

# Written evidence submitted by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

## Written evidence from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in response to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee's Call for Evidence on *Reimagining where we live: Cultural Placemaking and the Levelling Up Agenda*

### Introduction

Culture, arts, heritage, and the creative industries have a long-recognised and central role in imaginatively and sensitively shaping and developing the streets, towns, and public spaces where people live, work, and spend time. The Government's commitment to levelling up (as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper)<sup>1</sup> has renewed our focus on how these sectors can support, develop, and transform places and communities across the country to recover from the pandemic's impacts.

Levelling up aims to restore people's pride in their places: the cultural and heritage ecosystem of a place - its festivals, historic buildings, and traditions - are an important source of community identity, personality, and pride,<sup>2</sup> shifting local and national perceptions of a place and the people who live there. Levelling up also recognises the importance of empowering leaders and communities to make the decisions that affect them. Recent cultural, heritage, and creative initiatives have encouraged people - from community groups to creative practitioners - to co-create and centre distinctive cultural, heritage, and creative offers in wider local strategies. This recognises that the people and communities who live in a place are often the ones who know what will work best for it.

Lastly, levelling up focuses on the need to spread opportunity more equitably across the country. Culture, heritage, and the creative industries are economic powerhouses, providing employment in every Local Authority in the country, making places more attractive to businesses and visitors, and attracting inward investment. The density of creative, cultural and heritage assets in a place is positively and strongly related to the overall movement of businesses into it.<sup>3</sup> These sectors also provide a swift way of transforming and regenerating places, and galvanising wider local activity: Hull - UK City of Culture in 2017 - saw more than £676m of new public and private investment between 2013 and 2019 that can be attributed at least partly to the UK City of Culture.<sup>4</sup> There are more than 47 creative clusters and 700 microclusters of innovative creative businesses spread across the UK, generating significant economic growth and employment opportunities in regions.<sup>5</sup> The creative industries is one of the fastest growing sectors of the UK economy, growing on average more than twice the rate of the UK economy before the pandemic and supporting over 2.1m jobs,<sup>6</sup> with many of these economic benefits supporting strong creative clusters from video games in Dundee to fashion in Leeds and film in Northern Ireland.

The government recognises that some places have suffered historic imbalances in investment, including in establishing cultural infrastructure,<sup>7</sup> and the levelling up agenda aims to address this.

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<sup>1</sup> [Levelling Up White Paper](#) (February 2022)

<sup>2</sup> [Arts and Placemaking: Evidence Review](#) (September 2020)

<sup>3</sup> [The role of culture, sport and heritage in placemaking](#) (August 2017)

<sup>4</sup> [Cultural Transformations: The Impacts of Hull UK City of Culture 2017](#) (April 2021)

<sup>5</sup> [The Geography of Creativity in the UK](#) (July 2016)

<sup>6</sup> [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates 2019: GVA and Employment](#) (December 2020)

These places may now be those in the greatest need of targeted support, to make the most of the opportunities for regeneration and transformation offered by programmes like the Levelling Up Fund. This support can come through DCMS Arms-Length Bodies, like Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, who draw on decades of experience of working in, and building relationships with, places to guide and advise those that are keen to expand their cultural, heritage, creative, and visitor economy offer more holistically. Support can also come through specific programmes administered by these Arms-Length Bodies - often working collaboratively - such as High Streets Heritage Action Zones, or the Cultural Destinations Fund - and initiatives like UK City of Culture. Timely support means places can use cultural and creative development most effectively to reimagine and transform themselves as spaces where people want to live, work, and spend their time.

However, our evidence also recognises that places - even those with a mature 'cultural' offer - are likely to reap the strongest results when they embed ongoing cultural and creative development within wider economic strategies and decisions. Programmes like Cultural Compacts, and Skills Bootcamps, empower creative and cultural practitioners and community groups to influence local planning and work collaboratively with other sectors like health and higher education to implement bold approaches to holistic placemaking.

A collaborative approach to placemaking recognises the power of our cultural, heritage, and creative sectors to transform public spaces in towns and cities into places where people can meet, spend time, and share ideas. Libraries, museums, theatres, and heritage sites (to name a few) can tempt residents and visitors to return to city centres post-pandemic.<sup>8</sup> Strategic capital investment, rooted in a place's wider plans, can draw a halo of economic benefits. So can programming like UK City of Culture - created with, by, and for communities - and other local cultural and sporting events. These also bring people together, making places thrive, and attracting in turn visitors and businesses, strengthening the wider ecosystem.

Our media and broadcasting landscape also supports wider local economic growth: broadcasters play a key role in spreading economic and social benefits through commitments to regional commissioning and talent development.<sup>9</sup> Vibrant regional media hubs, like Salford's MediaCityUK, drive production in local economies, supporting the regional growth of wider creative and digital sectors. The rapidly growing community radio sector is delivering social benefits across the regions, increasing local engagement and building links between communities locally.

As the responses below set out, the Government is already doing a significant amount to ensure arts and culture funding is delivered equitably across the country, and to the people and places that need it most. Continued support for places administering cultural and heritage development projects over the long term will help ensure they deliver value for money, and - most importantly - a lasting and transformative legacy for the people who live and work in, and visit, these places.

Before moving on to the evidence provided in response to the questions asked by the terms of reference, it is worth examining the analytical evidence that demonstrates the potential economic and wider benefits of cultural investment in places.

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<sup>7</sup> [Levelling Up: An Anthology, Bennett Institute](#) (September 2021)

<sup>8</sup> [Build Back Better High Streets](#) (July 2021)

<sup>9</sup> The BBC Across the UK (March 2021)

Published earlier in 2021, 'Valuing culture and heritage capital: a framework towards informing decision making' sets out how cultural and heritage assets embody, store or give rise to cultural and social value, in addition to any economic value they may possess. Through this approach the government will be able to put a value on the interventions and investments that contribute to reducing place-based inequalities, and levelling up. Further information can be found at the Culture and Heritage portal.<sup>10</sup>

Investment in culture, heritage, and visitor economy initiatives can benefit local economies in places across the country. For example, the arts, heritage and museums (AHM) sectors can contribute to increasing productivity, as a number of specific channels demonstrate:<sup>11</sup>

- a. Agglomeration benefits: the development of local cultural clusters which host firms in close proximity can enable local knowledge and skills exchange, competition, economies of scale, and innovation.
- b. Spillover effects to other sectors: ideas and innovation generated in these sectors can spill over into the wider creative industries, while also developing human capital and transferable skills.
- c. Interactions with supply chains: investment in arts and culture also drives local growth through their links to the visitor economy, hospitality, and other services sectors.

Engagement with arts, culture, heritage, and the creative industries also has a range of positive social benefits. Engagement in the arts can help reduce inequalities in health outcomes for children experiencing adverse circumstances, and several studies also demonstrate a strong link between arts and culture and wellbeing in young people.<sup>12</sup> There is also evidence from systematic reviews that cultural and heritage engagement can support wellbeing in adults. Evidence reviews of music and singing have identified the strongest evidence for older people on morale, mental health-related quality of life, loneliness, anxiety and depression.<sup>13</sup> The benefits of arts engagement for reducing physical decline in older age are also strongly evidenced,<sup>14</sup> while there is good evidence of the positive impact of heritage on individual wellbeing, including increased confidence, social connectivity and life satisfaction.<sup>15</sup>

The role culture and heritage can play within places has been emphasised by a further study,<sup>16</sup> which shows that engagement in community cultural assets is associated with better wellbeing. Some evidence suggests individuals in areas of high deprivation may benefit more from engaging in this way. Findings suggest further exploration of place-based funding schemes that invest in improving engagement rates in areas of higher deprivation would be valuable, as these have the potential to help promote better wellbeing among residents.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/culture-and-heritage-capital-portal>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/productivity-and-the-arts-heritage-and-museums-sectors>

<sup>12</sup> DCMS asked Dr Daisy Fancourt et al to provide an evidence summary of the highest quality studies from a 2019 World Health Organisation report on the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing: [The role of arts in improving health & wellbeing](#) (April 2020)

<sup>13</sup> [What works wellbeing systematic review](#) (November 2016) on the wellbeing outcomes of music and singing in adults and the processes by which wellbeing outcomes are achieved

<sup>14</sup> [The role of arts in improving health & wellbeing](#) (April 2020)

<sup>15</sup> [What Works Wellbeing heritage scoping review](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Associations between community cultural engagement and life satisfaction, mental distress and mental health functioning using data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study \(UKHLS\) \(September 2021\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> Note: Given that causal mechanisms were not tested, causal claims cannot be generated from the results.

Arts, culture and heritage also have positive benefits for communities in places through promoting social cohesion. Studies identified in systematic reviews testify that cultural participation can contribute to social relationships and community cohesion, as well as making communities feel safer and stronger, with obvious implications for the strength of community bonds within a place.<sup>18</sup> A majority of studies also demonstrate that cultural participation results in an improved capacity for cultural citizenship, boosting confidence and developing social skills - which lead to more effective engagement with the community at large in a place. Arts interventions can also alleviate loneliness and social isolation. Community-engaged art programmes for adults aged 55+ were found to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

As well as gaining value directly by interacting with a local asset people can also receive value from an asset despite not consuming it; this is known as non-use value. Non-use value includes the value people get from the existence of a cultural good (existence value), or from others being able to benefit from a good or service, in the present (altruistic value) or for future generations (bequest value). Non-use value is particularly important within the culture and heritage sectors. Research has shown local non-users value continued provision of community-outreach programmes at local theatres and support the running of a local theatre they may not have visited.<sup>19</sup>

Investment in culture, heritage, and wider initiatives can have significant impacts on a place, and on the health, wellbeing, and cohesion of the people and communities who live, work, and visit there. Strengthening the evidence base for these impacts helps to design and target future interventions with greater accuracy, to ensure they reach the people and places that are most in need of the transformational power of cultural and heritage engagement.

### **How can culture reanimate our public spaces and shopping streets?**

A place's culture, history and identity are shaped and defined by its local institutions, its historic buildings, its natural heritage, and its community groups. These help make a place attractive, lively and welcoming for residents, local workers, and people who spend time there, and make them feel proud of it. It is crucial to recognise not only the broad range of the institutions, sites, and groups that can be grouped together as a place's 'culture' - spanning public libraries, ex-industrial sites, arts education organisations, bonfire nights, choirs, and seaside piers - but also that they will be unique and different depending on the place in question, and the people who live in it.

These organisations, institutions, groups and events have long been the vital ingredients that make high streets and public spaces thrive. Three quarters of buildings used by Arts Council funded organisations are on, or a five minute walk from, a high street,<sup>20</sup> drawing people to them and the exhibitions and experiences they host. More recently, a number of places have seen traditional shopping areas fall empty due to losses of in-person retailers, with the pandemic exacerbating and hastening this. The government is already providing significant support to local arts, culture, heritage, and creative sectors to help them, and the places in which they are situated, recover from the impacts of the pandemic. In 2020, we announced the unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund - the biggest arts funding package in history. To date, over £1.5bn has been allocated, including funding for the DCMS-sponsored national cultural institutions. The support has reached over 5000

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<sup>18</sup> [A review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport](#) (March 2015)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/culture-heritage-capital>. Further values for a range of cultural and heritage assets can be found on the Culture and Heritage portal: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/culture-and-heritage-capital-portal>

<sup>20</sup> [Arts Council-funded Cultural Infrastructure](#) (September 2020)

individual organisations and sites across England, and enabled the government and its Arms-Length Bodies to strengthen relationships with a broad range of local stakeholders. As well as this much-needed recovery funding, the government has invested in a wide range of place-based initiatives which help arts, cultural and heritage organisations, institutions and practitioners to provide new and sustainable uses for central civic and public spaces and buildings - encouraging people to return to their town and city centres once more.<sup>21</sup>

A place's cultural and heritage ecosystem offers significant opportunities for attracting people back to its high streets, civic spaces, and wider areas. An agreed, strategic plan, highlighting or centring on the local cultural, heritage and visitor economy offer, with local buy-in, helps places harness these opportunities. Such a strategy can set out priorities and actions for how their distinctive cultural and heritage offer might contribute to wider local reanimation and regeneration. Financial investment in these actions - whether from stakeholders, local or national government - can then enable places to create strong cultural networks and move to strategic delivery. This increases local access and engagement and provides more employment opportunities locally: for every full-time job in the arts and culture industry a further 0.62 jobs are supported indirectly (e.g. in local businesses), rising to 1.46 jobs if wider spending effects are included.<sup>22</sup>

Major capital investments like the first round of the £20m Cultural Development Fund, which represents DCMS' largest existing ring-fenced funding explicitly for culture-led regeneration projects outside London, has enabled places - including Grimsby, Wakefield, the Thames Estuary, and Worcester - to invest in business support programmes, develop creative workspaces, and bring together cultural organisations locally. In Worcester, for example, the city is regenerating its iconic railway arches, and putting on a cultural events programme to encourage people to spend more time in the city. Over time, these investments will also increase productivity and make these places more attractive to businesses and investors, as well as residents and visitors. Round 2 of the Fund also aims to drive local growth and productivity, promote recovery from Covid-19, and regenerate communities through capital investment in place-based initiatives, with successful recipients announced in spring 2022.

Public libraries, a vital part of the country's social and cultural infrastructure, also have an essential role to play in their local areas. Libraries help increase participation in and access to culture, regardless of background. As well-established, safe and trusted places, they not only run their own cultural programmes and activities, but are a gateway to further cultural engagement. They bring experiences and events to people who might not otherwise seek them out, and act as a platform from which other cultural and creative organisations can deliver events and interactions.

The 2,900 public library branches across England are found across all place types but there is a clear relationship between libraries and high streets; over half of high street destinations in England have a library and 65% of English public libraries are either on or close to high streets.<sup>23</sup> Libraries offer an alternative to shopping, providing a welcoming indoor public space which doesn't expect or require any commercial transaction from users.

Arts Council research showed that libraries contribute to economic growth by placemaking (through increasing footfall and spend in the neighbourhood, or enhancing an area's profile and image) or

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<sup>21</sup> [Arts and Placemaking: Evidence Review](#) (September 2020)

<sup>22</sup> [Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the UK economy: A CEBR report for Arts Council England](#) (May 2020)

<sup>23</sup> <https://blog.librarydata.uk/libraries-on-the-high-street/>

through their own spending (as an employer and purchaser of goods and services in the local economy).<sup>24</sup> Libraries can support regeneration and contribute to vibrant, healthy high streets; the Storyhouse in Chester (where the library is co-located with the performing arts centre, an ACE National Portfolio Organisation, in a redeveloped Odeon) has been a catalyst site for further regeneration in the city, as has the Lightbox in Barnsley. A number of successful Towns Fund bids - in Peterborough, Bolton, Carlisle and Grimsby - also include significant elements to improve and enhance their town centre libraries, as part of wider placemaking plans.

On a national scale, the British Library is working to realise its ambition for a British Library North - a major new public-facing centre for audiences, users, and visitors in the north of England, centred in Leeds. This work represents a cultural and heritage-led proposal of international significance that will galvanise wider regeneration - delivering new jobs and homes, as well as improved access to learning and research opportunities.

Museums, like libraries, are also key civic institutions, protecting important collections and helping to shape and tell a place's histories and identities to residents and visitors. These organisations often exist in the heart of communities: from local high streets to buildings of immense national and historical importance, they act as important anchors for, and draw people to, towns, cities, and rural areas. They support the delivery of a range of Local Authority priorities including educational attainment, economic regeneration, and improving health outcomes. The £18.8m Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND) allocated for 2021/22 supports accredited regional museums in England with vital infrastructure and maintenance projects. It can also enable them to improve visitor access and environmental sustainability - protecting them for future generations and ensuring they can continue to serve their communities and visitors. Further rounds of funding will be launched in 2022 as part of the £153m Cultural Investment Fund.

DCMS directly funds 19 branches of national museums outside London. These are located all over the country - from Tate Liverpool, to Bradford's National Science and Media Museum, to IWM Duxford in East Anglia. They also conduct a vast range of partnership work with other museums, which allow these institutions to attract more, and more varied, audiences to the places in which they are situated, generating wider local income. Touring exhibitions or lending star objects from the national collection can dramatically increase their reach and have a significant impact on the locations visited - and the people who see them there. The tour of Tim Peake's Spacecraft, part of the Science Museum Group's collection, was seen by over 1.3m people at venues across the UK, including Cardiff, Peterborough, and Bradford.<sup>25</sup> The Natural History Museum's Dippy on Tour exhibition of its famous Diplodocus cast attracted 140,000 additional visitors to Birmingham city centre - visitors who spent £4.2m in the city between them.<sup>26</sup> This followed a record-breaking stint in Dorset, where Dippy tripled the annual visitor numbers to Dorset County Museum in under three months.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, large-scale capital museum developments can act as a 'set-piece' investment in a town or city's wider strategic plans. These help to draw visitors both locally and from further afield to an institution itself, as well as the surrounding area - driving regeneration. As an example, the Cultural Investment Fund is providing over £18m for York's National Railway Museum redevelopment. The

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<sup>24</sup> [Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries Arts Council England](#) (June 2014)

<sup>25</sup> [Science Museum Group](#) (2019)

<sup>26</sup> [Birmingham Museums Trust](#) (2018)

<sup>27</sup> [The Arts Development Company](#) (2018)



funding will expand exhibition space and improve accessibility, contributing to a wider place-shaping vision for the city and acting as a key part of the transformation of one of the largest urban brownfield sites in Europe.

Many museums, galleries and libraries are housed in heritage buildings. They contribute to a place's historic built environment and are anchors for the streetscape - and in turn, a place's heritage buildings and historic sites are protected for now and future generations as well as offering vital support to placemaking and levelling up ambitions. Heritage-led regeneration can benefit people and places all over the country, making our streets and public spaces more attractive, vibrant, economically active and places where people want to spend time: four in five of us agree that heritage makes our area a better place to live.<sup>28</sup> Investment in the built historic environment complements the drivers of local growth and generates economic returns. Heritage density is positively and strongly related to the overall movement of businesses into an area, and one in four businesses say the historic environment is an important factor in deciding where they locate.<sup>29</sup>

There are approximately 142,000 retail, hospitality and commercial operations in historic listed buildings. Evidence from a survey of more than 500 commercial businesses occupying listed buildings shows that they are well aware of the advantages this offers - including the contribution to 'the positive atmosphere of the surrounding area'.<sup>30</sup>

The £95m High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) initiative, administered by Arms-Length Body Historic England, supports the regeneration of 67 high streets in towns and cities across England, including in Buxton, Selby, and Plymouth. The programme sees Historic England working with local communities on focused place-based regeneration in specific streets and areas of a place, transforming disused and neglected historic buildings into shops, houses, cafes, business premises, and community centres. By recognising that high streets can be the heart of a community, and involving developers, local government and residents as partners, the programme helps gain buy-in and spearhead wider local regeneration.

The High Streets Heritage Action Zone programme also includes a £7m Cultural Programme, administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England - a good example of joint working in places between Arms-Length Bodies. The Cultural Programme empowers people and community groups to co-create programming, such as events, with local cultural organisations. These celebrate what is authentic and unique about their local high street. It amplifies the benefits of the capital programme by encouraging people to engage with, and spend time in, their historic high streets. Research demonstrates that people who take part in cultural activities are more likely to join in other areas of civic life.<sup>31</sup>

The UK City of Culture competition is a UK government initiative delivered in collaboration with the devolved administrations. The competition also recognises the importance of cultural programming in encouraging people to spend time in our civic spaces. It empowers places to use this programming as the catalyst for further investment, driving economic growth and regeneration - on high streets, in city centres, and in any and all public spaces. This in turn promotes social cohesion, grows people's pride in these places, and makes them places where people want to spend time.

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<sup>28</sup> [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) (2015)

<sup>29</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/2018-heritage-in-commercial-use/>

<sup>31</sup> [Arts and Placeshaping: Evidence Review](#) (September 2020)

Hull's stint as UK City of Culture 2017 had a significant economic and wider impact on the city as a whole. Its programming, which included its opening event, *Made in Hull*, Radio 1's *Big Weekend* and the Blade artwork in Queen Victoria Square, drew residents and visitors alike to sites across the city. Over the course of 2017, there were 5.3m visits to more than 2,800 events, cultural activities, installations and exhibitions. More than nine in ten residents took part in at least one cultural activity. Visitor figures to the city as a whole increased by 10% year-on-year.<sup>32</sup>

Coventry UK City of Culture is already reaping similar results, drawing people back to the city's shopping streets and public spaces. For the six months since its launch in May 2021, under Covid-19 restrictions, there has been activity across every neighbourhood in Coventry, with over 141,000 tickets issued for live events. The Show Windows co-curated art programme in particular uses the city's retail centre to make art and culture more accessible. Led by Coventry City of Culture Trust in partnership with Historic England and Coventry Business Improvement District, the *The Show Windows* programme turns shop windows into portals to fantasy worlds and mindscapes, celebrating the city's post-war heritage. Displays in the Coventry City Arcade windows have included artworks from the Government Art Collection curated by Carriers of Hope, a charity that supports refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in the city. The Arcade's next installation will exhibit pieces from the British Museum's 20th century collection. Wider programming has similarly reanimated Coventry's public spaces, including Nitin Sawhney's *Ghosts in the Ruins* - a site-specific performance in both the modern Cathedral and the old Cathedral's ruins.

Visitors and the wider visitor economy are crucial for supporting the cultural and heritage organisations and institutions in a place, providing an important source of income not only for them but also for their businesses, public spaces and shopping streets, and the destination as a whole: pre-COVID, visitors to the Council-run attractions in Bath's UNESCO World Heritage Site - such as the Roman Baths - generated enough income to reduce the Council Tax bill by over £100 for every property in Bath and North East Somerset., and indeed UNESCO designations (including World Heritage sites and Creative Cities, like Bradford) add an estimated £150m in additional value to the UK economy annually, largely through visitors.<sup>33</sup> In turn, the UK's culture and heritage offer is a key driver for international and domestic visitors: almost half of inbound visits include visiting famous monuments and buildings, while three in ten include trips to museums and galleries.<sup>34</sup>

Recent initiatives like the £45m Discover England Fund, administered by VisitEngland, have capitalised on this to develop and promote places' cultural and heritage sites to visitors. The *England Originals* project supported 16 historic cities, including Carlisle, Lancaster, Lincoln, and Truro, to develop packaged itineraries centred around their heritage offer, as well as a digital app that encourages visitors to explore the cities involved.<sup>35</sup> The England's Creative Coast project was administered jointly by VisitEngland and Arts Council England. It has enabled arts organisations along the coastline of Essex, Kent and East Sussex, including Margate's Turner Contemporary, to develop new, site-specific artistic commissions for audiences to discover - supporting the visitor economy of these places more widely.<sup>36</sup> Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) play a vital role in developing and promoting their destination's cultural and heritage offer to these visitors, as the de

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<sup>32</sup> [Cultural Transformations: The Impacts of Hull UK City of Culture 2017](#) (April 2021)

<sup>33</sup> <https://unesco.org.uk/national-value/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.visitbritain.org/activities-undertaken-britain>

<sup>35</sup> <https://trade.visitbritain.com/destination-uk/discover-england-fund/englands-originals/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.englandscreativecoast.com/>



Bois review highlighted: more than nine in ten of England's 150+ DMOs speak to heritage venues and cultural organisations in their area at least once a month.<sup>37</sup>

Wider recent place-based investments have recognised the central role culture and heritage have in local regeneration projects that aim to restore life back to public spaces and streets in towns and cities across the country. The first round of the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund saw successful projects in places including Chesterfield, Colne, Eastbourne, Kidderminster all investing in holistic capital redevelopment projects where culture, heritage, the visitor economy, and sport and leisure play a central, anchoring role. This demonstrates their importance in encouraging people to rediscover and return to our civic spaces and high streets and make them lively once more.

### **How can creatives contribute to local decision-making and planning of place?**

Creatives make a vital contribution to the places where they live and work, supporting local economies and fostering a sense of community cohesion and pride in place. Their contribution to local decision-making and planning can help ensure that local investment and regeneration schemes have the greatest impact in places through supporting the local creative and cultural economy, skills and education opportunities. Creatives can also help investment to bring wider social and cultural benefits such as community engagement and improved health and wellbeing to regions across the country.

There are a number of schemes and mechanisms that support cross-sector partnership working, promote cultural and creative leadership in places, and aim to increase the participation of creatives in local communities and decision making.

DCMS' Arms-Length Bodies have been instrumental in this. They draw on decades of experience and a deep understanding of how places across the country - strengthened by their regional and local offices and networks - to design and administer schemes that encourage cultural, creative and heritage sector representatives to take a central role in local planning and decision-making. The Cultural Compacts initiative, launched in 2019 and operated jointly by DCMS and Arts Council England (ACE), has provided twenty places across England with a share of £433k. This funding fosters cross-sector partnerships between the cultural and heritage sectors, Local Authorities, and wider local partners such as universities, health agencies, and the private sector, with the aim of enhancing creatives' contribution to local development.<sup>38</sup> Places where the initiative has started to reap results include the West of England Combined Authority (WoECA) Compact, which has investigated how to engage with transport bodies, and the potential for combined ticketing offers, as part of recent work on Decarbonising Culture. The Exeter Compact provides direction to the city on issues such as urban development, wellbeing, economic growth, and education through its involvement on the city's wider strategic Partnership Board.

DCMS Arms-Length Bodies also regularly join forces, collaborating on programmes that recognise the synergies and opportunities for stronger working between a place's cultural, heritage, visitor economy and broader sectors, and support them to achieve more than the sum of their parts when contributing to local plans. Examples include the joint National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and ACE Great Places Scheme. This aimed to support new approaches to placing culture and heritage at the heart of communities and local policy-making. Since 2017, the scheme has made available £20m to

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<sup>37</sup> [de Bois Review of Destination Management Organisations](#) (September 2021)

<sup>38</sup> [Arts Council England, Review of the Cultural Compacts Initiative](#), Final Report (October 2020).

16 areas to pilot new approaches to cultural investment. The funding encourages cultural and heritage organisations to work together more closely, and with wider local sectors. The overall aim was to ensure arts, culture and heritage have a greater impact in places through supporting jobs, education, and community cohesion. In Gloucester the scheme enabled the City Council to build on previous city-centre Lottery investment to develop a wider vision for how people use and view historic buildings and public spaces. Findings from the second-year evaluation of the scheme identified that the partnerships involved had resulted in stronger engagement with policymakers, a rise in the number of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and university partnerships, and a stronger sense of a shared vision for places.<sup>39</sup>

The communities that know a place best are often best placed to shape and make decisions about that place. The Heritage Development Trust (HDT) model sees heritage buildings transferred to community ownership. It empowers these groups to use their local passion and expertise to influence planning and decision-making. This ensures that any changes truly reflect the needs of the community in question, and are made in a way that is sustainable in the long term. The £15m government-funded Transforming Places Through Heritage programme, administered by the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF), aims to build heritage skills and capacity within local community groups, social enterprises, and charities. Heritage Development Trusts such as Heritage Lincolnshire have used this funding to train groups to take on their own heritage regeneration projects. More than two thirds of funding recipients believe it has enabled capacity building,<sup>40</sup> allowing them to gain and retain skills in fundraising, project development and carrying out historic building projects. These skills and knowledge will continue within the local community beyond the end of funding, helping community groups to continue restoring heritage buildings for new uses. In turn, it places communities at the heart of wider town centre transformation plans. This engages residents with their local culture and heritage, and strengthens their appetite, ability and capacity for further creative regeneration projects of this kind.

The UK City of Culture competition has seen a number of examples of a place's creative people successfully influencing local decision-making. For the 2025 competition, bidding places are required to develop proposals that feed into wider local and regional strategies. Coventry, as the UK's current City of Culture, has developed activities that integrate with local growth plans and align with other government funds like the Community Renewal Fund. As part of their programme, Coventry City of Culture Trust and Coventry City Council have provided grants to support co-creation between communities and local arts organisations and introduced an artist-in-residence programme. This included the *Barriers to Bridges* project, with West Midlands Police enlisting an artist-in-residence to help tackle youth violence. Places bidding for the upcoming 2025 competition will be required to demonstrate cultural leadership and partnership working in their plans for the title.

The Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) also represents an opportunity for creatives to contribute to local regeneration plans, with bidding authorities expected to engage with local stakeholders and the community in developing their proposals. Successful bids to Round 1 of LUF include a proposal from Ulster University, Belfast. The c.£2.9m project aims to purchase a flexible virtual production studio that will complement the City Deal-approved Screen Media Innovation Lab in Belfast, enabling creative businesses in the region to keep growing and contributing to the local economy.

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<sup>39</sup> [Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund Great Place Programme Evaluation, England, Year 2](#) (October 2019)

<sup>40</sup> [Transforming Places through Heritage programme Interim Report, Year 2](#) (December 2021)

As well as engaging with authorities on funding proposals, there are other mechanisms for creatives to collaborate with local decision-makers on regeneration plans. Under the Government's Localism Act (2011), neighbourhood planning was introduced to give communities, including the creatives that live and work there, statutory powers to shape planning policies in their local areas. East Streets Arts are currently delivering England's first arts-led Neighbourhood Plan in three wards in Leeds, providing creatives in their communities with the opportunity to input on local decision-making.<sup>41</sup> This work has so far led to the establishment of a community-hosted summer school for 10-12 year olds in creative disciplines. The Government also recognises the need to modernise the planning system in England, providing better outcomes for local authorities, communities, and builders. We will ensure that communities are effectively engaged, including digitally, throughout the planning process – on local plans, decision-making and the development of design codes. Councils, communities, and residents - including creatives - will create new local design codes to shape streets; widen access to neighbourhood planning, and look to pilot greater community empowerment in shaping regeneration and development plans.<sup>42</sup>

By getting involved in these plans, creatives can help to develop a shared vision for their community and neighbourhood, shaping the transformation of their local area. The government proposes to retain neighbourhood planning as an important part of the planning system and spread its use further, particularly in our towns and cities.

There are also opportunities for creative and cultural people to contribute to local decisions around skills training schemes through DfE's Skills Bootcamps as part of the £2.5bn National Skills Fund. The scheme is co-designed, and occasionally delivered, by local creative employers, based on the specific workforce needs of targeted businesses and places. Wave 3 of these bootcamps is open for applications until 28 February. DfE are inviting applicants to evidence how they will align with work being done at a local level to strengthen labour markets, ensuring that skills development opportunities complement local economic plans.

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

The provision of cultural and artistic infrastructure - which, as highlighted above, can encompass everything from theatres to musical groups to historic churches to Art Deco lidos - can vary significantly both within and between regions, as well as in different types of place. A large city may be more likely to offer a greater range of cultural provision than a small rural market town. Beyond geographical factors, the strength of artistic infrastructure often depends on a place's history, its economic status, local priorities, and the people and businesses that call it home. In turn, this can influence and be reflected in local levels of cultural, heritage, and wider engagement and participation, and the extent to which people feel proud of and identify with the place in which they live and work - a key focus of the wider levelling up agenda.

Part of the challenge for places lacking established, or with depleted, artistic infrastructure may lie in lower investment in their local culture and heritage over time. This can be due not only to historic economic inequality,<sup>43</sup> but also to a more recent 'self-fulfilling prophecy' by which these places are

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<sup>41</sup> [East Street Art, Neighbourhood Planning Model](#)

<sup>42</sup> [Levelling Up White Paper](#) (February 2022)

<sup>43</sup> [Levelling Up: An Anthology, Bennett Institute](#) (September 2021)

unable to dedicate time and resources to securing funding, especially when bidding requirements mean the bid in question may be unsuccessful.<sup>44</sup> Targeted support helps these places build their capacity and capability and take the first steps to strengthen their local artistic, cultural, heritage provision. It can also empower them to embed renovated or, at times, new cultural and heritage institutions and assets within wider local plans, to ensure their long-term viability.

DCMS Arms-Length Bodies, such as Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, ACE, the British Tourist Authority, and Sport England, have decades of experience and significant expertise in engaging and building relationships with places with less-developed cultural and heritage infrastructure. Regional teams, embedded in places, can speak directly to local organisations and practitioners, and use their local knowledge and understanding of the wider context to offer support tailored specifically to that place's needs. Arms-Length Bodies also do this through their own capital programmes: for example, Historic England provides places administering the High Streets Heritage Action Zones programme with an online Knowledge Hub, for problem-solving, training, and knowledge sharing.<sup>45</sup>

These Arms-Length Bodies have also demonstrated how effective this experience and expertise can be when combined into a collaborative support offer for places bidding for, and receiving, large amounts of funding, often for the first time. As part of the £3.6bn Towns Fund, announced in 2019,<sup>46</sup> DCMS Arms-Length Bodies came together to form four regional Area Towns Groups (ATGs). These groups act as a coordinated 'single point of contact' for places in need of guidance on project development and delivery. Now established as forums for engaging with places and sharing intelligence, the ATGs were also used in supporting the assessment process for the Levelling Up Fund. The Arms-Length Bodies have also delivered collaborative training for Local Authorities, including in partnership with the Local Government Association, to build awareness of the opportunities cultural, heritage, and wider development can offer places that want to develop their cultural infrastructure more strategically.<sup>47</sup> The government itself has also worked hard to build stronger strategic relationships with places, to encourage greater join-up between stakeholders at national, regional, and local levels in support of a more equitable cultural landscape. For example, the DCMS Secretary of State's appointment of a Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal, Lord Mendoza, acts as a liaison between the cultural and heritage sectors and the government. He gathers feedback from across sectors and brings together organisations and actors all over the country - including Local Authorities, cultural leaders and Metro Mayors - to champion the importance of cultural interventions.

Increased engagement can also be a vital first step towards recognising the importance of, and strengthening, the cultural and heritage provision in a place. The £60m ACE Creative People and Places programme focuses National Lottery funding on parts of the country where involvement in arts and culture is significantly below the national average,<sup>48</sup> to increase the likelihood of participation and transforming the cultural opportunities open to people in those places. The programme currently supports 30 projects across England - including Boston and South Holland,

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<sup>44</sup> [Levelling Up White Paper](#) (February 2022)

<sup>45</sup> <https://khub.net/historicengland>

<sup>46</sup> The Towns Fund promoted arts and culture investment as a way of restoring pride in place, creating economic opportunities and building places that are wonderful places to both live and work. 137 bids were submitted under the Arts, Culture and Heritage intervention theme with an average ask of £3.1m.

<sup>47</sup> <https://local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/culture-and-sport-improvement/arts-and-culture-2021-22>

<sup>48</sup> As identified by the [Active Lives Survey](#)

Blackpool, and Doncaster. In the latter, the project is guided by a Community Panel and involves locals in choosing, making, seeing and sharing forms of artistic production.

ACE's renewed focus on supporting those places with less mature infrastructure is also signalled in their work, alongside DCMS, to identify 109 'Levelling Up for Culture Places', which will be targeted for additional investment, announced by the DCMS Secretary of State in February 2022.<sup>49</sup>

Organisations in areas that historically have had low investment in arts and culture - like East Lindsey and Tees Valley Combined Authority - will be encouraged to bid for funds.<sup>50</sup> Through collaboration with the Local Authorities, people, and wider organisations in these places ACE will help them realise a change in how they approach culture and their cultural heritage. ACE will also increase their investment in these places, with a £75m boost provided by 2025, to make sure they get a better distribution of arts funding. In parallel, the launch in spring 2022 of ACE's 2023-26 National Portfolio funding round will be an opportunity for building on the work the Arms-Length Body has done in recent rounds to increase support for places without established artistic infrastructure.

The bidding process for the UK City of Culture competition can also galvanise places without long-standing cultural infrastructure and provision to come together and collaborate on large-scale plans for developing, strengthening, and celebrating what is unique to them. Through their bids, places are encouraged to develop scalable plans and partnerships that can be continued to some extent even if they do not win the title. This work leads to increased local pride in the place and its identity, and changed perceptions of that place more widely. It can also be the first step of a long-term journey towards increased local awareness of and appetite for cultural activity, seeing the place as a whole making greater investment in cultural and heritage infrastructure. In 2017 the Historic Coventry Trust - a Heritage Design Trust with funding from the Architectural Heritage Foundation and the Government - took ownership of 22 historic buildings. The Trust renovated and opened them in time for Coventry's City of Culture programming. These included the long-disused Regency Draper's Hall, now an events, education, and performance space, and the historic Charterhouse, which has received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Coventry City of Culture Trust and partners are also ensuring a long-term legacy and further strengthening city-centre cultural provision in a number of ways, including by opening a new, large-scale digital immersive gallery, expected to attract around 200,000 visitors annually.

More widely, place-based capital investments like the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund have not only prioritised places for investment by measures that recognise their significant need for Levelling Up, they have also recognised that those Local Authorities in these priority places can lack the experience, skills and resources needed to bid for large-scale capital funding. With this in mind, the Levelling Up Fund included capacity funding for these Local Authorities to enable them to develop strong and strategic bids. This included bids for cultural, heritage, visitor economy, and leisure and sporting regeneration projects of the kind referenced above, ensuring that government investment was targeted where it is needed most.<sup>51</sup>

This was also the case for the £220m Community Renewal Fund. This provided Local Authorities with resource funding for new and innovative projects, delivered collaboratively, that aimed to solve local challenges. Capacity funding was provided to the lead authorities in 100 priority places based on an

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<sup>49</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/over-100-places-to-see-improved-access-to-culture-and-arts-across-england>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/your-area/priority-places#section-1>

<sup>51</sup> [Levelling Up Fund prospectus](#) (March 2021)

index of economic resilience, to help them coordinate and appraise the bids made.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, a number of the successful projects saw places with less developed cultural infrastructure exploring the opportunities culture, heritage, and visitor economy projects offer for helping people and galvanising economic investment. Cornwall's *Tresorys Kernow/Cornish Treasure* project forms part of the feasibility planning for a new capital cultural development, by testing sustainable approaches to driving footfall, supporting cultural-led regeneration in 12 Cornish towns.

### **How might changes to the UK's broadcasting landscape affect investment in cultural production outside the capital, and what could the consequences be for artists and communities?**

The broadcasting sector, and the changes taking place within it, has significant potential to contribute to levelling up. This is particularly the case in terms of reinvigorating local economies post-pandemic to drive regional growth, and strengthening connections within local communities.

London and the South East is a global hub for the broadcasting industry and attracts considerable and increasing levels of investment, particularly from global - often US-based - streaming services. This is incredibly important for the UK, which continues to be a major destination for film and TV production. However, we also recognise concerns that it presents some challenges. For example, producers have told us how the concentration of specialist staff and facilities is making it increasingly difficult to maintain film and TV business in other parts of the UK, whilst some broadcasters have reported that it is often more expensive to commission and produce shows outside of London due to issues such as skills shortages. For these reasons, the Government is committed to rebalancing spend and activity across the country, with greater emphasis outside London and the South East, to help to bring the economic and social benefits of media and broadcasting to people across UK regions.

UK broadcasters already play a key role in driving production across the UK, and the Government believes they should continue to do so. For example, public service broadcasters (PSBs) are subject to quotas for the production of a range of content outside of the M25 (often referred to as 'outside London' programming). The BBC and Channel 4 also have specific quotas for production in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.<sup>53</sup> Data from Ofcom shows that PSBs are already spending more of their content budgets in the nations and regions of the UK and regularly exceed the baseline requirements set by their quotas. For example in 2019 nearly half (48%) of total PSB content spend was outside of London, up from 38% in 2010.<sup>54</sup>

The Government is currently undertaking a strategic review of PSB, to ensure the UK's PSB system remains relevant and continues to meet the needs of audiences across the whole of the UK. The review will draw on the conclusions of *Small Screen: Big Debate*, Ofcom's latest periodic review of PSB, reports from the Select Committees in both Houses and Parliament, and advice from the Government's own expert PSB Advisory Panel. We will set out the conclusions from the review in due course but the Government agrees with Ofcom's conclusion from *Small Screen: Big Debate* that a core objective of the PSB system is to support the UK's creative economy across the four nations. As such our strategic review is looking at whether the obligations placed on PSBs (including quotas) remain effective, and proportionate in relation to the benefits those broadcasters receive.

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<sup>52</sup> [Community Renewal Fund prospectus](#) (May 2021)

<sup>53</sup> Channel 4's 'Out of England' quota is currently set at 9% of expenditure and hours. The BBC has individual quotas for Scotland (8% of expenditure and hours), Wales (5%) and Northern Ireland (3%).

<sup>54</sup> Ofcom, *Small Screen: Big Debate* (2021)



PSBs also continue to make valuable contributions to levelling up, with real benefits to artists and communities, beyond the qualitative requirements set out in their quotas. The BBC and ITV have already established a vibrant media cluster in Salford's MediaCityUK from where major UK national programmes including BBC Breakfast and Coronation Street are made and broadcast. Employment in the creative and digital sector in Salford has seen growth of 142% since 2010, and the number of digital or creative businesses has grown by 70%.<sup>55</sup> Similarly Cardiff has become one of the UK's largest media centres outside London, hosting BBC Wales, ITV Wales and Welsh language broadcaster S4C. Moving forward, the BBC's *Across the UK* strategy identified further plans to enhance these clusters by decentralising BBC News and establishing 'multiplatform story teams' across the UK. This proposal is one of many significant commitments to regional commissioning and talent development. The BBC estimates that planned changes to its footprint, staff profile and decision-making practices across all parts of the UK will mean that 'the BBC will cumulatively spend at least an extra £700m outside London by 2027/28, generating an additional economic benefit to those parts of the UK of around £850m'.<sup>56</sup>

As part of wider changes to the broadcasting landscape, the Government is also considering whether to take forward a change of ownership of Channel 4. The Government recognises the important economic, cultural and social contributions Channel 4 makes throughout the nations and regions of the UK through its investment in regional production, new HQ in Leeds, and regional hubs in Bristol and Glasgow. Channel 4's strengths in this space are to be celebrated and maintained into its future, and this is not at odds with private investment - in fact, Channel 4's access to networks out of London is likely to be an attractive asset to nurture and develop for any potential buyer. Whatever the decision taken on Channel 4's future ownership model, it will not compromise this Government's commitment to the wider creative economy, and our creative powerhouses across the UK.

Finally, as set out above, levelling up is also about supporting connected communities and fostering pride in place. Here too our broadcast sectors can contribute. Filming locations across the UK can be a significant draw for inbound visitors and associated spend, with two thirds saying that seeing UK locations and landmarks used in series like *Peaky Blinders* or *Bridgerton* - on-screen influenced their decision to visit.<sup>57</sup> The economic growth generated by a rise in visitors to regional filming locations can bring benefits for nearby communities, including increased employment, and contribute to their sense of local pride. Beyond film and TV, community radio is a rapidly growing sector, staffed mainly by local volunteers and delivering numerous social impacts to regions, including fostering civic pride, increasing community participation and alleviating loneliness. Stations receiving money from the Community Radio Fund to date have helped to improve lives in their communities.

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

Our arts, culture and heritage sectors are present in every local area of the country, creating jobs and skills in the places that need them and generating economic growth, contributing to soft power, and attracting inward investment. They bring joy and meaning to our lives, draw communities together more closely, and shape people and places' histories and identities, often engendering fierce pride.

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<sup>55</sup> KPMG - An Assessment of the Economic Impact of the BBC - 2021

<sup>56</sup> [The BBC Across the UK](#) (March 2021)

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-research-shows-70-of-international-audiences-view-british-film-and-tv-as-high-quality>

The complex networks of people, institutions, and organisations that make up these sectors have a crucial role to play in delivering the Government's Levelling Up ambitions, and the programmes and initiatives mentioned throughout this evidence are making significant progress in enabling them to do so.

The UK City of Culture competition already has hugely positive impacts on an area, driving investment, creating jobs, drawing visitors, and highlighting that culture and heritage is for everyone, regardless of background. The previous winners - Derry-Londonderry and Hull - and the current title holder Coventry have all demonstrated this significant impact: £172.6m has been invested in Coventry to date as a result of being City of Culture; 1101 City Hosts have been fully trained, and 43% of tickets were issued within Coventry to citizens who are financially stretched or facing adversity.<sup>58</sup> Bidding for the title in its own right can have a hugely positive impact on a place. The process helps bring partners together and develops strategic cultural leadership, showcasing and opening up access to and engagement with local heritage, art and culture, and articulating ambitions for the future. For example, although Sunderland narrowly missed out on the 2021 title, their bid created the momentum to create and sustain the ambitious organisation Sunderland Culture, bringing together Sunderland's most important cultural assets in innovative collaboration. Sunderland Culture became an Arts Council England NPO in 2018. This is why for the current 2025 competition, the Government strengthened the bidding process further, introducing the Expression of Interest stage. For the first time, the eight longlisted bidders - County Durham, Derby, Cornwall, Bradford, Wrexham, Southampton, Stirling, and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon - are being given £40,000 in seed-funding, to support and strengthen their full application.

This year also sees the launch of UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK, a £120m UK-wide celebration of creativity and innovation across science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM). 10 innovative commissions will bring people together, showcasing our sectors to the world. UNBOXED will take place in over 80 live sites across the UK, delivering direct economic benefits to these places through supply chain investment and visitor spend, as well as growing local pride and changing wider perceptions of them - in support of levelling up ambitions. UNBOXED also offers extensive learning and public participation opportunities, as well as volunteering and job opportunities.

The first live UNBOXED event - *About Us* - begins in Paisley, travelling on to Derry-Londonderry, Caernarfon, Luton and Hull. *PoliNations* will take place in Edinburgh and Birmingham, while *StoryTrails* features 15 locations across the UK, including Dundee, Omagh, Newport, Swansea, Blackpool, Lincoln, Bristol and Slough and is offering 50 job opportunities for emerging creatives. The groundbreaking *See Monster* - a decommissioned offshore platform from the North Sea - will be a new visitor attraction for Weston-super-Mare, while *Green, Space, Dark Skies* will take place in 17 rural locations all over the country, including Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike, Snowdon and Slieve Donard. The commission will recruit 20,000 volunteers as 'Lumenators', illuminating our areas of natural beauty using new Siemens lighting technology. *Dreamachine* will reach 12,000 schools across the UK, and takes place in Edinburgh, Cardiff, Belfast and London.

Each of the four nations will also host its own specific UNBOXED commission: in Scotland, *Dandelion* - in locations including Inverness and Glasgow; *Our Place in Space* - in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry - and *Galwad*, featuring four locations across Wales.<sup>59</sup> Finally, locations across England, including

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<sup>58</sup> [Coventry UK City of Culture 2021: performance measurement and evaluation interim report](#) (January 2022)

<sup>59</sup> Merthyr Tydfil, Swansea, Blaenau Gwent and Ffestiniog

Southampton, Leicester, Newcastle, and Hackney, will host the *Tour de Moon* which is offering 850 bursaries aimed at 18-25 year olds.

In addition, the Government is already ensuring arts, cultural and heritage investment is directed to the places most in need of it, helping to 'level up' funding for these sectors and places. As mentioned previously, this is strongly signalled in ACE and DCMS' work to identify 109 'Levelling Up for Culture Places' which will be targeted for £75m additional investment by 2025 - as well as the prioritisation methods used by funds like the Levelling Up Fund. More than 50 of the 67 High Streets Heritage Action Zones are in towns and cities outside London and the South East, and the Cultural Development Fund is explicitly ring-fenced for culture-led regeneration projects in places outside London. The Government's Tourism Recovery Plan highlighted the potential of the North East's visitor economy as an area for further development, to address imbalances in visitor number and spend compared to other parts of the UK.<sup>60</sup>

The provision of capacity funding for bidding Local Authorities - detailed in the response to Q3 - has been an important element in enabling places with little prior experience of or expertise in cultural and heritage development to take advantage of funding opportunities. In turn, this has helped many places to put culture and heritage at the centre of their local placemaking strategies, often catalysing further, larger-scale capital investment (for example, one of Stoke-on-Trent's three successful Levelling Up Fund bids builds on its Heritage Action Zone, in Longton).

However, to harness this momentum and ensure it has a legacy, these places may require ongoing support to make sure major cultural and heritage investments deliver their promised economic and social benefits. This can be in the form of ongoing guidance and advice for places, such as that provided by DCMS Arms-Length Bodies, working together to recognise shared ambitions across sectors and across places. It can also come as resource funding (such as that provided by the Community Renewal Fund) for feasibility studies, which can help measure the local interest in visiting, and thus long-term viability of, new developments and the places in which they are located. This can help ensure any such developments meet an identified need and stay open for the long term, contributing to the local economy, and providing a valuable resource for locals and visitors alike.<sup>61</sup>

Finally, building on the successes of existing place-based arts, culture, and heritage initiatives also requires us to learn from existing and previous place-based funding programmes. Embedding these learnings into the development of new initiatives helps to ensure that they have a lasting legacy and deliver long-term local impacts and benefits. The Arts Council recently published a meta-evaluation of six place-based programmes totalling more than £116m,<sup>62</sup> which identified a number of key considerations for future funds. These included the need for longer timeframes, new and easier ways of demonstrating a programme's impact on engagement and economic contribution, and the importance of embedding evaluation and sharing learnings with programme participants and wider stakeholders, such as local and national government.<sup>63</sup> Ensuring evidence-based insights like these are promoted, shared with, and considered by those developing future place-based support will help

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<sup>60</sup> [Tourism Recovery Plan](#) (June 2021)

<sup>61</sup> [RIBA Future Place report](#) (2020)

<sup>62</sup> Creative People and Places, Cultural Destinations, Creative Local Growth Fund, Great Place Scheme, Cultural Development Fund, Cultural Compacts

<sup>63</sup> [Meta-evaluation of Arts Council-funded place-based programmes](#) (October 2021)

cultural and heritage funding achieve the greatest benefits for places, and the people who live and spend time in them.

**February 2022**