

EXCELLENCE, ACCESS AND ATTITUDE

THROUGH THE FESTIVAL LENS



NAOMI TAYLOR

DOCTORAL STUDENT,
BIRMINGHAM CITY
UNIVERSITY

CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
CHILTERN ARTS





*1940: Council for the
Encouragement of
Music and the Arts
(CEMA)*

*'... bringing the best
to as many of our
people as possible to
cheer them on to
better times.'*

CEMA

PUBLIC
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE ARTS

*The Ninth Annual Report of the
Arts Council of Great Britain
1953-1954*

**ART
IN THE RED**

The Twelfth Annual Report of the
Arts Council of Great Britain

THE
STRUGGLE FOR
SURVIVAL

*The Fourteenth Annual
Report of the
Arts Council of Great Britain
1958-1959*

A BRIGHTER
PROSPECT

*The Tenth Annual Report of the
Arts Council of Great Britain
1955-1956*

HOUSING
THE ARTS

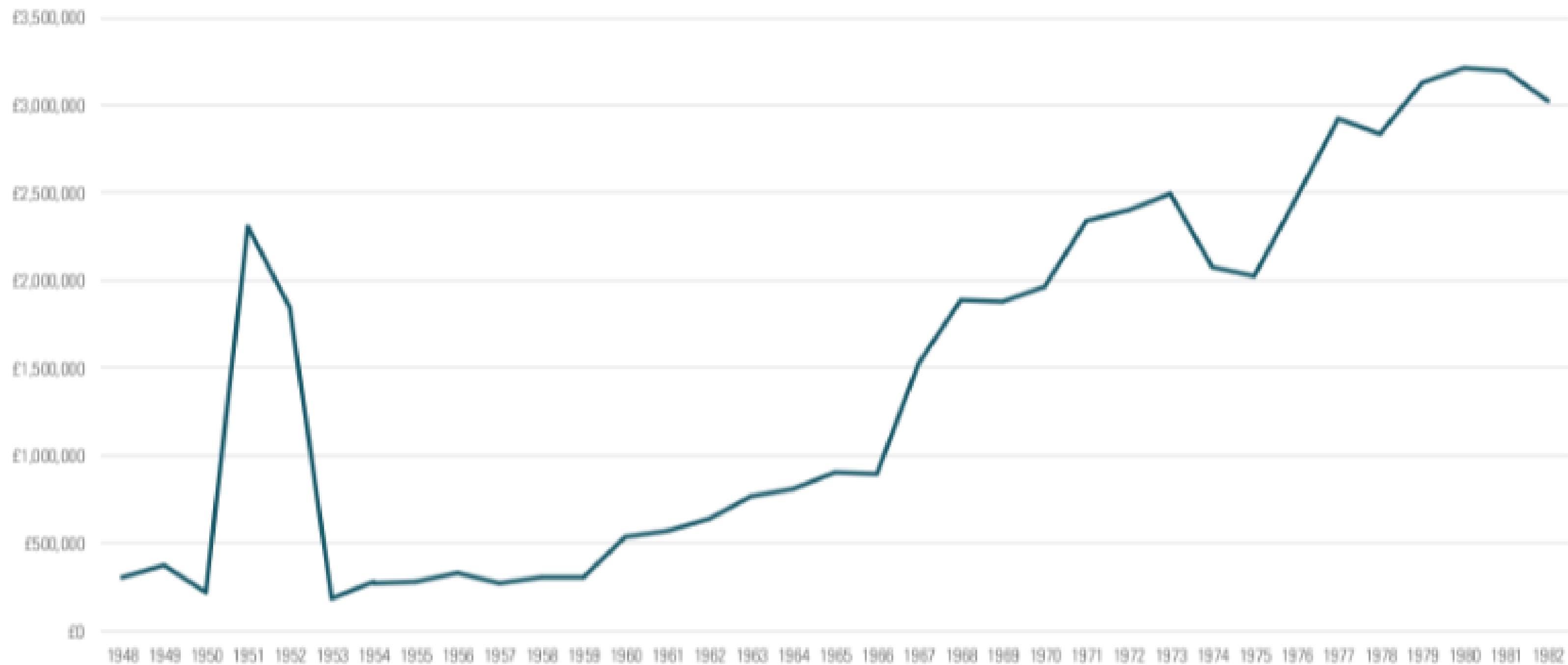
POLICY INTO PRACTICE



20th annual report 1964/65
ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN

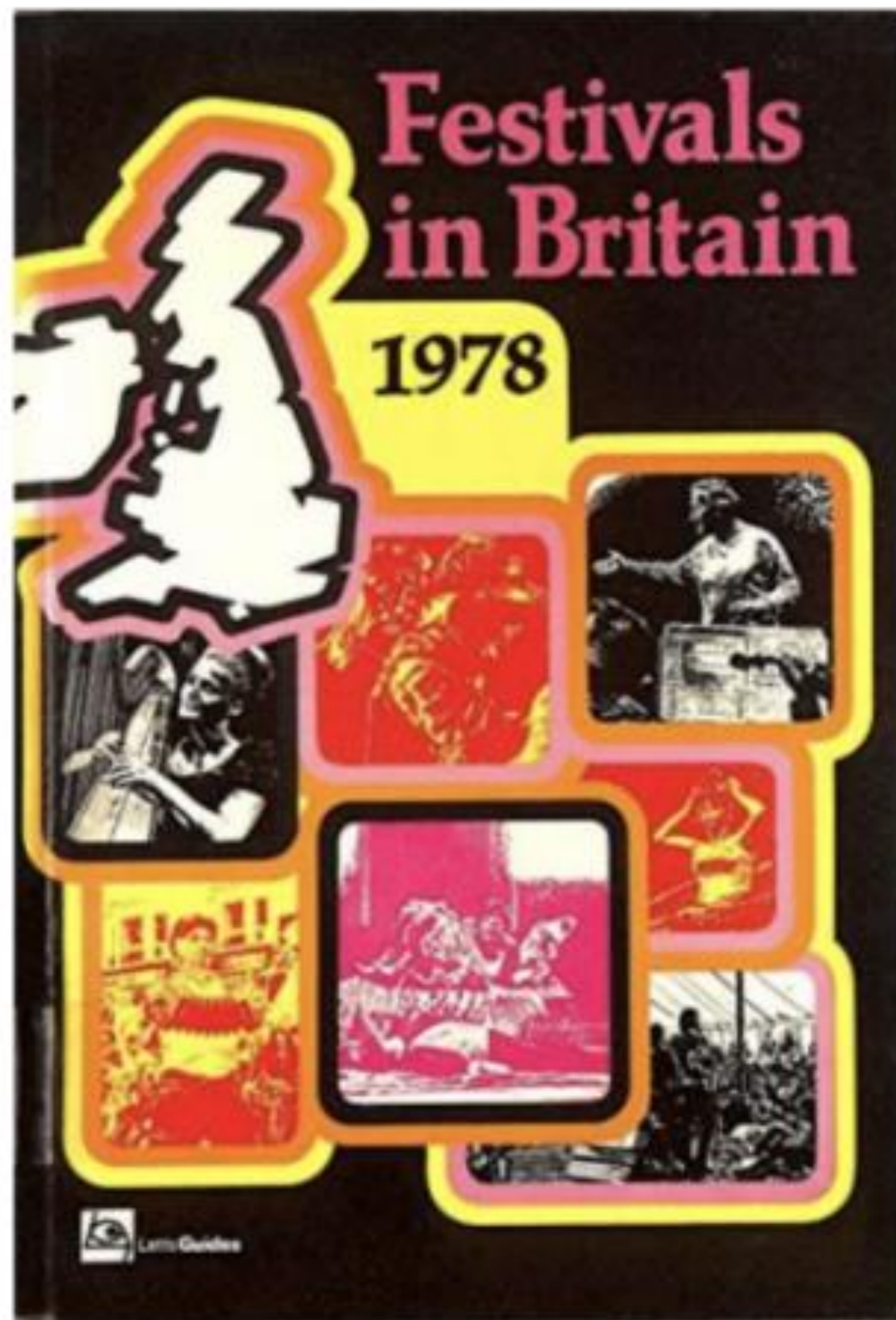
A NEW
PATTERN OF
PATRONAGE

ACGB Support for Festivals in £ (adjusted for inflation) 1948–1982



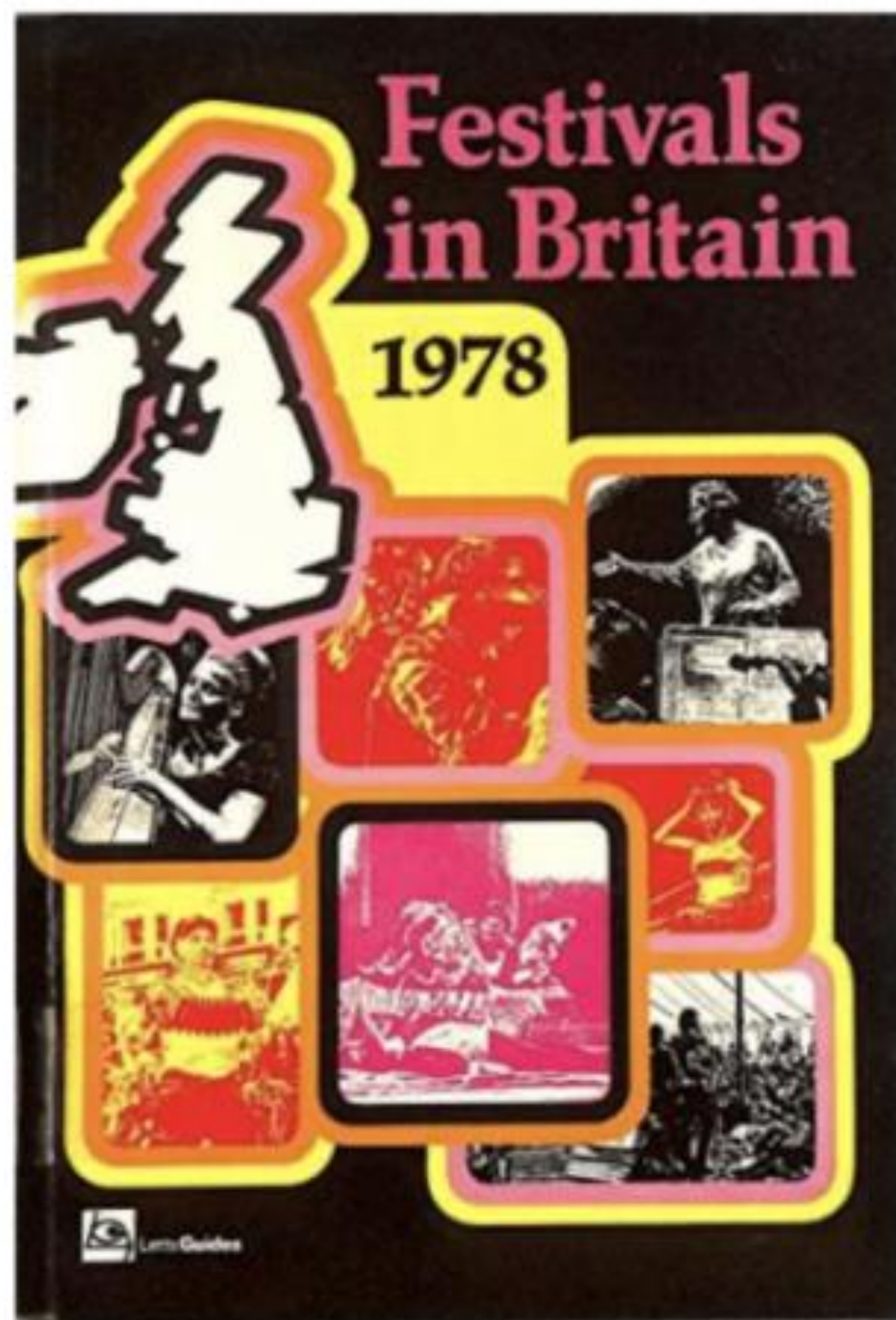
Number of appearances of the word Festival
in ACGB & ACE reports 1946–2024





LettsGuides' **Festivals in Britain 1978** featured sections about both Festivals and Arts in general and a chapter on venues (Abbeys, Churches and Cathedrals), and explored different artforms:

- Ballet and Opera
- Drama, Films and Literature
- Folk Art and Festivals
- Music



Index of Festival Dates and Addresses

Note: Most festivals are run by volunteers and are short of money. Please send a stamped reply envelope when you write.

Albrighton p26

Date: Autumn 1978

Address: Mrs Celia Tiddeley, Charlton

The Liberty-of-the-
London SE1; teleph

Barnwood, St Law

Date: 7-14 May 1978

Address: The Direct

Gloucester GL4 7AD

Bath 0120

“The basis of Arts Council grant policy, then, is to maintain a limited number of power-houses of music, drama, opera and ballet on subsidies which assure a satisfactory standard of performance. Its function is to nurture the arts, not to provide popular amenities in that field...”

THE PRIORITIES OF PATRONAGE



*The Fifteenth Annual Report of the
Arts Council of Great Britain
1959-1960*

2023-26 INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Relationship Framework

How Arts Council England works with National Portfolio Organisations

Published: February 2022

Updated February 2024

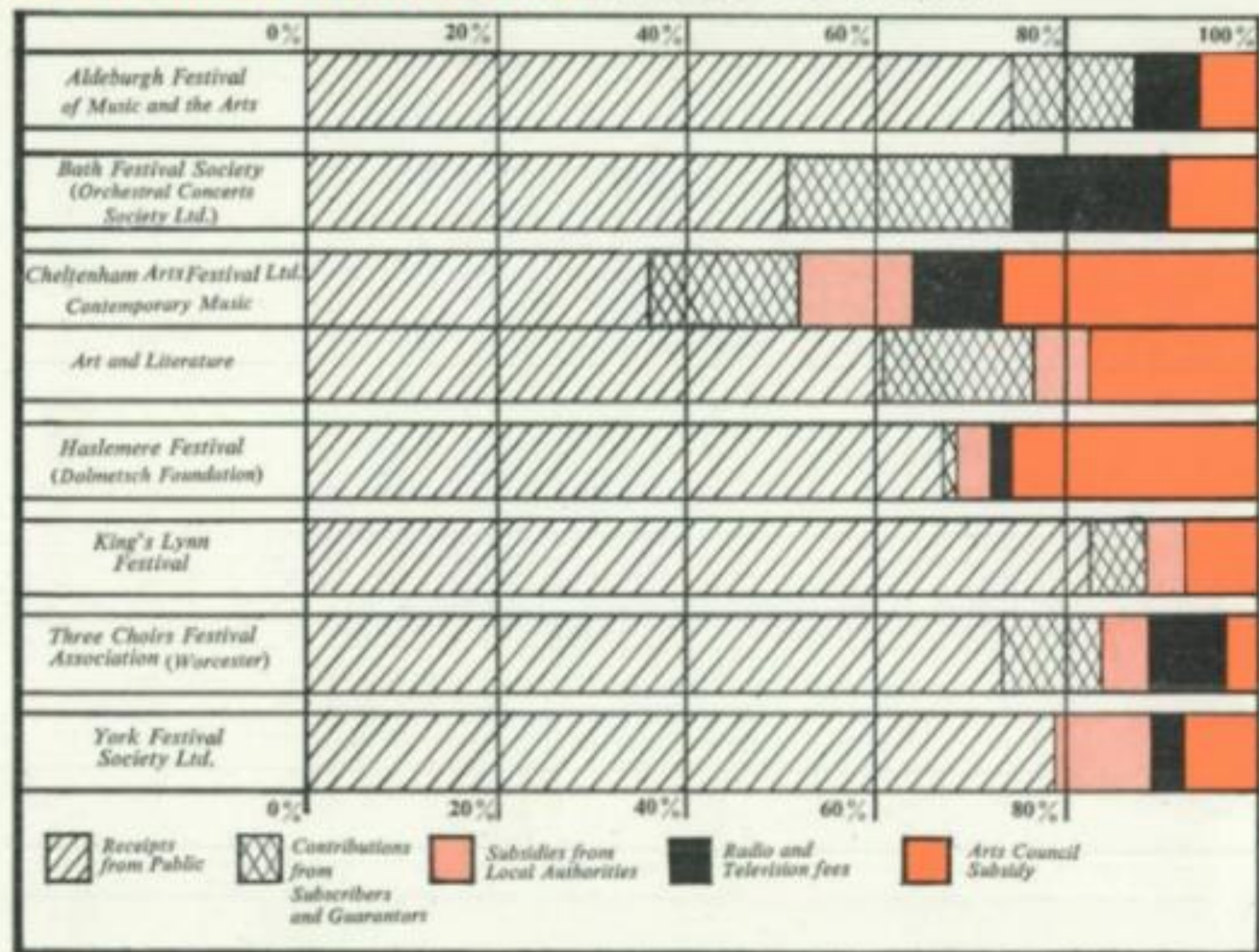


[artscouncil.org.uk](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

“leaders in their areas, with a collective responsibility to protect and develop our national arts and cultural ecology”

“We expect that each organisation we invest in should contribute to the delivery of our goals, using mutually agreed specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based objectives that are embedded in organisations’ business and associated plans.”

ARTS FESTIVALS IN ENGLAND 1960 ANALYSIS OF INCOME



This table is designed to show not only the grants made to the various arts, but also the distribution of these grants between activities in London and activities in the rest of Great Britain.

Analysis of Arts Council Expenditure 1961/62

1 Opera	London (including Covent Garden £298,000, Sadler's Wells £130) £448,000	The Rest (Scotland/Wales £33,000 Provinces £259,000) £292,000
2 Drama	London £92,000	The Rest £164,000
3 Music	London £27,000	The Rest £220,000
4 Ballet	London £164,000	The Rest £66,000
5 Administration	London £50,000	The Rest £93,000
6 Visual Art	London £32,000	The Rest £49,000
7 Festivals Poetry Art Centres and Clubs	London £1,500	The Rest £47,500

2. In the year 1962/63 these figures will become £116,000 and £225,000 respectively as a result of the Chancellor's increased subvention earmarked for repertory theatres.

3. Of the Arts Council £10,700 grant to the London Philharmonic Orchestra £10,000 was spent on concerts outside London.

4. One Company of the Royal Ballet played 27 weeks out of London; the Rambert played 30 weeks; and Western Theatre Ballet 32 weeks.

5. The cost of central administration is divided equally between London and the provinces and the operational costs in Scotland and Wales are included in the second section of the diagram.

6. This includes the net cost to the Arts Council in 1961/62 of its exhibitions which was only £68,000. A further £66,000 was earned.

7. Arts Council subsidies to Arts Festivals in Great Britain amounted to £35,000, to Arts Centres and Clubs £9,500, and to Poetry £4,500.

The above figures are not, of course, the entire cost of provision. In 1961/62 total box-office receipts of Arts Council beneficiaries amounted to over £3½ million; Local Authorities contributed £250,000; Independent Television, the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Pilgrim Trust provided over £10,000 between them, apart from their grants to bodies not in our books.

* The cost of all production costs of Opera and Ballet are charged wholly to London.



A POLICY FOR THE ARTS

THE FIRST STEPS

*Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister
by Command of Her Majesty
February 1965*

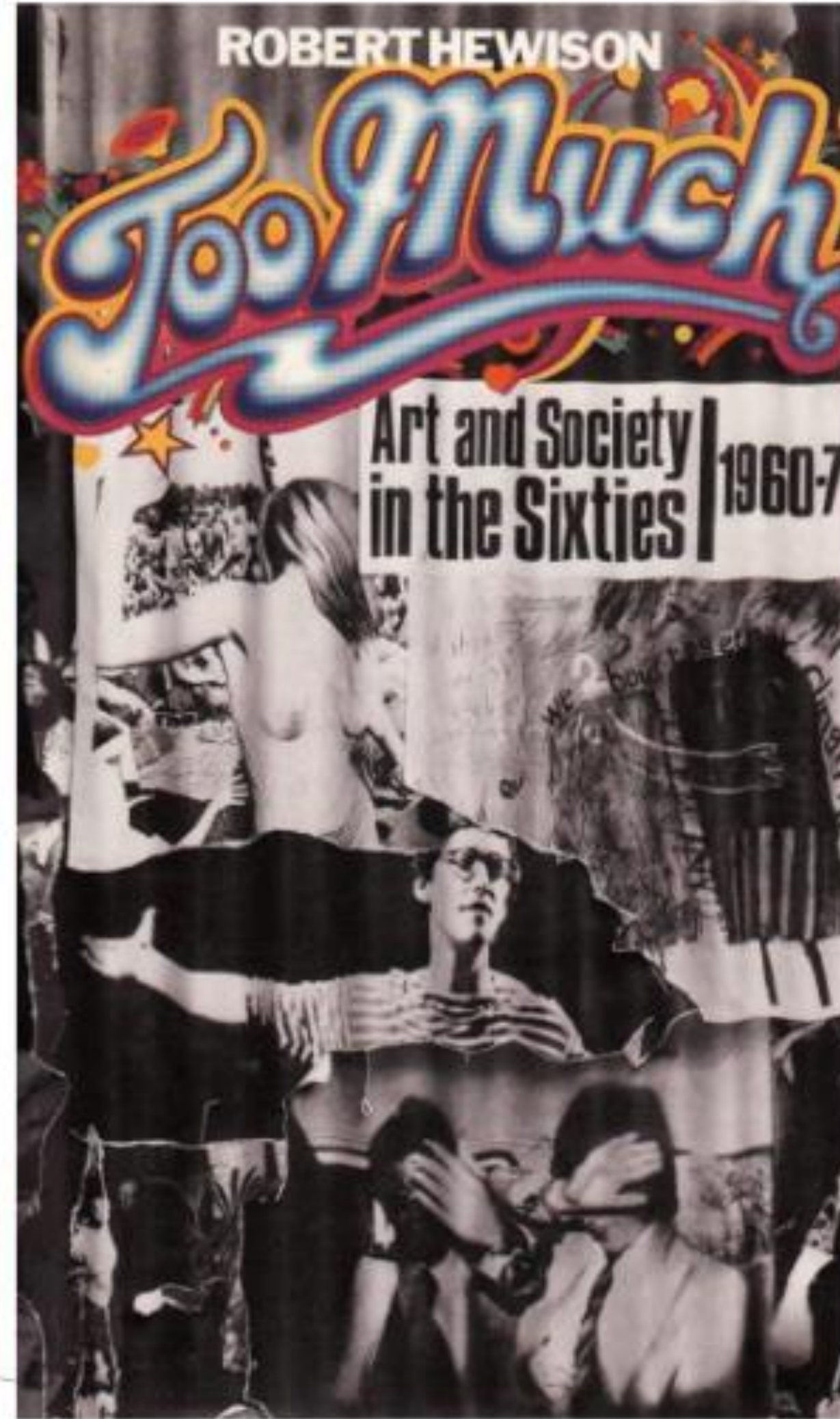
“Today's artists need more financial help, particularly in the early years before they have become established. Their ability to develop and sustain a high level of artistic achievement lies at the centre of any national policy for the arts.”

“By far the most valuable help that can be given to the living artist is to provide him with a larger and more appreciative public. Everything must be done to enlarge the area of appreciation of the arts while at same time guarding against any lowering of standards.”

.992
8p

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

PRICE 1s. 6d. NET





ART FOR BEAUTY ALONE

ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ALONE

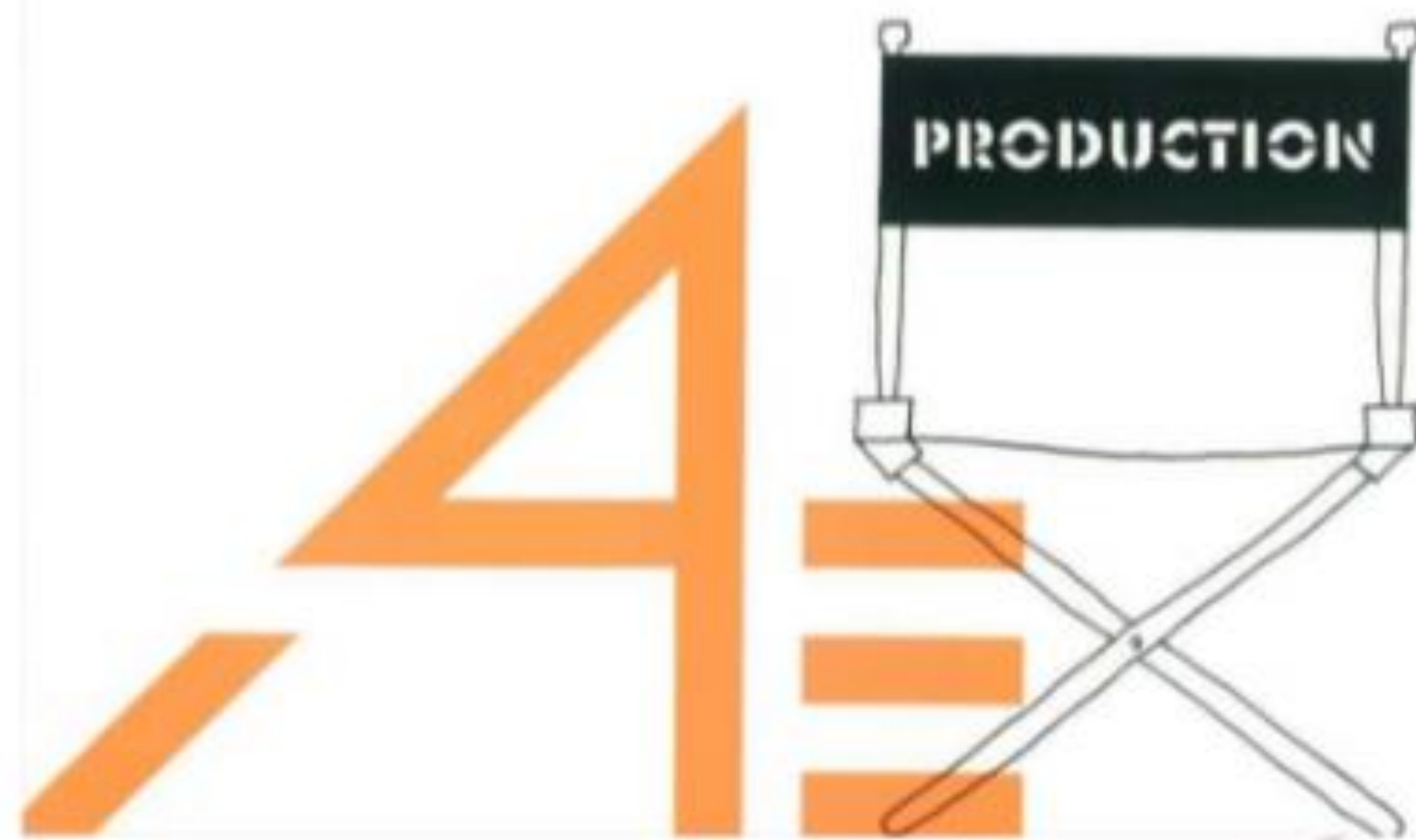
ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ALONE

ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ALONE



The launch of the National Lottery in 1994

ACE's Lottery-funded “Arts for Everyone” (A4E) programme





AT 10's Remit

Body

Arts Council of England (ACE)

Recommended Action

Should recognise explicitly that sustaining cultural diversity and using the arts to combat social exclusion and promote community development are among its basic policy aims. ACE should seek to devote resources specifically to community development objectives and ensure that its funded clients and Regional Arts Boards (RAB's) also contribute in their work to such objectives. To that end, ACE should provide a positive

Timescale

within three months

***THE FUNDING
AGREEMENT
BETWEEN ACE AND
DCMS SETS OUT THE
DEPARTMENT'S 10
GOALS FOR THE ARTS.***

1. to encourage excellence at every level;
2. to encourage innovation at every level;
3. to promote a thriving arts sector and support the creative economy;
4. to facilitate more consumption of the arts by more of the people;
5. to facilitate more participation in the arts by more of the people;
6. to encourage more relevant training for the arts sector;
7. to encourage better use of arts in education in schools, and in lifelong learning;
8. to develop and enhance the contribution the arts make to combating social exclusion and promoting regeneration;
9. to improve public perceptions of the arts; and
10. to promote British culture overseas.



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

The Culture White Paper

This white paper seeks to harness the nourishing effects of culture. It seeks to ignite the imaginations of young people, kindle ambition and opportunity and fuel the energy of communities.

It seeks to spread the gifts of our arts, heritage and culture to more people, and communities across the country and abroad and free the creative genius that can make a better world for all.

Ed Vaizey MP,
Minister of State

#OurCulture

1

Everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life

2

The riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country

3

The power of culture can increase our international standing

March 2016



The Sultan's Elephant, London, May 2006

DID YOU CONSULT THE COMMUNITY?

“the answer is always ‘no’. Because what they want is generally what they can already imagine. And what I want is to do something that introduces that audience to stuff that they could never imagine.”

— Helen Marriage, Artichoke

ACHIEVING GREAT ART FOR EVERYONE

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE ARTS

Long-term goals

At the heart of the framework are five 10-year goals.

Goal 1: Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated
England is regarded as a pre-eminent centre for artistic excellence.

Goal 2: More people experience and are inspired by the arts
The arts are at the centre of people's lives – more people are involved in arts in their communities and are enriched and inspired by arts experiences.

Goal 3: The arts are sustainable, resilient and innovative
Collaborative and networked, the arts are known for resilience, innovation and their contribution to the nation's reputation and prosperity.

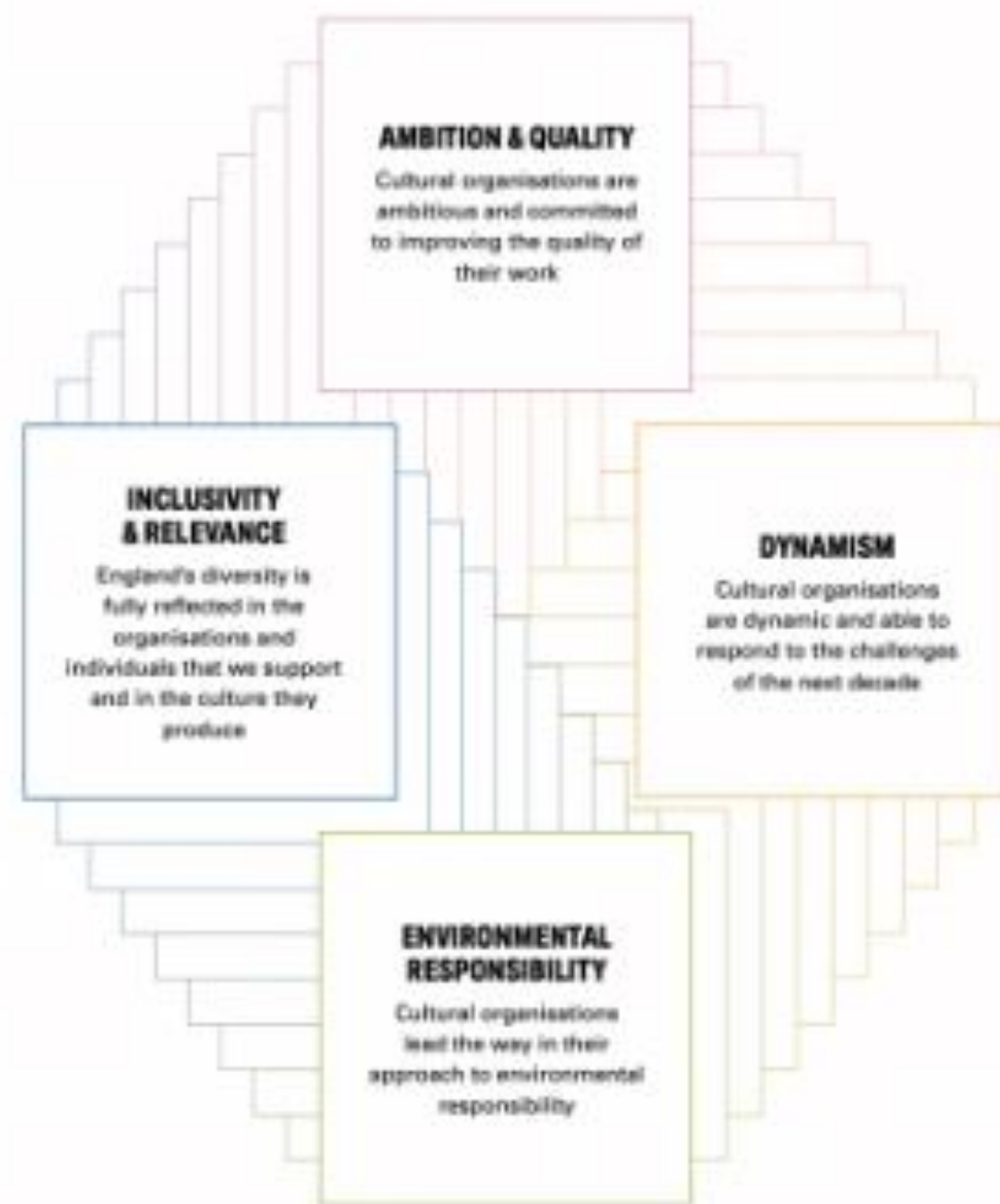
Goal 4: The arts leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled
The diversity of the arts workforce reflects the diversity of society and artistic practice in England. Outstanding arts leaders play a wider role in their communities and nationally.

Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts
Children and young people have the best current and future artistic lives they can have. They are able to develop their artistic capabilities and engage with, and shape, the arts.

THE OUTCOMES



OUR INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES



Our definitions of Culture and Creativity



CULTURE

'Culture' means many things to many people and is often used to refer to food, religion and other forms of heritage. Here, though, we use it to mean all those areas of activity associated with the artforms and organisations in which Arts Council England invests: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts. By describing all of this work collectively as 'culture', rather than separately as 'the arts', 'museums' and 'libraries', we aim to be inclusive of the full breadth of activity that we support, as well as to reflect findings from the research we commissioned for this Strategy, which showed that members of the public tend to use the words 'the arts' and 'artists' to refer specifically to classical music, opera, ballet or the fine arts. Similarly, we have used 'creative practitioners' rather than 'artists' as an umbrella term for all those who work to create new, or reshape existing, cultural content.

We also recognise that the traditional boundaries between and around cultural activities are disappearing as new technologies and other societal changes alter the ways in which many artists, curators, librarians and other practitioners work, as well as how culture is made and shared. We're excited by these changes, which we expect to accelerate over the next decade – and in response, we will become more flexible about the range and type of cultural activities that we support over the years to come.

CREATIVITY

'Creativity' describes the process through which people apply their knowledge, skill and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn't there before. While creativity is present in all areas of life, in this Strategy, we use it specifically to refer to the process of making, producing or participating in 'culture'.

DISAPPEARING EXCELLENCE?

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF PAGES	NUMBER OF TIMES 'EXCELLENCE' APPEARS
ACHIEVING GREAT ART FOR EVERYONE (2010)	47	37
LET'S CREATE (2020)	79	1



TROWEL AND ERROR?



Sir Nicholas Serota's introduction to the 2020 *Let's Create* strategy uses a similar gardening metaphor to both the 1951 Arts Council report (to which Serota refers) and Sir William Rees-Mogg's introduction to the 1984 *Glory of the Garden*.



In both 1951 and 1984, however, the metaphor is used to refer to the Arts Council as gardeners tending flowers; in 2020, the stated ambition is to "recognise that we can all be gardeners".

ACE REPORT QUOTES

the Festivals have, in many places, stimulated interests which **deserve further nourishment**

1951

Edinburgh set itself the task of planning and mounting, for a limited period, a varied and proportionate provision of the arts: its **courage and foresight** have been well rewarded

1954

Festivals are very much the product of local effort ... many of them provide something **exceptional** in the life of their communities, and quite often a setting in which **new work** can be heard or seen for the first time.

1973

... an unparalleled **richness in the national artistic scene** ... the major festivals are of increasing attraction to visitors from overseas
... all symptomatic of the **enthusiasm and excitement** that a festival can generate.

1980



The access v. excellence argument is as old as the hills; and just as static. I wish that the arts had some of the self-confidence on this of, say, sport, where the need to *widen* as well as *deepen* sporting excellence is hard wired...

... in seeking access, we want to make sure we are supplying *access to the best*. Access to the substandard is access to disappointment ... It will not inspire or raise levels of aspiration, and in the end is not worthwhile. *That is why excellence has to be at the heart of cultural subsidy, and that is what we must insist on.*

— Tessa Jowell, 2004



IT'S TIME TO BRING FESTIVALS BACK INTO THE CONVERSATION

NAOMI TAYLOR

DOCTORAL STUDENT, BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

naomi.taylor2@mail.bcu.ac.uk

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, CHILTERN ARTS

naomi.taylor@chilternarts.com

