

Principle 5 Study Group. May 2020

William Morris, a leading figure in The Socialist League wrote its manifesto which was adopted at the General Conference on the 5th July 1885

[Manifesto of the Socialist League](#)

Questions to be considered:

1. To what extent do the matters raised in The Socialist League manifesto apply today?
2. The central purpose of the Socialist League was education, as socialism was little understood in those days. Is this still the case today?

William Morris's socialist inspiration came from the writing of Karl Marx and in particular 'Capital'. He left the Socialist League when it became taken over by anarchists. From then on he focussed his time and energy on The Hammersmith Socialist Society.

The word 'socialism' came into being with Robert Owen around 1817 and led to the development of the Co-operative Movement.

Morris was anti-parliamentarian. He envisaged communism as a loose association of small communes.

For more about William Morris and socialism I would recommend:
Part III Practical Socialism (chapters 14 – 20) of;
[William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary \(Part III\) by E. P. Thompson.](#)

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I have written some articles about Labour and Socialism which you might find useful:

[Labour and Socialism](#)

[Robert Blatchford, The Clarion and Socialism](#)

[Charity and Socialism](#)

Best wishes,
Steve , Principle 5 Study Group

<https://www.principle5.coop/p5-study-programme-unit-1>