

Party Manifesto Analysis

The Heritage Alliance

20th April 2015

The Heritage Alliance has made available an analysis of the political party manifestos in key areas affecting the independent heritage sector in the run up to the General Election in May 2015.

Please note, The Heritage Alliance is mindful of the Charity Commissions Guidance over political activities – this analysis in no way suggests The Alliance's endorsement of any proposed party policies.

A full analysis which incorporates links to further references can be found here:

<http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/party-manifestos/>

Conservative Party Manifesto

Heritage and Cultural affairs

Under the [Enabling you to enjoy our heritage, creativity and sports section](#) the manifesto pledges that the Conservative Party will:

- Keep major national museums and galleries free to enter.
- Build a tunnel on the A303 under Stonehenge WHS.
- Responsible for the creation of English Heritage Charity during this Parliament.
- Enable cultural institutions to benefit from greater financial autonomy.
- Support a Great Exhibition in the North, a new theatre in Manchester, a new India Gallery, and a Concert hall in London [see [BBC Article](#)].
- Support school sport, build on the Olympic and Paralympic legacy, and deliver the Rugby and Cricket World Cups and the World Athletics Championships.

***See also:** DCMS [Culture and Creativity – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow](#) for more information.

Churches

- Continue to support essential roof repairs for cathedrals and churches along with other places of worship [page 42].
- Recognition of the role of Churches, faith groups and other voluntary groups in supporting country's social fabric [page 47].

Libraries

- Support local communities by providing free wi-fi in Libraries.
- Ensuring more access to e-books.

Tourism

- Set challenging targets for Visit Britain and Visit England to ensure that more visitors travel outside the capital.
- Speed up visa issuance for tourists.
- Increase efforts to recruit more apprentices into tourism businesses.

Creative Industries

- Continue the reliefs to the creative industries – including a tax credit for children’s television in 2016.
- Protect intellectual property by continuing to require internet service providers to block sites that carry large amounts of illegal content.

Charities

- Expand the National Citizen Service (increase number of cadet units in schools).
- New innovations in the delivery of public services – including social impact bonds and payment-by-results [page 43].
- Make volunteering for three days a year a workplace entitlement for people working in large companies and the public sector.

Spending cuts and Departmental Spending

- Further £10 billion in annual savings by 2017-18 and £15-20 billion in 2019-20 [page 43].
- Reduce government spending by one percent each year in real terms for the first two full financial years of the next Parliament (same rate as preceding five years).
- £30 billion in fiscal consolidation over the next two years - £13 billion from departmental savings, £12 billion from welfare savings, and raise £5 billion from tackling tax evasion. They estimate that spending will grow in line with GDP after 2019-20. [Page 9-10]
- Commitment to no increases in VAT, Income Tax, or National Insurance [Page 10].
- Increase the tax-free Personal Allowance to £12,500 and the higher rate threshold to £50,000.
- Public Sector innovation - ‘right to mutualise in the public sector’.

Planning

- Development of a £1 billion Brownfield Fund to unlock homes on brownfield land.
- Ensure local people have more control over planning and protect the Green Belt - supporting locally-led garden cities and towns [Bicester and Ebbsfleet].
- Prioritise brownfield development [page 53] ensuring that suitable brownfield sites have 90 per cent of brownfield sites have planning permission for housing by 2020.
- Creation of a new London Land Commission, with a mandate to identify and release all surplus brownfield land owned by the public sector.

Rural Affairs/natural environment

- Keep the forests in trust for the nation – while planting another 11 million trees.

- Launch a programme of pocket parks in towns and cities.
- Spend £3 billion from the Common Agricultural Policy to enhance England's countryside over the next five years.
- Protect the Green Belt, while maintaining national protections or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, sites of Special Scientific Interest and other environmental designations.
- Provide free comprehensive maps of all open-access green space.

Labour Party Manifesto

Spending and Departmental Commitments

- Cut spending every year – outside of the protected areas of health, education and international development.
- Tax on properties worth over £2million to help raise £2.5 billion a year for an NHS Time to Care Fund.
- Not raise VAT, National Insurance or increase the basic or higher rates of income tax– and Labour have claimed that they will not extend VAT to food, children's clothes, books, newspapers or public transport fares.
- Abolish non-dom status, tax avoidance and review HMRC.
- Increase Localism.
- Proposed to change the way that local authorities are funded – 'implement a new funding system so that communities who need the most support are not unfairly targeted'
- 50p rate of tax for earners over £150,000.
- Raising national minimum wage to more than £8 an hour by 2019 and banning zero-hour contracts.

*See also: Zero-based Review: see [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#).

Heritage and Cultural Affairs [Including: Museums and libraries, sports]:

Under the [Arts and Culture Section](#) of its Manifesto, The Labour Party pledges it will:

- Promise to put 'arts and culture and creativity at the heart of the next Labour government's mission'.
- Reaffirm commitment to universal free admission – "to ensure that our great works of art and national heritage can be enjoyed in all parts of the country" [page 55].
- Create a Prime Minister's Committee on the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries with a membership drawn from all sectors and regions. The Committee will bring issues of concern directly to the attention of the Prime Minister.
- Universal entitlement to a creative education so that every young person has access to cultural activities and the arts [page 55].

- Institutions that receive arts funding will be required to open doors to young people, and to rebalance arts funding across the country.
- Continue to keep Museums and Galleries Free.

***See also:** [Arts for All speech](#) at Battersea Power Station for more information.

***See also:** Harriet Harman [speech](#) on young people and the Arts, and Shadow Culture Minister,

***See also:** Chris Bryant MP, [speech](#) [You're Beautiful: Government and the pursuit of beauty] in March 2015 to Birmingham's creative sector.

Creative Industries

- Work with the creative sector to increase the number of apprenticeships, while giving more control over available funding.
- See Shadow Culture Minister, Chris Bryant MP, [speech](#) [You're Beautiful: Government and the pursuit of beauty] in March 2015 to Birmingham's creative sector.

Natural Environment: [Including: Rural Affairs, CAP]

- Keep forests in public ownership and promote access to green spaces in local planning. Support work of Natural Capital Committee to protect and improve wildlife habitat and green spaces while making them part of tourism industry.

***See also:** For more in-depth details on proposed policies see Zero-based Review [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#).

Planning:

- Plan to build 200,000 new homes a year by 2020 by implementing the recommendations of the [Lyons Review](#) [see [Update 289](#)]. This will have a priority for first time buyers. [Page 45]
- Introduction of an increased transparency in the land market and give local authorities new 'use it or lose it' powers.
- New generation of garden cities.
- New powers of councils to require particular types of shops to apply for planning permission
- Under its devolution section in England [page 65], Labour has stated that they will give local communities more power to shape their high streets through permitting Councils to be given more power to require particular types of shops to apply for planning permission.
- Strengthen the 'brownfield first rule' - Roberta Blackman-Woods at Labour Party Conference
- Get the Public Sector building again.
- Mansion tax on properties over £2 million.
- Continue with High Speed two.

Tourism:

- Increasing the minimum wage to £8 by October 2019.
- Tightening the rules for student visas.
- Improving the uptake of physical activity.

- Introducing a tax on properties worth over £2 million.
- Making a swift decision on expanding airport capacity in London and the South East, balancing the need for growth and the environmental impact.

Charities: [Volunteering, charity tax, gift aid etc]

- Commitment to continue to support and help develop the social economy by improving access for co-operative and mutual organisations to growth finance through the new British Investment Bank.
- **Volunteering** – Encourage young people’s volunteering and social action by supporting the #iwill campaign of ‘Step up to Serve’, and the National Citizens Service.

Devolution in England

- Introduction of an English Devolution Act – transfer £30 billion to city and county regions along with new powers over economic development, skills, employment, housing and business support.
- Set up a people-led constitutional Convention to determine the future of UK’s governance.
- Replace the House of Lord with a Senate of the Nations and Regions.
- Increase the number of apprenticeships in the creative industries.

Liberal Democrat Party Manifesto

Spending and Departmental Commitments

The [Pride in Creativity section](#) of the Manifesto pledges that the Liberal Democrats will:

- Eradicate the structural current budget deficit by 2017/18 and have debt falling as a percentage of national income.
- Spending Review following general election.
- Two new fiscal rules: from 2017/18 debt must fall as a proportion of national income every year, and second, that over the economic cycle the overall budget will be balanced.
- Taxes on the wealthiest, on the banks, big businesses and on polluters, and tax avoidance to limit deficit reduction on public services.
- No increase in Income Tax, National Insurance, VAT or Corporation Tax, and raising the tax-free personal allowance.
- Raise Personal Allowance to at least £12,500.
- Introduce a ‘community trigger’ mechanism to enable the public to require a review of the provision of a particular service being delivered consistently poorly.

Heritage, Cultural Affairs and Creative Industries [Including: Museums and libraries, sports]

- Commitment to support the arts in Britain working to deliver access for all regardless of income, ethnicity, gender, age, believe sexuality or disability [page 37].
- Maintain free access to museums and galleries, while giving these institutions greater autonomy.
- Protect the independence of the BBC.
- Work to encourage creativity in schools and universities.
- Support growth in the creative industries: support the Creative Industries Council, support modern and flexible patent, copyright and licensing rules, and address the barrier to finance faced by small creative businesses.

Natural Environment: [Including: Rural Affairs, CAP]

- Pass a Nature Act to put the Natural Capital Committee (NCC) on the same statutory footing as the Committee on Climate Change [page 81].
- Significantly increase the amount of accessible green space. Complete the coastal path, introduce a fuller Right to Roam, and a new designation of National Nature Parks to protect up to a million acres of accessible green space valued by local communities.
- Put public forests on a sustainable footing through creating of a new public body through the implementation of the findings of the Independent Panel on Forestry, and plant at least an additional tree for every child born (about 750,000 every year).
- Shift CAP payments to the active farmer rather than the landowner to concentrate on sustainable food production, conservation and tackling climate change.
- Expand accessible green space with new National Nature Parks chosen by local communities. [page 81]
- Expand the Green Investment Bank and set a legally binding decarbonisation target to green electricity.
- Introduce 'retained' police officers, fully trained officers available to respond when needed, to increase police presence in rural communities.

Planning:

- Enable more people to travel with rail upgrades across the country and HS2.
- 10 new Garden Cities to be built alongside with encouraging Local Authorities to develop garden villages or suburbs.
- A government commissioning programme to boost house building towards a 300,000 target a year. Where the market alone fails to deliver sufficient numbers, government agencies will directly commission homes for sale and rent to fill the gap.
- Requirement to make Local Authorities have a plan for 15 years of housing need.
- Strengthen the Duty to Cooperate to help Local Authorities develop sites beyond their boundaries.

- Creation of a Community Right of Appeal in cases where planning decisions go against the approved local plan, or a Local Plan that is emerging and has undergone substantive consultation.
- Update planning law to introduce the concept of 'landscape scale planning' and ensure new developments promote walking, cycling, car sharing and public transport and improve rather than diminish access to green space.
- Prioritise development on brownfield and town centre sites and end permitted development rights for converting offices to residential.
- Pass a new Green Buildings Act to set new energy efficiency targets, including a long-term ambition for every home to reach at least an energy rating of Band C by 2035.
- Not allow developers' appeals against planning decisions that are in line with the local plan.
- Five major new settlements along a Garden Cities Railway between Oxford and Cambridge.
- Development on unwanted public sector sites through the Homes and Communities Agency.
- A review of Compulsory Purchase legislation to facilitate site assembly, including for Garden Cities. Also pilot techniques for capturing the increase in land values from the granting of planning permission.
- Cut Council Tax by £100 for year years if you insulate your home.
- Charge the Land Registry with completing registration of all substantial land and property holdings in England and Wales by 2020.
- Encourage Local Authorities to consider trams, and support a new generation of light rail and ultra-light rail schemes in towns and cities [page 31].

Tourism:

- Consider the conclusions of the Davies Review into runway capacity and develop a strategic airports policy for the whole of the UK. Remain opposed to any expansion of Heathrow, Stanstead or Gatwick.
- Make sure that the British tourism industry (and heritage) is able to compete with other major world destinations be a key generator of growth in the UK economy.
- Strengthen the Hospitality and Tourism Council.
- Give higher status to tourism within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
- Build on the Tourism North and Tourism South West Initiatives to devolve more power, resources and decision-making to local areas to promote their unique tourism propositions.
- Ensure work, tourist and family visit visas are processed quickly and efficiently.
- Ensure the UK is an attractive destination for overseas students. Reinstate post-study work visas for STEM graduates who can find graduate-level employment.

Charities: [Volunteering, charity tax, gift aid etc]

- Support social investment, ensuring charities and social enterprise can access the support and finance they need.

Libraries

- Develop the Community Budgets model for use in rural areas to combine services, encouraging the breaking down of boundaries between services. This will help keep rural services like GP surgeries, pharmacies, post offices and libraries open by enabling them to cooperate, share costs and co-locate in shared facilities.

Creative Industries

- Continue to develop an industrial strategy through working with sectors such as the Creative Industries that are critical to Britain's ability to trade internationally.

Devolution in England

- Devolve more economic decision-making to local areas, building on the success of City Deals and Growth Deals.

UKIP Manifesto

Spending and Departmental Commitments

- Sharp reduction in public sector programmes.
- Save £9 billion a year in direct net contributions to the European Union budget by leaving the EU.
- Abolish the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Energy and Climate Change, and the Department for International Development.
- Cut departmental running costs where they do not deliver value for money.
- Abolish the 'Big Society' programme and the National Citizen Service [£62 million].
- Clamp down on 'fake charities' and state-funded political activism.
- Reduce the overseas aid budget from 0.7 per cent to 0.2 per cent of GNI.
- Save £4 billion a year in capital expenditure by scrapping HS2.
- Reduce spending by £5.5 billion by replacing the Barnett Formula.
- Raise the personal allowance to at least £13,000.
- Abolish Inheritance Tax.

Heritage and Cultural Affairs [Including: Museums and libraries, sports]:

The Heritage and Tourism section of the Manifesto pledges that UKIP will:

- Savings made from cutting the costs of Westminster will be put into a dedicated fund to contribute to the repair and maintenance of the Palace of Westminster which has estimated costing £3 billion.
- Exemption for vehicles over 25 years old from Vehicle Excise Duty.
- Create a dedicated Minister of State for Heritage and Tourism, attached to the Cabinet Office.
- Remove VAT completely from repairs to listed buildings.

- Introduce a 'presumption in favour of conservation' as opposed to the current 'presumption in favour of development' in planning legislation.
- Ensuring that tax and planning policies support.

Seaside Towns

- Give power to local authorities to access low-interest loans to buy up and renovate poor housing stock.
- Boost the Coastal Communities Fund and expand its remit to enter the 'scattergun' approach, prioritise larger-scale heritage, residential retail and tourist regeneration over smaller scale projects, encourage regenerative arts projects into coastal towns.

Natural Environment: [Including: Rural Affairs, CAP]

- Outside of the EU, introduction of a modified UK single Farm Payment Scheme.
- UKIP will match-fund grants made by local authorities towards rural capital projects, such as creating a lake, wetland, repairing traditional stone walls.

Planning:

- Introduce policies to incentivise the creation of more affordable housing, while protecting communities and preserving the countryside.
- Place a statutory duty on local authorities to include a commitment to bring empty properties back into use within their broader housing and planning strategies.
- Charge those whose homes are empty for more than two years 50 per cent more than the applicable rate of council tax, with exceptions for owners who are in HM Armed Forces.
- Remove the barriers to brownfield builds with the aim of building one million homes on brownfield sites by 2025 to address the current housing shortage.
- Require the Environment Agency to compile a National Brownfield Sites Register and provide a remediation assessment where appropriate.
- Promote smaller 6-12 unit developments in rural areas to extend existing villages.
- Allow large-scale developments to be overturned by a binding local referendum.
- Replace the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] with new planning guidelines that prioritise brownfield sites for new housing and protect the green belt.
- To incentivise brownfield development: Grants of up to £10,000 per unit will be available to developers to carry out essential remediation work; properties built on brownfield sites will be exempt from stamp duty on first sale (up to £250,000 threshold); a grant to cover the cost of indemnity insurance will also be available to developers of contaminated land. Local authorities will be allowed to keep the New Homes Bonus beyond six years on brownfield sites.
- Identify long-term dormant land held by central and local government so it can be released for affordable development.

Charities: [Volunteering, charity tax, gift aid etc]

- Scrap the National Citizen Service.
- Clamp down on big charities.

Green Party Manifesto

Spending and Departmental Commitments

- Borrow £338 billion (in real 2015 terms) over the Parliament as compared to borrowing £115 billion.
- Provide £10 billion a year uplift in local authority budgets to allow local authorities to restore essential local services, creating more than 200,000 local jobs.

Heritage and Cultural Affairs

The [Media, Sports and Arts section](#) of the Manifesto pledges that the Green Party will:

- Reduce VAT on housing renovation and repair work (including insulation) to 5%, costing £1.6 billion a year. 'At present there is no VAT on constructing new dwellings but there is VAT at 20% on converting and renovating old buildings to be used as homes. This encourages new building at the expense of saving land and using what we have'.
- Increase government arts funding by £500 million a year to restore the cuts made since 2010 and reinstate proper levels of funding for local authorities, helping to keep local museums, theatres, libraries and art galleries open.
- Reduce VAT to 5% for live performances.
- Work to support fair pay productions in the arts.
- Support initiatives to make the arts and sports accessible to all.

Natural Environment:

- Introduction of a well-being act.
- Protect, expand, properly fund and improve non-car access to National Parks.
- Protect forests through a Forests Protection Bill.
- Improve the management of woodlands through new planting and the local use of sustainable woodland products.
- Promote landscape-scale conservation, using reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, improved agri-environment schemes and the planning system.
- Reform the Common Agricultural Policy and reform national agri-environment schemes to prioritise and support farmers who farm sustainably and enhance biodiversity.
- Provide a free nationwide retrofit insulation programme (page 21).
- Ensure that everyone lives within five minutes' walk of a green open space, and ensure local authorities have the resources to extend and maintain local parks. Introduce a nature improvement area in every town, city and county.

- Make sure that rural areas are not neglected when transport budgets and planning for cities is under discussion.

Planning [page 60]:

- Support preservation of the historic environment, in part by being flexible about how older buildings reduce their energy use.
- Repeal the National Planning Policy Framework and its presumption in favour of development.
- Restrict the ability of the Secretary of State to call in planning applications.
- Restrict the right of applicants to appeal only when there has been an error in the planning process.
- Strengthen local authorities' powers to prevent changes of use for important community facilities such as local shops, pubs and meeting halls.
- Introduce a community right of appeal where a development is non-compliant with a neighbourhood plan or local plan.

Tourism:

- Make aviation subject to fuel duty and VAT.
- Reduce VAT on the tourism industry (meals and drinks out, accommodation and also live performances) to 5% putting the UK on a level playing field with international competitors and costing around £6 billion a year.
- Allow local authorities to levy new local taxes, such as local tourist taxes, empty homes levies, supermarket taxes or workplace parking levies.

Charities: [Volunteering, charity tax, gift aid etc]

- Repeal the lobbying act so that civil society organisations can campaign properly.