Arts & Theatre

General Election 2024

Who represents Arts & Theatre in Parliament?

Sophie Layton (she/her)

Two and a half months after July's historic General Election result saw the formerly Opposition Labour Party sweep into governance and remove Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party from power, Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer wasted no time in forming his new administration. After 14 years of Conservative rule, he promised his tenure would be defined by "a government of service", having campaigned on a manifesto of 'change'. So how are the Arts & Theatre industries represented in this new Parliament, and who is standing up for these sectors, both in government, and in opposition?

Prior to the 2024 General Election, there were 91 MPs in Parliament from a range of different parties who had experience in legislating for Arts & Theatre causes. These ranged from current and former Secretaries of State and Ministers of State, both Government and Shadow, from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, MPs who were sitting or had sat on the Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee or Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art, or had been Spokespeople of smaller parties on these issues.

However, following the election and MPs either losing their seats or standing down, only 45% of this cohort (totalling 42 MPs) were returned to the House of Commons, effectively cutting Arts & Theatre representaion in half. Notable names who are no longer in the House of Commons with Arts & Theatre experience include former Prime Minister Theresa May, who stood down as an MP and had served as Shadow Secretary of State for the Family, Culture, Media & Sport in 2005.

The losses also included both the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport Lucy Frazer, who lost Ely & East Cambridgeshire to the Liberal Democrats, and Shadow Secretary of State Thangam Debbonaire, who lost Bristol Central to Green Party Co-Leader Carla Denyer. As the new administration begins to settle into their roles, the new ministerial team have many challenges facing the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, and only time will tell how they will fare.



Lisa Nandy MP

Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport

Party: Labour
Constituency: Wigan
Majority: 9,549
Vote Share: 47.4% (+ 0.7%)
Preceded by: Lucy Frazer MP (Conservative)
Previous Roles: Shadow Minister for International Development, Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, Communities & Local Government



Chris Bryant MP

Minister of State for Creative Industries, Arts & Tourism

Party: Labour
Constituency: Rhondda & Ogmore
Majority: 7,790
Vote Share: 47.8% (- 8.5%)
Preceded by: Julia Lopez MP (Conservative)
Also: Minister of State for Data Protection & Telecoms
Previous Roles: Shadow Minister for Creative Industries & Digital



Stephanie Peacock MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Sport, Media, Civil Society & Youth

Party: Labour
Constituency: Barnsley South
Majority: 4,748
Vote Share: 46.7% (+ 4.9%)
Preceded by: Stuart Andrew MP (Conservative)
Previous Role: Shadow Minister for Sport, Gambling & Media



Julia Lopez MP

Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport

Party: Conservative
Constituency: Hornchurch & Upminster
Majority: 1,943
Vote Share: 32.5% (- 32.9%)
Preceded by: Thangam Debbonaire MP (Labour)
Previous Roles: Minister of State for Media, Tourism & Creative Industries, Minister of State for Data & Digital Infrastructure



Max Wilkinson MP

Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Culture, Media & Sport

Party: Liberal Democrat
Constituency: Cheltenham
Majority: 7,210
Vote Share: 50.6% (+ 4.7%)
Preceded by: Jamie Stone MP (Liberal Democrats)
Previous Roles: Max Wilkinson was first elected in 2024, and as such, has no previous Parliamentary roles



Caroline Dinenage MP

Chair of the Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee

Party: Conservative
Constituency: Gosport
Majority: 6,054
Vote Share: 40.3% (- 26.2%)
Preceded by: Role held since 2023, then Julian Knight MP (Conservative)
Previous Roles: Minister of State for Digital & Culture, Minister of State for Social Care