Social Historical Context

Mary Tennant

Made possible with Heritage Fund

chichester festival theatre

Author

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I moved to Chichester in 2022, having lived in Worthing for nearly 19 years.

I am a retired lecturer and arts manager who has worked in the arts and cultural sector for over 30 years, and in Higher Education for over 10 years.

My experience in the arts sector included working in theatre and events, and in community arts where I worked as part of a team developing access and participation to arts activities.

Working in Higher Education, I was a Contextual Studies and Dissertation lecturer and also developed my own research skills through Post Graduate studies.

I have continued to volunteer in the sector, including at Chichester Festival Theatre as a Heritage volunteer, and leapt at this opportunity to be involved in the New Ventures research team. The role fits with my own personal knowledge and experience of working in the sector and is an opportunity to further refine my research skills.

It's a great community to be involved with and it's an important opportunity to be able to contribute to and support this exciting new venue at the theatre. I have learnt so much about Chichester as well, which makes me feel much more like a local.

Images

Purchases Paintings of North St, South St, West St and East St

Chagall Window (Chichester Cathedral)

Social Historical Context

Time Magazine Covers - Margaret Thatcher and Andrew Lloyd Webber

Women's Own Magazine Cover

Romans in Britain NT Poster

Section 1- Thatcher's Britain

Prime Ministers leading up to, and succeeding, Margaret Thatcher (GOV.UK. Past Prime Minsters)

Harold Wilson 1964-1970 (Labour)
Sir Edward Heath 1970-74 (Conservative)
Harold Wilson 1974-76 (Labour)
James Callaghan 1976-1979 (Labour)
Baroness Thatcher 1979-1990 (Conservative)
Sir John Major 1990-1997 (Conservative)

Harold Wilson's years as Prime Minister between 1974 and 1976 were challenging as his focus on domestic policy and social reforms meant an increase for the top tax band to 83% and unemployment reaching 1 million in 1975. He resigned as Leader of the Labour Party, and therefore Prime Minster, in 1976. (GOV.UK. Past Prime Minsters)

Following his resignation James Callaghan won the Leadership Election for the Labour Party and became Prime Minister from 1976 to 1979. However, the Labour Government lost its majority of seats on Callaghan's first day in office and so he had to rely on the support of other parties during his time as Prime Minster to be able to effectively govern. During this time of government, inflation hit almost 17% and the unemployment figure had risen to 1.5 million. (GOV.UK. Past Prime Minsters)

Margaret Thatcher had won the Leadership Election for the Conservative Party in 1975 and subsequently became Prime Minster with the Conservative win of the General Election in 1979. With the Conservatives winning the 1983, election by an overwhelming majority, and the General Election in 1987, Thatcher ushered in 18 years of Conservative rule when she became Prime Minister in 1979 (GOV.UK. Past Prime Minsters)

Thatcherism

Thatcherism and Thatcher's legacy has informed elements of Britain's social and political context through to the present day. Her time in government was controversial for many different reasons and had a lasting impact on how we view elements of society today.

Milton Friedman was an American economist and statistician. Born in 1912 and died in 2006, he is known for "A Friedman doctrine - The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits" which was introduced in a 1970 essay for the New York Times Magazine. In his essay Friedman associated monetarism with the free market and referred to the inefficiency of government, the benefits of lower taxation, and the virtue of privatisation and deregulation in industry and commerce suggesting that individual freedom meant freedom to make choices, while the economic freedom of Capitalism itself, which involves voluntary buying and selling, was essential for political freedom (Friedman).Thatcherism can be largely credited to this doctrine and in particular the "use of the words 'freedom and 'choice' which became mantras for the New Right" (Peacock, p14)

The Conservative government had been voted in following a turbulent time in politics in the seventies with a conservative Prime Minister at the beginning of the decade, followed by two Labour Prime Ministers in six years. The 'Winter of Discontent', a phrase coined to describe the harsh winter over 1978 - 9, was bleak in both weather conditions and a raft of strikes, mainly in the Public Sector due to an attempt to limit pay increases in that sector to 5 percent. It was these strikes that had helped to severely affect the unions' popularity and a distrust of their power to impact everyday life in the way that the strikes did. (Peacock, p14) The electorate largely perceived that a conservative government would respond to these concerns. (Peacock, p19)

Thatcherism was an ideological shift and, following several years of political upheaval, was initially welcomed by a society that had lost faith in the previous governments and their track records. Britain was ready for a change, and the new government's economic policies were not only "a radical change in direction but also a change in the style of the accompanying discourse. Debate became abrasive and adversarial" (Peacock, p15)

Looking at Thatcherism and its impact on society, we can see a shift in the use of political language which became entrenched in everyday exchanges and became “so naturalized that it appears identical to common sense” (Peacock, p15).
This shift meant that the state, and its operating arm the public sector, became associated with bureaucracy and stultification compared to the efficiency and vitality of the free (private) market place.(Peacock, p15) The principle of “over-manning” meant that businesses could be “‘leaner and fitter’ and therefore more ‘efficient’ Such businesses were able to offer products and services better and more cheaply to the ‘customer’ giving ‘value for money’ “ (Peacock, p16)

Connotations were realigned, which at the same time allegiances shifted:

> “Freedom now equaled free-market, and the free-market would lead to a strong nation released from government intervention. The discourse claimed that the free market would permit society to adapt to a changing world economy. ‘Freedom’ also replaced ‘egalitarianism’. If people wanted to be equal, for example in comprehensive education’s equality of opportunity, this would inhibit parents’ freedom of choice of schools. ‘Free choice’ was accompanied by ‘freedom for enterprise’ in an ‘enterprise culture.’ More disadvantaged citizens, such as low income, unemployed, or long term ill or disabled became “either scroungers or the victims of their own moral inadequacies” (Peacock, p15)

Margaret Thatcher gave an interview to Women’s Own, which summarised this viewpoint and led to the popular reference of ‘there is no such thing as society’:

> “I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand “I have a problem, it is the Government's job to cope with it!” or “I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!” “I am homeless, the Government must house me!” and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and [end p29] there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first.” (Kaey)

The view of Thatcher’s government was that the Public Sector at the time was not aligned with the behaviour of the Private, or enterprise, sector and so needed to be incentivised.

To ensure that the Public Sector performed as it was required therefore, the introduction of benchmarks, performance indicators, internal markets and league tables, became the landscape of public services, with the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) introduced for many areas of service within the Public Sectors, such as catering or cleaning. It became very apparent however, that there were dangers with many of the tools applied to carry out this monitoring, and that the principles of professionalism and self-regulation were eroded through providing the data now deemed to be needed in terms of meeting the clients and customers expectations (users) of the public services. “Choices [were] distorted by information processing skills and the economic and social capital conferring advantages in public service markets on the more affluent and articulate.” (Painter)

The Populist discourse adopted by Thatcher’s government also “included a concerted, direct and easily assimilated demonization of the ‘permissive’ and ‘progressive’ influence of the 1960’s which could be countered by a restoration of discipline, authority and traditional values” and that aligned the workings of the national economy with the principles of managing a household budget (Peacock, p16) “In her discourse the basic unit of society was ‘individuals and their families’” (Peacock, p21)

This ideological shift away from the freedom of the sixties was supported by those newspapers faithful to Thatcher and “By 1983 about three-quarters of Britain’s population was reading a daily paper that supported Thatcher’s re-election” (Peacock, p15) (p16)

Ronald Miller, an advisor to Margaret Thatcher, had previously had success working in mainstream theatre (Peacock, p17). He wrote many of Thatcher’s speeches which included her quoting St Francis of Assisi after the 1979 election (Peacock, p17):

“Where there is discord, may we bring harmony.
Where there is error, may we bring truth
Where there is doubt, may we bring faith
Where there is despair, may we bring hope” (Peacock, p17)

and "U-turn if you want to - the lady's not for turning" (Peacock, p17) which was written for the 1980 Party Conference and informed by the play "The Lady's Not For Burning" by Christopher Fry (Billington, p28)

"By a quirk
of unastonished nature, your obscene
Decaying figure of vegetable fun
Can drag upon a woman's heart, as though
Heaven were dragging up the roots of hell,
What is to be done?" (Billington, p28)

Margaret Thatcher also became known as 'The Iron Lady" after the Soviet new-agency Tass used this description following her response to the Falklands War and her dealings with the trade unions. (Peacock, p18)

Section 2 - The Arts in Thatcher's Time

A Matter of Discourse

As mentioned in the previous section, Thatcherism was an ideological shift and this was reflected in the language used to embed the ideas and policies of Thatcherism into everyday life.

> "Such words and phrases as revolutionary socialism, state ownership, closed shop, flying pickets, militant action, late capitalism and even working class, were replaced

> by reference to market forces, monetarism, cost-effectiveness, individual ownership, consultancy, yuppies, freedom, aspiration, opportunity, leanness and fitness, redundancy, the strangling of lame ducks and the axing of dead wood." (Peacock, p6)

The Labour-run councils did not escape this shift in language, used to tarnish their governance at local level, where the tabloid press in support of Margaret Thatcher and her government, labelled them as 'Loony'. This description was especially applied in the case of the Metropolitan Councils, such as the Greater London Council and Merseyside Metropolitan Council, who found themselves placed in extreme opposition to the government and perceived as a danger to the status quo. "The term 'loony' conveyed a failure of economic realism, political irresponsibility and, of course, madness." (Peacock, p7)

The underlying message of Thatcherism, with respect to the public sector, was of its inefficiency and waste. This discourse and its use of combative language was absorbed by, and informed the public's view, of the management of all services provided by the sector including the arts. (Peacock, p7)

State Funding of the Arts

In 1940 the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) was founded. Before 1940 "about the only direct state involvement with the arts in Britain was to be found in local and national museums, financial support for broadcast opera on the BBC and in the post of Poet Laureate" (Owen, p209) The foundation of CEMA paved the way for the formation of the Arts Council for Great Britain (ACGB) in 1946. (Owen, p209) "with a view to providing art for the 'mass of the population'." (Gooch, p28)

The main policy for Arts Council "subsidy since 1945 is admirable because of its principled commitment to arms-length funding" (Harvie, p106) but as a government funded organisation "it must follow broad government policy directions" (Harvie, p106) while the decisions made on funding were awarded "on the basis of qualitative judgements made by panels of appropriate experts. " (Peacock, p36)

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When the Arts Council for Great Britain was initially formed in 1946, it subsumed the fourteen regional offices that had been set up for the Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) which were reduced to six in number in 1951-2." (Reid, p249) As well as ACGB, state funding for the arts was actively supported by the Labour government of the time through its Local Government Act of 1948 (Peacock, p39)

Other legislation encouraged collaborations between councils, charities, educational institutions and private sector with capital schemes. "These were devices to assist the construction trade, of course, but also to produce new arrangements for the urban blending of retails and leisure on American models" (Witts, p283)

Arts Council England replaced in the Arts Council of Great Britain In 1994 along with the Arts Council of Northern Island, the Scottish Arts Council and the Arts Council of Wales. Each council was responsible for the distribution of public funds, as well as distributing funds from the National Lottery, which was established in 1994. (Reid, p251)

From its beginnings the Arts Council practised "The class-based and Eurocentric ideology of artistic excellence" (Owen, p214) which was "underpinned by an elitist and paternalistic universalism grounded in a false belief that only metropolitan-styled high art could be really good-quality art, and that everyone would universally appreciate this when they were properly trained." (Harvie, p109) This approach could be seen as elitist in that its panels and experts, by deciding who should receive funding, at the same time "intrinsically demeaned myriads of other art forms, artists who produced other kinds of work, and audiences who enjoyed that work" (Harvie, p109)

During the next thirty years however, state support for the arts contributed to the "expansion of arts provision, renewal and extension of the theatre estate, increased interaction between the arts and systems of national and local government and struggles over artistic legitimacy stimulated by a blossoming counterculture seeking subsidy for the arts." (Owen, p214) It was this general consensus and broad support for the necessary funding by the state of the arts that the came under attack following after the 1979 election of a Thatcher's Conservative which "saw this principle come under attack" (Owen, p214)

Thatcher's view of the arts sector overall was that the sector should be subject to market forces and that "that state support could regiment and stifle artistic activity" (Peacock, p35) Rather than receiving financial support from the state it was thought that the arts would be better placed if they were managed in a business context and any fundraising should be the concern of the private sector. During the early eighties however, this was not initially apparent as a beneficial way forward for arts organisations. In October 1982 a third of London theatres were dark, with four for sale (Peacock, p35) and in February 1983 twelve mainstream London theatres were dark.(Peacock, p35-6)
During the eighties the arts received almost standstill funding and this, coupled with inflation and an increase of VAT to 7%, meant that the Arts Council was forced into a position where funding cuts had to be made and forty-one organisations and individuals received no further funding at all. In the early eighties the financial support from the private sector was less than two percent, which led to a funding deficit which could not be made up by the private sector alone. The public sector were also limited in their ability to financially support the sector with a cut of their own rate support grants looming (Peacock, p36) The Arts Council was to come under further scrutiny when Robert Hutchinson's independent report in 1982 'A Hard Fact to Swallow: The Division of Arts Council Expenditure between London and the English Regions' reported per capita spending in London in 1980-81 to be £3.37 against £0.66 in the rest of England. It was "conceded that the Council's original aim to decentralise and devolve had 'not been adequately realised'" (Reid, p250) and the Arts Council 1984 report 'The Glory in the Garden: A Strategy for a Decade "was ostensibly designed to address these inequalities." (Reid, p250)

The Arts Council's further report in 1986 'Theatre IS for all' attempted to address some of the issues reported with its funding profile but "theatre subsidy remains selective and, in many respects, exclusive, tending to support institutions and practices that are predominantly metropolitan, elite, white and patriarchal" (Harvie, p109)

The Arts Council, through its funding choices, appeared to be supporting "plays drawn largely from the canon of western theatre that reflected a liberal consensus of what constituted 'art'." (Peacock, p37) An attempt to support new writing was made through funding of companies who were developing plays, but "because theatre buildings were difficult to close without provoking public opposition, the council tended, however, to include towards these small touring companies when making cuts. (Peacock, p37)

State funding also came through local authorities and between 1981-82 an estimate of £43,363,000 was spent on theatre buildings, and £5,695,000 was awarded as grants for theatre and drama activities. By 1985 local authorities spend on the arts exceeded the Arts Council funding at over £100,000,000. Rate capping and the poll tax, however, meant that as Local Authorities had to make cuts to their own budgets, this seriously impacted on the funding being able to be awarded for support of the arts in the latter part of the eighties. (Peacock, p39)

Section 3 - British Theatre

The official opening of the South Bank Centre by Queen Elizabeth II took place on 26th October 1976, with Leslie Evershed Martin in attendance. (Mosse, p74)) This was also the year that the Theatres Trust and the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts was founded (Clements, p86). It would be another three years before the Conservative Government, and their leader Margaret Thatcher, would win the General Election in 1979 and usher in 18 years of Conservative rule. The changes that would happen over the next

decade would have a huge impact on how theatre in Britain was produced and performed and how it was received and perceived.

Government

After winning the election, Margaret Thatcher and her government ushered in the first of a three-stage implementation of neoliberalism in Britain. The first part of this process during Thatchers time, the 'roll-back', included the introduction of monetarism, cuts to state spending, privatisation and deregulation of state organisations combined with the encouragement of competitive individualism. Prior to this there had been an active engagement of spending on public services which was seen by the new government as wasteful and inefficient (Owen, p210)

> "capitalism is a mode of economic organisation, the state is a governmental apparatus, and neoliberalism is a normative theory regarding the relationship between the two and their role and function in people's lives, which is then translated into concrete governmental policies and actions" (Owen, p210)

The primary relationships between the government and the arts were financial and legislative, and principally "Thatcherism saw the value of the arts primarily in terms of economic productivity: box office income, urban regeneration, and tourism" (Owen, p216)

The power dynamic between the Conservative government and the sector was "top-down, permitting or prohibiting forms of action" (Owen, p209) Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the New Labour government came to power in 1997, took a completely opposing view describing how a strong relationship between government and the cultural sector can exist with:

> "The nurturing that government must do to achieve this, however, must not be a process of dictating. It must, in a modern age, be a process generated from the bottom rather than imposed from the top. Patronage of culture by the state can so easily tip into prescription of content or form" (Smith, p18)

This was not to be the case during Thatcher's time in power. The Greater London Council (GLC) was actively in opposition to Thatcherism and "prioritised access, community based and radical arts practices, and focused on supporting representation in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability" (Owen, p216) Their support of arts events in London during this time meant that "the slogan "GLC funded' became almost ubiquitous" (Peacock, p39) The GLC, along with the other metropolitan councils, was abolished in 1985 (Owen, p216)

Understanding this relationship in relation to the theatre sector, it can be seen how "the art of government in these terms has conditioned public gathering, subjectivity and the regulations of institutions: all aspects of which affect theatre's interaction with its social context" (Owen, p209) The legacy of this Conservative government has subsequently informed the relationships between the sector and future governments in a way that will mean that the arts will now always be measured either for its financial or its societal impact. New Labour revived the funding landscape and importance of the arts to its policies, but continued with the "governmental uses of the arts in delivering economic outcomes arguably entrenched the logics established by Thatcherite arts policy - although they were now articulated in terms of social inclusion and cohesion as well as economic regeneration" (Owen, p216)

In the nineties the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) replaced the Department of Heritage. Chris Smith, as Secretary for State for this new department, described "five principal reasons for state subsidy of the arts in the modern world: to ensure excellence; to protect innovation; to assist access for as many people as possible, both to create and to appreciate; to help provide the seedbed for the creative economy; and to assist in the regeneration of areas of deprivation" (Smith, p18-19) underlining the importance of the cultural sector but continuing with the now embedded requirement of measuring the impact and value of the arts. To demonstrate value for public money, the "processes of 'inspection, benchmarking, strategic planning, target setting, key performance indicators and service agreements' were put in place between the Treasury and the DCMS to oversee and measure cultural initiatives and the expansion of arts audiences that government and other organisations sought" (Owen, p217)

Funding and Policy

Nigel Lawson described Thatcherism as “a mixture of free markets, monetary control, privatisation and cuts in both spending and taxes” (Billington, p284) and it was this approach to the economy for the country that had a significant impact on the economic environment of the theatre sector.

The impact of standstill funding during the eighties meant withdrawal of funding for many organisations in the subsidised sector, as well as cuts (Owen, p215-6). Margaret Thatcher’s view of the sector, however, was clear from her responses at the time to the pleas from the subsidised sector for more support. Peter Hall tried to raise the issue of public funding for British Theatre with the Prime Minister and was directed to look at Andrew Lloyd Webber as an example of a theatrical success story. (Billington, p284) “Lloyd Webber ‘embodied everything she revered: entrepreneurial skill, a world-famous brand name, the priceless ability to make money.” (Billington, p284) and it was during the eighties that “the British theatre was synonymous with the achievements of two particular men: Lloyd Webber and the producer, Cameron Mackintosh. Between them - and sometimes in tandem - they provided the shows that defined the decade” (Billington, p285): *Cats* (1981); *Starlight Express* (1984); *Les Miserables* (1985); *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986); *Miss Saigon* (1989) and *Aspects of Love* (1989) (Billington, p285)

These shows were hugely successful financially, tapping into international tourists to build their audiences:

> “the ascendancy of the musical in the Eighties and its capacity to marginalise other theatrical forms was a product of the Thatcherite times. Musicals had the potential, with the aid of intensive marketing, to make bucketloads of money. They offered audiences both escape from social reality and spiritual uplift” (Billington, p286)

These productions could not solely exist in the theatre sector however without previous partnerships, collaborative working and the skills and knowledge of practitioners from across the sector. New plays were also produced in the West End, “many of them transfers from the subsidised sector” (Billington, p273) and both *Cats* and *Starlight Express* “depended heavily on an alliance between talent drawn from subsidised theatre

and commercial know-how" (Billington, p286) (Source - State of the Nation) while *Les Miserables* was a co-production between Cameron Mackintosh and the Royal Shakespeare Company, which was partly sustained by its continuing profits" (Billington, p285)

The arrangement between Cameron Mackintosh and the RSC however meant that, although the latter benefitted from the funding arrangement of the co-production "it set a dangerous precedent. It gave a commercial producer a large say in the artistic programming and policy of a subsidised national company" (Billington, p291) and this "had a profound effect on our theatrical culture." (Billington, p285)

A cultural shift in the perceived value of theatrical works occurred, where productions were measured "by the fundamental criterion of commercial theatre: is it a hit or a flop?" (Billington, p291) (Source - State of the Nation) while those working in commercial theatre found "Instead of the joy of collaborative and creative effort, there is the anxiety of competitiveness" (Gooch, p23) In the Public sector "Productions like the National Theatre's *Guys and Dolls* (1983) or the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Les Miserables* (1985) signalled that the economic barriers between the commercial sector and the subsidy system had been significantly eroded during the 1980's" (Clements, p97) Productions from the Commercial sector also had an impact on the programming for public sector theatres where the "commercial enterprise gained cultural power. Productions which transferred from the commercial sector were significant in representational and reputational terms, and in terms of which stories are seen as part of a commercial mainstream." (Clements, p97)

As well as the Musical, Epic plays were also a popular type of production in the eighties, although not to be confused with the Epic, or Brechtian, theatre usually found as an example of alternative theatre. These Epic plays, for example Shakespearean play cycles, such as the War of the Roses, sometimes lasted a day or more. "Even the prospect of a day spent inside the Aldwych or the National watching the work of Aeschylus, Euripides, medieval Mystery plays or a Dickens adaptation was ultimately a form or refuge" (Billington, p296) (Source - State of the Nation) in the same way that the musicals could be seen as a form of escapism.

In the subsidised theatre sector the impact of Thatcherism, in the late seventies and eighties, was far-reaching. “British theatre subsidy has not existed in a vacuum, outside of changing economies and governments.” (Harvie, p107) (Source - Theatre in Britain since 1945) and while the principle of state funding is that it should enable, and aim to, provide access to the arts for all (Harvie, p107), this principle was at odds with the Thatcherite view of the arts having to pay for themselves, and subsequently restricted access to the arts for “the privilege of those able to pay independently” (Harvie, p107) Those venues that were subsidised by the state may have “’escaped’ free market economics, they did so by relying on the political economics of state funding, not by escaping economics as such.” (Billington, p230)

Venues relied on known or canonical works to shore up income through ticket sales, as well as pursuing funding development opportunities through private sponsors where available. (Owen, p215-6) New relationships developed in the sector which metamorphosed into consumerist behaviour between venue and user, a behaviour and expectation that has continued into the present day.

> “But so dominant is the need to ‘sell’ a piece of theatre, and so prevalent are the safety mechanisms of the theatre workers hired as its salesmen, that the same reflexes have come to operate even in the subsidised field where, in theory at least, the pressure to ‘sell’ the product shouldn’t be so great. But with levels of subsidy so low, and the Arts Council’s consequent insistence that companies ‘earn their keep’, the same reflexes and motivations have come to be reproduced even in the subsidised sector” (Gooch, p26-7)

With restricted funding for subsidised venues, their programming choices had to be informed by economic considerations. “The one flexible area of a budget is the artists themselves and the product you put on stage” therefore if there is limited budget, then there are plays that are just not able to be put on due to the size of their casts eg (Witt, p337) Steven Gooch identified an “identikit annual programmes the reps set up ‘to guarantee the 60 per-cent-box-office capacity approved by the Arts Council’ “ which consisted of “one Shakespeare, one Restoration Comedy, one Chekhov or Ibsen, ‘or foreign at any rate’ one slightly more obscure classical play recently done by the National or RSC, one ‘modern’ play (maybe Godot or Ayckbourn) one old favourite, the Christmas

play and one other" perhaps a play from the school syllabus. (Witt, P333) This formula, as described by Gooch was in response to the income generating requirements of the subsidised sector and subsequently meant that un-tested productions, whether new or unusual, could mean that a venue might be looking for an audience of 8,500 for an average sized venue to support the production during its run to make it economically viable. (Witt, p333) and so was too great a risk to take.

In response, the Arts Council offered 'Challenge' funding to match Local Authorities financial support of venues, in an attempt to encourage more risk-taking by the theatres. But both local and metropolitan councils, under the economic scrutiny of Thatcher's government, were unable to offer further financial support. (Witt, p333)

Fundamentally, the Repertory Theatres were not being seen by the Arts Council as cutting-edge venues, ready to take artistic risks, perhaps in comparison with the Arts Centre model. The Arts Council report in 1983 'Glory of the Garden' identified 13 strategic areas for "a rolling programme of regional development" which included 11 principal cities and Devon and East Anglia. (Witt, p332) The principal idea behind the strategic areas was that they were to "bear a much greater responsibility for ensuring the theatrical experience of the wider community in the whole of their regions", including new writing, and there was an expectation for venues to "expand their seasons of studio work" to cover this. These regional centres should act as "magnets, emanating artistic forces reaching thirty miles around them" (Witt, p332) This also meant, however, that venues who were not geographically in these strategic areas "were now mere distractions to the plan and they were devolved to their nearest Regional Arts Association" (Witt, p333) West Yorkshire Playhouse did receive a grant of four million pounds however from West Yorkshire council and opened in 1990 (Witt, p333-4)

The attempt to encourage and support new work from playwrights, however, was not without risk. Playwrights who explore the issues and topics around them to inform their writing. *The Romans* in Britain by Howard Brenton was an example of when new writing clashed with the views of the establishment, or in this case Mary Whitehouse. The play opened at The National in 1980 and "drew a direct parallel between the Roman invasion of Celtic Britain in 54C and the contemporary British presence in Northern Ireland" (Billington, p305) Mary Whitehouse, who was a campaigner against, what she perceived, as a

decline in morality represented on television and elsewhere, “launched a private prosecution in 1982, invoking the 1956 Sexual Offences Act. Michael Bogdanov, the play’s director, was charged with having procured an act of gross indecency by the actors involved.” (Billington, p306) Three days into the trial the prosecution withdrew the case, but Mary Whitehouse “claimed that she had made her point” because the judge, Mr Justice Staughton, ruled that “the 1956 Act could apply to events on stage” and as this created a legal loophole for possible future prosecutions, the play was not produced for 25 years. (Billington, p306) This example helps to understand “a good deal about the mood of the times: in particular the moral bullying and feverish sanctimony that were a by-product of a market-driven decade.” (Billington, p305)

The second of the Arts Council reports in the eighties, the Cork Report Theatre IS for ALL in 1985, “recommended that, as highly funded national institutions, the NT and RSC ‘should take on larger responsibilities in touring the English regions and in acting as host theatres for regional and international companies and artists” (Harvie, p112-3) This was an attempt by the Arts Council to respond to the criticism of funding being disproportionally spent on the major public venues based in the capital at the expense of the regions.

As the theatre sector as a whole changed its behaviour in response to the funding environment that it found itself in, both commercial and subsidised venues could be seen to have ‘mixed’ funding profiles, that is “a combination of private investment, public subsidy, charitable giving, and income from both box office and other ventures” (Clements, p97) with funding of many venues received from income and investment from different sources (McKinnie, p230) both public and private sector. What is also important to understand is that where the commercial theatre sector was generating a higher proportion of their income through market activity, ticket sales and catering for example (Clements, p97), it was also being ‘subsidised’ by the public sector venues “for example, mega-musicals like Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Cats* (1981) - many more were at least initially subsidised” (Owen, p106)

Theatre Building

One of the main issues for the theatre sector in terms of funding is the allocation of capital funds for the building and kitting out of theatres. For the majority of projects "the state has been the only realistic source for the vast majority of the substantial amount of capital investment which theatre buildings require for their construction, refurbishment and maintenance. "(McKinnie, p231) After World War II there were many demands for rebuilding the infrastructure of towns and cities and limited private funding available to help with this. The financial value of theatres could not be realised at the time of building and there were many other capital projects that needed public subsidy.

> "the state's resistance to funding theatre is not only the result of political intransigence, timidity, or ideology. It is also due to the economic character of theatre buildings themselves, which require significant, up-front capital investment; the value of that investment is realised slowly" (McKinnie, p232)

In economics this "is commonly known as 'market failure'- when there is no market for an economic good (say, a theatre building) because it cannot be supplied by the market at a price that permits either sufficient production or consumption of it." (McKinnie, p233) This helps to explain the tension between the political economy and the theatre sector, where "public investment in theatre has been necessary to ensure theatre's financial survival." (McKinnie, p232) Where the value of theatre is perceived as social there often needs to be "some form of subsidy, in order to ensure its production and consumption. "(McKinnie, p233) . The economic relationship between providing the capital funds for a social context and the subsequent public financial support that is required to ensure that then the building can be operated, informs another political economic tension, where the capital outlay subsequently means more future financial support. In government terms, this is informed by the ideological policies of which party is in power, and its views on social value, and it can be said that "the state has taken up its fiscal responsibilities fitfully, and sometimes inequitably, and the fraught history of capital investment in British theatre illustrates this political economic ambivalence especially forcefully." (McKinnie, p232)

In terms of public support and "In a sign that arts infrastructure was now envisaged to be part of welfare state planning" (McKinnie, p234) the Arts Council had previously published

‘Plans for an Arts Centre’ in 1946” which laid out its aspirations to build a network of arts centres in communities across Britain. It linked these explicitly with the larger programme of post-war reconstruction underway at the time” (McKinnie, p233-4) The plans included “indicative floor plans, architectural renditions, and three-dimensional models that could tour public meetings” (McKinnie, p234) The Arts Council however, did not have the capital funds to support these aspirations and so their vision of local community hubs to support regional arts activities could not be realised until 1965 and the ‘Housing the Arts’ policy of the then Labour government.

Following the second World War, the 1948 Local Government Act was meant to support local authorities in their funding activities for rebuilding and which “allowed local authorities to fund art and was to have a concrete impact on British theatre’s relationships with its audiences” (Freshwater, p149) The act led to “a massive expansion in the building of new civic, repertory, and university theatres in the regions between the 1950’s and 1990’s, such as the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry (1958), the Octagon Theatre , Bolton (1967) and the Dundee Repertory Theatre (1982)” (Freshwater, p149)

This subsidy however, didn’t only provide more physical theatre buildings, but “also transformed the status of theatre” (Freshwater, p149). As the buildings had been provided through public money, those venues that were built were also deemed to have a particular relationship with the communities that supplied the funds through their local taxes. “The result was the emergence of the so-called ‘civic’ theatre, a term which not only illustrates the role of local authorities as the landlords and funders of these theatres, but also implies a sense of citizenship” (Freshwater, p149)

The geographic location of these venues with ”the creation of large, single hubs for theatre-making in cities and towns across the country failed to address the fact that the urban audience is not singular, but multiple.” (Freshwater, p151) Funding from the Arts Council as this time however, was informed by their “hierarchical value judgements about different forms of art, and about the people whose needs were to be catered for, creating an ethos which militated against the formation of a meaningful sense of connection between these institutions and their audiences” (Freshwater, p149) Civic theatre therefore became problematic in terms of the programming these venues “large regional theatres continue to face the challenge of catering for manifold needs, as they struggle to articulate

a coherent identity in the face of mounting pressure to deliver both excellence and accessibility" (Freshwater, p151) (Source - British Theatre since 1945) and the accountability that they were being held to in terms of public subsidy and the expectations of what that funding could support:

> "a new generation of hard-left councillors in Bristol (Bristol Old Vic), Islington (Almeida) Camden (Shaw) and Liverpool (Playhouse) sharply questioned their theatres' core programmes, asking instead for local plays and multi-ethnic productions which 'celebrated the community' (Witt, p334)

In terms of government economic policy in the sixties, a capital investment programme "Housing the Arts' was created by the new Labour Government and "when combined with capital grants from local authorities, the scheme spurred significant investment in arts centres and regional repertory theatres across Britain" (McKinnie, p235) Nearly one million pounds of public money had been spent "effectively resuscitating the local arts centre model that the Arts Council had proposed twenty years earlier" (McKinnie, p235-6) Inevitably, some of the capital projects sometimes took years to be completed and subsequently opened after the time of the elected government that had approved the project, such as the "Barbican Centre [which] opened in 1982, a year of record unemployment" (McKinnie, p236) When the 'Housing the Arts' fund was "wound up in 1987, it was worth less than half its 1965 value in real terms" (McKinnie, p237)

How venues were managed during the seventies and eighties were also impacted by the wide range of responsibilities required to keep a theatre running. The Artistic Director considered which productions would be supported by audiences, as well as managing the "under-explored aspects of the role, such as building development, programming and personnel management, which in fact, have always been central to it" (Six, p47) As the "day to day management falls to the Artistic Director, a job in which many of the functions of a producer are telescoped together with that of director" (Gooch, p29) (Source - All Together Now) the role had to balance artistic and financial decisions in order to keep the venue financially and artistically viable.

Peter Hall, while establishing the management of the National Theatre recognised the importance of support for this range of functions and his “decision to expand the NT’s administrative staff, housed in what his associate director Michael Blakemore critically described as a ‘suite of offices’ , set the pattern for the sector more widely” (Six, p47) As the ‘business’ of running theatres became more and more economically focused, a shift in staffing became apparent to be able to respond to these needs of the business. In the sector economic considerations began to take over from artistic ones and staff structures were gradually adapted in response to this. Nottingham Playhouse put an ‘executive director’ (an administrator) above the artistic director in its staff structure at the venue. (Witt, p337)

Alternative Theatre/Fringe

Thatcherism brought in an ideological shift which included embracing the economics of Friedman and attempting to present the public sector as inefficient and wasteful in the delivery of their services.

“Thatcherism explicitly sought to crush left-wing activism and reduce subsidy in favour of private sponsorship. Many of the other sources of official and unofficial funding for the arts were eliminated: in the early seventies, when unemployment benefit was at a historic peak of 20 percent of average earnings, you could run a theatre company on the dole, but successive below-inflation rises saw enormous cuts to employment benefit between 1978 and 1982 and again between 1985 and 1990, eventually losing a third of its relative value. Local authority funding was sharply curtailed and The Greater London Council, always a significant supporter of alternative arts in the capital, was abolished by Thatcher in 1986” (Harvie, p137-8)

This shift was not only presented from an economic and political standpoint but also informed a cultural shift in society and this “had a clear influence on the drama and theatre of the 1980’s” (Peacock, p7) This influence informed both the dramatic and the theatrical presentation of work.

> “By dramatic discourse I refer not merely to subject-matter but also to a play’s implicit ideology and the aesthetics of genre and form. Theatrical discourse refers

> to the modes of theatrical representation - venue, set, costume, music, song and performance technique. in some cases, and particularly in the mainstream theatre, both are ‘naturalized’ and appear not to possess any ideological connotation. In oppositional theatre they are, however, normally consciously contrived as antithetical to traditional forms in order to become a performative expression of their ideological content.” (Peacock, p7)

“The kind of leap that fringe theatre workers of the seventies had in mind was entirely different. Instead of getting jammed in theatre conventions of one’s own making, the desire was to explode the conventions. (Gooch, p37) This meant that to be in opposition to current theatrical representation, and challenge the ideology being proffered by Thatcherism, was to eschew mainstream, conventional, theatre production and to develop alternative means of theatrical discourse. “The pursuit of new theatrical and dramatic discourses was a central feature of the left-wings theatre’s reaction to Thatcherism.” (Peacock, p9)

The conventional view of theatre can be understood as “a large, public building specially designed - usually with an end-stage and proscenium arch - for audiences to watch actors and actresses perform” (Gooch, p15) Theatre, however, has a history of being presented in many different venues, its performers not always professional actors, and the work presented can be of many formats, not only plays.

> “Two constants govern the production of art: first, that you cannot prevent people saying what’s on their mind simply by closing the principal channels of communication to them; second, that artists in any society will inevitably work either through or around the channels that are available.” (Gooch, p33)

It is also the case, however, that wherever theatre is presented “theatre cannot be entirely divorced from its social context.” (Gooch, p16) and indeed there are “all the social connotations from the space in which theatre is performed” (Gooch, p16) This can be seen to explain why alternative theatre practitioners chose venues that had a social context for their audience and “why it has exercised a consistent appeal to those interested in political art.” (Gooch, p16) By placing the performance in a venue familiar to its audience, the

message that is being conveyed can be further enforced by the social connotations of the venue where the performance is being viewed, as:

> "conditioned by what has gone before, our 'eye' is trained by the past, even if our conscious stance is total rebellion. Aesthetic sense and taste are developed attributes. The moment we approach the stage, whether as an audience and critics or as producers, we bring a little bit of the past with us" (Gooch, p17)

These alternative versions of theatrical output can be largely identified as existing in three formats; Agitprop, Social Realism or Epic (Brechtian) Theatre (Peacock, p7)

Agitprop was adapted from theatre in post-revolutionary Russia and "portrayed class archetypes such as 'The Worker' and 'The Capitalist' in non-realistic interactions that were intended to convey the political reality underlying a given situation." This type of theatre could was usually presented in non-theatrical venues (Thatchers Theatre) and led to the use of different types of venues for alternative theatre, such as pubs or shops. Agitprop usually presented "non-realistic interactions that were intended to convey the political reality underlying a given situation." (Peacock, p7)

Social Realism "emphasized the 'typicality of social roles'" and could be found in the plays of Trevor Griffiths or the Red Ladder Theatre company (Peacock, p7))

Epic, or Brechtian Drama, focused on the inequities of capitalism and speculated on alternative political and cultural possibilities" in a non-naturalistic setting to underline the artificiality of the theatrical presentation so that the audience could focus on the message being presented through the play. Edward Bond and Howard Brenton (Peacock, p7) both can be seen as using Epic Theatre in their plays.

Alternative theatre also had a "sense of mourning, of grief for lost opportunities, that something loved between us was being strangled - our culture." (Peacock, p8) To present this underlying notion that society was being deconstructed, while the bright lights were distracting people from what was actually happening to their communities "Writers were trying to get at the darkness, the social cruelty and suffering behind the numbing neon-bright phrases" (Peacock, p8) More theatre companies were also being formed by

communities of marginalised groups as they used theatre, and its alternative forms, to try and understand and explore their own identifies and situations. (Peacock, p8)

Naseem Khan's book, written in 1976, 'The Arts Britain Ignores: The Arts of Ethnic Minorities in Britain' explored the development of these theatre groups with little or no funding, lack of acceptance from the arts funding organisations, lack of infrastructure for support, lack of rehearsal space and barely any exposure. There were subsequent Black Theatre companies, such as Temba and Talawa, who existed within a decade of the book being published, but were still subject to lack of funding. (Harvie, p113)

Fringe theatre can be described as "an avowedly oppositional artistic and/or political theatre that experiments with both forms and methods of theatre work, usually taking place in smaller venues outside the theatrical mainstream" (Harvie, Rebellato, p123) and as such can be seen as alternative theatre. There are problems with definitions of alternative theatre however, as the very nature of exploring oppositional ways of producing work presented many and varied responses "that emerged in the 1960's Britain to challenge both the commercial and subsidised theatre sectors" (Harvie, Rebellato, p123) and were too many in number for a definition which would satisfactorily be able to applied to all.

> "The great strength of the political Fringe - that its ideological opposition to the mainstream was so total - has meant that it still holds an attraction for anyone critical of the status quo. Its great weakness - that it attacked on all fronts simultaneously - means that it remains, very firmly, on the fringe" (Gooch, p41)

Fringe theatre was "not a unified, consistent movement" and did not have a "consistent ideology or theatrical style" (Harvie, Rebellato, p125) but the first wave of Fringe can be identified as emerging in the 1960's-1980's (Harvie, Rebellato, p123) and "by the mid-seventies, the term 'alternative' was preferred as a term used to described this type of theatre production" (Harvie, Rebellato, p123) Perhaps because 'fringe' suggested "an implicit deference to a mainstream" (Harvie, Rebellato, p131) while 'alternative' proposed "a rival, even critical rejection, of the mainstream" (Harvie, Rebellato, p131) In 1979, the British Theatre Directory listed 151 companies (Harvie, Rebellato, p125)

Funding from The Arts Council for Alternative Theatre was generally awarded as “grants for individual projects by people whose work was already in some way proven, and, as some companies grew and stabilised, by supplying revenue grants for year-long programmes of production” (Gooch, p45) The Council usually dealt directly with these emerging companies and subsequently “their function as ‘watchdog’ increased” (Gooch, p45) so that they could account for the value of the public money that they were spending.

Community Theatre

Community Theatre can be defined as theatre “based in a particular locality and who sees as an important part of their work the generation of a geographically local culture” (Gooch, p9) The nature of their work therefore, which is not necessarily economically focused, usually means that resources are limited and sometimes “the actual relationship with the local community can be fraught” (Gooch, p9) There are also touring companies which can come under the definition of community theatre, with similarly restricted resources and usually no base (Gooch, p9)

“There was an extraordinary increase between the late1960’s and the end of the 1980’s in small- to medium-scale touring companies, who ‘took to the road in a fleet of transit vans and established a network of performance venues for themselves throughout the British Isles. These were to include community centres and youth clubs as well as playgrounds, parks, pubs, and disused buildings.” (Freshwater, p151)

These companies also “see a large part of their job as expressing the interests and concerns of people in their area.” (Gooch, p9) and where community can be urban or rural, usually concerned with working class members of that community (Gooch, p9) In some instances it can be “a community not defined by place or geography but by a constituency of interest” (Gooch, p10) such as minority groups.

Gay Sweatshop was established in 1974 - 1977, Tara Arts formed in 1977, Graeae - first disabled-led British theatre company started in 1980 and Oily Cart who “specialises in theatre for the very young as well as young people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.” (Freshwater, p151) in 1981.

Community theatre groups usually “emphasise the value of the collective approach to their work and point to their intention of reaching a socially broader audience” (Gooch, p10)

For a theatre company “to look for continuity and stability in their work, they need premises and a patron - be it a wealthy nobleman, the paying public or the State” (Gooch, p12) and this can create a tension when the company is looking to explore the issues, perhaps contentious, of a community while at the same time need “material resources for a place to perform and to finance productions” with little prospect of any return on a financial investment (Gooch, p12-13) “The initial impetus of the Fringe had been away from existing institutions in both politics and theatre, towards the vision of its shows.” (Gooch, p43) but to be able to continue to present their productions however, fringe practitioners “depended on coming to terms with these institutions, on moving towards them, creating a network of relations for itself with audiences and the state.” (Gooch, p43)

“The Arts Council’s top-down structure made it a rather distant, undemocratic organisation, especially when the rise of the fringe meant such an expansion of grass-roots theatre making” (Harvie, Rebellato, p134)

Some key decision makers were also hostile towards the movement, and sometimes encouraged companies to explore directions that they perhaps didn’t want to explore. (Harvie, Rebellato, p134)

Community theatre will quite often eschew published or classic texts that mainstream theatre will embrace for their income generating potential, and instead look to their demographic to come together to explore the issues that are pertinent to them. (Gooch, p12) Some of the origins of the ideas of community theatre can be traced back to “travelling players in the late Middle Ages who in some way were connected with the beginnings of religious non-conformism” (Gooch, p12)

Theatre produced by a group or collective however, looking to represent their community will inevitably be subjective as “even if the physical and material circumstances of production were removed, the outside world would still encroach on that notional freedom

of expression in the theatre”(Gooch, p16) There will always be social connotations for everyone involved in the production of the work and for all those viewing the work.

> “Theatre takes place within the physical and economic conditions of the world around it, and is dependent on them for the material resources to make it happen. But theatre is also able to reflect and represent that world within itself.” (Gooch, p17)

Community theatre practitioners are aware of these social conditions and will “present a sense of the world and hope to impress that sense upon the freely wandering minds and imagination of our audience” (Gooch, p18), but cannot control how these social connections will be received by their audience.

> “What applies to ‘transmitters’ or producers, of plays also applies to ‘receivers’ - a particular message may be intended to be transmitted, but how it is received informs what the audience understand about the message that it attempting to be transmitted to them.” (Gooch, p18-19)

The relationship between community theatre and its audience can also be seen to break with convention of the audience being presented a production from behind a proscenium arch, and “numerous productions were created with ‘environmental’ sets where the entire audience sat within the same decor as the actors, so that the division between acting and spectating areas was no longer clear.” (Gooch, p37)

As community theatre practitioners main objectives are to connect and communicate with its audience, “Audiences are only going to experience a sense of ownership if they value the work made there, or recognise the characters and stories presented on stage” (Freshwater, p151) (Source - British Theatre since 1945) and so how the audience is involved in the production is part of their experience and understanding of the work that they are engaging with and subsequently “Audience participation became almost a necessary component of fringe productions” (Gooch, p37) As practitioners explored new methods of theatre discourse “the model of a simple action representing an aspect of contemporary life, played directly and simply not to an audience but amongst it, offered a potential for not only a new message but also a new method” (Gooch, p38) Many

practitioners chose to ‘break the fourth wall’ in the presentation of their productions and this can be seen as part of the oppositional discourse of these companies.

> “The idea of playing amongst an audience rather than to it is central to the idea of community theatre and remained very much a reality as long as the post -’68 groundswell of rebellion against the ‘corporate’ politics of the modern state continued. Even in the eighties, when the state is taking its revenge, the sense of a separate and distinct identity remains amongst companies who still adhere principally to a post -’68 value system” (Gooch, p41)

Writing

When the National Theatre finally opened, the Writers Union (TWU), who represented the majority of the living playwrights whose plays were due to be produced there, felt that this was an opportunity to attempt to change the contractual conditions for their members. A strike was called in January 1977 and ran until May that year, resulting in the TWU and the Writers Guild of Great Britain (WGGB), who were the recognised negotiating body at the time, working together to standardise a contract for their writers which was finalised in autumn 1979. The new contracts recognised various working conditions for playwrights, including new rates of pay, that playwrights often worked in rehearsals as well and so should be paid for their time and that a play should not be altered without the playwright’s permission. (Rebellato, p33) A contract negotiated with the Independent Theatre Council at the same time covered fringe and small-scale touring and in 1986 another contract was drawn up with the Theatrical Management Association (TMA)

The Writers Union also called for a Dramaturg’s scheme in 1976, but this was less successful. The motivation behind this was the large amount of unsolicited new plays that were being sent to theatres, and that this proliferation of new writing was also contributing “to the squeeze of playwrights’ income”. There were 150 playwrights listed in the New Playwrights Directory in 1976, which had risen to 436 listed in the British Alternative Theatre Directory in 1982. (Rebellato, p33)

The idea behind the provision of a Dramaturg’s scheme was mainly in recognition of how plays could be developed between the playwright and the theatre sector and during the

eighties there were various activities that supported the move towards achieving this. To support the theatres, who were being sent the new plays, voluntary playwright unions appeared and offered regional support to their local venues with script reading and other services. The regional arts boards also sometimes used these voluntary bodies to assist with funding and bursaries. There was also a fundamental shift with the regional arts boards ring-fencing some of their funding for major theatres rather than individuals, following a slew of reports that advocated for a more effective process of play development within a theatre environment. Various theatres also began to employ Literary Managers through this time and this led to “the invention of shared dramaturgical vocabulary for describing plays and how they work”, which was encouraged by the Arts Council who produced “several reports including The Glory of the Garden (1984),Theatre IS for all (1986), and The Policy for Drama of the English Arts Funding System (1996) recommended, with increasing effectiveness, the value of embedding play development processes in theatres” (Rebellato, p35) (Source - British Theatre since 1945) and more writing courses were being offered at both Further and Higher Education establishments (Rebellato, p36)

Max Stafford-Clark had previously pioneered his model, which included the writer and director researching, writing and improvising with the actors as part of the process of writing a play, and brought this model with him when he moved to the Royal Court in the eighties. The Arts Council produced several reports. The National Theatre established the NT Studio in 1984, as a research and development environment for new work. (Rebellato, p36)

Section 4 - Chichester

Chichester has a long history and at one point had four medieval gates that remain in name only: Eastgate, Southgate, Westgate and Northgate as well as an inner medieval gate.

In the 1970's and 1980's the citizens of Chichester would come to its aid to support and fight for what they believed to be the spirit and character of Chichester. The people of Chichester are described as being "inspired by the pioneering and determined spirit, not of government-fuelled organisations, but by striking and impassioned individuals" (Garland, p5) This applies in particular to community and art based activities, where different individuals found themselves in positions of influence or opportunity and led projects and activities to provide "a discernible range and variety of vigorously different kinds of artistic excellence, rather than the influence of one singular giant" (Garland, p5)

Chichester Politicians

Anthony Nelson was the Conservative MP for Chichester between 1974 - 1997

From 1974 Chichester District Council replaced Chichester City Council, assuming most of the responsibilities of the latter.

Patrick Denis Combes was the first Mayor of Chichester in 1976, following the Local Government reorganisation, when twenty-two, of twenty-four, of the newly elected councillors were new to their roles. Cllr Combes and Cllr France were the only two councillors elected in 1976 who had previous council experience. The office of Alderman had been dispensed with following the 1972 Local Government Act. (p46)
Terence Michael France succeeded Cllr Combes as Mayor in 1977 and was Mayor again in 1982, when he was the last conservative Mayor until 2015. Cllr France features in the painting of East Street by Nigel Purchase in celebration of the Queens Silver Jubilee in 1977. William Arthur Doody was Mayor in 1978, and Ursula Hogg became Mayor in 1979 and again in 1980. In 1981, Philip Leslie Coombes, as Mayor, can also be credited with the inaugural Christmas street lighting and decorations, supported by Marks and Spencer who were celebrating their centenary that year. There were seven Mayors for the rest of the decade - Anne Mary Dorothy Scicluna 1983, Colin Paul Tupper 1984 and 1989,

Anthony John French 1985, John Cooper Rankin in 1986, Leonard Christian Eyles in 1987, Martin John French in 1988 and Raymond James Arthur in 1990

Scicluna. *A Chain of Mayors.* 2019

Chichester Festivities

The first Chichester Festivities were held in 1975 in celebration of the 900th anniversary, known as Chichester 900, of Chichester Cathedral. Originally intended as a one-off celebration for Chichester 900, by the Duke of Richmond, the event became an annual one with its 30th season held in 2004. The Chichester Festivities were listed in the British Arts Festival Association and held its last event in 2012. The Chichester Festival is now held annually. (Hewitt, p196-7)

Chichester Cathedral

Diocese of Chichester

The Diocese of Chichester is a Church of England diocese based in Chichester and covers Sussex. It was founded in 681 as the ancient Diocese of Selsey and translated to Chichester in 1075

Bishop Ralph de Luffa (1091 - 1123) began the Norman Cathedral and Chichester's best known medieval bishop was Richard of Chichester (1245-54)

Bishop of Chichester

The Bishop of Chichester is the ordinary of the Church of England Diocese of Chichester in the Province of Canterbury. The see is based in the city of Chichester and the residence is the Palace, Chichester.

Between 1974 and 2001 the Bishop was Eric Kemp, previously Dean of Worcester.

Archdeacon of Chichester

This post was created, following the Norman Conquest, where a uniform system of territorial archdeaconries were created to try to ensure that no settlement was more than a day's ride from the Bishop's seat.

Saint Richard, when Bishop of Chichester in the 13th Century, produced a body of statutes which included the duties of his archdeacons, including visiting churches regularly to see that everything was being carried out properly and was in order.

The modern role of an archdeacon in the Church of England has not significantly changed since these original responsibilities were stated. The archdeacon post in 1976 - 1990 was held by Richard Eyre between 1975 - 1981 and Keith Hobbs between 1981 – 1991.

Chichester Cathedral Restoration and Development Trust

In May 1980 the Trust was established to "raise funds to support Chichester Cathedral for: The restoration, development and maintenance of the Cathedral. The promotion and improvement of the musical and educational facilities. The restoration, development and maintenance of other buildings in the Cathedral Close" (Charity Commission)
Donations in 1986-9 reached a total of £1,300,000 (which included £300,000 raised for the organ fund)
Leslie Weller was the first chair of the Trust and, in addition to raising funds, the charity "stimulated a lively interest in the Cathedral and its work, and created a partnership between laity and chapter

(Holtby The Immediate Past in Hobbs. *Chichester Cathedral - An Historical Survey*)

Congregations and Visitors

In the second half of the twentieth century, it became clear that there was an increased amount of people who were considering the Cathedral as their 'parish' church and the Cathedral, in recognising its responsibility for pastoral care, started to deliver Sunday

sermons aimed more at the local community. At the end of the seventies, it was also recognised that an increased number of tourists were visiting the cathedral and a survey published in March 1979 by the English Tourist Board, 'English Cathedrals and Tourism, Problems and Opportunities' estimated that twenty million tourists visited cathedrals annually. It was recognised by the cathedral that "care for visitors and pilgrims involves a pastoral solicitude which has also to extend to the regular congregation"

Another feature of the cathedral at this time, was the increase in the number of 'special' acts of worship, including a series of carol services, and in 1986 the Queen attended Royal Maundy

(Holtby. The Immediate Past in Hobbs. *Chichester Cathedral - An Historical Survey*)

The Organ

The organ in the Cathedral was built by Renatus Harris in 1678 and subsequently the instrument went through a period of rebuilds and refurbishments.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in 1904, the organ went through a rebuild by Hele of Plymouth, when the playing action was changed from mechanical to pneumatic. In under seventy years, however, the organ was described as unplayable, and there were insufficient funds to pay for a restoration as money was needed for building work on the Cathedral itself.

An electronic Allen organ was therefore in use for 14 years, following the assessment of the condition of the organ in 1972, and while the fundraising and refurbishment of the organ could be carried out.

(Thurlow The Organ in Hobbs. *Chichester Cathedral - An Historical Survey*)

Before the refurbishment, the organ had been recognised as a fine instrument, which through the combination of all the previous rebuilds and renovations "had somehow resolved itself into a wondrous unity of captivating sounds, perfectly suited to the building" It was recognised that even though "there are great risks in touching a work of art, even

when the need for repair is urgent" it was very important to retain this character and sound of the organ and so a way forward was agreed that included a return to the mechanical action for keys and stops.

(Gillingham The Rebuilding of the Organ in 1986 in Plumley, Lees, Gillingham, Osborne. (Ed) *The Organs and Organists of Chichester Cathedral*

A successful fundraising campaign raised £300,000 and NP Mander Ltd was commissioned to carry out the work, which was completed in time for the Royal Maundy service in 1986. The service of dedication for the organ took place in June, led by the Right Honourable Edward Heath.

During the refurbishment Anna Plowden restored the original painted decoration from 1678 for the Harris pipes and a new nave section was also added which could be played from the main organ, or from its own console at floor level, greatly helping with the singing during congregations and other occasions.

(Thurlow The Organ in Hobbs. *Chichester Cathedral - An Historical Survey*)

The Organists of Chichester Cathedral

John Anthony Birch - organist from 1958 - 80
Alan John Thurlow - organist from 1980 - current

Music at the Cathedral

Musical Commissions between 1976 and 1990:

1976	Berkeley, Lennox	The Lord is My Shepherd
1976	Walton, William	Chichester Service: Evening Canticles
1979	Leighton, Kenneth	Evening Hymn
1980	Berkeley, Lennox	Chichester Service: Evening Canticles
1980	Berkeley, Michael	At the Round Earth's Imagined Corners
1980	Burgon, Geoffrey	Sanctus Variations

		This World From
1981	Walker, Robert	Here, O My Lord
1983	Walker, Robert	Gonfalons
1983	Burgon, Geoffrey	But Have Been Found Again
1984	Patterson, Paul	Christ is Our King: Festival Fanfare
1986	Eben, Petr	A Festive Voluntary
1986	Harvey, Jonathan	God is Our Refuge
1989	Burgon, Geoffrey	Songs of the Creation

(Birch and Thurlow. Music at the Cathedral in Foster *Chichester and The Arts 1944-2004 A Celebration.)*

in 1974, the first Chichester Festivities were held as a one-off event to mark the 900th anniversary of Chichester Cathedral and was known as Chichester 900. Each year around 30,000 would attend the Festivities events. The Duke of Richmond is credited with the idea of holding a festival of events in celebration of the significance of the 900th anniversary.

Chichester 901 events virtually sold out all its events within a week of opening the Box Office and as the event developed, it was seen as very important for the cathedral to be retained at the centre.

(Hewitt. A Time of Celebration, Joy and Fun. in Foster *Chichester and The Arts 1944-2004 A Celebration.*)

Modern Art and Chichester Cathedral

“Through works of art man probably reaches the highest achievement of which he is capable, and so such works are surely the most appropriate offering to God”
Walter Hussey *Time* 21st July 1947 (Hobbs. *Chichester Cathedral - An Historical Survey)*

In the twentieth century, and beyond, the curation of a collection of significant art works housed in Chichester Cathedral was made possible through particular individuals coming together in the same place and at the same time, with an understanding of the importance

of such works in a major cathedral church. In the case of Chichester Cathedral, this can be attributed to the Bishop, Dr George Bell; the dean at the time, Walter Hussey; and the artist Hans Feibusch

The second half of the twentieth century was also an important period of time in British Art when artists were exploring new ideas and methods that informed their artworks.

Feibusch and Bell became friends, and Bell commissioned various works for churches in the Chichester see, while Hussey arrived in Chichester in 1955, with a reputation for an interest and support for avant-garde art and artists.

It can be said that “the crowning achievement of Hussey’s time at Chichester and the one that properly sums up his patronage is the window ‘The Arts to the Glory of God’ by Marc Chagall installed in the northern retroquire. Unveiled by the Duchess of Kent on 6 October 1978, it was the culmination of an idea dating back to Hussey’s first approach to the artist in 1969.” but due to funding issues and delays in the processes used to produce the artwork, the window actually arrived on 20th September 1978, a year after Hussey’s retirement.

(Coke and Potter. The Cathedral and Modern Art in Hobbs, *Chichester Cathedral: An Historical Survey.)*

Walter Hussey was dean of the cathedral from 1955 - 77. His successors were Robert Holtby 1977-1989 and John Treadgold 1989 - 2001 “Subsequent to the retirement of Walter Hussey, the commitment to strengthen the link between the cathedral and contemporary artists has been extended by Hussey’s successors.”

(Jones. Walter Hussey and Art in Chichester Cathedral in Foster *Chichester and The Arts 1944-2004 A Celebration.)*

Robert Holtby continued the commissioning of modern artworks by his predecessor with his first commission of a new font from John Skelton in 1982/3, which replaced the Victorian font of 1894. Artist Ursula Benker-Schirmer was also commissioned to produce a major new tapestry in 1985 for St Richard’s shrine.

(Coke and Potter. The Cathedral and Modern Art in Hobbs, *Chichester Cathedral: An Historical Survey.)*

Pallant House

in 1712, Pallant House was built for Henry Peckham. The Georgian House eventually became a building used by the District Council as offices. (Stansfield Smith, p47)

In the late seventies, the trustees of the Edward James foundation, based at West Dean, offered a collection of Surrealist art to Chichester. The offer had also included the suggestion that Pallant House and its next-door neighbour could be used for the collection, but found resistance from the council who did not want to give up both buildings, and so in October 1977 the offer was withdrawn.

The loss of this collection for Chichester, however, highlighted the lack of appropriate space in Chichester for displaying art works of this significance and importance. Walter Hussey, the Dean at the Cathedral, supported the need for such a space and offered to leave his own, not insignificant, collection of modern art to Chichester, if Pallant House could be restored to house it. (Martin, p67)

Philip Stroud, a well-known local restauranteur in Chichester, saw the opportunity for Pallant House to be “a centre of cultural importance on both the national and international stage” (Stansfield Smith, p53) Stroud wrote to The Chichester Observer in 1978 in support of the proposed transformation of Pallant House to an important gallery that could house Hussey’s collection (Martin, p68-9) and in 1979 suggested forming a support group, called the ‘Friends of Pallant House’ which could support the council in the creation of the gallery. Among the signatories, in support of this idea, were many of Stroud’s friends and customers, artists and antique experts, as well as the Earl and Countess of Bessborough, Christopher Fry and the Chancellor of the Cathedral (Martin, p70)

Stroud was the Chair for the ‘Friends’ and in July 1979 led the application for Charitable status. An inaugural public meeting held in November 1979 attracted nearly 400

supporters. It was at this time, however, that Thatcher's government were looking for efficiency in spending for local authorities, and so the council had to review i's position on supporting the gallery and withdrew its financial support. Stroud vehemently disagreed with the withdrawal of funds by the council and, in support of the gallery going ahead, raised sufficient funds for the restoration programme to proceed.

Long, Kentish and Wilson, who had worked as a team on the British Library, were the architects for the conversion of the 1712 Georgian building into Pallant House Gallery. (Stansfield Smith, p47) and the transformation was sensitively carried out, with consultation with experts in their fields, Pallant House Gallery opening in 1982. After the opening, Stroud remained in his role with a day-to-day involvement in the running of the gallery and in 1985 the formation of the Pallant House Gallery Trust meant that the gallery could be run independently. The Friends continued to support the gallery through fundraising and acting as room stewards. The gallery has attracted other important collections and legacies since the Hussey Legacy and the new wing, next door to the original 18th Century building, was opened in 2005 (Martin, p71)

Chichester Amateur Operatic Society

Chichester Amateur Operatic Society (CAOS) was formed in 1910. In 1977, they performed a concert version of Merrie England at the Assembly Room in celebration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. (Treagust, p68)

The Assembly Room, and Ante Room, were added to the Council House between 1781 and 1783 and the former was a venue used by a variety of local organisations in Chichester including CAOS

Also in 1977, the society took part in a Gilbert and Sullivan 'Sing In' at Portsmouth Guildhall in September and staged The Mikado in October. (Treagust, p69)

The society performed regularly each year and in 1979 performed Ali Baba in February 1979 as their first pantomime. This tradition then continued with further pantomimes performed in February 1980 (Jack and The Beanstalk) (Treagust, p72) and February 1981

(Aladdin) (Treagust, p75). They also celebrated the 70th Anniversary of CAOS in 1980 with a performance of Pirates of Penzance (Treagust, p76)

In 1981 the society entered a float of Princess Ida for Chichester Gala Day and won the Champions cup plus their class. (Treagust, p76)

Chichester Gala Day was founded by Leslie Evershed Martin in 1954, and the Queen visited the event in Chichester in the same year

https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-the-queen-visits-chichester-on-gala-day-1956-online

The Gala Day is now an annual event each year. (Foster. *Chichester and The Arts 1944-2004 A Celebration*)

The eighties saw other changes for the society, including the staging of an Old Tyme Music Hall in 1982. In 1983 the society performed Breach of Promise, specially written for the society as a prelude to Trial by Jury (p80) and in 1984 the society again staged an Old Tyme Music Hall (Treagust, p81).

1985 was the 75th Birthday for CAOS and the society were presented with their own badge by Cllr Tupper, the Mayor in celebration of their anniversary (Treagust, p81). They also entered the Gala Day that year with a float celebrating many of the different Gilbert and Sullivan operas which the society had performed over the years and won the General Section. Performances in their anniversary year included Yeoman of the Guard in June and Scrooge in December (Treagust, p82)

In the later part of the eighties The Merry Widow was performed in 1986, while in 1987 The Mikado was staged in June and While Shepherds Watched was presented in December (Treagust, p85) In 1988 the society gave a concert in March in aid of the Mayor's Charity, staged Waltzes in Vienna in July at the Assembly Room and A Music Hall staged in November. (Treagust, p86). In 1989 the society performed The Gondoliers in June at the Assembly Room and later in the year, Some Enchanted Evening, a concert performed as part of the Chichester Festivities. (Treagust, p88)

1989 was also a significant year for Chichester Amateur Operatic Society, as they performed at The Minerva Theatre for the first time, with The Merry Widow. They also performed Carousel at The Minerva Theatre in 1990 as well as performing Pirates of Penzance at the Assembly Room (Treagust, p89)

New Park Centre

in the late sixties and early seventies, many local authorities were in a dilemma over planning for their towns and cities. Many of these planners preferred the solution, to the buildup of traffic needing access to these centres, of pedestrianisation of the centres and building ring roads around them. To also provide car parking for the increased traffic, many buildings were lost as they were demolished to make way for the newly designed town centres. (Stansfield Smith, p75)

It was the case for Chichester as well and the Market Cross was identified as one such building that could be demolished, especially as it stood at the epicentre of four roads, each approaching from east, west, north and south, and was regularly damaged by vehicles using these four roads. (Stansfield Smith, p77-8) There was also the proposed demolition of school buildings at New Park Road for a dual carriageway as well as other Victorian buildings earmarked for demolition to make way for a car park.

In response to these planning proposals, the Chichester Society was founded in 1973 by David Goodman, with an inaugural membership of 2000 members. A subsequent meeting, held at the cathedral, within the year to ‘Save Our City’ attracted 1500 members.

The buildings at New Park Road had been declared unsafe but were still in use by local community groups. An architect, Michael Cassidy, was able to clarify that if the roof ws repaired and some rewiring was carried out, then there was no reason why the building could not continue to be used. Chichester District Council subsequently granted a six month feasibility period to assess the condition of the buildings (Stansfield Smith, p78). It was subsequently agreed that the buildings could be continued to be used, and a seven-year lease was granted in January 1975. The New Park Road Community Centre Association became a registered charity and began the work of fundraising and managing

the refurbishment and premises. Volunteers ran the ‘Save our Centre’ campaign as well as helping with the day-to-day running of the buildings. (Stansfield Smith, p79)

During the early eighties, twenty groups were using the centre and so it was decided to build a new wing at an estimated cost of £27,000. Fundraising came from public support as well as contributions from the City and District Councils. (Stansfield Smith, p81) The final part of the development, which included the 1940’s school dining room being integrated into the site, was completed in 1982. The ‘New Park Centre’ was so well used that paid staff were needed for management and cleaning of the premises and new refinements such as a proper heating system were able to be installed. (Stansfield Smith, p82)

The Cinema on the Park

When the last public cinema closed in Chichester ‘The Chichester College Adult Education Film Society’ was formed in 1979, moving to the New Park centre in 1986. The society’s activities, including a Saturday morning junior film club, were recognised in 1990 when the National Federation of Film Societies awarded the society Film Society of the Year, chosen from approximately 300 film societies nationally. Roger Gibson had moved to Chichester and started a film course at Chichester College of Further Education and held a weekly screening at the college which then became the society. (Stansfield Smith, p85)

Car Park - Avenue de Chartres

The Multi-storey car park in Avenue de Chartres faces the medieval wall and the cathedral. The architects Birds Porchmouth and Russum won a national competition to design the car park in 1989 organised by Chichester District Council. The intention of the brief was to connect the proposed building with its physical and historical location. It received national acclaim when it was first built and suggests another city wall with its own bastions in response to the historical architecture opposite. (Stansfield Smith p35-36)

Section 5 - Chichester Festival Theatre

Seventeen theatres were built between 1960 - 65, including Chichester Festival Theatre (Witts, p284)
The theatre was “deemed a Glyndebourne-style private venture” and although was supported by the local authority in the building of the venue. (Witts, p285) Leslie Evershed-Martin, the founder of the theatre, did not initially seek support from the Arts Council as “The town clerk had told him that to do so would fuel local animosity, because the Council had discouraged a 350-capacity civic theatre in Chichester” (Witts, p285) Evershed-Martin described how “In the beginning we received praise from the Arts Council for having built the theatre without any appeal to them for financial support.” (Evershed-Martin, p86)

The principle of running the venue as a festival theatre, along similar lines as Stratford-upon-Avon and Glastonbury, was that it was envisaged that there would be higher ticket sales for a limited time of opening. The theatre opened in June 1962, and its studio theatre, The Minerva, opened in 1989

Keith Michell was Artistic Director of CFT between 1974 to 1977 and during this time started New Ventures at the Dolphin & Anchor in Chichester. The idea of New Ventures was to provide opportunities for younger actors cast in the Festival Season, while emerging directors were given opportunities to direct one-act plays and rehearsed readings, in the old ballroom (now the upper floor of Waterstones) in Chichester. Tony Robinson was listed in the 1977 programme as New Ventures Production Associate and many of the technicians working at the theatre also took part in New Ventures. This “project was to develop into The Tent in the 1980’s, led ultimately to the building of the Minerva Theatre, which opened in 1989” (Mosse, p74)

In the eighties, Chichester Festival Theatre found that the Arts Council had not included them “When a conference was called of all the theatre in the United Kingdom in 1983 to inform them of the new arts council policies” (Evershed-Martin, p86) while West Sussex County Council provided limited support to the arts with the lowest grant to its regional arts board compared to other counties and “In direct aid to the arts West Sussex is also bottom of the league” (Evershed-Martin, p87)

Evershed-Martin believed in CFT being self-supporting and acknowledged the huge support from the public in financially supporting the venue. The theatre acknowledged “the invaluable help of sponsorship from Martini and Rossi for the Productions Company from 1978 to 1983.” (Evershed-Martin, p85) Funds were also raised through various initiatives such as the Thousand Club, where a donation of £100 or more meant that the donor received a silver plaque on a seat, which was to be limited to 1000 in number (Evershed-Martin, p88) and an Auction of antiques held in October 1981, which the Theatre Society helped to organise, and which included a lot donated by Rex Harrison, of a jumper which he had worn in My Fair Lady (Evershed-Martin, p92)

The Theatre Society had been formed in 1960 and played a crucial role in raising funds for the building of CFT in the beginning of the 1960’s. It had many members, including local people, and is one of the largest supporter organisations of its kind in the country. (Mosse, p109)

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