

Castle House
Grosmont
Monmouthshire
NP7 8EP
2nd November 2016

Chair/ Cadeirydd Bethan Jenkins AM/ AC:
Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Bethan Jenkins

I am writing to express my concern at the intended merger of the National Museum Wales with Cadw into a new Historic Wales organisation.

From my lengthy and extensive involvement with the Blaenavon World Heritage Site and south Wales industrial heritage in general and with the European Route of Industrial Heritage I consider the contributions of NMW and Cadw to date to have been of great merit in the protection and promotion of Wales' internationally significant industrial heritage. There have been benefits from clarity between their discreet roles. In particular I consider the loss of independence of NMW could prove to be unfortunate. NMW has shown great professionalism and imagination in providing first class promotion of Wales' heritage. NMW has provided sterling input within the Blaenavon World Heritage Site Partnership to make the most of tourism potential and wider community regeneration opportunities set out in the World Heritage Site Management Plan. NMW has also made a strong contribution to advancing the aims of the European Route of Industrial Heritage, the principal organisation for the promotion of European industrial heritage tourism, this includes crucial support for the "South Wales Route of Industrial Heritage –Valleys that Changed the World". This initiative has resulted in networking between all sites in south Wales to achieve a joined up approach in promoting the region's exceptional industrial history.

The remits of NMW and Cadw are complimentary. While the concept of Historic Wales may have attractions it is worth noting that Historic Scotland has not subsumed the National Museum of Scotland which is the responsibility of a Board of Trustees, therefore Wales would not be creating a parallel organisation.

Working in effective partnership as at present has much to recommend it while allowing bodies to retain their integrity and deliver their individual responsibilities. Wales' individual heritage organisations are of proven quality, presently respected throughout Europe. Merging these bodies and separate remits and in particular removing the autonomy of the NMW, could well prove to be a retrogressive step and not achieve the best possible protection and promotion of Wales internationally important industrial heritage.

Yours sincerely

John Rodger. MBE.