

Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill
Consultation Response
The Fruitmarket Gallery

Local Cultural Entitlements

1. Do you think that developing local cultural entitlements will help to increase participation in cultural activities?

Provided that they have been developed in partnership and consultation with the providers as well as the beneficiaries of the entitlements, to ensure that the entitlements are realistic and deliverable as well as aspirational we believe that it is possible that they may. However, the term needs first to be publicly defined, so that Everyone from the arts organisations, whether involved or not in delivering them needs to understand the term and its implications.

2. If you believe further alternative measures are necessary, what are they?

We are concerned that there is little mention in the Bill or the guidelines of local authorities taking steps to audit and assess current cultural provision, in order that the entitlements might be based on a region's strengths and successes. This exercise would need to take note of organisations and initiatives (such as are own) that are not currently funded through the local authority structure. As providers of culture, we are aware of successful and less successful attempts to engage the public in cultural activity, and would wish that this knowledge be used to inform the development of entitlements. In addition, we are concerned that barriers to accessing culture (and hence cultural entitlements) do not seem to be assessed or addressed – giving people the tools and confidence to access culture for themselves is the driving force in The Fruitmarket Gallery's programme, and we would wish to see it enshrined in and supported by the entitlements agenda.

Quality – the provision of cultural entitlements needs to take into account a range of provision and must also reflect quality.

3. How do you think the Scottish Executive and local authorities can best utilise the influence and impact of cultural activity.

I am not sure how to answer this without offering a hymn of praise to the intrinsic value of cultural activity on a national and individual level – national pride and international standing, individual development, confidence, knowledge and understanding, critical thinking and communications skills.

The Scottish Executive and Local Authorities need to take into account the importance of contemporary art and the work of living artists as well as museums, libraries and heritage in order that young people are encouraged actively to engage with current culture, are inspired to become involved and participate in the heritage of the future.

4. Do you think the initial draft guidance under this Part of the Culture Bill is clear and helpful? Is there anything else it should contain?

I think that the initial draft guidance is leaden and uninspiring, and too wordy to be truly helpful. I am concerned that a great deal of the work that needs to be done in order to develop and deliver entitlements is already being done but not noted as such – for example, in the section on entitlements already in place on page 12, there is mention of free entry to Museums and Galleries to permanent collections, but no mention of work done by galleries such as ourselves, funded out with the local authority (the Fruitmarket Gallery is funded for 50% of its running costs by the Scottish Arts Council and receives no other public revenue funding), which offer free entry to a programme of changing exhibitions, plus a free programme of interpretation and education events, targeted at a wide range of participants, in particular those 'hard to reach' groups mentioned in the report.

Creative Scotland

5. Do you agree that there should be a single national cultural development body

Yes

6. Do you agree with the remit proposed for Creative Scotland? Has it the right powers and functions?

I worry that there is no creative vision proposed for Creative Scotland, from which its remit, powers and functions should flow. I am concerned that there seems to be no vision to link Creative Scotland, the National bodies and the local authorities, accepting that there are overlaps in areas of activity, with cultural providers funded through Creative Scotland achieving national and international impact and Nationals fulfilling local needs.

Creative Scotland should be a Development Agency as well as a funding body. It should provide more advice, advocacy and support for the sector (artists and organisations). The organisation should represent expertise.

7. Do you agree that Creative Scotland should work in concert with the Scottish Executive to implement national cultural policy?

I believe that Creative Scotland should work in concert with the Scottish Executive to develop and implement national cultural policy.

Creative Scotland should lead and lobby for the sector and be its voice.

National Collections

8. Do you agree that the National Collections should remain as constitutionally separate centres of excellence?

Broadly speaking, yes. As long as it is ensured that their operations and understanding are linked to that of organisations working and funded through Creative Scotland and local authorities.

9. Do you think the powers and functions proposed for the Collections in the draft Bill are right? If not, how would you improve them?

While I welcome (in a spirit of collaboration) the stipulation that the Board of the National Collections should offer advice to other organisations in their sector, I would hope that this could be more of a two way process, with, at the very least, some assurance that the National Collection is offering advice that is needed and welcome, relevant and accurate



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14 December 2006

Dear Sir / Madam

DRAFT CULTURE (SCOTLAND) BILL AND DRAFT GUIDANCE ON CULTURAL PLANNING AND PROVISION OF LOCAL CULTURAL ENTITLEMENTS

I have pleasure in enclosing with this letter two documents, for your consideration:

- Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill consultation document; and,
- Draft guidance to local authorities on cultural planning and the provision of local cultural entitlements.

These documents are being published today, for consultation. Please offer your comments, either on the specific questions in the Bill consultation document, or on any other matter. You may send comments:

- By post, to "Draft Culture Bill consultation" at the address above; or,
- By email, to culturebill@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

Please note in your reply if your comments relate to only one of the documents, or to both. You may access the documents at the following website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/ArtsCulture/CulturalPolicy>

Please offer your comments by 31st March 2007.

When responding to the consultation, **please ensure that you complete the attached Respondent Information Form**. This will enable us to handle your response appropriately, by, for example, making it publicly available or treating it as confidential.

Yours sincerely,

GREIG CHALMERS
Head of Culture Bill team

