

# Nicky Morgan: Speech to Conservative Party Conference 2019

Nicky

Morgan, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, speaking today at the Conservative Party Conference, said:

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against delivery)**

“Conference, good afternoon. It is wonderful to be here with you today.

And wonderful to be able to tell you about the work we are doing in Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

For some, this may seem a dizzying array of issues –

from broadband to the arts,

heritage to youth services

but it is all brought together by one simple word: place.

‘Place’ means reminding ourselves

that we are all part of a wider community and that our sense of belonging needs

to be central to making policy and enhancing the lives of those we serve – something I think we can all agree is now more important than ever.

As we grasp the opportunities available to us when we leave the EU on October the 31<sup>st</sup>, I believe that art and culture will have ever more vital roles to play in Britain’s future.

## **Tech**

We are (and always have been) a creative and imaginative nation, we are a nation of unique museums that capture our vibrant heritage and new businesses

that show us an exciting high tech future.

Conference, in the first seven months of this year alone – the UK tech sector attracted 5.5 billion pounds of investment.

That is more in the first half of this year than for the whole of 2018. This – in the words of some Westminster watchers – despite Brexit.

Leaving the EU means we can expand our relationships around the world.

It’s not by coincidence that more than half of the investment I have just

cited  
came from America and Asia.

Conference, Corbyn and McDonnell would put all of this progress at risk with plans to tax our tech sector. By taking taxes to their highest ever level in peacetime Labour would simply drive business and investment from this country.

This would not only stifle our creativity but impact the companies that come here – threatening our tech sector's unique position on the world stage.

Almost 40% of the billion dollar tech start-ups in Europe are from the UK. With London forging ahead of both Paris and Berlin.

But, this success is not just clustered in our capital, other cities are also contributing to our country's great success in this area; with both Oxford and Cambridge, combined, having more than Paris.

## **Broadband**

I want the UK to be the best place in the world to start and grow a business.

But Conference, the truth is, you can't start and grow a business if you can't connect to the Internet. That is the reality facing people in communities across our United Kingdom today, because of poor broadband services.

The Prime Minister has great ambition and optimism for our country – and I share that.

We will dramatically speed up the rollout of fast, reliable and secure broadband and get gigabit speeds right across the UK – much faster than our previous target.

And you only need to remember the situation we inherited in 2010 when we came in to clean up Labour's mess.

It wasn't just the economy Labour had driven into the ground, we inherited a situation from Labour whereby millions were left with appallingly low levels of broadband access and only half of all UK premises having access to superfast broadband.

Now, we have turned the situation around – 96% of UK premises have access to superfast broadband– but there is much more that we can and will do.

Why? Because as Conservatives, we believe every corner of the United Kingdom should have the opportunity to thrive. We will never give up on our

rural communities.

## **Arts**

As well as levelling up digital infrastructure right across the UK, I am determined to do the same for our cultural heritage across the country.

Our culture should not be limited or clustered to our tourist cities. That is why I am determined that we focus on those left behind areas, supporting both local culture and creative infrastructure

This all goes back to that word – place.

Every part of the country has its own history and story to tell, which is at the heart of our shared national culture. These stories should be cherished for future generations for the great – great – grandchildren of those who were there.

We all know the last few years have been fractious.

Sometimes we have forgotten the amazing things that unite us, and I believe passionately our shared culture can help bring us together.

Creative and cultural institutions are the greatest gathering places that give a community its life – they are the heart of place-making.

## **Young people**

When we talk of building the infrastructure Britain needs – we must not forget the social infrastructure.

No matter where you live or where you came from, everyone should have the same opportunities afforded to them. This is why we are Conservatives.

If we wish to use all the great talent in our country it is vital that we offer opportunities and the chance to build character and resilience to all.

Increased access to art, culture and sport, not just in school but also outside of the school day. This Government has ambitious plans to ensure that our future generations have the chance to nurture and grow their talents.

## **Conclusion**

Conference – our national culture has always been a source of soft power, but today I have set out why it can also be used to drive economic prosperity in communities across the United Kingdom.

We should never put a limit on our ambition for this country. We must support our vital cultural and artistic sectors, while harnessing new technology to enrich the lives of future generations.

These values that I have spoken about today are Conservative values.

A sense of belonging.

A stake in society.

Opportunity for all to unleash talent across the board.

As Conservatives – we will always fight for these values, to unleash and harness the abilities of people in places across the country.

Because that is how we will truly become One Nation.

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