

Amelia Womack says artists should be protected with a basic income



Green Party

6 October 2020

- **Green Party deputy leader responds to comments made by chancellor**
- **Womack: “Whether or not he was trying to make a point about all workers, this Government’s attitude towards the arts has been clear throughout this crisis”**

The chancellor Rishi Sunak has today warned workers, including those in the arts, will need to find new opportunities and retrain as the coronavirus pandemic continues.[1]

Reacting to the comments, Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack said:

“Today, thousands of musicians and performers, and all those behind the scenes, will have heard the chancellor write their careers off completely. Whether or not he was trying to make a point about all workers, this Government’s attitude towards the arts has been clear throughout this crisis.

“Lockdown has shown us how much we truly value the arts. We’ve tuned into TV, tucked into books and turned up the radio. To say all these people should just seek ‘new opportunities’ is ridiculous, when they bring joy, stimulation and sustenance to people everywhere.

“If we let this sector collapse, it won’t bounce back. The legends of the future will be lost and undiscovered. Imagine if Beyonce, Bowie and The Beatles had been told to seek ‘new opportunities’. Imagine how much poorer we would all have been in every sense of the word.

“Our artists deserve support, they deserve protection, and they deserve to know that they are valued. We need a universal basic income to protect them until we can all enjoy the arts to the fullest, safely, once again.” [2]

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Notes

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-10-06/rishi-sunak-suggests-musicians-and-others-in-arts-should-retrain-and-find-other-jobs>

2

Earlier this year, Amelia Womack led a call alongside musicians such as The Libertines, The Charlatans and Reverend and the Makers asking the government to introduce a universal basic income to support artists during the pandemic.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/musicians-union-artist-support-arts-government-universal-basic-income-a9625511.html>

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