

Cyfeillion Amgueddfa Cymru/Friends Museum Wales

Treasurer's Report

Financial Year April 2025-March 2026

BACKGROUND

Maintaining a bank account becomes ever more challenging. When we opened a Lloyds Bank Treasurer's account in July 2023, we enjoyed free banking and the ability to pay in cash and cheques with no charge. In November 2025, we were informed that our account would be changed to a Charity Account, and that we would now be liable for charges for online, cheque and cash payments. These changes, along with the closure of local branches, means that we are paying more both in fees and officer time to pay in cheques and cash.

INCOME

- Subscriptions continue to be our main source of income, and, as always, we are very grateful to our faithful members. We did experience a drop in membership associated with the change to another account, but we are finding lost members and re-establishing subscriptions from them, and slowly attracting new members.
- Day trips and longer visits organised by members of the BoT continue to attract good participation; we must be aware, however, that the age of many of our members means that increasing mobility problems may affect the numbers who are able to enjoy our outings in future. Day trips to Oxford, Batsford Arboretum, Aberystwyth and Ludlow proved both interesting and enjoyable, and longer stays in West Yorkshire, London and Cornwall opened members' eyes to the history and culture of such locations. A large part of the success of these trips is thanks to the unstinting efforts of those who organise them.
- A visit further afield to the Loire Valley also proved popular and, again, thanks must go to organisers.
- The Christmas Lunch always attracts a good number and this year was no exception. The attraction of dining and mingling in the Museum's Great Hall is an experience which masks the sometimes draughty nature of the venue. Changes in how we now pay for the basics were brought into sharp focus when a number of guests noted that they had had to find an ATM to get cash to pay for raffle tickets!
Our St David's Day Tea celebrations provided another opportunity for members to socialise with others over a traditional tea and be entertained with superb music from our resident folk trio.
- The AGM in November was reasonably well-attended.

EXPENDITURE

- Once again we have been able to make a substantial donation to Amgueddfa Cymru/Museum Wales for the continuation of their work. A sum of £12,000 has gone towards the monthly organs recitals at the National Museum , Cardiff, and a play area at the Slate Museum in Llanberis.
- Our monthly talks are a major source of both income and inspiration, and we are endlessly thankful to those speakers who give their time to share their experiences and expertise in the enlightenment of their audiences. A number of speakers have generously forgone payment, for which we are very grateful indeed.
- Catering is now an in-house activity of the Museum. We accept that there will have been an early period of adjustment when we might have expected some changes to the way we receive invoices. However, throughout the year, we have experienced difficulty in obtaining invoices following events. The tendency has been for a batch of invoices for several months to arrive together. While this has not affected our overall ability to pay, it has meant that cash flow is a little more difficult to predict. Invoices for staff attendance continue to be presented to us shortly after the event.
- Insurance is a necessary part of the organisation's activities, and again we have been able to negotiate through the British Association of Friends of Museums (BAfM) a favourable figure for the cover needed.
- Printing and postage form a large portion of expenditure. *Oriel* is published biannually and posted to every member. In addition, flyers advertising activities are posted to those who cannot access internet services; this is currently just 23 members. With ever-increasing postage costs, the Trustees continue to explore ways in which some of these costs might be reduced.

Our income and expenditure levels mean that we are not required to undergo full financial audit, but are able instead to produce a certificate of examination. We are again very fortunate to have the services of Dr Tony Williams, who carries out the exercise with diligence, accuracy and endless patience with the Treasurer.

CHANGES TO VENUE HIRE

At the BoT meeting on 18 March 2026, the Museum announced that in future, the Friends would be charged a commercial rate for the hire of venues such as the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre (RSLT) and the Oriel suite; up to the present, we have been able to use these facilities at no charge, paying additional costs for staff attendance and catering. The new rate will cover the arrangement of the room used, and staff and technical assistance, and includes a 20% discount for the Friends. Catering will still be an additional, separate, cost.

The proposed hire costs range from just over £800 for the use of the Oriel Suite for three hours, set up café-style with chairs around tables, to over £1,600 for the use of the RSLT. Our current arrangements for the Christmas Lunch in the Great Hall would cost us over

£3,000 for four hours. We very much appreciate the Museum's generosity hitherto in not charging us for the use of rooms for our events, and are aware that there are substantial financial pressures on the Museum. However, these changes will mean that many of our activities will no longer be cost effective in their present form. We are considering different ways that we can adapt the programme of events without incurring financial deficit.

IN SUMMARY

FMW has ended the Financial Year April 2025-March 2026 in a reasonably healthy state, in spite of some difficulties. The changes in venue hire fees as outlined above will make a noticeable difference to our expenditure levels and hence on our overall income and surplus figures. The Board has been and will continue to discuss ways in which we may be able to overcome these problems with the minimum effect on our activities, yet still be able to support the Museum in its work as we have done in the past.

Lyn Owen

Treasurer

April 2026