

THERE IS SUCH A THING AS SOCIETY, AND THE PROVISION OF OPEN ACCESS TO OUR ARTS AND CULTURE MAKES FOR A BETTER SOCIETY.

JENNIE LEE

# A CHARTER FOR THE ARTS



## Introduction

**At the heart of Labour's radical offer to this country is our fundamental belief that everybody, from all walks of life and all backgrounds, should be able to lead rich and fulfilling lives.**

If we are to achieve that vision in Government, central to our programme will be an unwavering commitment to support and properly fund the arts.

The Government I lead will be proud to ensure that every child in every corner of the country has the opportunity to learn an instrument, engage with the arts and develop their creativity.

In the 1960s, the pioneering Arts Minister Jennie Lee oversaw Britain's first national cultural strategy of its kind. A strategy that pledged:

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A Labour government elected in 2019 will proudly embrace Jennie Lee's legacy to renew the cause of arts for all.

We will introduce a renewed Culture White Paper, which recognises the rich heritage of Britain's contribution to human culture, from William Shakespeare to Ben Okri, and from Mary Quant to Tim Berners-Lee.

We will establish at the heart of government a co-ordinating committee for arts and culture working across government departments to drive a national cultural renewal.

We will acknowledge the economic importance of our world-leading creative industries and we will look to the future to include modern developments like the digital arts and creative media industries. We will seize opportunities for artists and performers by global connectivity and access to content through the internet.

We will facilitate their continuing growth because we also understand

the need for lifelong education. We will support and ensure grassroots, nationwide participation in the arts in order to continuously develop a skilled and valued pool of performers, content creators and artistic thinkers.

Our White Paper for the Modern Arts will demonstrate that we understand not only the bottom line of artistic endeavours but the benefits of arts for arts sake, too. The arts are a common inheritance, representing an essential part of the ever-changing culture which binds us all together in common purpose.

Today, I am pleased to present a Charter for the Arts, on which we will build in government.

**Jeremy Corbyn  
Leader of the Labour Party**

## The Socialist Vision of Jennie Lee

**Jennie Lee was first elected to Parliament in 1929. She was a deep, free thinker, a passionate believer in realising opportunities for everyone, regardless of sex or race, wealth or background. She believed in arts for all, including through the provision of equal access to our country's common assets, heritage and knowledge.**

Jennie was instrumental in founding the Open University, enshrining the principle of open access to higher education at a time when it was still only available to a privileged few. Such was the thinking of post-war Britain: Jennie's husband, Nye Bevan, was the founder of universal, free healthcare through our National Health Service. Today, we aim to reassert and put in practice their socialist values.

There is such a thing as society, and the provision of open access to our arts and culture makes for a better society.

Jennie understood this: she pursued socialist values in her time as the arts minister in Harold Wilson's Labour government, when she oversaw the completion of new arts institutions at London's South Bank Centre, including the Hayward Gallery, the Purcell Rooms and the Queen Elizabeth Concert Hall. She renewed the charter of the Arts Council, expanding its work into all the regions of the country and, famously, she issued her 1965 White Paper: A Policy for the Arts – First Steps.

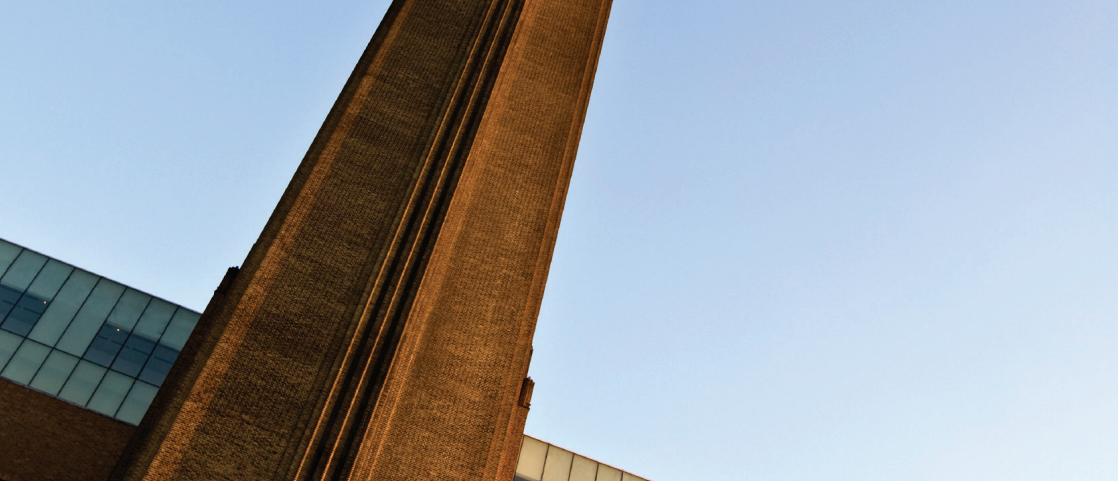


It was the first time any government had issued a white paper on the arts, a clarion call to value the place in British life for the arts and our culture.

Jennie's White Paper set out why the expressions and creativity of a thriving culture of arts enriched us all, and made for a better society in which to live. She understood why the arts must occupy a central place in our country and be a part of everyday life for children and adults alike. She recognised that the arts needed to be embedded in the education system, that they had to be valued as highly as any other industry and that it was crucial that the whole population had equality of access to culture and opportunities to participate in the arts. She asserted that 'the best must be made more widely available'.

Labour governments before and since have honoured those principles. In the aftermath of the Second World War we regathered our national collections and began to repair the damages sustained during bombing raids. At the turn of the century we made admission to our national galleries and museums free of charge and visitor numbers soared, with many more people from all walks of life able to access the best of our cultural heritage. A Labour Government elected in 2019 will be built on this proud tradition.

Jennie never faced the challenges of digital creativity in the arts nor ever knew the impact it would have on our culture. We do.



## Sharing our Common Inheritance

### A Labour government will maintain free access to national museums and galleries.

Our national collections have attracted many more visitors every year since Labour introduced our free admissions policy nearly two decades ago.

More people from all walks of life have been able to share in the very best of Britain's cultural and artistic heritage.

A Labour government will invest £1 billion to transform libraries, museums and galleries across the country

Seven hundred of our Libraries have been forced to close since 2010 and cultural institutions outside the capital are being particularly badly neglected. The vast majority of public and private investment in museums goes to London while other parts of the country are losing their vital cultural assets.

Our Cultural Capital Fund will ensure that the nourishing effects of our cultural heritage are shared nationwide, with our understanding that warm words of encouragement about unlocking potential and increasing access need to be backed up with cold hard cash investments.

## Giving all artists a good start in life

### A Labour government will invest £160 million in an arts pupil premium for primary schools.

Our arts pupil premium will embed creative education in the school curriculum and introduce children to the enjoyment of arts from a very early age.

The investment will provide a strong foundation for a creative talent pipeline that will support and sustain our growing, creative industries. As automation changes the world of work, creative jobs will become even more important to our economy. We will make sure that our children have the skills they need to thrive.

A Labour government will invest £1 billion in Youth Services

We are all only young once but young people today have too often been left with nowhere to go, nothing to do and no one to talk to.

We will guarantee a right of access to local youth services, where formal education can be supplemented by guidance and mentoring with associated, supervised and organised recreational activities, including performance, visits and artistic or cultural learning.





## A Fair Share Of Funds

### **A Labour government will ensure lottery grants are shared out fairly between all our communities**

Lottery grants are an important lifeline for community arts and heritage projects. We will introduce transparency of sales data, so that grants to good causes are distributed more fairly. More grants should be awarded to the deprived communities which raise money in the first place and they should be given a stronger say in how grants are spent locally.

A Labour government will end the cuts to the Arts Council

We will fund the Arts Council properly.

We will review its grant criteria to ensure a full local, regional and national balance in its work.

We will also consider the stability of arts funding through more multi-annual funding awards and long term targeting of under-served communities

A Labour government will establish a Town of Culture competition

The Cities of Culture award has brought enormous benefits to cities like Liverpool and Hull.

Celebrating the contributions to our culture of smaller towns we will bring those benefits to towns like Hastings and Llantrisant, Galashiels and Northampton.

## Creative Jobs

**Our creative and performing industries offer artists and performers opportunities to thrive but they can also be places of insecure self-employment, in-work poverty and the exploitative practises of bad bosses. Labour believes that creative and artistic work should provide a decent life for all.**



A Labour government will transform lives through the biggest extension of workers' rights in history.

We will repeal restrictive trade union laws, set a real living wage, prohibit zero-hour contracts and seek to introduce protections for the self-employed, including collective income protection insurance schemes and better access to mortgages and pension schemes. We will extend the right to shared parental leave and pay to freelancers. We will also review the copyright framework to ensure artists and content creators receive fair dues in the digital age.

A Labour government will promote diversity in the creative industries

Everyone deserves the opportunity to see themselves represented on-screen and on-stage and in the games we play, the stories we tell and the songs we sing.

We will work with trade unions to ensure diversity initiatives in creative workplaces and with industry to ensure that our world leading creative tax reliefs encourage and improve diversity.

Local cultural venues nurture diverse talent from every part of our country, but too many have shut down during the last decade of austerity. We will help communities protect their local music and cultural venues from closure.

A Labour Government will invest £1 billion to achieve parity for mental health services

Arts and Music therapies play an important role in recovering mental health and well-being. Our huge investments to transform mental health services offers opportunities for therapists as well as for the young people who will be able to reach them through a counsellor in every secondary school.

## Digital Creativity

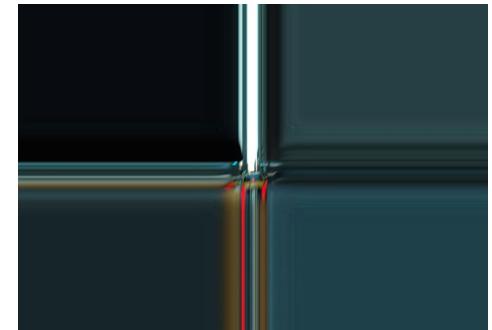
**The digital revolution is here. Our digital creative industries are world leaders, in a world transformed by the opportunities of digital technology and global connectivity.**

From music streaming and internet blogging to online game design and the fine arts, the digital revolution has changed our creative cultures forever.

Digital connectivity is the foundation of our future economy and the canvas of our future creativity, but we will all need access to world-class digital infrastructure in order to harness the opportunities which abound. Everyone should be able to access those opportunities. A Labour government will ensure they can.

A Labour government will deliver free full-fibre broadband to all by 2030

We will bring the broadband-relevant parts of BT into public ownership and roll out the remaining 90–92% of the full-fibre network. We will introduce a Charter for Digital Rights alongside new regulation to make the internet a safer, more welcoming space for all and a place where creativity can thrive.



Digitally Enhanced Photograph by Rory Donaldson  
Royal Scottish Academy Morton Award Winner, 2008



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