

Commons clash over heritage funding

Support for English Heritage has sparked a clash between culture minister Margaret Hodge and her Tory counterpart Ed Vaizey in the House of Commons.

Vaizey attacked the government for cutting funding to the heritage body by £100 million, and accused Labour of halving lottery funding for heritage. "Buildings are part of our national heritage," he said "—a national heritage that the Secretary of State described last week in disparaging terms as "the past, old buildings" and "monuments".

But Hodge denied that there had been any decline in the funding of heritage. "Although it might be true that English Heritage's funding has kept level over the past few years, the



investment in our buildings has increased. We now invest some £600 million per annum in heritage." She added, "I would have thought that opposition members would support the government as we try to ensure that investment in our heritage goes to supporting the assets rather than the bureaucracy of particular organisations."

The culture minister also came under fire from Tory MP Sir Patrick Cormack who said that the government grant of £26.5 million for the repair of listed buildings was inadequate, "bearing in mind that Canterbury, Lincoln and Lichfield cathedrals alone are looking for more than £26.5 million."

Top 50 list to help women's arts careers

Women in the arts are being pushed to the fore in a new scheme being promoted by ACE's Cultural Leadership Programme.

The CLP is appealing for nominations for a new "Women to Watch" list of female leaders in the arts in an attempt to enhance recognition of the achievements and potential of emerging women in the sector.

"We firmly believe that an important part of the drive to tackle under-representation is to recognise and celebrate good practice and, crucially, to support and encourage emerging and mid-career women leaders in the sector" said Hilary Carty, director of the CLP. "By launching this list we are hoping to engage a variety of senior leaders in supporting the advancement of talented women across our industries."

The list will be launched in March to coincide with International Women's Day, with submissions being judged by a panel chaired by Jenni Murray, presenter of BBC Radio's Woman's Hour.

The panel are looking for submissions from the realms of advertising, archives, crafts, design, libraries, literature, museums, music, perform-

ing and visual arts, the historic environment and other creative businesses. They should be for women in the positions of artistic director, chief executive, managing director, chair or organisational lead.

"There are nowhere near enough women in positions of power and influence, whether it be in the cultural and creative industries or other sectors" Ms Murray said. "We need to do everything we can to enable and encourage the next generation."

The arts have traditionally been more encouraging to talented women, and currently a number of key posts are held by females. Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund both have female chairs, and the latter's chief executive is also a woman. The London Symphony Orchestra's managing director is a woman, as the new director of Tate Britain.

However, CLP believes that despite culture being worth £56.5 billion and 8% of the overall UK economy, there is a lack of investment in leadership in the creative and cultural sector and in particular there are significantly fewer women in positions of leadership than men.



Pablo Picasso's striking *Still Life with Poron* (1948) – becomes the first oil painting by the artist to enter a Welsh public collection, thanks to the National Museum Wales through its Centenary Fund. The Picasso, worth £1.435 million, has gone on display at the National Museum Cardiff alongside work by other leading artists of the 20th century.



The DMU Cube, which opens in Leicester this month, will house not only the city's new Phoenix arts cinema, but also an innovative digital art space. The building, on Leicester's Phoenix Square, contains 63 new homes, seven office studios, 22 managed workspace units as well as the cinema and gallery, which will also feature exterior exhibitions like Martin Rieser's *Songlines*, pictured.