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Further appointments at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have been announced with Margaret Hodge as Minister of State and Gerry Sutcliffe as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.

- *One Wales* – a programme for the Wales Assembly Government
- Live Music Forum report
- DCMS funding guide

***One Wales* – a programme for the Wales Assembly Government**

Plaid Cymru and Labour have published an agreement setting out a “progressive, stable and ambitious programme for government over this Assembly term.” *One Wales* describes itself as the “outcome of a rapid and intensive period of discussion and negotiation”, a “progressive consensus”, and “an historic step” for Wales. It seeks to deliver a “fair, prosperous, confident and outgoing Wales”. Priorities for the arts are set out under the heading of “Promoting Arts and Culture” and include:

- ensuring access to culture for all;
- maintaining free access to museums and galleries and offering free entry to Assembly funded heritage sites for pensioners and children;
- establishing a National English-language Theatre and exploring the creation of a National Gallery for Wales;
- implementing the recommendations of the Stephens Review;
- placing a statutory obligation on local authorities to promote culture and encourage partnership to deliver high-quality cultural experiences for their communities;
- supporting opportunities for Wales’s artistic producers to participate on the international stage;
- considering enshrining the concept of *artistic freedom* in Welsh law.

The programme chimes with many of the recommendations in the NCA Wales Arts Manifesto, produced for the election in May, and the NCA will be continuing to monitor and contribute to debate and policy making in the arts sector under the new Assembly Government.

The Wales Arts Manifesto is available on the website at:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/info/NCA%20Wales%20arts%20manifesto%202007.pdf>

Information about the NCA’s involvement with the Wales Arts Review is available at:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/campaigns/afs/Arts%20Council%20Wales%202005%20%20overview.html>

Live Music Forum: Findings & Recommendations

This week the Live Music Forum (LMF), of which the NCA is a member, published its final report - the result of independent monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on the performance of live music. The report finds that local authorities have generally acted appropriately in dealing with live music licensing and that no particular style of music or type of venue has been affected more than another by the new legislation. Overall the impact on the provision of live music is described as "neutral."

However, the report finds that the Act has not led to the promised increase in live music as and notes that "the promotion of live music" is not one of its objectives. Nevertheless, the LMF cites the removal of the extra cost of a Public Entertainment Licence and the annual renewal process, and the introduction of a flexible system of Temporary Event Notices, as positive changes. The LMF questions "the need for the licensing of live music" but recognises the need for "the proper control of public events", arguing that "controls should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the event." The Forum believes that the exemption for incidental music is "wide ranging" and should be "applied liberally" but has "uncovered clear evidence" of "over zealous or incorrect interpretation" in some areas. Coupled with a "lack of clarity" within the Act (including the definition of incidental music) this has resulted in some "unwelcome and unwarranted impact, particularly on very small scale live music events". The report therefore recommends some changes to the legislation. It asks for a definition of incidental music, a specified exemption for unamplified live music, and investigation of the "small minority" of licensing authorities which have "developed repeated patterns of heavy handed, negative decision making".

The full recommendations are included in the report which is available on the DCMS website at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Publications/archive_2007/lmf_findings_recommendations.htm

Gerry Sutcliffe, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Licensing Minister, welcomed the report. A statement is available at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Minister_Speeches/gerry_sutcliffe/dcms_081_07.htm

Information about the NCA's work on licensing is available on the website at:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/campaigns/nationalpolicy/Licensing%20Act%202003%20overview.html>

DCMS funding guide

The DCMS Arts Division has produced a new guide on funding for the arts. It is intended "to help artists and arts organisations navigate their way around the arts funding system and identify specific funding opportunities" and is of particular relevance to "organisations that are using the arts to address areas of social policy such as disability, criminal justice, cultural diversity and health."

The guide is available on the DCMS website at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Publications/archive_2007/guideartsfunding_june07.htm

Information about the NCA's work on funding for the arts and the Comprehensive Spending Review is available on the website:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/campaigns/afs/index.html>

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/campaigns/afs/CSR%202007.html>

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The NCA is the UK's only independent lobbying organisation representing all the arts. It provides a voice for the arts world in all its diversity. It seeks to safeguard, promote and develop the arts and win public and political recognition for the importance of the arts as a key element in our national culture.

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