



Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

Deirdre Hargey MLA & John Walsh

Minster for Communities & Chief Executive Belfast City Council

By email only

October 2022

Dear Deirdre and John

I write as Chair of the Assembly's All Party Group on the Arts.

At our latest meeting, there was unanimous dismay at the news of the fire at Cathedral Quarter, which has resulted in devastation to the lives, livelihoods, ambitions and aspirations of the artists who had chosen the building as their base.

We have a deep concern about the potential impact on their sense of mental health and wellbeing, not least because of the unexpected and traumatic ending of the certainties of waking up with a place of work to go to, an income to earn, and a return on investment on equipment in which they had invested.

The APG is aware your Department / the Council is actively exploring options to support these artists. We write simply to state our support for your efforts and urge urgent and potentially imaginative interventions.

As MLAs, we often hear of the desire for co-design and co-production. This is an opportunity for such an approach.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE APG ARTS

Mike Nesbitt

Mike Nesbitt MLA