immediately familiar to many visitors, we propose that organisations with a direct or indirect involvement in the arts should be recruited to act as *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* hubs, where staff will be able to explain the approach and augment the content of the maps / websites for visitors and for residents. There would need to be one or more hubs in each of the key areas of the geographic regions we have identified and we have suggested a number in the list of potential partners. However, at this stage, no approaches have been made to the owners or managers of these potential hubs.

We would propose that the staff of the potential hubs - and volunteers where appropriate - should receive training about the themes and how they can be delivered. Such staff could act as *Advocates for Art* and, in addition to meeting visitors and residents, could organise events, devise trails and undertake other activities to explain the special characteristics of their local landscapes and how they inspired responses from artists in different media.

The organisations which we suggest could be approached to act as hubs are identified in Section 13. None has been contacted at this stage.

## 9.3 Creative interpretation

In recent decades, Welsh artists from many disciplines have been involved with interpretation projects. Their creative thinking and skills, in both traditional media and when working with new technologies, have helped to make interpretation projects more memorable. They have been particularly strong in enabling these projects to address their personal and emotional objectives.

We recommend that proposals related to *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* include ideas for involving contemporary creative artists of all kinds in delivering messages and stories. This can be achieved through working with arts organisations and groups and by seeking out professional artists who already have experience of interpretation.

There are toolkits available that can help with commissioning artists. One of these is *Working with artists in forest interpretation* that can be used as a model for projects for other sites. This toolkit will be available on the Forestry Commission Scotland website.

Cadw has committed to this approach as a way of enlivening interpretation and of making it more accessible to many people. Cadw's *Cauldrons and Furnaces* project involved live events and performances at Cadw sites.

Wales offers many examples of successful interpretation that has involved creative artists. They include:

- ◆ Writers tours, when writers lead day tours around places that have been an inspiration for their work
- ◆ Artists creating work specifically related to individual sites, such as the *Locws International* project around the city of Swansea and the programme of art related to the Strata Florida monastic site
- ◆ Animation projects with young people
- ◆ Site related story walks and music
- ◆ Site related sculpture trails, such as that at Lake Vyrnwy
- ◆ Sculptural markers and welcome interpretation for sites managed by Forestry Commission Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales, wildlife trusts and other countryside sites
- ◆ Outdoor projection of images, sound and words
- ◆ Commissioned artwork and poetry for use in public and visitor-use buildings
- ◆ Artists', musicians' and writers' residencies that relate to particular landscapes. One example is the programme of visual artists and writers who have spent time on Bardsey Island and produced work related to the island.
- ◆ Programmes for commissioned artists and writers related to the National Eisteddfod in which they have been asked to celebrate the area where the Eisteddfod is being held.

## 10 Area study - Snowdonia

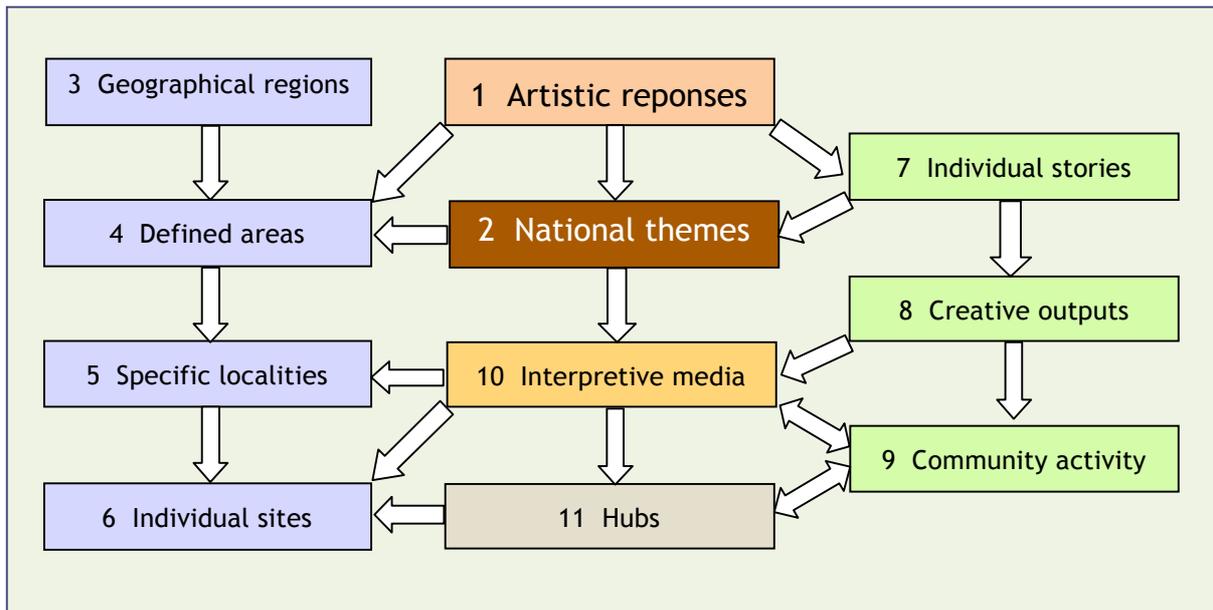
*Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* is a strategy for interpreting artistic responses to the Welsh landscape rather than providing a detailed interpretation plan for numerous sites around Wales. Because of this, we are presenting a single area study that indicates how the overall national narratives are reflected in the artistic responses to a particular area. This study also presents a model for how interpretation might be delivered, at site level, throughout Wales.

The study relates to a specific area: the mountainous core of North Wales, usually referred to as Snowdonia. The area includes Snowdonia National Park, other parts of Gwynedd that are not in the National Park, and part of the Conwy Valley. Snowdonia has been selected as our area study because artistic responses to places within the area can be linked with all of the four key national themes that are used in this plan.

When implementing this plan, we recommend that similar studies be developed for other regions or areas in Wales. Areas will differ from each other in the way they have inspired artistic responses and because of their physical character, their institutional framework and existing or developing projects will be different.

The diagram below shows the interrelationship between the various elements involved in the area study. This key provides a fuller explanation of the boxes:

1. **Artistic responses** are the personal and emotional ways in which artists have reacted to the landscape
2. **National themes** that provide the overall narrative
3. **Geographical regions** are the four broad (administrative) segments of Wales
4. **Defined areas** are composite landscapes whose parts share an overall landscape and cultural character
5. **Specific localities** lie within the defined areas and share physical and/or thematic characteristics
6. **Individual sites** include viewpoints, landscape features and buildings which are the focus of an artistic response
7. **Individual stories** refer to specific narratives linking artists to individual sites
8. **Creative outputs** are the work produced by artists; this includes work commissioned as a result of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* initiative
9. **Community activity** covers a wide range of local initiatives related to implementing the national themes
10. **Interpretive media** are the mechanisms by which the stories are delivered and will include on- and off-site media including digital and online media
11. **Hubs** are places within the geographical area where visitors can access interpretive media



## 10.1 Detailed area study - Snowdonia

### Individual sites

Members of the team made a number of field and site visits. The main purpose of these visits was to test ways in which the visitor experience can be related to particular sites or groups of sites that have been identified as key areas of artistic response and which are candidates for site interpretation.

Chapter 3 explained how defined areas have been chosen for inclusion and how they link to the overarching national themes. We have also noted that there may be significant differences in the ways that visual artists and other artists, especially painters, tend to relate to a landscape.

Landscape paintings may not always be exact representations of the scene. Many visual artists constructed a view that suits compositional preferences and underlying aesthetic and narrative purposes, rather than relating strictly to a given viewpoint. This can result in elements being moved, landscape configurations being exaggerated, distorted or ignored, and in views being foreshortened or extended.

Because more traditional compositional approaches often depend on a viewpoint that looks down onto a landscape feature, the original view is likely to have been taken from a fairly high point, which was never easily accessible and which may now not be accessible at all.

In general, we recommend that sites for interpretation are selected for having a 'good view' of a particular landscape or landscape feature. Specific viewpoints used by artists should be identified only when they are very obvious and very accessible.

We also recommend that interpretation should be focused at places where people already go. This may be:

- ◆ At the start of a popular walk where there is a parking area
- ◆ At a place where people stop for refreshment
- ◆ At centres where people are staying

The table below indicates individual sites identified for this model, some of the key artists or writers who have responded to them and the way in which their work relates to the main themes. The examples used are not intended to be all-inclusive for the area, sites, artists or themes.

### Theme codes

H The landscape as history

N The landscape as nature

C The landscape as home

R The landscape as resource

Snowdonia				
Specific locality	Individual site	Artist	Creative output	Story Code
Cadair Idris	Llyn Cau	Gillian Clarke	<i>Climbing Cadair Idris</i> (Poem)	N
Cadair Idris	Dolgellau Town square	H V Morton	<i>In Search of Wales 1932.</i> (Travel book)	H N
Cadair Idris	Penmaenpool	Gerard Manley Hopkins	<i>Penmaenpool - for the Visitors' Book at the Inn</i> (Poem)	N
Cadair Idris	Llanelltyd Old Mawddach Bridge	John Varley	<i>Cadair Idris from Llanelltyd</i> (Painting)	N
Cadair Idris	Llanelltyd Old Mawddach Bridge	Christopher Williams	<i>Tyrau Mawr</i> (Painting)	N
Cadair Idris	Coed-y-Brenin Visitor Centre	J M W. Turner	<i>Cadair Idris and the Mawddach</i> (Painting)	N
Coed-y-Brenin	Coed-y-Brenin Visitor Centre	Creu-ad & local children	<i>Map of interpreting place names in the forest</i> (Painting with mosaic)	H N R
Arenig & Tryweryn	Llyn Celyn Tryweryn Memorial chapel	Sally Roberts Jones	<i>Tryweryn</i> (Poem)	H R
Arenig & Tryweryn	Cae Garnedd car park	J D Innes	<i>Arenig Fawr</i> (Painting)	N
Betws-y-Coed	Pont-y-Pair	Hugh Hughes, Paul Sandby, Moses Griffiths and other more recent artists	<i>Pont-y-Pair</i> (Paintings)	N
Betws -y-Coed	Rhaiadr y Wennol (Swallow Falls)	David Cox & other artists	<i>Rhaiadr y Wennol</i> (Paintings)	N
Betws-y-Coed	Llyn Elisi	Walter Crane	<i>Llyn Elisi</i> (Painting)	N
Betws-y-Coed	Conwy Valley	Clarence Whaite	<i>The Finding of Taliesin</i> (Painting)	H

<i>Specific locality</i>	<i>Individual site</i>	<i>Artist</i>	<i>Creative output</i>	<i>Story Code</i>
Betws-y-Coed	Betws-y-Coed	David Cox	<i>The Welsh Funeral</i> (Painting)	C
Betws-y-Coed	Betws-y-Coed	Eleri Mills	Recent paintings (Painting)	H
Snowdon	Not known	John Stuart Williams	<i>Snowdon 1798</i> (Poem)	N
Snowdon	Hafod Eryri (Snowdon summit)	Gwyn Thomas	<i>Yr Wyddfa</i> (Poem)	H N
Snowdon	Nantlle	Richard Wilson	<i>Snowdon from Llyn Nantlle</i> (Painting)	N
Snowdon	Nantlle	John Sell Cotman	<i>Snowdon</i> (Painting)	N
Snowdon	Capel Curig	Phillippe de Louthembourg	<i>Snowdon from Capel Curig</i> (Painting)	N
Snowdon	Capel Curig	John Varley	<i>Snowdon from Capel Curig</i> (Painting)	N
Snowdon	Pen y Gwyrdd	Kyffin Williams	<i>Crib Goch and Llanberis Pass</i> <i>Sun and Snow Crib Goch</i> (Paintings)	N
Snowdon	Crib Goch	T Rowland Hughes	<i>Crib Goch</i> (Poem)	N
Dolbadarn Castle	Llanberis	J M W Turner	<i>Dolbadarn Castle</i>	H
Dolbadarn Castle	Llanberis	Numerous painters	<i>Dolbadarn Castle</i>	N H
Slate	Blaenau Ffestiniog	Jeremy Moore	Blaenau Ffestiniog (Photographic book with poet Gwyn Thomas)	R
Slate	Blaenau Ffestiniog	Jean Napier	<i>Rhosydd</i> (Photographic book)	R
Slate	Blaenau Ffestiniog	Maurice Rutherford	<i>Slate</i> (Poem)	R
Slate	Bethesda	Bryan Aspden	<i>Chwarel Bethesda: Peter Prendergast</i> (Poem)	R
Slate	Bethesda	Peter Prendergast	Slate Quarry (Painting)	R N
Slate	Rhosgadfan	Kate Roberts	<i>Feet in Chains</i> (Painting)	C

## Location A: Cadair Idris

Cadair Idris is an isolated massif which can be approached from several directions. People who plan to climb the mountain usually start at one of two places:

- ◆ Minffordd on the south side of the mountain where there is a large National Park parking area at the junction of the A487 and B4405

- ◆ Tŷ Nant on the north west side of the mountain where there is also a National Park parking area. This is accessed from a minor road from the centre of Dolgellau.

Both these car parks have general interpretation panels and would be good places to introduce visitors to *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* although they don't offer views of the mountain that have been used by artists. This is probably where the poet Gillian Clarke began her climb of Cadair Idris and up to Llyn Cau.

*... past the ruined hafod, the last flower,  
stream falling among boulders  
the mountain ewe and her lamb and at last  
Llyn Cau like a secret cupped in hands.<sup>7</sup>*

The following sites provide dramatic views of Cadair Idris and they are appropriate places to introduce interpretation.

### Site A1: Dolgellau Town Square

*It is Saturday afternoon in Dolgelly.  
I sit on a green seat in front of the hotel, which faces the square, and I think that I have reached  
the most foreign corner of Wales.  
... And right at the back of the square the slopes of Cader Idris lift themselves to the clouds,  
bright green and sage green and brown, scarred by gullies, cut across with thin mountain paths.<sup>8</sup>*

### Dolgellau interpretation hub:

- ◆ All-ability access
- ◆ TIC - *Lure of the Landscape* general information
- ◆ Royal Ship Hotel - interpretive seating outside hotel
- ◆ T H Roberts - historic shop, internet café and potential site for internet access
- ◆ Tŷ Siamas - Welsh centre for folk music - performance and interpretation area

### Site A2: Penmaenpool

*Who long for rest, who look for pleasure  
Away from counter, court, or school  
O where live well your lease of leisure  
But here at, here at Penmaen Pool?  
You'll dare the Alp? You'll dart the skiff? -  
Each sport has here its tackle and tool:  
Come, plant the staff by Cadair cliff;  
Come, swing the sculls on Penmaen Pool.<sup>9</sup>*

<sup>7</sup> From *Climbing Cadair Idris* by Gillian Clarke. Published in *Selected Poems*, 1985. Carcanet

<sup>8</sup> From *In Search of Wales* by H V Morton, 1939

<sup>9</sup> From *Penmaenpool - For the Visitor's Book at the Inn* by Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1918

## Penmaenpool interpretation hub

- ◆ All-ability access
- ◆ National Park car parking area
- ◆ Mawddach Cycle Trail
- ◆ The George Hotel - car park, the hotel itself - possibly site for online access

## Site A3: From Llanelltyd and the old Mawddach Bridge



- ◆ All ability access
- ◆ Views from the Mawddach Bridge similar to those in: *Cadair Idris from Llanelltyd* by John Varley and *Tyrau Mawr* by Christopher Williams

The old Mawddach Bridge is a listed structure and easily accessed by car from the A470 immediately north west of Dolgellau on the minor road to Cymer Abbey. There is a parking area. The bridge is also on a right of way and cycle route. There is the potential for an interpretive panel and / or interpretive seating.

## Site A4: The Precipice Walk

This is a popular and moderately easy circular walk of about 1.5 hours that begins at the National Park car park about two miles off the minor road to Llanfachreth. The walk was established in the Victorian period because it gives excellent views of the Mawddach estuary and Cadair Idris.

There is potential for interpretation at the car park and for interpretive seating at a point about half way along the walk.

## Site A5: Coed-y-Brenin Forest Park

The Forest Park is accessed by car directly off the A470 about 6 miles north of Dolgellau. It is a popular destination for mountain biking, walking and general visits. There is all-ability access to and from the Visitor Centre area.



The visitor centre has been built to give a view of Cadair Idris. The site has a number of interpretive artworks that relate to the forest landscape, including the Coed-y-Brenin map which interprets place names in the forest executed by Creu-ad and local school children.

- ◆ View from Coed-y-Brenin Forest Park that is similar to that in *Cadair Idris and the Mawddach* by J M W Turner.

## Location B: The Arenig and Tryweryn

The Arenig Mountains lie between Bala and Trawsfynydd and are approached from either settlement along the A4212. Afon Tryweryn skirts the Arenig and gave its name to the valley that was dammed to form Llyn Celyn.

These two sites make an interesting contrast when considering the ways in which artists have responded to them. The painters Augustus John and J D Innes used the Arenig as their central motifs for colourful paintings made while staying in the area between about 1911-1913. Tryweryn or Llyn Celyn is now known because of the conflicts that arose when, in 1957, Parliament approved the plan to drown the village of Capel Celyn to make a reservoir for Liverpool.

*Nothing's gone that matters - a dozen farms,  
A hollow of no great beauty, scabby sheep,  
A gloomy Bethel and a field where sleep  
A few dead peasants. There are finer charms  
Observed in rising water, as its arms  
Circle and meet above the walls; in cheap  
Power and growing profits ...<sup>10</sup>*

### Site B1: Picnic area

There is a National Park picnic area, toilets and car park on the A4212. This has access to the lakeside (not for the disabled) with good views of the Arenig. This is a possible place for an interpretive seat.

- ◆ Arenig Fawr from Cae Garnedd car park showing a similar view to that in J D Innes's 'Arenig Fawr'

### Site B2: Chapel

The Capel Celyn memorial chapel and garden are related to the story of the drowned community. This site is not signed at all and the chapel is locked. There is parking in a large layby on the main road.

Plans to site a memorial sculpture by local artist John Meirion Morris have never materialised. It's an ideal place to interpret both stories, as there is also a good view of the Arenig.

- ◆ View showing the Arenig Mountains and the Tryweryn memorial chapel



<sup>10</sup> From *Tryweryn* by Sally Roberts Jones. Published in *Turning Away*, 1969. Gomer

Interpretation hubs for the Arenig and Tryweryn could be located at:

- ◆ Trawsfynydd - Llys Ednowain is a youth hostel and heritage centre. It tells the stories of the poet Hedd Wyn (Elis Humphrey Evans, 1887-1917) and of the Catholic martyr, St John Roberts. There is also interpretation of aspects of the story of Coed-y-Brenin Forest.
- ◆ Bala - Canolfan Cywain is a centre for the interpretation of rural life and for activities connected with that. It's on the outskirts of Bala.

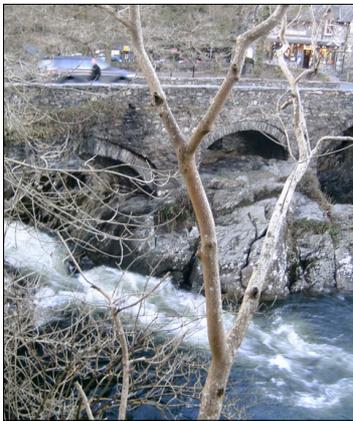
## Location C: Betws-y-Coed

Betws-y-Coed is a well-known beauty spot and is one of the 'honey pots' of Snowdonia. It lies where the A5 east-west road meets the A470 north-south route. It is also on the Conwy Valley rail line.

Betws-y-Coed has attracted artists since the later eighteenth century. However, in the mid nineteenth century, it became a regular haunt for painters and a number of them settled there, creating an artists' colony. This history is important to local people and in 2009 the Snowdonia Arts Festival was initiated. This event is intended to celebrate the artistic history of the area and to encourage new creative work. It is planned to become an annual, week-long, event.

Painters have chosen sites throughout the surrounding landscape, especially in the Conwy and Lugwy valleys. However, the most popular and well-known paintings tend to depict the rivers and especially the waterfalls for which the area is famed.

### Site C1: Pont y Pair



Pont y Pair is a bridge over the Lugwy in the centre of the town. It overlooks a dramatic waterfall and has been a favourite subject for painters. The surroundings have altered significantly since the nineteenth century with the addition of buildings and the growth of trees. Sketches for some of the paintings may have been made from large stone stepping-stones across the river. These no longer exist.

Paintings were made of Pont y Pair by Hugh Hughes, Paul Sandby, Moses Griffiths and many other more recent artists.

There is a car park near to Pont y Pair, which is also at the start of a Forestry Commission walk along the River Lugwy to the famous Swallow Falls. Numerous information and interpretation panels on this site draw attention to the various aspects of the river and the forest. There is seating that could incorporate *Lure of Landscape* interpretation.



## Site C2: Swallow Falls (Rhaeadr y Wennol)

These falls are a very popular commercial tourism site on the A5 to Capel Curig and about 3 miles from Betws-y-Coed. Access is by paying at a turnstile and this is closed out of season. Another point of access (free) is by walking the forest path from the town. The site is not suitable for disabled access.

The falls have been the subject of many paintings, including David Cox's *Rhaiadr y Wennol*.

## Site C3: Llyn Elisi

This site is a large lake/reservoir about 1.5 miles above Betws-y-Coed. It can be accessed by several footpaths out of the town but is a steep walk and not suitable for disabled. The lake was the subject of Walter Crane's painting *Llyn Elisi*.

## Site C4: The Gwydyr Forest

The *Caerdroia* project is deep in the Gwydyr Forest. It is accessed from the B5106 between Betws-y-Coed and Llanrwst. The name translates as 'castle of turning' or 'labyrinth'. It was set up in 2005 by Theatre Cynefin, Golygfa Gwydyr and other community groups. In 2010, it won the *Best Cultural Achievement* award at the Conwy Pride of Community Awards.

The projects on site include art, sculpture and performance installations as well as environmental activities.

## Betws-y-Coed interpretation hub:

- ◆ All ability access
- ◆ There are two private art galleries in Betws-y-Coed, and a large tourist information centre, located in the historically important old stable block of the Royal Oak Hotel. Co-ordinated development could provide both excellent on site interpretation and access to on-line material.
- ◆ Other venues in Betws-y-Coed
- ◆ Accommodation providers
- ◆ The Snowdonia Arts Festival - held annually for a week in October

## Location D: Snowdon

*The difference is not the climbing, the steep ascent  
successfully concluded, conquest of scree and heath,  
but the exultation of inward music,  
such as a hawk might hear, threading time and space  
with omniscient eye as he rides the high wind's  
combers when its curling surf breasts the walled rock.<sup>11</sup>*

Snowdon (Yr Wyddfa) is the centre point of Snowdonia. It is visited by large numbers of people because, as well as walkers, the summit is accessible to all by

<sup>11</sup> Extract from *Snowdon* by John Stuart Williams, 1798

train from Llanberis, giving changing views of the mountain. The visitor centre, Hafod Eryri, at the summit has recently been rebuilt to a striking new design.

*The mighty King Arthur,  
He slew Rhita  
An evil and terrible giant;  
When his warriors  
Cast stone and stone upon him  
They created this mountain, Yr Wyddfa!*<sup>12</sup>

A couplet at the entrance reads:

*Copa'r Wyddfa: yr ydych chwi yma, yn nes at y nefoedd  
The summit of Snowdon: you are here, nearer to Heaven*

Most walkers start from the recognised points of:

- ◆ Nantgwynant (The Watkin Path)
- ◆ Pen y Gwryd (The Miners' Path and Crib Goch)
- ◆ Rhyd Ddu

All these starting points could have some interpretation of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape*.

Visual artists and writers have responded to the mountain in many ways and from many viewpoints. Painters have tended to favour views from Capel Curig, Llanberis and Nantlle. Others have portrayed the higher crags and ridges. Most writers express their experience of climbing the mountain.

Visitors to the area are encouraged to use the Snowdon Sherpa bus service for which a day ticket allows travel all around the main Snowdon massif and between points that are accessed by other forms of public transport. This is an ideal way to view Snowdon from all directions.

The Welsh Highland Railway between Porthmadog and Caernarfon also provides good changing views of the mountain and offers opportunities for interpretation.

## Site D1: Nantlle Lake

This is accessible from the B4418 between Penygroes and Rhyd Ddu - a layby on this road has a seat that gives an approximate view. There is all-ability access.



<sup>12</sup> Extract (translation) from poem by Professor Gwyn Thomas and couplet written for Hafod Eryri Visitor Centre 2009

Richard Wilson chose the view of Snowdon on the previous page with Llyn Nantlle in the foreground for his famous painting of 1765 (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool). Other artists, such as John Sell Cotman, have since used it. The view remains very similar today, although there are some trees, which obscure the precise angle.

There is an opportunity for interpretation either as part of a new seat or in rebuilding the wall opposite the layby.

## Site D2: Capel Curig

For artists, Capel Curig has been a favourite point from which to paint Snowdon. Two very different interpretations of the landscape were painted by de Louthembourg and John Varley. The view can be seen from the A4086 and there is a similar view, although marred by a pipeline, from a popular viewpoint layby at the top of the A498 pass from Cwm Gwynant.

## Site D3: Crib Goch

*Gwaedda-  
ni chynhyrifi braidd y llethrau hyn,  
rhaeadr y defaid maen,  
y panig di-frys, di-fref,  
y rhuthr pendramwnwgl, stond:  
a fugeiliodd mynyddoedd iâ,  
a wlanodd rhew ac eira a niwl...*

*Shout-  
you will not disturb the flock in these slopes,  
the waterfall of stone sheep,  
the unhurried, unbleating panic,  
the headlong, motionless rush:  
that mountains of ice have shepherded,  
that ice and snow and mist have clothed ...*<sup>13</sup>

Crib Goch is recognised as the most challenging ridge on Snowdon. It is reached from the parking area at Pen y Gwryd where there is also a view of the ridge for those who don't plan to climb it. Crib Goch has been included in many paintings and photographs, such as Kyffin Williams' *Crib Goch and Llanberis Pass* and his *Sun and Snow Crib Goch*.

Interpretation hubs:

- ◆ Beddgelert Tourist Information Centre (junction of A4085 & A498)
- ◆ Hafod Eryri - summit of Snowdon
- ◆ Llanberis Tourist Information Centre (on A4086) and The National Slate Museum
- ◆ National Trust Centre at Crafnant (off A498)
- ◆ Plas y Brenin National Mountain Centre, Capel Curig

<sup>13</sup> Extract from *Crib Goch* by T Rowland Hughes, 1948. Translated by R Gerallt Jones

## Location E: Dolbadarn Castle

Dolbadarn Castle sits on a rocky outcrop at the eastern end of Llyn Padarn, near Llanberis. It was built by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth at the beginning of the 13th century. During his wars with Edward I, it was a key point to guard the Nant Peris Valley. It is also associated with the story of the twenty-year imprisonment of Owain ap Gruffudd by his brother Llewelyn ap Gruffudd during the mid 13th century. The stories associated with the castle and its landscape setting that combines dramatic effects of mountain, lake and rocks, has appealed to many artists. It has been interpreted in a variety of ways.

The painting by J M W Turner is the best-known image of Dolbadarn Castle. His painting introduces the tragic story of the imprisonment of Owain.

Interpretation points:

- ◆ Dolbadarn Castle (In care of Cadw)
- ◆ Llanberis - a viewpoint from the Padarn Country Park or in Llanberis town

## Location F: Slate Quarries

Slate is pervasive in the Snowdonia area. It makes its impact on the landscape from Corris in the south, through the slate-embraced town of Blaenau Ffestiniog to the huge quarries at Llanberis, Bethesda and Penrhyn in the north. Its contribution to the landscape character of the area today is mainly where it has been worked and exploited and it is this aspect of the slate landscape that has elicited most responses from visual artists.

Writers have tended to focus on the society associated with the slate communities and with the theme of work.

## Site F1: Blaenau Ffestiniog

*Drawn from his fold on the mean mountain  
the brittle man of Wales shuffles black dominoes  
and builds, on the shards of his father's dreams,  
this mean mountain, where grieving winds  
Polish the grim sarcophagus at Blaenau Ffestiniog<sup>14</sup> ...*

Some of the most powerful artistic responses to the slate landscape have been through the work of photographers. This aspect could be interpreted in Blaenau Ffestiniog through the work of:

- ◆ Jeremy Moore in collaboration with poet Gwyn Thomas
- ◆ Jean Napier's photographs of the Rhosydd Quarries at Tanygrisiau

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<sup>14</sup> From *Slate* by Maurice Rutherford

## Site F2: Bethesda

*No men and no machinery  
Are at work in your painting.  
There's only the shape they've made  
Making a living from slate  
By increments of poverty and profit ...*<sup>15</sup>

Peter Prendergast, the painter, lived in Bethesda for many years. His work became widely known throughout Wales and elsewhere. A favourite subject was the wildness and drama of the landscape of the slate valleys of Gwynedd, but he didn't paint many pictures of the slate quarries themselves.

## Site F3: Hinterland of Caernarfon

*Traed mewn cyffion (Feet in chains) is set in the years between 1880 and 1914 in a slate-quarrying area similar to the one where Kate Roberts grew up. Its chief character is Jane Gruffydd and the novel deals with the hardships of her life as she struggles to bring up six children.*<sup>16</sup>

The slate quarrying communities in the hinterland of Caernarfon include the villages of Rhostryfan and Rhosgadfan where the Welsh language novelist, Kate Roberts, was born. Her birthplace, the cottage of Cae'r Gors, is now a centre for the interpretation of her work and of the social heritage of the slate quarrying communities.

Interpretation hubs:

- ◆ Blaenau Ffestiniog Tourist Information Centre
- ◆ Cae'r Gors, Rhosgadfan
- ◆ Conwy Valley Railway
- ◆ Ffestiniog Railway
- ◆ Llechwedd Slate Quarry, Blaenau Ffestiniog
- ◆ National Slate Museum, Llanberis
- ◆ Welsh Highland Railway

### Delivering interpretation

We recommend that the whole of the Snowdonia area be considered as one and that delivery of the interpretation should be done through a network of organisations and local groups. In order to manage the project and to ensure a high standard of outputs, it would be good practice if one overarching body or steering group coordinated the work of various local initiatives.

The overarching body should include representation from:

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<sup>15</sup> From *Chwarel Bethesda: Peter Prendergast* by Bryan Aspden. From *Poems from an Exhibition 1*, 1983

<sup>16</sup> From: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/northeast/guides/halloffame/arts/kate\\_roberts.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/northeast/guides/halloffame/arts/kate_roberts.shtml)

- ◆ Arts Council of Wales
- ◆ Gwynedd Council
- ◆ Local arts and tourism initiatives
- ◆ National Trust
- ◆ Snowdonia National Park Authority

# 11 Visitor packages

One of the requirements of the brief is to propose a number of total visitor packages covering pre-visit decision information, welcome, orientation, inspirational visit guidance and encouragement to visitors to explore further.

Our proposals for interpretive media incorporate all these elements in different ways:

**National (and area) websites** should include:

- ◆ Adequate pre-visit information including sources of further information from routes and accommodation to specific places of interest
- ◆ Over-arching inspirational visit guidance
- ◆ Overall encouragement to explore further and sources of information to support this guidance

**National (and area) interpretive maps** should include:

- ◆ Overall pre-visit information including sources of further information - particularly the related websites which will be more detailed in this respect
- ◆ Implicit welcome
- ◆ General orientation with clear maps and sources of further information
- ◆ Clearly-articulated inspirational visit guidance
- ◆ Embodied encouragement to explore further with sources of information to support this

**Interpretive panels** should include:

- ◆ Implicit welcome
- ◆ Well-articulated stories appropriate to the site
- ◆ Guidance for further visiting directly relevant to the site or story

**Interpretive seats** should include:

- ◆ Implicit welcome
- ◆ Well-articulated mini-stories / quotations etc appropriate to the site

**National and local support services** should include:

- ◆ *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* hubs providing a welcome to visitors, further orientation, information, interpretation and guidance
- ◆ Inclusion of appropriate guidance information, introductory interpretation and encouragement to explore in national or regional publications and websites produced by tourism partnerships and similar groups, arts and broadcasting organisations etc

- ◆ Inclusion of appropriate welcome, orientation, visit guidance, interpretation and encouragement to explore in any material designed for digital downloading either from websites or other sources
- ◆ Provision of appropriate information and interpretation in galleries, national and local arts centres and other arts-linked venues
- ◆ Guided tours and other activities such as art-based workshops at the locations for historic visual artists and their artwork

## Working with others

However, one of the challenges of interpreting artistic responses to the landscape is that the overall story is extremely disparate in time, geography, artistic medium and artists and, except in areas where there is considerable ‘density’ of material - and obvious landscape appeal, such as Snowdonia, is not easy to package in a way that provides a compelling attraction in its own right.

Our proposals for national and area websites and interpretive maps (with appropriate digital spin off in downloads etc) will provide much of the required packages, particularly when linked with other sources of information relating to visitor facilities. Other media suggested above will support these two key mechanisms.

Although all the interpretive mechanisms we have proposed will help to provide ‘packages’ for visitors, we believe that many people within and visiting Wales are more likely to incorporate their interest in artistic responses to the landscape with other attractions and activities and, for that reason, we believe that much of the success of this overall project will depend upon its being integrated with the promotional, informational and interpretive work that is more general, whether on a national, regional or local basis - as we have suggested earlier.

This would be also be apposite in the cases of the two other projects related to *Spiritual and Inspirational Landscapes* - those concerned with *Celtic Saints*, *Spiritual Places and Pilgrimage*, and with *Churches, Chapels and Monastic Landscapes*. Working in association with these other projects - and those related to Castles, for example, and with the wider promotion and interpretation of the landscape in Wales, will provide a broader context for *Trin y Dirwedd / the Lure of Landscape* which can only be to the advantage of that project and to the wider appreciation of Wales as a whole.

## 11.1 Compiling packages

When considering the compilation of specific regional or local packages within the overall narrative of *Trin y Dirwedd / the Lure of Landscape*, we suggest that the organisations responsible should:

- ◆ Use existing sources to assemble the names and works of native and visiting painters, writers etc who are connected with the area; the information in Appendices A and C will be helpful in this respect.
- ◆ Agree the specific interpretive and marketing aims of the package within the overall narrative of *Trin y Dirwedd / the Lure of Landscape*

- ◆ Decide which of the four themes is or are most appropriate for the package
- ◆ Select a limited number of artists and their works to illustrate the themes, with particular reference to what residents and locals can go and see
- ◆ Commission, where appropriate, skilled interpretive writers and designers to prepare whatever graphic / printed / digital material is required
- ◆ Commission, where appropriate, contemporary (local) artists to contribute to whatever material is produced or to produce public art
- ◆ Ensure that distribution of printed or digital material is considered in advance and supplies / content kept updated

## 12 Potential partnerships

Cadw has been charged with the overall responsibility for developing this and related interpretation plans but, for a variety of reasons, will not be in a position to implement the proposals on its own. It will look to other organisations with complementary interests to bid for funding to undertake interpretive initiatives or simply to adopt the principles within their own work.

The range of bodies which, potentially, could play a part is considerable and the list below identifies a wide range of them.

The museums and galleries shown below are included in the table in Section 11. Those identified with [H] would, we propose, act as *Lure of landscape* hubs where staff could act as *Advocates for Art*.

### **National organisations**

- ◆ National Library of Wales [H]
- ◆ National Museum of Wales, Cardiff [H]
- ◆ Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth
- ◆ Royal Cambrian Academy, Conwy
- ◆ TRAC (folk development organisation), Cardiff
- ◆ University of Aberystwyth School of Art, Aberystwyth
- ◆ Wales Millennium Centre

### **North Wales organisations**

- ◆ Antur Nantlle, Caernarfon
- ◆ Galeri Caernarfon, Caernarfon [H]
- ◆ Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery, Bangor [H]
- ◆ Kate Roberts Heritage Centre, Cae'r Gors
- ◆ Oriel Plan Glyn y Weddw
- ◆ Oriel Tegfryn, Menai Bridge [H]
- ◆ Oriel Ynys Môn, Llangefni [H]
- ◆ Plas Tan y Bwlch [H]
- ◆ Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin [H]
- ◆ Tŷ Newydd, Criccieth
- ◆ Tŷ Siamas, Dolgellau
- ◆ Wrexham Library and Art Gallery [H]

***Mid Wales organisations***

- ◆ Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Aberystwyth [H]
- ◆ Brecknock Museum and Gallery, Brecon [H]
- ◆ Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth [H]
- ◆ Gregynog Hall, Newtown
- ◆ Oriel Davies, Newtown [H]

***South West Wales organisations***

- ◆ Dylan Thomas Boathouse, Laugharne [H]
- ◆ Oriel Myrddin, Carmarthen [H]
- ◆ Oriel y Parc, St David's [H]
- ◆ Tenby Museum and Art Gallery, Tenby [H]
- ◆ West Wales Arts Centre, Fishguard [H]

***South East Wales organisations***

- ◆ Cyfartha Castle, Merthyr Tydfil
- ◆ Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea [H]
- ◆ Glynn Vivian Museum, Swansea [H]
- ◆ Locws International, Swansea
- ◆ Neath Museum and Art Gallery [H]
- ◆ Newport Museum and Art Gallery, Newport [H]
- ◆ Rhondda Heritage Centre, Pontypridd [H]
- ◆ Swansea Museum [H]
- ◆ Taliesin Centre, Swansea
- ◆ The Welfare, Ystradgynlais

To this list can be added the great number of national and local arts festivals that take place every year, the Mentrau Iaith project which embraces 24 organisations throughout Wales that promote the use of Welsh, work with communities and include arts- and heritage-based projects. Planed, the community development project in Pembrokeshire, is one of the many community development projects throughout Wales that have arts interests.

In addition, there are many websites that play a part in recording and interpreting artistic responses to the landscape in a variety of ways.

## 12.1 Criteria for collaboration

Although *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* themes will be open to use in their own right and as part of other initiatives, it is important the organisations that wish to have a direct part in using, developing and promulgating its principles and overall narrative meet with a number of criteria if they are seeking central funds to support their work. We propose that these criteria include clear evidence that ...

- ◆ ... the principles and ethos of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative and themes is understood by staff of collaborating organisations
- ◆ ... *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative will be implemented according to this interpretation plan and not amended or altered to suit other needs
- ◆ ... there are sufficient resources to implement interpretation of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative to a standard set nationally
- ◆ ... any branding, symbols or logos associated with *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative are properly used
- ◆ ... the organisations involved are able to develop the concepts of *Trin y Dirwedd / The Lure of Landscape* narrative and implement them in their region, area or site without diminishing their impact or losing sight of the national framework
- ◆ ... Welsh and English are used in any interpretive media, although direct translations from one language to the other may not always be appropriate or desirable.

It is also essential that any organisation wishing to include reproductions of paintings or photographs should check on the position regarding copyright and / or reproduction rights. The copyright position of written material, including poetry, music and songs, must also be ascertained.

## 13 Monitoring and evaluation

As a precursor to monitoring and evaluation of interpretation, it is important to set targets and performance measures, not least to give yardsticks against which to judge performance. However, in the case of this interpretation plan, this presents a number of challenges:

Many of the proposals in the plan relate to actions and activities which cannot easily be measured. For example:

- ◆ As we said in our introductory sections, this plan deals with a mix of aesthetics and perceptions, neither of which are easy to monitor, let alone measure
- ◆ References to artistic responses to the landscape in tourism promotional material are likely to encourage visitors as much to areas as to specific sites, and many sites, even then, will have no formal admissions perimeter or visitor counts.
- ◆ It is notoriously difficult to determine the more personal thoughts and reactions of visitors (including residents) to landscape or to the work of artists and therefore constructing a data base against which to measure future research will be problematic and expensive, as will the later research itself.
- ◆ The manner in which a variety of organisations may implement all or parts of this plan is likely to be extremely varied, to include as target markets visitors and / or residents, and to be linked to, or integrated with, other activities which will make largely impossible any monitoring and evaluation, in isolation, of the plan's effectiveness.

There appears to be no detailed knowledge of tourists' (or residents') interests or detailed evaluation of their intellectual satisfaction from visits to specific or generic sites. Motivations and principal attractions are surveyed but they are so general as to be of little assistance in the case of this plan and its implementation.

### ***Monitored sites***

Where specific visitor sites are involved, such as historic buildings or designed landscapes, then there would be opportunities to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan although even there, disaggregating the 'artistic responses' element from other motivations and satisfactions will present challenges of their own. Where the plan forms a part of other activities, it may be possible to attribute any success to the impetus provided by the plan or to specific elements within it.

However, where new interpretive media are created and installed, whether in physical or digital form, then there are mechanisms for judging their success which should be put in place. These include.

- ◆ Pre-testing of new interpretive media from graphic panels, installations, printed material, websites and digitally-downloaded material.

- ◆ Monitoring of the use of such interpretive media (including use by different audiences and those with accessibility challenges).
- ◆ Evaluation of the use of different media.
- ◆ Evaluation of the interpretive approach as a whole.

There are many methods that can be used to undertake each of these activities and we identify a number of them below. The list is not exhaustive but indicates some of the methods that can be employed to take stock of different elements of the interpretive approach. Wherever possible, pre-change data should be obtained in order to provide for immediate comparisons and to establish base lines of 'graphs' for continued monitoring and evaluation.

## 13.1 Pre-testing

Pre-testing is something that many organisations fail to do because 'deadlines' are cited as the need to get things on the ground, or out in the public domain. On the principle of 'getting it right, rather than getting it now', we advocate strongly that Cadw, and / or its partners in implementing this plan, test out new media before committing final expenditure and implementation work. A further benefit of this approach is in ensuring that the local community is given a chance to feed into the development process both by commenting and by participating.

In terms of printed and similar material, this process is now simpler and cheaper with the availability of computer-derived artwork that can be produced inexpensively and, in the case of printed material, easily circulated. In the case of interpretive panels or similar media the artwork can be laminated to last for the brief period necessary. Reactions can be sought from selected or random users / viewers, from 'focus groups' or otherwise chosen groups of people, or by other means that ensure wide pre-implementation appraisal and approval.

With any sound stores, or downloaded audio / video tours, sample scripts or 'sound bites' should be tested by visitors and residents over a period to ensure, as far as possible, that they meet their expectations of a visit as well as promoting the promoter's aspirations. The same applies to websites, DVDs etc.

## 13.2 Monitoring

Once media are in place, then monitoring their use and / or success can be done in a variety of ways, often in conjunction with evaluation. For example, the following largely quantitative checks could be instituted:

- ◆ Maintaining accurate records of questions asked - and the type of questioners - as well as of material issued and advice given at tourist information centres and site admission points
- ◆ Maintaining accurate records of printed material distributed and replenished
- ◆ Maintaining accurate records of publications issued, website 'hits' and material downloaded, audio / video tours downloaded and comments made etc

- ◆ Making observation of visitors' and residents' use, behaviour, time spent etc when viewing specific and installed media
- ◆ Making observation of visitors' use of printed material
- ◆ Maintaining records of number of visitors to key sites and special events.

### 13.3 Evaluation

The more time-consuming and, therefore, costly, aspects of the work of appraising success are those that involve qualitative research, which can include:

- ◆ Face-to-face interviewing of visitors (and residents) at key sites, using interpretive media and / or attending events or guided walks / tours / trips
- ◆ Distribution of questionnaires for self-completion
- ◆ Use of focus groups, private and public meetings etc.
- ◆ Analysis of questions asked and answered (or not) by visitors at tourist information centres and key sites
- ◆ Analysis of unsolicited written communications by email, letter or otherwise

The depth of analysis of visitors' and residents' perceptions and reactions goes beyond any conventional tourism survey which seldom if ever cover interpretation, although many comments may have a bearing upon interpretation, or the lack of it. However, evaluation of this plan's implementation would make a suitable subject for a piece of more academic research.

Few organisations undertake any or more limited monitoring and evaluation of interpretation and only occasional pre-testing is undertaken. In a commercial environment, such appraisal of the potential success, as well as actual success, of a product would be undertaken as part of the overall marketing function. The same should be done by any organisation responsible for spending substantial sums on activities of public benefit.

Pre-testing, monitoring and evaluation will provide essential data and anecdotal material that will inform the development of the interpretive approach and guide it throughout its implementation over succeeding years. It is recommended that Cadw and its partners dedicate appropriate time and resources to the evaluation process in order to determine those initiatives that are successful in developing and maintaining the audience for 'artistic responses'. This will help to ensure that resources can continue to be effectively targeted.

## 14 Appendices

The following appendices are referred to in the text:

- ◆ Relevant sources
- ◆ The brief in full
- ◆ Selected sites and responses

### Appendix A: Relevant sources

#### General

- ◆ Davies, J. Jenkins, N. Baines, M. Lynd, P. 2007. 'The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales'. University of Wales Pres. Cardiff.

#### Visual Arts

- ◆ Andrews, Malcolm, *The Search for the Picturesque*. Scolar Press, 1989
- ◆ Bala, Iwan, ed. *Groundbreaking - The artist in the changing landscape*. Cywaith Cymru /Artworks Wales and Seren, nd
- ◆ Seren, 2005.
- ◆ Curtis, Tony, *Welsh Painters Talking*. Seren, 1997
- ◆ Curtis, Tony, *Welsh Painters Talking 2*. Seren, 2000
- ◆ Hywel Harris, *Cymru'r Cynfas*. Y Lofla. Aberystwyth, 1983
- ◆ Lord, Peter, *Industrial Society: The Visual Culture of Wales*. University of Wales Press, 1998
- ◆ Lord, Peter, *Imaging the Nation: The Visual Culture of Wales*. University of Wales Press, nd
- ◆ Lord, Peter, *Clarence Whaite and the Welsh Art World - Betws-y-Coed Artists' Colony 1844 -1914* National Library of Wales, 1998
- ◆ Moore, Donald. *The Discovery of the Welsh Landscape in Wales in the 18th century*. Christopher Davies Press, 1976
- ◆ Rowan, Eric and Stewart, Carolyn. *An Elusive Tradition-Art and Society in Wales 1870-1950*. University of Wales Press, 2002
- ◆ Williams, Kyffin. *The Land and the Sea*. Gomer, 2001 [Illustrations of his paintings with a commentary on each by the artist]
- ◆ Hourahane, Shelagh. *The Layers of a Landscape in Certain Welsh Artists- Custodial Aesthetics in Contemporary Welsh Art*. Poetry Wales Press Ltd, 1999

#### Literature

- ◆ Jarvis, Matthew. *Welsh Environments in Contemporary Poetry*. University of Wales Press, 2008
- ◆ Stephens, M. *New Companion to the Literature of Wales*. University of Wales Press, 1998

#### Collections

- ◆ Curtis, T, ed. *The Poetry of Pembrokeshire*. Seren, 1989.
- ◆ Curtis, T, ed. *The Poetry of Snowdonia*. Seren, 1989

- ◆ Hopwood, M, ed. *Cerddi Sir Benfro [The Poetry of Pembrokeshire]*, collection. Gomer, 2002

### **Websites**

- ◆ Artists in Wales, [www.artinwales.com](http://www.artinwales.com), an instructive web site: containing information about the arts in Wales since c.1950.
- ◆ Art/National Museum Wales, [www.museumwales.ac.uk](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk); a unique resource documenting the history of art in Wales since the 16th century and a major international collection of British and European art.
- ◆ The National Library of Wales, eg [www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=welshlandscape](http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=welshlandscape); the Library has the largest source of graphic material for the Welsh landscape.

## Appendix B: The brief in full

### Artistic responses to the landscape interpretation plan

#### Summary

Cadw, the Welsh Assembly Government's historic environment service is seeking quotations to produce an interpretation plan for the sites associated with artistic responses to the landscape of Wales.

#### Context

After a major review of the interpretative provision at its 127 sites across Wales, Cadw is developing an overarching interpretation strategy for its estate. Cadw is also leading on the implementation of a significant Heritage Tourism Project, part-funded by the EU Convergence Programme. Consequently, Cadw is developing a pan-Wales heritage interpretation plan.

The plan will focus on a number of chronological and/or thematic story strands which create a cohesive picture of the story of the Welsh historic environment. One story strand concerns *Spiritual and inspirational landscapes*. This headline story has been sub-divided into three interconnected story strands. These are: *Celtic saints, spiritual places and pilgrimage, Churches, chapels and monastic landscapes* and *Artistic responses to the landscape*.

The interpretation plan for the story strand *Artistic responses to the landscape* should detail artistic responses to the historic landscape of Wales from the late 17th century to the present day, in visitor oriented packages. Themes could include art, literature, music and landscape design.

The plan should detail how these stories can be told at individual sites and through visitor oriented packages.

The plans for the *Celtic saints, spiritual places and pilgrimage* and for *Churches, chapels and monastic landscapes* will be commissioned separately through the Interpretative Framework.

The contractor will need to be aware of the wider context, historically and geographically in which their proposals need to sit and of the significance this aspect of Welsh history continues to have in contemporary culture and thinking.

#### Requirements

Cadw needs an interpretation plan for the theme of artistic responses to the landscape of Wales. The interpretation plan needs to:

- ◆ Identify the key elements of the story of artistic responses to the landscape of Wales and the key sites or destinations which can help bring that story alive. Note: some sites identified may be problematic in terms of general public access and some will certainly pose challenges for people with disabilities. These issues and, where feasible, suggestions as to how to address them, should be highlighted in the plan.
- ◆ Propose strong interpretive themes and relevant stories.
- ◆ Be firmly grounded in historical fact.
- ◆ Offer interpretation proposals which acknowledge each site's unique qualities and deliver interpretation which makes each site a 'complete visit' in itself.
- ◆ Propose, in addition, an appropriate number of total visitor packages, covering pre-visit decision information; welcome; orientation; inspirational visit; a desire to explore further.
- ◆ Propose interpretation which is focused on a broad audience base, from special interest to the family holiday market. Note: information about the existing visitor profile will be made available by Cadw and relevant Tourism Partnerships; the potential to attract new audiences, including special and local interests, is also a factor.
- ◆ Propose interpretation which is participative and involves the audience.

Note: Some of the sites in question are unstaffed and are often open to extreme weather conditions. The proposals need to be realistic in terms of audience and use media appropriate to the site, the story and the audience.

## Outputs

Cadw requires an interpretative plan for artistic responses to the landscape by **27th March 2011**. A 1st draft would be required for comment by early Feb 2010.

The plan will:

- ◆ Recommend how to tell the story of artistic responses to the landscape; to identify the sites key to telling that story; and analyse the key audiences.
- ◆ Propose interpretative interventions appropriate to the target audiences and the sites in question.
- ◆ Identify key themes and sub-themes.
- ◆ Comprise interpretative planning for individual sites, the relationship between sites and the wider *Spiritual and inspirational landscapes* story strand.
- ◆ Recommend means of motivating visitors to the site/s and to explore further.
- ◆ Acknowledge that some sites may have a story to tell relating to more than one of the proposed headline story strands. In such cases interpretative proposals may need to take account of other strands or topic areas.
- ◆ Recommend evaluation and monitoring techniques to measure the effectiveness and use of the interpretation in line with interpretative objectives.

## Deliverables

The consultant will need to:

- ◆ Familiarise themselves with the key sources relating to the story strand and the interpretation and tourism developments relevant to the project. Information will be made available by the client, but the contractor may also need to obtain access to additional historical reference material.
- ◆ Engage in dialogue and discussion with heritage and tourism interests relevant to the subject area and the locality.
- ◆ Engage in dialogue, liaison and negotiation with other organisations and/or consultants undertaking other interpretation or heritage promotion projects.
- ◆ Work in association with an expert relevant to the story strand.
- ◆ Embrace Cadw's conservation and interpretation principles.
- ◆ Meet with a steering group, led by Cadw, drawn from regional heritage and tourism interests, at agreed milestones during the commission and present the completed plan and recommendations to the steering group and, if deemed appropriate, an invited audience of sector interests.

Cadw  
1 October 2010

## Appendix C: Selected sites and responses

The list on succeeding pages shows a selection of key locations with associated works from paintings to folksongs, poetry to designed landscapes. We have tried to bring together as wide a variety of works representing different media from different periods in order that the stories of artists and their chosen landscapes can be as inclusive as possible in terms of the interests and enthusiasms of visitors and residents. The list is not comprehensive but contains many useful citations to which can be added more on a local or regional basis.

Entries are listed under the four regions, within which they are grouped by area and then alphabetically by location within each local authority. The order within each location begins with painting and photography, moves on to writing and music and ends with designed landscapes. Galleries and museums are included as they can act as important sources of information and interpretation. Those centres we propose as *Lure of landscape* hubs (see Section 12) are clearly identified.

### Local authority areas

#### North Wales

AY Isle of Anglesey [11]  
 GD Gwynedd [10]  
 CY Conwy [7]  
 DE Denbighshire [8]  
 FE Flintshire [9]  
 WM Wrexham [22]

#### Mid Wales

CN Ceredigion [6]  
 PS Powys [17]

#### South West Wales

CE Carmarthenshire [5]  
 PE Pembrokeshire [16]

#### South East Wales

BD Bridgend [2]  
 BG Blaenau Gwent [1]  
 CF Cardiff [4]  
 CP Caerphilly [3]  
 ME Monmouthshire [13]  
 MT Merthyr Tydfil [12]  
 NP Newport [15]  
 NT Neath Port Talbot [14]  
 RC Rhondda Cynon Taff [18]  
 SA Swansea [19]  
 TN Torfaen [20]  
 VG Vale of Glamorgan [21]