

P-06-1282 Create a National Poetry Library of Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 21 June 2022

Annwyl Pwyllgor Deisebau,

Diolch am eich ateb.

Thanks also for the Minister's response. The letter is correct and we had indeed met; since then, the campaign has been talking with stakeholders more and more to see what are the best steps to take so that all of Cymru's literary community can be on board. Attached is the result of those consultations - a presentation that will be given on the evening of the 28th of June, 2022, in the Senedd Neuadd, 6-8p.m. We hope you can join us for a chance to chat further.

We have spoken with many publishers, poets, libraries, universities, & institutions here and I'd like to draw your attention to the 'Next steps' slide in the attachment: after discussions with the National Library, it became clear that they don't know the full extent of their collection and this needs a Poetry Librarian (perhaps even a team of researchers under her) to make clear; after that, it shows that this campaign must continue through an Arts Council Wales application (that is being put together as I write), preferably with Welsh Government support, so that we can 'Find the building and stack the shelves', i.e. find the most accessible location for the majority of the population and source from all (many already engaged) publishers & stakeholders, the necessary books; once the research is started, we believe we can begin building a team in late 2023 with a view to open in 2025.

The Minister's letter is supportive and so we hope that the Government's will be, with adequate funding, in due time. I hope the Petitions Committee will support our work, too.

Diolch am eich amser a dymuniadau gorau.

- Dr. Ben Gwalchmai.



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NATIONAL POETRY LIBRARY OF WALES



Why? And why now?

(Why not?!

England has many, Scotland has 1 but we have none.)

Case study - Scottish Poetry Library



The **Scottish Poetry Library** started its life with Tessa Ransford.

In January 1984, the first iteration opened its doors.

That was just 2 rooms, 300 books, and 2 part-time staff.

Today the Scottish Poetry Library employs 9 staff members, offers 30,000 books, and works with the Scottish Government.

"The elements remained constant: free access to lending and reference collections, a national core but an international outlook, and the pleasures of poetry shared in schools and through an events programme."

Case study - Manchester Poetry Library

The Manchester Poetry Library (MPL) opened in 2021.

MPL is England's second poetry library in northern-England. Opened amid the pandemic, MPL had to attract national & international backers.

A UNESCO City of Literature, Manchester institutions leveraged their position to create this new library.

The Director of MPL, Dr Becky Swain, is a part of the team behind the Campaign for a National Poetry Library of Wales.

"In this extraordinary year, we have seen how poetry, more than ever, has been a powerful way of connecting our common humanity across the world" - Dr Becky Swain.

Manchester Poetry Library

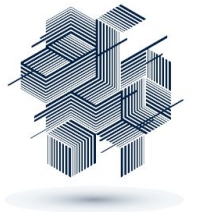
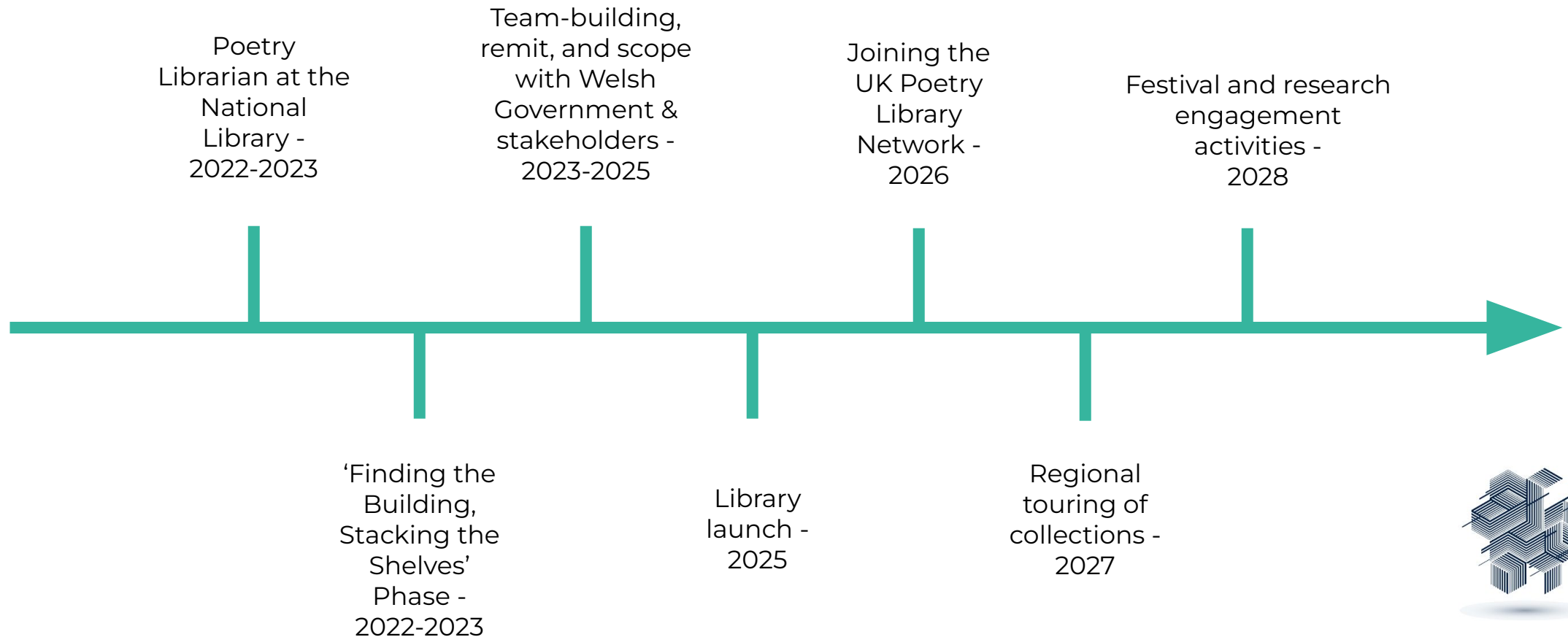




How?
And with who?



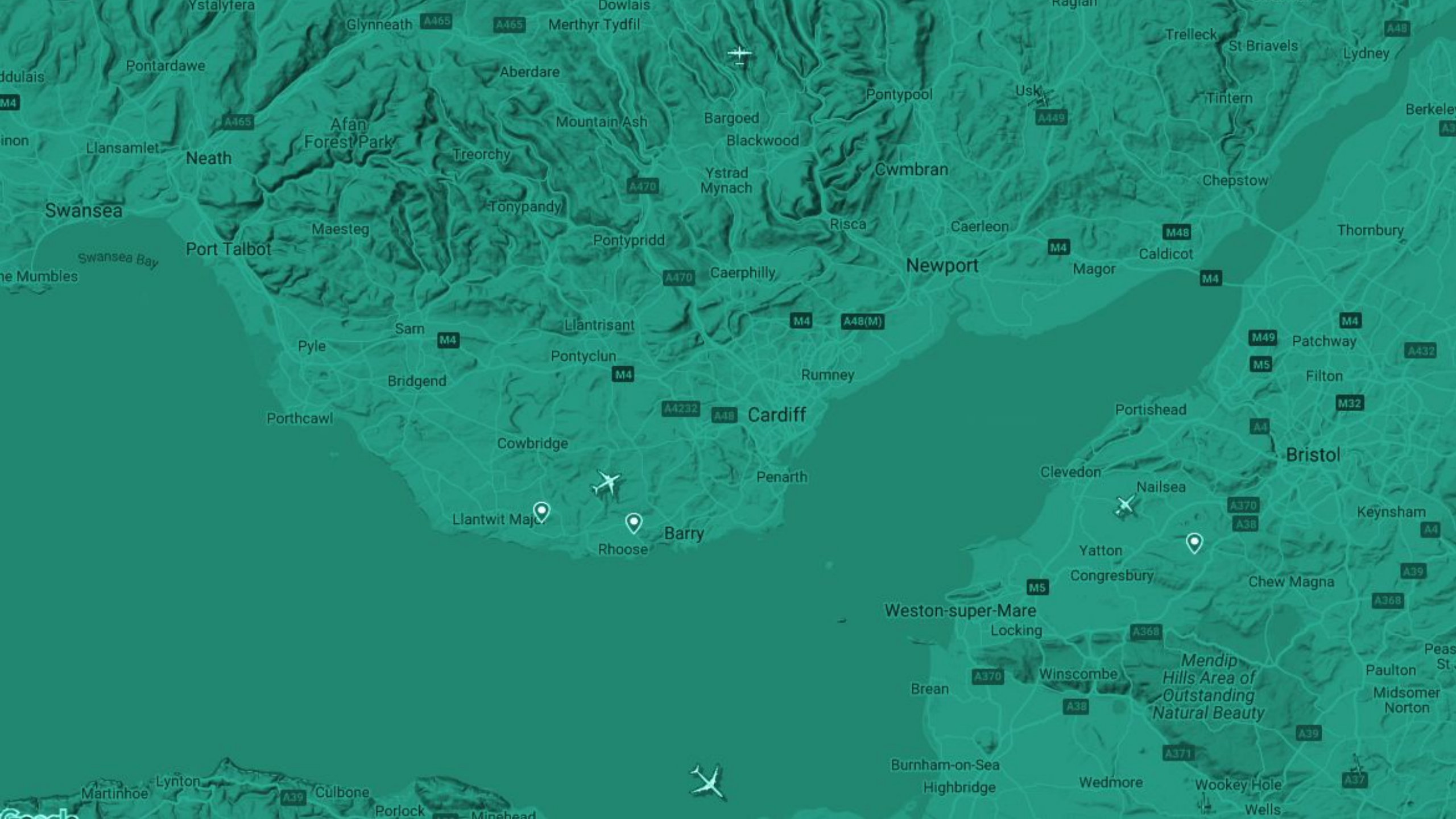
Next steps





Where?
And for who?





Swansea

Neath

Afan Forest Park

Aberdare

Mountain Ash

Bargoed

Pontypool

Usk

Trlleck

St Briavels

Lydney

Berkeley

Tintern

Chepstow

Cwmbran

Risca

Caerleon

M48

Magor

Caldicot

Thornbury

Port Talbot

Maesteg

Pontypridd

Tonypanyd

Ystrad Mynach

Caerphilly

Newport

M4

M4

Pyle

Sam

M4

Llantrisant

M4

A48(M)

Rumney

M49

Patchway

M4

A432

M5

Filton

M32

Porthcawl

Bridgend

Pontyclun

M4

A4232

A48

Cardiff

Portishead

Bristol

Cowbridge

Penarth

Clevedon

Nailsea

Keynsham

Llantwit Major



Barry

Rhoose

Yatton

Congresbury

Chew Magna

Weston-super-Mare

Locking

A368

A368

Brean

A370

Winscombe

A38

Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Paulton

Midsomer Norton

Burnham-on-Sea

Highbridge

Wedmore

Wookey Hole

Wells

Martinhoe

Lynton

A39

Culbone

Porlock

Minehead



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