

Labour's Culture manifesto launch speech

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, speaking at the party's Culture manifesto launch in Hull, said:

There could be no better place to launch our cultural manifesto, Labour's plan to guarantee a 'Creative Future For All', than right here in Hull.

In the last Labour Government our then Culture Secretary, Andy Burnham, was impressed by how Liverpool had been transformed after being made the European City of Culture.

So Andy proposed the idea that every four years we should have a UK City of Culture.

And in 2013, thanks to a brilliant bid from Labour-run Hull City Council, it was Hull that was chosen.

And what an inspiration you have been as a City of Culture

Hull had hoped to encourage an extra million people to visit Hull during 2017.

A third of a million visited in the first week.

And I'm not surprised. Look at what you've offered.

'Blade' saw a 200 foot wind turbine blade, made locally at Siemens Green Port factory go on display in Queen Victoria Square.

The Poppies Weeping Window had 450,000 visits in just two months.

And finally you created the 'Sea of Hull' by encouraging 3,000 local people to strip naked, paint themselves blue and be photographed in the early hours of Saturday morning.

Those photos by the brilliant photographer, Spencer Tunick, are now on display in the refurbished Ferens Art Gallery.

So in a very nice way, the people of Hull have literally made an exhibition of themselves.

I'd like to thank Hull's Labour council leader Steve Brady for all his hard work in helping the city deliver for culture, along with Hull 2017's Chief Executive Martin Green.

Because we can see what the transformative powers of culture have done for Hull.

Not just by attracting visitors and creating world class cultural events. But here in Humber Street, where a former Fruit Market has been regenerated into a thriving cultural hub, creating new business and new jobs.

The New Humber Street Contemporary Gallery next door has seen 60,000 visits in its first six weeks.

It is estimated that being the UK City of Culture will bring a £60 million economic boost in 2017 alone.

Now Labour wants to replicate what we've seen in Hull across the rest of the UK

And here's why: Our music industry alone contributes £4 billion to our economy each year. But every Adele or Stormzy has to start somewhere.

And small venues like Hull's New Adelphi and larger ones like Fruit give artists their first break as they learn their craft.

But over the last ten years in London alone 40 per cent of small venues have closed.

And this Conservative Government has made matters even worse for artists.

Since 2010 they have slashed £48 million of funding to the Arts Councils in England, Wales and Scotland.

There is creativity in all of us. Labour's mission will be to set free that creativity.

We need to give people the opportunities for this creativity to flourish.

So today we unveil Labour's cultural manifesto which sets out a bold and inspiring policy programme to encourage creativity.

We're pledging £1 billion to launch a new Cultural Capital Fund to support our world leading cultural industries savaged by Conservative cuts.

We will end austerity to boost creativity.

It will be amongst the biggest arts infrastructure funds ever created.

It will boost arts, music, theatre and literature, upgrading our cultural and creative infrastructure for the digital age, and supporting our economy.

The fund will also invest in creative clusters across the country based on a similar model to business enterprise zones.

I don't want to see just one city benefit from the transformative powers of culture every four years.

Our Cultural Capital Fund will help many more towns and cities like Hull benefit all year round.

The fund will be administered by the Arts Council over a five-year period and help to transform our country's cultural landscape.

We will also protect and invest in music venues to support grassroots and professional music ensuring a healthy music industry across the country.

Labour will review the business rates system to make it fairer to organisations like music venues extending the £1,000 pub relief to help small music venues that are suffering from rates rises.

We will also maintain free museums and invest in our heritage sector which is central to both the identity and economy of local communities across the country.

Because access to culture is vital for the emotional and intellectual growth of our people, especially the young.

We want to unleash the potential of every young person, not just through education, but also through culture.

In every one of us there is a poet, a writer, a singer of songs, an artist.

But too few of us fulfil our artistic ambition.

And under the Conservatives it's getting worse. Per pupil funding for schools is going to be cut for the first time in a generation.

It has become so bad that headteachers are sending out begging letters to parents to make donations to keep the school running.

This is a shameful state of affairs.

So as well as scrapping tuition fees, fully funding our schools and introducing universal free school meals – something pioneered here in Hull – we will go further.

Labour will introduce an Arts Pupil Premium that will allow every primary school child in England the chance to learn an instrument, take part in drama and dance, and have regular access to a theatre, gallery or museum.

Labour will not only feed our children's bellies, we will feed their minds and unleash their creativity.

The Arts Pupil Premium will provide £160 million per year to boost creative education and ensure arts facilities in state schools match standards found in many private schools.

We will deliver a creative future for all and culture for the many not the few.

But we need your help.

If people want to see these transformative changes then they have to be able to vote.

Those who are not on the register have just over 12 hours to get registered.

Since the election was called more than two million people have registered to vote – 40 per cent of them aged between 18 and 24.

If you're tired of being held back and want to lead a richer life, then get registered and have your say.

We can stop a Conservative Government that wants to pit the old against the young.

And replace it with a Labour Government that offers hope and unity.

A government for the many not the few and a government that ensures culture is for the many not the few

Thank you.