

CONFIDENTIAL FILING

Selection of a UK Nomination for
the European City of Culture

EUROPEAN POLICY

June 1986

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 October 1986

From The Minister of State

Rt Hon Richard Luce MP
Office of Arts and Libraries
Great George Street
LONDON SW1P 3AL

EDP
J/K.

Dear Minister,

EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE 1990

in PM's box
6/10

You wrote to Geoffrey Howe on 3 October to say that you have chosen Glasgow as the UK nomination for the European City of Culture in 1990.

I discussed this with you on the telephone on 6 October. Our preference in this office would have been for Bath (which you said was your second choice) as it is a city of recognised beauty and historic and cultural links. But I recognise the arguments for Glasgow and your own strong commitment to this choice, and I am therefore content with what you propose.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and to Malcolm Rifkind, Nicholas Edwards, Nicholas Ridley, David Young and John MacGregor.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynda Chalker

(Approved by the Minister and signed in her absence)

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cc: [unclear]
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OFFICE OF ARTS AND LIBRARIES
Great George Street
London SW1P 3AL
Telephone 01-233 8610

From the Minister for the Arts

Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
LONDON SW1

Prime Minister
To note the intention
to nominate Glasgow
as European City of
Culture for 1990.

3 October 1986

CDP
b/x

Dear Geoffrey,

EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE 1990: UK NOMINATION

I wrote to you and other colleagues on 10 June about the nomination of a UK City as European City of Culture in 1990. As you know, the year has been informally "booked" for us for some time in Brussels, pending an announcement during our Presidency of the Community.

I am writing now to let you know that I have chosen a city from the short-list of five agreed earlier this year; these were Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Leeds. Guided by the considerations described in my earlier letter, and in the light of follow-up visits by my officials, I have decided to nominate Glasgow as the United Kingdom candidate. This choice will, I hope, receive formal approval at the meeting of EC Ministers of Culture which I shall be chairing in Brussels on 13 November.

I believe that nominating Glasgow will provide an opportunity to demonstrate to our European colleagues (as well as to the people in this country) some of the most positive and forward looking aspects of the arts in Britain today. I decided to go for the city with by far the best argued case and the most convincing evidence of commitment. Glasgow has a strong and impressive range of cultural activities, a European outlook and an eye on the scope for expanding its European connections. I am convinced that the City will mount and finance a programme which will do credit to the United Kingdom.

I want to gain the maximum impact for what I think is an imaginative choice and am concerned about the risk of premature leaks.

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I would therefore like to make an announcement in the near future; this will refer to the nomination of Glasgow as the UK candidate, and will not pre-empt the formal decision of EC Ministers of Culture on 13 November. Malcolm Rifkind is content with my choice. Unless I hear otherwise by lunch time on Wednesday, 8 October, I shall assume that you and other recipients are also content.

I am sending copies of this letter, as before, to the Prime Minister and to Malcolm Rifkind, to Nicholas Edwards, Nicholas Ridley, David Young and John MacGregor.

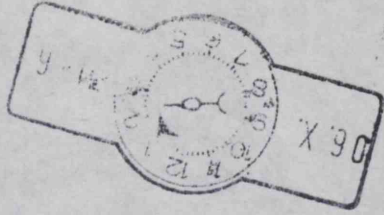
W

Rifkind

RICHARD LUCE

CONFIDENTIAL

EUR . POL : European City of Culture : June 1986





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Richard Luce Esq
Office of Arts and Libraries
LONDON
SW1

*CDP
8/7*

7 July 1986

Mr Richard

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 10 June to Geoffrey Howe about the selection of a UK nomination for the 'European City of Culture'. I am sorry not to have replied earlier.

I should very much like to see Bath nominated as the UK candidate for 1990. It is an old and attractive city with an established image of heritage and culture. In particular it is well known for its excellent Spa facilities and is an active member of the British Spas Federation.

I am copying my letter to the recipients of yours.

*Yours,
David*

Kuro pot

CITY OF WINDRE

6/16

Cyfe



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WELSH OFFICE
GWYDYR HOUSE
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From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP

John Redden

*EDP
4/1*

3 July 1986

SELECTION OF A UK NOMINATION OF THE 'EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE'

attias

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 10 June to Geoffrey Howe.

I was disappointed to see that neither of the two Welsh applicants had made the short list. In the case of Cardiff their bid for 1991 reflects the City's commitment at other major events in that year which, understandably, they felt would naturally dovetail with the City of Culture concept. Both the Cardiff Singer of the World competition and the Cardiff Searchlight Tattoo are firmly scheduled for 1991 and would have provided a natural base for other events for the City of Culture.

The next few years will see some exciting developments in Cardiff. We already have in the St David's Hall one of the finest concert halls in Europe. The Welsh National Opera is recognised as one of the foremost opera companies. The study I commissioned into the Housing of the Visual Arts has opened up some interesting possibilities; another study in which I am participating with the Welsh Arts Council is examining the options for Housing the Performing Arts.

If we can possibly realise all these ambitious aspirations Cardiff will have the potential to be a cultural centre of some major importance. All this makes Cardiff a very strong contender for the future and I very much hope that you will bear this in mind when other venues for the rest of the decade are considered.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, Malcolm Rifkind, Nicholas Ridley, David Young and John MacGregor.

*✓ → em
Ned*

Richard Luce Esq MP
Minister for the Arts

EURO POL: City of Culture, 6/8





NEW ST. ANDREW'S HOUSE
ST. JAMES CENTRE
EDINBURGH EH1 3SX

cc/c

The Rt Hon Richard Luce MP
Minister for the Arts
Office of Arts and Libraries
Great George Street
LONDON
SW1P 3AL

cc's?
1. ~~Office~~
2. cf type

30 June 1986

Dear Richard,

UK NOMINATION FOR THE EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 10 June to Geoffrey Howe about nominations for the European City of Culture in 1990.

I agree that Glasgow has produced an impressive submission and am sure they would prove strong contenders for the nomination. I would hope however that you would be prepared to add Edinburgh to your short-list as well as Glasgow. Their submission is relatively weak but this is only a question of presentation. I am sure that in discussion with your officials it would emerge that the financial commitment to which you rightly attach importance is in fact there. The City has given priority to cultural affairs over many years and almost certainly assumed that this would be taken as read when submitting their bid. If, when we come to review the position in September, it emerges that there are still serious doubts about Edinburgh's case I would not pursue the matter. In a European context however Edinburgh would probably have a stronger chance of success than Glasgow or, indeed, any of the other cities you have short-listed. If we are to stand the best chance of a British nomination it would therefore make sense to examine Edinburgh's case more seriously.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours ever,
Malcolm Rifkind

MALCOLM RIFKIND



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 June 1986

From the Secretary of State

CEP

CAP 20/6

UK Nomination for the 'European City of Culture' 1990

Thank you for your letter of 10 June. I am grateful for the opportunity to comment on your shortlist of UK nominations for the European City of Culture in 1990. From a purely personal point of view I was sorry to see that neither Cardiff nor Swansea made the final list, but I have no strong case to make to have them reinstated. I liked the geographical mix of your list. Perhaps it is no bad thing that London did not apply, giving other cities the opportunity to shine.

From a European point of view we would have to support Bath. It is an old and attractive city with an established reputation in the arts. More than the other shortlisted candidates it ranks with the European cities which have already been selected. No doubt the proximity to Stratford is an advantage. Bristol, being relatively close, might also benefit from the Festival spin-off should Bath receive the accolade.

/I

The Rt Hon Richard Luce MP



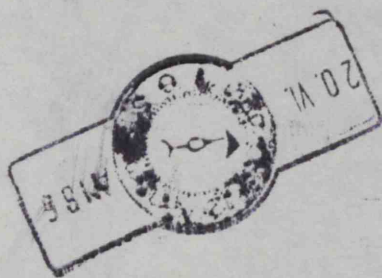
I have no strong views on the nomination, however. You are obviously satisfied with the viability of each of the applications. The efforts of Leeds and Glasgow to improve the cultural life of their cities will no doubt be borne in mind. Any gesture in their direction would be well received as recognition of a commitment to the regeneration of the inner cities.

I am copying my letter to the recipients of yours.

GEOFFREY HOWE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Geoffrey Howe', written in a cursive style. The signature is located to the right of the typed name.

Encl 102
CITY OF AUSTIN
6/16





OFFICE OF ARTS AND LIBRARIES
Great George Street
London SW1P 3AL
Telephone 01-233 8610

From the Minister for the Arts

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Secretary of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
LONDON SW1

10 June 1986

Dear Sir,

SELECTION OF A UK NOMINATION FOR THE 'EUROPEAN CITY OF CULTURE'

Ministers with responsibility for cultural affairs in the European Community last year accepted a resolution that a city nominated by a Member State should be chosen annually as a "European City of Culture". The purpose would be to celebrate both the culture of a region and its links with broader European culture. Athens was nominated in 1985, with Florence this year, and Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris in 1987, 1988 and 1989 respectively.

I should very much like there to be a UK City of Culture in 1990, and there is an expectation that we shall be making such a nomination. Accordingly, earlier this year, following consultations with the local authority associations, I invited submissions from cities in the United Kingdom who wished to be considered as candidates. I made it clear that in putting forward bids cities would be expected to meet three main criteria: some measure of international prestige, the practical ability to host a suitably high-profile programme of cultural events (including adequate services and accommodation) and the financial commitment to carry this out without calling on extra resources from central government. Submissions were received from Bath, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool and Swansea.

My belief is that the chosen city (and by extension the UK) need not feel obliged to compete directly with the major European cities already selected, which have very large public spending programmes for this sort of activity. Of course, it does need to have plausible credentials in this area but the most important thing is that it should present its own

distinctive contribution. This means that the city does have to be committed and enthusiastic. It is also important that the authorities of the city chosen should understand that the full responsibility for organising and financing its programme of events would rest with them. The benefits to the city would lie in the tourism, employment and publicity which would be generated, and the high profile that the city would enjoy during the period of the festivities. It is clearly desirable that the programme should build on existing facilities and activities, rather than try to start from scratch.

I am now writing to you, and to interested Ministerial colleagues, to let you know that on the basis of the proposals submitted, which were asked to include substantial back-up information, I have concluded that only four responding cities offer the appropriate potential, and the likelihood of an adequate local financial commitment. These are Bath, Bristol, Glasgow and Leeds.

At this stage, and before reaching a final decision, I should value your and other recipients comments both on the short list, and on any other candidates. I should say, however, that my great concern has been to emphasise that cities will be required to contribute a substantial amount of their own resources, and this has inevitably had a limiting effect.

The four shortlisted cities are those which on the evidence submitted have best merited further consideration. The decision not to include a candidate from Wales was made reluctantly, but the finance and facilities available and Cardiff's wish to bid only for 1991, were relevant. I have already explained to Malcolm Rifkind that the reason I have put Glasgow ahead of Edinburgh when drawing up my short list is simply that Glasgow put in a far stronger, more committed case.

I am aiming to make final announcement of the UK candidate reasonably early in the UK Presidency. Before that I should like to announce the shortlisted candidates and ask my officials to begin discussions with the respective city authorities, so as to check the details of their programme, services and finance. I would then like to make a final choice in September. I am therefore anxious to make quick progress and should appreciate comments by 23 June.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, Malcolm Rifkind, Nicholas Ridley, Nicholas Edwards, David Young and John MacGregor.


RICHARD LUCE



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