

Dear Claire Cressey

I fully support the bid for funding from the Arts Council of Wales. Having worked with AWEN in the past and across the time of the pandemic I have seen first hand the support AWEN gives to Art groups and the public in the Bridgend County. I have been fortunate to be included in their projects including "Stronger Together Bridgend", a project that aimed to bring the arts to people stuck at home and get more people involved in the arts and cultural groups in Bridgend County. This brought together Men's Sheds, mental health groups, musicians, poets and artists together in one place, connecting together as a community.

AWEN have also supported Maesteg Ukulele Club and The Wales Ukulele Project with connecting to other groups and partners in the area. Through this, The Wales Ukulele Project have partnered with AWEN Libraries to provide a Ukulele Lending library to allow people to try out a musical instrument. We aim to work more with AWEN Libraries as we start Ukulele taster sessions at Maesteg Library and possible other libraries in future.

AWEN have also supported many community groups over the years through their Grand Pavilion Theatre, Maesteg Town Hall and other venues. Allowing communities to put on shows and events for the local community. Without which the arts in the county would not have an outlet for performances. They also work with local schools to put on performances and primary school nativities.

Through my experience I believe that investment into AWEN is beneficial to the community as they provide a focal point in Bridgend County for shows, tours, performances and communities. This includes the warm spaces that are being set up. AWEN theatres also give the public the opportunity to see shows that they would normally not be able to attend as they would have to travel to Swansea, Cardiff or further afield.

Yours Sincerely

Shaun Keddy

Director of Wales Ukulele Project

Musical Director of Maesteg Ukulele Club

Thanks

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