



Media Release
13th July 2021
For immediate release

Film Hub Wales awards over £50,000 to help cinemas and festivals reunite Welsh communities through film

Film Hub Wales (FHW) has awarded £52,700 in National Lottery funding, through the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) Film Exhibition Fund, to 8 Welsh independent cinemas and film festivals as they reopen post Covid 19. For some this will be the first time the doors have opened since March 2020.

Funds will be used to help bring the best UK and international films back to the big screen in Welsh communities. Exhibitors will support wellbeing and reduce isolation created by the pandemic, offering audiences affordable, accessible events both online and in the local cinemas they know and love. From missed movies strands, to neurodiverse Welsh animation, communities will play a key role in the shaping the return of cinema.

At Theatr Gwaun in Fishguard, they have been busy making over both the film programme and the building, with the help of the community. Audiences can expect an updated space, including Martha's café, along with brand-new activities for young visitors.

Sue Whitbread, CEO of Theatr Gwaun explains:

"The award from Film Hub Wales means that we will be able to open our doors again in July as promised to our community. Theatr Gwaun is the only film exhibitor servicing rural North Pembrokeshire and a vital source of entertainment. Having installed all Covid precautionary measures, we are ready to welcome back our audience to a safe, friendly environment.

Our new Community Film Panel has developed a refreshed programme that includes more independent film, Welsh language and event films nights with guest presenters and local hospitality. Young people have also been encouraged to have their say through POINT PRESENTS, a monthly film night. We have developed our new daytime cafe and event space, Martha's, which will feature archive film collated by the community. The building is also getting a makeover this summer with a major new community mural."

In Blaenau Ffestiniog, CellB are bringing the world to their audiences' doorsteps, through film, via their youth led 'Sinema'r Byd programme.' Over 50 British and international films for all ages will explore culture and climate change, which audiences can enjoy in their brand-new screen:

Rhys Roberts, owner of Cellb says:

“Our young hosts will welcome and greet, inform and advise, laugh and listen to our young and old audiences. We’ll create a Welsh welcome like no other as our audiences return to Cellb and experience the brand new Sgrin 2 set up as a place for all of our community to come together to watch films.”

With Covid restrictions set for review in mid-July, sites across Wales are working hard to navigate safe and viable reopening.

Hana Lewis, Strategic Manager of Film Hub Wales explains:

“It’s a huge milestone to reopen to the public and cinemas and festivals have worked tirelessly to make this happen. There is a challenging road ahead as we rebuild and cinemas need the support of audiences now more than ever but this is a moment to look forward and recover from time spent apart. Highly anticipated films are releasing and exhibitors are set to entertain us but thanks to their community focus, we all have a chance to play an active part in the future of cinema.”

The BFI FAN Film Exhibition Fund is made possible thanks to National Lottery funding from the British Film Institute (BFI), via its Film Audience Network (FAN). The fund offers reopening support to exhibitors across the whole of the UK, to boost cultural programming and engage diverse audiences as restrictions ease. Funds in Wales are administered by FHW via Chapter as the Film Hub Lead Organisation.

The National Lottery raises £36 million each week for good causes across the UK.

Ends

For images, please copy and paste the following link into your browser:
<https://bit.ly/FEF2122>

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Projects Supported

Region: North Wales

Off Y Grid:

8 venues based across North Wales (CellB, Galeri, Neuadd Dwyfor, Neuadd Ogwen, Pontio, Tape, Ty Pawb [73 Cinema] and Dragon Theatr) will work together throughout the year to develop audiences for British and independent film across the region, with a focus on affordable

cinema for rural audiences. Concentrating on health and wellbeing as audiences return to the cinema, the programme will include heart-warming films, a missed movies strand and outreach screenings in care homes and day centres. They will also focus on marketing strategy to support return audiences across the participating venues.

[Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Region: North West Wales

CellB (Blaenau Ffestiniog):

Gwallgofiaid Cellb will re-connect audiences in Blaenau Ffestiniog to the wider world, post Covid-19, by exploring culture and climate change on screen. They aim to create a safe space where the community can travel the world through film, at affordable prices. With over 50 international films for young audiences, families and pensioners and 25 special screenings of international films for youths 12-16 years of age. As a youth led enterprise, they work to expand access to the arts for young people in Blaenau but also support their older audiences through regular accessible screenings, forums and take away packs to keep the community connected.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Region: North East Wales

Wales Youth Festival Network (WYFN) (Rhyl):

WYFN works with Welsh film festivals and venues to create opportunities for young film enthusiasts in Wales. In 2021, 3 - 4 Welsh festivals, will receive tailored support from the network. WYFN will also continue to develop Ffilm Ifanc: a group of young programmers who will advise the festivals, ensuring that young voices reach both industry and audiences. The funding will also establish a small WYFN steering group of 5-6 festivals that will meet three times a year to develop the network based on equality and shared ownership.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Region: South East Wales

Cardiff Animation Festival (Cardiff):

Providing an important opportunity for animation screenings in Wales, CAF will deliver a programme of screenings both online and in venues such as Chapter and Cardiff Rooftop Cinema at Jacobs Market. They will partner with Biggerhouse Film on 'Different Voices' to showcase the work of neurodiverse animators/filmmakers and Capetown International Animation Festival on a curated shorts programme from Welsh, Wales-based and African filmmakers.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Pontardawe Film Club/Pontardawe Arts Centre (Neath Port Talbot):

As a pilot reopening, with Covid safety measures in place, Pontardawe Film Club and Arts Centre will screen 3 films during the summer to film club members, followed by monthly screenings as the cinema reopens. They will create a video tool for audiences to navigate their

return to the venue and a marketing campaign / strategy for independent film to broaden membership. The pilot will act as a springboard for the Film Club to relaunch in September with a programme of on-going film activity.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Kotatsu Japanese Animation Festival (Cardiff):

Kotatsu Japanese animation festival will return for its 11th season, post covid-19, with a mixture of screenings online as well as in Chapter, Aberystwyth Arts Centre and a new partnership with Cardiff Library, where they will host Japan-Anime related workshops. The programme will include feature films such as Akira, Evangelion and Ongaku (TBC). The aim is to re-engage with the audience, bringing Japanese Animation to the widest possible audience in Wales, increasing awareness of Japan's animation film industry. As 2021 is designated UK Japan Season of Culture to coincide with the Olympics in Tokyo, it also offers a chance to celebrate wider Japanese culture on screen.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Region: South West Wales

Theatr Gwaun (Fishguard):

Theatr Gwaun is a community owned and run cinema located in the heart of rural Pembrokeshire. It plays an important role, giving local access to diverse film entertainment for those who find it challenging to travel further afield due to cost, mobility and other social issues.

They reopened as a cinema on July 2nd 2021 in response to demand from the community, offering a refreshed tailored film programme of 24 socially distanced screenings per month. Their new website has many new features to promote the film programme and encourage people throughout the community to get involved. New activities include a community film panel, screenings for people who live alone and a partnership with POINT (a major youth support organisation).

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Region: Wales - Wide

WOW Film Festival (Aberystwyth and online):

WOW will deliver a 'blended' festival in March 2022 that combines live 'in cinema' activity in Aberystwyth with a UK-wide online offer. In preparation, WOW will pilot a small 'blended' event in autumn 2021 enabling them to review the best approach alongside their carbon footprint.

This Autumn event will consist of three in cinema films, including a family film suitable for the WOW Film Club members, and one with a panel discussion. WOW will also offer three films online via Eventive to a UK-wide audience, with a panel event live streamed to audiences at home.

This event will give WOW the chance to reconnect with their loyal Aberystwyth audience who they haven't seen in the cinemas since 2019 and time to undertake outreach work to reconnect with BIPOC Film Club members.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Notes to Editors:

About Film Hub Wales

Film Hub Wales (FHW) celebrates cinema. We support organisations that screen film, from film festivals, to societies and mixed arts centres. Working with over [315 Welsh exhibitors](#), we aim to bring the best British and international film to all audiences across Wales and the UK. Since Film Hub Wales set up in 2013, we've supported over 250 exciting cinema projects, reaching over 480,000 audience members.

We're part of a UK wide network of eight hubs funded by the British Film Institute (BFI) which form the [Film Audience Network](#) (FAN), with [Chapter](#) appointed as the 'Film Hub Lead Organisation' (FHLO) in Wales.

We are also proud to lead on the UK inclusive cinema strategy on behalf of BFI FAN.

[Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

About the BFI Film Audience Network

Supported by National Lottery funding, the BFI Film Audience Network (FAN), is central to the BFI's aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone. Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of eight Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country. FAN also supports talent development with BFI NETWORK Talent Executives in each of the English Hubs, with a mission to discover and support talented writers, directors and producers at the start of their careers.

BFI FAN Film Hubs are:

- Film Hub Midlands is led by Broadway, Nottingham working in partnership with the Birmingham-based Flatpack
- Film Hub North is led collectively by Showroom Workstation, Sheffield and HOME Manchester
- Film Hub South East is led by the Independent Cinema Office
- Film Hub South West is led by Watershed in Bristol
- Film Hub Scotland is led by Glasgow Film Theatre
- Film Hub Northern Ireland is led by Queen's University Belfast
- Film Hub Wales is led by Chapter in Cardiff
- Film Hub London is led by Film London

[Website](#)

About the BFI

We are a cultural charity, a National Lottery distributor, and the UK's lead organisation for film and the moving image. Our mission is:

- To support creativity and actively seek out the next generation of UK storytellers
- To grow and care for the BFI National Archive, the world's largest film and television archive
- To offer the widest range of UK and international moving image culture through our programmes and festivals - delivered online and in venue
- To use our knowledge to educate and deepen public appreciation and understanding
- To work with Government and industry to ensure the continued growth of the UK's screen industries

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Tim Richards.

[Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)

About Chapter

Chapter is one of Europe's largest and most dynamic arts centres with cinemas, theatres, exhibition spaces, studios, a café, award-winning bars, over 60 cultural workspaces and more.

Chapter has an international reputation for excellence, innovation and collaboration. It offers an ever-changing programme of the best performance, films and exhibitions from Wales and from around the world.

[Website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)