

Correspondence from Mike How (Executive Artistic Director and founder of Grass Under Foot)

Dear Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee,

I grew up in North Wales from the age of 14 - 19 and in many ways they were my formative years. It's here that I first discovered my love of theatre being involved in Clwyd Youth Theatre productions. That was 40 years ago and in the last few years I've moved back to North Wales as a creative theatre professional. I'm happy to say that once again I call Wales my home.

I writing to share this open letter to you from National Theatre Wales regarding the recent funding decision that I'm sure you are aware of.

<https://www.nationaltheatrewales.org/news-stories/an-open-call-to-acw-for-conversation>

I acknowledge the great work that Arts Wales does to support Wales unique and wonderful cultural heritage. I also accept that in a highly competitive and under funded sector that they have been forced to make some tough, if not impossible choices. However, as someone who is committed to grass roots theatre, (something that Wales does so well) I do think that this particular decision is, in my view, an extremely short sighted one. In my considered opinion it goes against, not only their own stated aims of broadening the appeal of theatre in Wales, but also that of the cultural aims of the Country as a whole.

I urge you to enter the debate to save Wales' National Theatre and to call on Arts Wales to enter an interim dialogue with them. The unique cultural landscape of Wales, based on community is what attracted me back here and it saddens me that this brilliant company, a flagship of theatre arts in Wales has been put at risk.

Many thanks for considering this email.

Best Regards,

Mike How (Executive Artistic Director and founder of Grass Under Foot)—

