

Written evidence submitted by Arts Council England

Response to the DCMS Select Committee inquiry: Reimagining where we live: cultural placemaking and the levelling up agenda

February 2022

1. How Arts Council England supports culture

- 1.1 Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from Government, and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery.
- 1.2 The Arts Council invests through three main strands:
 - National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs). The backbone of England's cultural infrastructure.
 - The Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants. Our open access programme for individuals and organisations that use the arts in their work.
 - Development Funds, supported by the National Lottery. These funds target specific gaps, challenges and opportunities in the sector, such as areas of low arts engagement, skills and diversity.
- 1.3 We also invest over £82m per annum from the Department for Education (DfE) in 119 Music Education Hubs and co-invest in a variety of education programmes including In Harmony projects working with children and families in deprived communities. We also invest in Bridge Organisations connecting children and young people, schools and communities with art and cultural opportunities.
- 1.4 Approximately 71% of our National Portfolio organisations are funded to deliver work with children and young people as a primary or secondary focus. In 2019 -20 we invested £8,560,366 through our National Lottery Project Grants in projects with a focus on children, and £9.6m a year is invested in youth music projects to support children and young people aged 0-25, particularly those facing barriers to accessing culture.
- 1.5 To help support organisations and individuals through the Covid-19 pandemic, Arts Council England has awarded a total of £1.14 billion through the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, and £160 million through the Arts Council's own Emergency Response Fund to individuals and organisations, including those within our national portfolio.

- 1.6 The Arts Council's contribution to culture is based significantly on supporting cultural development within place, which is one of the key commitments in our ten-year strategy, *Let's Create*. Our strategy contains three headline outcomes, which include our ambition for villages, towns and cities to thrive through a collaborative approach to culture. This builds on the Arts Council's strong track record of supporting place based cultural development and seeking to spread cultural opportunity to all places.
- 1.7 We have long recognised the importance of working in partnership in place, and local authorities are the Arts Council's most important strategic and delivery partners. Our partnership with local government is fundamental to our approach. Our Shared Statement of Purpose with the Local Government Association sets out the principles – agreed with the national representative body for English local government – about how we work with local authorities.
- 1.8 The Arts Council, as an expert national sector development agency can invest strategically and at scale, working alongside local government, and other local partners including Higher Education institutions, Local Enterprise Partnerships, businesses, schools, MATs, and the voluntary sectors.
- 1.9 The Arts Council has significant local knowledge in place. We employ staff across our 9 regional offices, and our grant decisions are made locally by our teams across the country. Our governance structure is similarly dispersed with 5 Area Councils which comprise a range of skills and experience including 25 local authority councillors. Places on each Area Council are reserved for representatives from local authorities, and the chair of the London Area Council is appointed by the Mayor of London.
- 1.10 The Arts Council has taken a place-based approach to support the growth of cultural opportunity across the country. We deliver development programmes to build local cultural capacity outside London including the Great Place Scheme, the Creative Local Growth Fund, and the Cultural Destinations Programme. We also deliver the Cultural Development Fund (CDF) on behalf of Government which invested £18.5 million into five locations (Wakefield, Worcester, North-East Lincolnshire and Plymouth) in its first round, and we will make announcements on its second round within the next two months.

- 1.11 The CDF is part of the wider Cultural Investment Fund, which includes capital funding for museums (MEND) and libraries (LIF). The Arts Council commissions robust evaluations of these programmes in order to inform policy and practice, and we have recently published meta-evaluations of all our place programmes to inform the development of our policies relating to levelling up.
- 1.12 We also work alongside partners to develop capacity within place to provide local leadership for culture. Key to this has been a decade long partnership with the LGA to develop the cultural leadership capacity of local councillors. The Arts Council and the LGA run regular residential cultural leadership academies and provide peer reviews for library and cultural services seeking advice and challenge to help with their transformation.
- 1.13 The Arts Council also seeks to support thought leadership, innovation and new thinking. For instance, in 2018 we worked with the Core Cities Group to support the independent Cultural Cities Enquiry, chaired by the then CEO of Virgin Money Jayne-Anne Gadhia, to consider the key challenges facing the cultural sector in the UK's urban areas. The Enquiry made a number of policy recommendations about how to overcome these challenges and to support social and economic regeneration - these included local fiscal reforms, cultural compacts, and increasing the scale of apprenticeships, and access to people from all backgrounds.

2. Arts Council England investment outside London and levelling up

- 2.1 Throughout our 2018-22 National Portfolio we have invested an additional £170 million outside London, which is a 4.6% increase in the proportion of the NPO budget spent outside the capital. This represents an element of our wider funding strategy, which has also seen at least 75% of our National Lottery budget invested outside London.
- 2.2 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, funding from the Culture Recovery Fund has been awarded to organisations of all sizes right across the country, in both rural and urban areas. Over 60% of awards delivered by the Arts Council throughout the programme have been made to organisations outside the capital.
- 2.3 All Arts Council funding decisions are made by local experts across our nine regional offices (Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle, Leeds, Nottingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Brighton, London), that work closely

with local artists, arts and cultural organisations and creative practitioners - 71% of all Arts Council staff is located outside London.

- 2.4 The Arts Council will continue investing outside London, and over the next three years, we will be distributing the 6% uplift of £43.5 million which has been allocated to the Arts Council in the recent funding settlement. The Arts Council will therefore be allocating at least £24m of investment per year from London to areas outside the capital. Where possible this will particularly benefit over 100 Levelling Up for Culture Places identified by the Arts Council and DCMS and will be done in two stages which include a minimum of £16m per year from 1 April 2023 and a further £8 million from 1 April 2025. Overall, an additional £75m will be invested in areas outside London over the next three years.
- 2.5 Overall, an additional £75m will be invested in areas outside London over the next three years – funded by increased investment from government and as instructed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport by moving funding from London.
- 2.6 Our commitment to funding more places across the country is also set out in the Delivery Plan of our 10 Year Strategy, *Let's Create*, which outlines how we will continue to strengthen our place-based approach to deliver more cultural opportunities across the country, particularly in places that have not benefited enough from investment in the past, and where cultural engagement is still low. As part of this we have identified 54¹ priority places across the country where the Arts Council will work with partners and local stakeholders to develop new opportunities for investment and give more people the opportunity to enjoy high quality cultural experiences in their communities.
- 2.7 We will also continue investing in programmes that focus on parts of the country where involvement in the arts and culture is significantly below the national average including through the Creative People and Places programme - through which we have committed £108million since 2012 in 39 programmes across 56 local authority areas, in places including Stoke, Wigan, Bolton, Hull and Bradford, with 7.4million engagements to date.
- 2.8 The Arts Council will continue to support regeneration through capital programmes and through the delivery of the Culture Development Fund

¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/your-area/priority-places#section-1>

on behalf of DCMS. We will also continue to support skills and cultural education through Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs).

- 2.9 To ensure our ambition to help more places achieve their cultural and creative potential aligns with the Government's commitment to level up and address inequalities across the country, we will continue to work closely with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and other government departments, to deliver the priorities in the Levelling-up Whitepaper. We will continue to increase our investment in places outside London and work with London-based National Portfolio Organisations to increase their presence outside the capital.
- 2.10 We will also engage with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, building on our work with them to date supporting delivery of the Stronger Towns Fund, the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. In doing this we will continue to work in partnership with other DCMS arms' length bodies – Historic England, National Lottery Community Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Visit Britain, BFI and Sport England.

3. The value of culture in place-based regeneration and its role in towns and high streets

- 3.1 The arts and cultural sector have a strong economic and social value in all parts of the country, and they can play a significant role in regenerating high streets in towns, and cities across England.
- 3.2 A culture led approach to regeneration, can have significant social and economic benefits. It can drive economic growth by creating jobs, supporting businesses, boosting tourism, stimulating footfall, attracting inward investment supporting community cohesion, and promoting health and wellbeing – creating better places to live, work and visit.
- 3.3 **Economic impact** – prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the arts and cultural sectors generated over £13.5 billion² a year for the UK economy and employed 233,000³ people across the country - with over 300⁴ cultural venues located in unemployment hotspots.

² <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/faster-recovery-arts-and-culture>

³ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/faster-recovery-arts-and-culture>

⁴ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news-and-announcements/culture-our-high-streets>

- 3.4 In addition to creating jobs, the presence of culture on highstreets and in city centres can help repurpose vacant buildings, and generate significant footfall, providing vital trade for businesses including local pubs, restaurants, hotels, and transport services, and can also contribute to supporting local night-time economies.
- 3.5 Our cultural venues are often at the hearts of our towns and city centres, with nearly 75%⁵ of all Arts Council funded venues located in proximity of a high street, and nearly a quarter also hosting cafés, bars and restaurants onsite, which attract visitors, and in turn generate footfall in their local areas.
- 3.6 Successful cultural organisations can bring large numbers of consumers to their local high street. ARC Stockton Arts Centre brings 110,000 visitors per year to its local high street through a combination of arts programming, creative learning, and space hire.
- 3.7 A strong cultural offering can also bring new business to local high streets. Thirty-five per cent of Theatre Royal Plymouth’s visitors in 2018/19 were attending the venue for first time, with many travelling from across Devon and beyond to do so⁶.
- 3.8 For some high streets, cultural organisations are among the most prominent local attractions. Thirty-two per cent⁷ of the footfall to Derby city centre is to visit a cultural institution, such as Derby QUAD, or to attend a cultural event. Derby QAD’s economic impact analysis found that the venue had directly contributed £20million to the local economy of Derby since it opened in 2008⁸.
- 3.9 As cultural organisations grow more established, they often help to deliver sustainable economic development to their local high street. Turner Contemporary has supported or safeguarded at least 100 retail

⁵ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news-and-announcements/culture-our-high-streets>

⁶ https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20BOP%20Consulting_1.pdf

⁷ https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20BOP%20Consulting_1.pdf

⁸ https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20BOP%20Consulting_1.pdf

jobs on the Margate high street through an increase in footfall and spending⁹.

- 3.10 Festivals like Sounds from the Other City in Salford for example helped attract new visitors to Salford and boosted local businesses, with venues reporting an increase in their turnover during the day of the festival between 200 -800% of their usual bar food takings.
- 3.11 The Big Feast festival, organised by Appetite, in Stoke, generates over £220,000 a year for local businesses from an average of 15,000 visitors. Business owners report a significant correlation between the festival taking place and the positive impact on their business.
- 3.12 In libraries for example, the footfall prior to the Covid-19 pandemic was greater than Premier League football matches, cinema admissions and top 10 tourist attractions combined.
- 3.13 Libraries can also be engines for economic growth and job creation, for example the British Library's Business and IP Centre Network of 17 hubs across England where people can come together to learn, network and access free and low-cost information and support in protecting and commercialising a business idea.
- 3.14 The programme helped to create 12,288 new businesses, 7,843 additional jobs, and £78million GVA. Of those who started a new business 55% were women, 31% were black, Asian or minority ethnic, 17% were disabled and 22% were from the most deprived areas.
- 3.15 The arts and cultural sector's contribution has the potential to contribute to levelling up, building on what it is already achieving, which includes creating value for the economy in the North and Midlands – where the sector generated £3.3 billion GVA¹⁰, supported 44,000 full time jobs¹¹, and boosted productivity in the wider creative industries.
- 3.16 **Social impact, health & wellbeing** – arts and cultural interventions can help combat loneliness, improve health and wellbeing and increase the social capital of individuals and communities.

⁹ https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20BOP%20Consulting_1.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/contribution-art-and-culture-sector-uk-economy>

¹¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/impact-arts-and-culture-wider-creative-economy>

- 3.17 Cultural organisation often delivery a number of health and wellbeing programmes that help support their communities. The Derby QUAD for example leads a Creative Wellbeing programme, with strong links with local health services and runs creative engagement initiatives with Mental Health Residents¹². During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Derby QUAD used part of their Culture Recovery Grants to develop an online wellbeing programme to foster ongoing engagement with Derby’s Cathedral Quarter BID group, to help regenerate the high street.
- 3.18 The Arts Council has also invested £3m towards health and wellbeing activities through the Celebrating Age programme in partnership with the Baring Foundation, to provide arts activities in care homes and programmes for people living with dementia.
- 3.19 **Community cohesion and civic pride** – the presence of cultural organisations in towns and highstreets, often provide a social space for communities, bringing together different social and generational groups, promote inclusion, and reduce isolation.
- 3.20 Culture has also been fundamental in helping bring back a sense of civic pride to our highstreets, generate place identity and fundamentally enhance the public realm. 90% of Stoke-on-Trent residents felt an increase in civic pride after engaging with the New Vic Theatre’s Appetite community programme, and three-fifths of those living in Margate reported an increase in community pride thanks to the presence of Turner Contemporary¹³.
- 3.21 This increase in local pride can have direct benefits for the high street. The proportion of Stockton-on-Tees residents who “cited a liking for the town centre” for example rose from 69% in 2011 to 83%¹⁴ in 2016, in line with the Stockton Arts Centre objectives.

¹² <https://www.derbyquad.co.uk/about/news/capacity-creative-engagement-mental-health-residents#:~:text=Derby%20QUAD%E2%80%99s%20Creative%20Wellbeing%20programme%20has%20created%20strong,and%20explore%20new%20opportunities%20and%20ways%20of%20working.>

¹³ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/high-street-renaissance>

¹⁴ https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20BOP%20Consulting_1.pdf

3.22 **Skills & Education** – Cultural organisations including libraries that are often located on high streets can provide a range of education activities and can support local residents with skills and employment opportunities.

3.23 Bolton library for example organises learning and employment fairs, which feature employment, training, and skills providers from across the borough though the government's Kickstart zone.

3.24 Through the Libraries Taskforce, which includes Arts Council England, the British Library, CILIP, CLOA, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Libraries Connected, Local Government Association, and the Reading Agency – we have been helping the development of the public library offer through projects such as the Living Knowledge Network, broker partnerships and help those working in the sector develop their professional skills.

4. Arts Council England's role in supporting local economic growth and regeneration

4.1 The Arts Council delivers a number of capital and place development programmes which have sought to build local capacity to grow the cultural sector and help it deliver social and economic value, including the Creative Local Growth Fund, the Great Place Scheme, and Cultural Destinations Programme, Cultural Development Fund and our Creative People and Places programme, the Youth Performance Partnership Programme, and the National Leadership and Peer Learning programme for LCEPs.

4.2 Through the **Creative Local Growth Fund**, we invested £3.5m over five years in nine consortia working across Local Enterprise Partnerships, arts organisations, and other partners. The fund supported initiatives designed to help culture contribute to local economic growth, and delivered a range of activity including digital innovation, and job creation - supporting growth, resilience, and confidence in small and medium sized enterprises. The meta evaluation of the Creative Local Growth Fund showed that it had a strong impact on artists and creative practitioners, with 70% of beneficiaries reporting it had a positive impact on their skills and 60% reporting it increased their access to equipment, technology and expertise¹⁵.

¹⁵ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-research/creative-local-growth-fund-evaluation>

- 4.3 In 2020-2021, Arts Council supported a **National Leadership and Peer Learning Programme for LCEPs**, which reached 172¹⁶ participants from across 97 LCEPs. The programme, which offered a series of workshops and individual coaching sessions, focused on equipping leaders with the skills and confidence to influence change in their local area and supporting LCEPs to generate collective solutions to shared challenges.
- 4.4 Additionally, five LCEPs are taking part in the **Youth Performance Partnerships programme**, a £5m pilot programme to test how place-based partnerships can support children and young people from areas of low cultural engagement and high levels of deprivation to take part in high-quality performance-making.
- 4.5 To encourage cross sector partnerships and pilot new local investment approaches in culture, we co invested £20m with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) in the **Great Place Scheme** (£10m from Arts Council England and £10m from (NLHF)). The programme ran from 2016 to 2019 and funded places with high levels of socio-economic deprivation and low cultural activity.
- 4.6 The evaluation of the Great Place Scheme showed that embedding culture in wider economic development and local plans motivated partners to participate in projects, enhancing the reputation of a place for creative enterprises or SME, and encouraging other businesses to relocate and start-up. The scheme has also turned places into areas where people want to live and visit – with 76%¹⁷ of audience respondents in the year 2 programme evaluation agreeing that being part of the Great Place Scheme is part of what makes an area special.
- 4.7 Through the **Cultural Development Fund**, which the Arts Council delivers on behalf of DCMS, we awarded £18.5m to five projects from 2018 -23 to boost local growth, and regenerate communities through capital investment in place-based cultural initiatives.
- 4.8 Towns and cities were invited to bid for funding for local cultural plans tailored to their strengths and needs. The programme aims to create 1300 new jobs, enable 2000 people to access skills development or training, and support more than 700 businesses, by encouraging closer working between cultural bodies, private industry and local authorities.

¹⁶ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/children-and-young-people/working-partnership>

¹⁷ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding-finder/great-place-scheme>

- 4.9 Grimsby, Thames Estuary, Plymouth, Wakefield and Worcester benefitted from the funding. In Worcester for example, the Culture Development Fund programme will boost local growth by developing eight disused railway arches for use by cultural businesses and turning the previously unwelcoming public walkway alongside them into a safe and attractive route between the busy railway station and the high street.
- 4.10 To encourage collaboration between the cultural and tourism sectors, and to boost investment around highstreets and city centres, we invested £7.2million in 28 projects between 2014 and 2020, through the **Cultural Destinations Fund**. The programme aimed to support the positioning of culture as a prominent part of the local visitor offer to drive the growth of the visitor economy, and to build partnership capacity in the cultural and tourism sectors.
- 4.11 Through our **Creative People and Places Programme**, we have invested £108m between 2012 and 2025 to support local consortia to engage people through arts and culture in areas of least engagement. The programme works across communities, encouraging local residents to take the lead in shaping their local arts provision - encouraging partnerships across subsidised, amateur and commercial sectors. The creative people and places programme demonstrated how empowering local communities to make decisions about the type of culture and projects they want to see in their place, helps shape the cultural offer in a way that works best for local residents.
- 4.12 In Stoke-on-Trent for example, the Creative People and Places project led by Appetite supported community organisations to co-produce and deliver events in their own communities, such as the successful The Big Feast festival and other cultural events including exhibitions.
- 4.13 Appetite has worked with more than 50 partners including the local council, resident associations, hospitals, Business Improvement Districts as well as various galleries, art centres and cultural networks to collaboratively develop cultural projects. Events delivered by Appetite have reached more than 460,000 audience members and nearly 50,000 participants.

5. How creatives can contribute to local decision-making and planning of place

- 5.1 Place based regeneration is particularly successful where artists and local cultural organisations participate in the planning of a place, and where there are strong partnerships between the cultural sector, artists and creatives, organisations, and individuals beyond culture.
- 5.2 Investment in cultural projects and the participation of artists in the planning process, has been essential to reviving struggling seaside towns. Margate is an example of how a place has been revived through a conscious strategy of culture led regeneration, where artists like Tracy Emin, local businesses, and the council worked together to help spearhead the regeneration of one of the most deprived parts of the UK.
- 5.3 Investment in capital projects and the opening of the Turner Contemporary, helped re-establish Margate as a destination town. Since it opened in 2011, the gallery has generated over £68 million for the Kent economy, train travel to Margate has increased by 64% and the gallery has attracted over 3 million visits. In Summer 2018, 10% of their visitors had never visited an art gallery in their lives before¹⁸. The town of Margate has also seen a 71 per cent increase in artist studios¹⁹.
- 5.4 Places like Thanet have seen an 84% growth in creative businesses between 2013-2017, following a long-term programme to support arts and culture. This, combined with the country's fastest growing tourist economy prior to the pandemic and rapid growth in employment, has shown the extent to which Thanet has 'turned the tide' in terms of economic growth and putting itself firmly on the map as a destination for talented and ambitious creatives²⁰.
- 5.5 In Folkestone, for example a joined-up partnership approach working with artists, businesses, communities and local government, helped transform the old town into a creative quarter, with 90 buildings restored and 300 jobs created, and with cultural festivals like the Folkestone triennial attracting 285,000 visitors a year, and generating a direct benefit of £10.7 million for the local economy.
- 5.6 In Sunderland, there is a collaborative approach to embedding arts and culture into the city's ambitious regeneration plans, a unique partnership with the city council and local businesses to place investment in arts and

¹⁸ <https://turnercontemporary.org/news/16/04/2019/turner-contemporary-celebrates-its-8th-birthday-following-a-successful-year/>

¹⁹ <https://local.gov.uk/case-studies/growing-creative-economy-thanet-kent>

²⁰ <https://local.gov.uk/case-studies/growing-creative-economy-thanet-kent>

culture at the centre of Sunderland's economic regeneration – which also includes the setting up of Sunderland Culture to operate and develop cultural venues.

- 5.7 Sunderland Culture is a partnership created to lead the city's cultural strategy, programme, and venues, formed by the University of Sunderland, Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Music Arts and Culture (MAC) Trust. This partnership has also been instrumental in the regeneration of Sunderland's cultural quarter, and the capital redevelopment of the Fire Station Auditorium, the Peacock and the Empire Theatre.
- 5.8 The MAC Trust was also a founding partner in 'The Cultural Spring' programme, part of the Arts Council's Creative People and Places programme. Since it was established, the Cultural Spring has been successful in taking arts and culture to the most socially deprived areas of Sunderland and South Tyneside and has recently been awarded a further period of funding until 2023.
- 5.9 Alongside creatives contributing to local decision making, our **Creative People and Places programme** also places communities at the heart of local cultural activity, helping them to make decisions about the type of cultural activity they want to see in their places. This might involve taking local people to selection panels, writing briefs for artists and deciding on which projects to commissions.
- 5.10 In 2019 Arts Council England and Core Cities, led the Cultural Cities Enquiry, that investigated different ways that policy makers, funders and culture creators can create an environment in which culture can flourish. Among the recommendations set out in the report for local places was the creation of **Cultural Compacts across England**.
- 5.11 Cultural compacts create critical mass within a place, bringing together the cultural sector to be more than the sum of its parts, and involving organisations in other sectors with which cultural organisations need to collaborate if they are to contribute to place. These cross-sector partnerships thus create strategic capacity – enabling the cultural sector and local stakeholders to set out a vision of what culture can do for people in a place; partnership capacity – enabling the cultural sector to engage effectively with other sectors; and, potentially over time seeing compacts develop into or oversee organisational structures which enable activity.

- 5.12 Following on from this recommendation, DCMS and the Arts Council provided funding for a 20 pilot cultural compacts²¹. These compacts each took an approach that was appropriate to the place that they were working in.
- 5.13 In Sheffield for example, the cultural compact known as Sheffield Culture Collective, is working on four key capital projects that will underpin the cultural regeneration of the areas of Tinsley, Park Hill, Castlegate and Sheffield city centre. These projects will provide opportunities for communities and businesses, including local creatives, contributing towards the local visitor economy, and stimulating talent development and attraction.
- 5.14 Culture Change, Coventry's cultural compact has formed partnerships between Coventry's cultural, business and public sectors including higher education institutions, NHS Trusts, and Coventry residents to strengthen the local creative workforce, increase cultural engagement and improve health and wellbeing.
- 5.15 Building local capacity in this way will be crucial to the success of levelling up, as it will require leadership within place. As well as building capacity within places to set out a vision and to develop cross sector-partnerships compacts helped the cultural sector engage with broader policy frameworks and place development programmes, demonstrating that they can provide local structures to help culture contribute to levelling up. In Truro, the compact developed plans to support the Town Deal. Meanwhile, in Exeter, the compact was embedded within the broader strategic partnership board, giving the cultural sector input to broader place strategy.
- 5.16 Compacts have been set up in a range of places, from smaller urban settlements like Truro, to towns such as Tunbridge Wells, and in places which have a track record of using culture to transform place and want to consolidate those gains like Wakefield. As well as in major cities at a local authority level such as Sheffield, it is clear that Mayoral Combined Authorities are another level of place governance where compacts can help create capacity. Compacts have been set up to in the West of England and Liverpool City Region Combined Authorities.
- 5.17 Compacts offer much to places where culture has a role in levelling up. They can help build capacity in the cultural sector where it might be

²¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/review-cultural-compacts-initiative>

lacking, engage partners in other sectors, and connect to broader strategic and policy frameworks within the place.

6. How the Government can support places without established artistic infrastructure to take full advantage of the opportunities that the levelling up agenda provides

- 6.1 Continued investment in capital programmes will be fundamental in helping improve existing infrastructure and building new cultural infrastructure across England – making places more attractive to live work and visit.
- 6.2 In 2019 the Arts Council launched a £3,969,000 **Cultural Investment Fund** with DCMS and Historic England to improve and build new cultural infrastructure across England. The fund will support places outside of London to invest in creative, cultural and heritage initiatives that are designed to make places more attractive to live and work in and to visit. Successful projects will reflect the needs of each area, bringing together partners such as a local authority, a university or a Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver ambitious and innovative initiatives to enable real local transformation.
- 6.3 Government should help places develop local capacity within the cultural sector and its partners, as this will be an important way to ensure that the cultural organisations can help lead change within their communities, and also engage with other programmes and initiatives that will drive forward levelling up.
- 6.4 The Arts Council will continue to support cultural compacts, and we will help support more places to set them up where they can make a real difference. The Government should recognise that compacts have huge potential to help solve capacity challenges in place, and should encourage places to set them up, potentially with local authority and combined authority leadership.
- 6.5 As a mechanism to engage with local strategy and partnerships, compacts can plug the cultural sector into decision makers and improve policy making and delivery. Additionally, as combined and mayoral authorities develop priorities for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, compacts can provide crucial local insights into the potential for culture locally to help change place.

- 6.6 We would encourage government to recommend to places looking to maximise culture's contribution to levelling up that they seek to set up cultural compacts. We note government's ambition that UK Shared Prosperity Fund will empower local leaders, and we believe that compacts will enable the cultural sector to engage effectively with UKSPF.
- 6.7 We welcome the government's commitments to ensuring that culture contributes to levelling up as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper. However, these will only be successful if they are embedded within the overall mission that the White Paper aspires to, both in terms of national priorities and programmes and local action. Government can help support this by ensuring that culture is included in its programmes and funding.
- 6.8 Building on the Stronger Towns Fund the first round of the Levelling Up Fund – both of which supported new and refurbished cultural infrastructure – government can help places leverage their cultural potential through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. To ensure this, government should engage with the Arts Council, local government and the cultural sector so that the Fund is designed to be accessible to good cultural initiatives. Government can draw on the evidence provided by evaluations of the Arts Council programmes referred to above, and from the more recent experience of the Stronger Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund Round 1. There is also the recent experience of the Historic High Streets Heritage Action Zones programme which Historic England delivered in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Arts Council.
- 6.9 Alongside making national levelling up programmes and policy work for culture, government should enable the Arts Council to play its role as an expert sector development agency, supporting partners in place. We acknowledge the recent work with DLUHC on the Stronger Towns Fund and the Levelling Up Fund, where the government has worked closely with the DCMS ALBs through regional level Area Towns Groups.
- 6.10 The Arts Council's track record, alongside our partners, in supporting development in place can significantly help realise local ambition and will aid levelling up. We recommend that government further enable the Arts Council and our partners to directly help places bring forward high quality applications to the next round of the Levelling Up Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund. This will produce better applications with a greater chance of sustainable impact, as well as aligning funding within place to ensure efficient use of resource.

7. How Government should build on existing schemes, such as the UK City of Culture, to level up funding for arts and culture.

- 7.1 Government should continue investing in cultural capital projects to strengthen the cultural infrastructure of places. Continued support for programmes like UK City of Culture, can help promote and raise the profile of cities within the UK, and internationally - increasing cultural participation, generating jobs, attracting investment, and boosting tourism.
- 7.2 In Hull for example, more than 5.3 million people, including more than 90% of Hull's residents, attended at least one of the 2800 City of Culture events and activities during 2017. More than £676m of new private and public investment was generated in the city because it hosted UK City of Culture - which also improved the perception of Hull nationally and increased tourism to the city by 31%²².
- 7.3 In Liverpool, the national and international reputation of the city continues to be influenced by European Capital of Culture, 14 years since the city had been awarded the title. Liverpool has consolidated its position as a tourism destination and is the fifth most listed city for international visitors. A survey of residents has also shown that 44%²³ felt that Liverpool is now viewed more positively than before, and 90% believed that Liverpool has become a more creative city after hosting European City of Culture.

²² <https://hullisthis.news/evaluation-report-highlights-hull-uk-city-of-culture-impact>

²³ <https://news.liverpool.ac.uk/2018/10/09/impact-of-european-capital-of-culture-still-felt-in-liverpool-a-decade-on/>