

# nca

*Protecting and promoting the arts*

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[www.artscampaign.org.uk](http://www.artscampaign.org.uk)

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*(The NCA office will be closed on Good Friday and reopen on Tuesday, 14 April. We would like to wish all our readers a Happy Easter.)*

This week, the NCA announces *Future Britain: Arts leading the way*, a national conference to launch the Arts Manifesto for the next General Election; the NCA led a delegation to meet Shadow Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt; the cost of Creative Scotland was finally revealed; and Culture Secretary Andy Burnham ordered an inquiry into the Wirral library closures.

- *Future Britain: Arts leading the way*
- NCA delegation to Shadow Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP
- Budget for setting up Creative Scotland revealed as £3.3 million
- Inquiry into Wirral library closures

### ***Future Britain: Arts leading the way***

The NCA is holding a national conference on **Monday, 15 June 2009 from 10am to 4pm at Tate Britain's Clore Auditorium**. The conference will examine the development of the arts sector over the coming years and its role in shaping Britain's future. The arts manifesto for the next general election, which is being developed by the NCA following extensive consultation with the sector, will also be launched at the conference.

This event is open to anyone with an interest in the arts and will include panel discussions with leading figures from the sector, and open question and answer sessions. Confirmed speakers so far include Dame Joan Bakewell CBE and Lord Melvyn Bragg will be giving the keynote address.

We hope that the conference will attract interest from across the sector and from artists and organisations from all of the nations and regions of the UK

For more information and to book tickets, please click [here](#)

### **NCA delegation to Shadow Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP**

On Tuesday 7 April, NCA director Louise de Winter led a delegation\* of arts representatives to meet Jeremy Hunt MP, the Conservative Shadow Secretary for Culture. The meeting was called to discuss the Conservative position on the arts in a recession and followed on from a similar delegation led by the NCA to the Secretary of State for Culture, Andy Burnham, in February this year.

Jeremy Hunt was very receptive, stating public funding for the arts was a firmly established principle in current Conservative Policy, and that David Cameron recognised the benefits of a mixed and balanced ecology. The Conservatives also understood that it was the stability of state funding that had helped to drive private funding and create excellent institutions. Hunt

himself was advocating the role of the arts, particularly their importance in a recession, to his shadow cabinet colleagues, and was well versed in arguments regarding the value of the arts and their contribution to the creative industries and the economy.

He warned, however, that in the current climate it would be important to get the economy right first, and to get “public spending on an even keel” as the arts need a prosperous and successful economy in which to thrive. He also cautioned that any incoming Government would have to cut public spending, including the arts. In conclusion, Hunt stated that the most helpful thing the sector could do in the present climate would be to continue to make the case for the economic importance of the arts, and to gather more evidence in support of this.

To view the DRAFT meeting notes, click [here](#)

\* The delegation comprised the Association of British Orchestras, Crafts Council, Dance UK, Independent Theatre Council, Museums Association, The Theatres Trust and the Visual Arts and Galleries Association.

### **Budget for setting up Creative Scotland revealed as £3.3 million**

It was revealed this week that Creative Scotland, the new development body for culture and the arts, will cost an estimated £3.3 million to set up. The organisation, which was originally proposed in 2006, will unite Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen to form a new statutory Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB).

Addressing the Scottish Parliament, the Minister for Culture Michael Russell stated that Creative Scotland should be established in the first half of 2010. The cost of £3.3 million is much less than previously estimated, as plans now dictate that Creative Scotland will operate out of the existing Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen offices, rather than a new headquarters building.

The Minister also made it clear that the costs of setting up Creative Scotland would be met fully by Government and not affect artists’ grants.

The NCA has been following the progress of Creative Scotland and is reassured by these recent, more concrete developments.

To read Michael Russell’s announcement to Scottish Parliament, click [here](#)

For more information on Creative Scotland, click [here](#)

### **Inquiry into Wirral library closures**

On Friday 3 April, just one day before four libraries in the Wirral were scheduled to be closed, Culture Secretary Andy Burnham intervened and halted the closures. Burnham has called a local inquiry to test the viability of Wirral Council’s plans for library restructuring and whether they are consistent with the council’s statutory duties.

The inquiry is spurred on by concerns expressed by the MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) after working with Wirral Council on the proposed restructuring of library services.

The NCA campaigned against the Wirral's library closures at the beginning of the year and welcomes this inquiry. We are pleased that the government recognises the value of public libraries and is taking steps towards improving the quality of local authorities' cultural services.

For the DCMS press release, click [here](#)

To read the NCA's letter (Jan' 09) to Wirral Councillors, click [here](#)

### Links Directory

If any of the embedded links are not working, please copy and paste the links below into your web browser:

Information and ticket booking for *Future Britain: Arts leading the way*:

<http://www.futurebritain.eventbrite.com/>

Draft notes of Jeremy Hunt meeting:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/membersonly/info/NCA%20delegation%20to%20Conservative%20DRAFT%20MEETING%20NOTES.pdf>

Scottish Parliament debate:

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/sp/?id=2009-04-02.16425.0>

Creative Scotland transition website:

<http://www.transition.creativescotland.org.uk/>

DCMS press release on Wirral libraries inquiry:

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/media\\_releases/6035.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/media_releases/6035.aspx)

NCA letter to Wirral councillors:

<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/membersonly/info/NCA%20letter%20to%20Wirral%20Councillo rs%20re%20Library%20Closures.pdf>

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The NCA is the UK's only independent campaigning organisation representing all the arts. It provides a voice for the arts world in all its diversity. It seeks to safeguard, promote and develop the arts and win public and political recognition for their importance as a key element in our national culture.

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