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We welcome correspondence in Welsh.

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[REDACTED]

20 March 2018

[REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – Information relating to Turner House Penarth

Thank you for your email received at 15:44hrs on 15 March 2018, which was in reply to our response to your original FOI request. Your email states:

Thank you for your answer to my FOI in January

Can I ask a few questions please.

Are there any circumstances under which the works of art formerly on exhibition in Turner House Penarth; the Pyke collection could be returned to Turner House?

By the circumstances I mean if the money was raised to upgrade Turner House and all that's required. The right people were in place to facilitate this and if a robust plan to do so was produced.

Also can you tell me who owns the works now? Does Penarth and or Turner House retain any ownership rights? Who owns the works at present?

If possible I would appreciate an answer in principle by the 20th of March as there is a meeting being held to discuss some ideas for Penarth town and this will be on the agenda.

In a further email received 17:08hrs on 15 March 2018, you state:

My main and most important question for now is whether the repatriation can be done. I know it can but I need to the NMW you confirm its possible.

RESPONSE

We have identified three main points your letter and we have listed them in ascending order of relatedness, i.e. the first point needs to be considered before the second or third:

1. **Ownership of the works of art** - *Also can you tell me who owns the works now? Does Penarth and or Turner House retain any ownership rights? Who owns the works at present?* **RESPONSE** In our original reply to your FOI request, dated 15 January 2018, we recorded that 'On 17 October 1921 the original trustees assigned the building and its collection to the National Museum, which has acted as trustee ever since'. Therefore both Turner House the building, and the collection are owned by the National Museum of Wales.
2. **Definition of the term 'repatriation'** *My main and most important question for now is whether the repatriation can be done. I know it can but I need to the NMW you confirm its possible.* **RESPONSE** In our original reply to your FOI request, dated 15 January 2018, we set out the 'timeline of events regarding the ownership of the building and its collections'. This is repeated here:

Pyke Thompson's original plan of 1896 to gift the building and its collection to Penarth outright never happened. After his death on 17 February 1897 and the proof of his will on 11 May the same year the ownership of The Turner House and its collection was instead passed to Pyke Thompson's two brothers, Charles and Herbert M Thompson. On 28 December 1899, following the spirit of Pyke Thompson's original idea the brothers established a trust to manage The Turner House. This comprised only themselves, the Earl of Plymouth (ground landlord), and Frederick Wedmore (Pyke Thompson's art advisor). The trustees also acted as a management committee, on which also sat a relevant representative of the local authority. They were responsible for the upkeep of the building, its insurance, lighting and heating, and rates.

The Turner House trustees and its management committee continued to run the gallery until 1921, when the age of its members and increasing costs of maintenance of the building required a more permanent arrangement. On 17 October 1921 the original trustees assigned the building and its collection to the National Museum, which has acted as trustee ever since.

Penarth Town Council, or its predecessors, have never owned the collection or the building. Therefore, since neither the building nor the collections were ever transferred to Penarth Town Council or its predecessors, the term 'repatriation' is not relevant here.

3. **The circumstances under which the works of art could be returned to Turner House** *Are there any circumstances under which the works of art formerly on exhibition in Turner House Penarth; the Pyke collection could be returned to Turner House? By the circumstances I mean if the money was raised to upgrade Turner House and all that's required. The right people were in place to facilitate this and if a robust plan to do so was produced* **RESPONSE** In principle, there could be circumstances under which the Pyke Thompson collection could be displayed at Turner House Penarth. However, these circumstances would have to address all the issues listed below, and a case made to demonstrate strategically how this would be achieved, alongside evidence of the appropriate long term investment and financial support in infrastructure and staff to address, for example:
- a. Appropriate physical and curatorial provision is in place at Turner House to ensure the collections are stored, displayed, invigilated and interpreted for the benefit of the people of Wales, and that this interpretation enables the collection to be understood through the wider context of the story of art in Wales;
 - b. Appropriate environmental conditions and infrastructure is in place to safely preserve, store and display the collection within Turner House;
 - c. Relevant security and invigilation measures are in place to protect the collections and staff within the building at all times, that meet museum accredited standards;
 - d. That the additional costs of support for the proposed arrangement from National Museum Cardiff (management, etc) are assured;
 - e. That a fully funded case, supported by appropriate guarantees of sustainability, be made to the Board of Trustees of Amgueddfa Cymru as to the long term financial and operational viability and the over-riding benefits for the people of Wales of displaying the Pyke Thompson collection in Turner House as opposed to the National Museum of Art at the National Museum Cardiff and other venues where works are currently sent on loan.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Cabuts
Museum Secretary