

# The Jersey Topic

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50p



'Plemont Puffin's vandalised'

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Hautlieu school in St Saviour's has recently set up an exciting new initiative as a way to get students involved with broadcasting. The 24/7 radio station includes music and conversations with students and teachers.

## History left to ruin

Culture neglected by lack of governmental support.



Charlie Dicker investigates why the arts is being left on the shelf by a disregard for the arts.

The island's most traditional building, Jersey Opera House, which was originally opened in 1900 has been permanently closed since March 2020 due to the detrimental effects of COVID-19. This beating heart of celebration of live theatre and performance, the Grade II listed building, on the island is lifeless. Even though the emergency refurbishment work was promised by the government through their 2021 £2.2 million support fund, Jersey's only theatre is still very much, dark following this money being recently withdrawn. A recent BBC News report stated that the theatre is expected to be closed until at least summer 2023, over two years since it's 'temporary' closure. A

new development suggested that the government was expecting to find the funding although this has not yet been confirmed, nor denied. In an interview, Jersey politician 'Nancy Fletcher' said that "we have many more important things to be getting along with, like building a hospital and saving lives." She added that "the arts and our community culture should be the least of any of our worries". Mrs. Fletcher quoted popular culture theorist David Hesmondhalgh who says that "the creative industry is a risky business." Linking to this idea, Mrs. Fletcher concluded that "people should understand the risky nature of creativity before criticizing the government's involvement with the issue." Clearly, governmental support for livelihood

and the rebuilding of the arts in this 'endemic' period is thin on the ground. In response to this, local theatre performer Karen Malone said that "it's a disgrace that so many people's enjoyment and way of self-expression has been neglected by the states", she added; "culture is important and it's future is a huge worry to many islanders who hold performing so close to their hearts and their identity." Local performing groups such as the 'JGRTC' and 'JADC' have resorted to using other performance venues such as the Jersey Arts Centre and the RJ&HS to stage their productions, however these places do not create the same theatrical experience as the west end style Opera House.

