appg

Northern Culture
All-Party Parliamentary Group

Co-Chair	Patrick Hurley MP
Co-Chair	Lord Watson of Wyre Forest
Vice-Chair	Lord Vaizey of Didcot
Vice-Chair	Tom Morrison MP

NORTHERN CULTURE CULTURE CLUB

NORTHERN CULTURE
'UNTAPPED'

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NORTH'S GREAT CULTURAL CAPITAL

October 2026

CONTENTS

FOREWORD 3

INTRODUCING THE NORTHERN CULTURE INQUIRY 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 6

THE NORTHERN CULTURE “UNTAPPED” INQUIRY

- WHAT IS THE TRUE VALUE OF THE NORTH’S CULTURAL CAPITAL? 8
- WHAT WILL UNTAP CULTURE, SKILLS AND THE TALENT PIPELINE? 11
- NORTHERN CULTURE IS A CATALYST FOR GROWTH - TWO CITIES. ONE BIG LESSON 14
- SHOULD NORTHERN MAYORS HAVE MORE POWER TO UNTAP CULTURAL CAPITAL? 16
- IS IT TIME TO RE-IMAGINE HOW WE “DO” CULTURE? 19

THE STANDOUT HEADLINES FROM NORTHERN CULTURE UNTAPPED 22

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 24

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 26







Culture isn’t just about creative industries, it touches all of us every day. It’s about those moments when a spark can create something magical for individuals and communities.

Claire McColgan CBE





FOREWORD

Culture is the glue that holds together 17 million people who live in the North’s cities, towns, coastal and rural communities.

Culture is central to everything we do; the pubs, cafes and places where we catch-up with friends and family, the music we listen to, the films, theatre and shows we watch, the sport and games we play and the heritage we visit enjoy.

What this Inquiry demonstrates is how Northern culture shapes our people and places and how good we feel about where we live. The North’s cultural capital is rich and a huge asset which we need to untap if we are going to make the cultural economy prosper and thrive. Untapped, the social and economic cultural dividend could transform lives and create a cultural powerhouse in the North.

We know culture is an economic driver in the North. From Eurovision, The Great North Run, the Brit Awards and the Commonwealth Games, the North is home to a diverse and culturally rich ecosystem which attracts global recognition. Its unique cultural brand and heritage must be cherished, untapped and invested in.

But what this Inquiry also shows is that Northern Culture drives diversity, inclusion, opportunities and strengthens our communities pride in place. We all want to live in places we enjoy, visit places we love and celebrate talent, go to events and participate in cultural and sporting activities across the North. Done properly, culture can transform lives and re-new communities. It is clear that we must invest in talent, grassroots venues and infrastructure if we are going to give young people real opportunities to experience what might be their future career.

There is an incredible opportunity to back creative growth right across the North and unleash its potential as a cultural powerhouse. Our Metro Mayors and Combined Authorities are deeply rooted in place, offering strategic vision and local-leadership to drive ambition, talent, innovation and support our cultural and visitor economy.

By working collaboratively with our Mayors, political, business and creative leaders, and our Northern MPs and Peers we can showcase the North’s potential and unlock its full cultural capital. Together we can deliver real growth and greater opportunities for our people, places and communities.



Patrick Hurley MP
for Southport and Chair
of the Northern Culture APPG

“Northern culture has always been a major part of our national DNA. We’ve got it all, from historic venues like Blackpool Tower Ballroom and the Spanish City in Whitley Bay that have entertained generations of audiences, to the most important bands of the last 60 years like The Beatles, Oasis and Pulp and major artistic institutions like the Liverpool Philharmonic. There is nothing you can’t do in the North.

Talent is everywhere and opportunity is not – and this Government are fully committed to making sure that everyone growing up in this country will have access to the best culture and art wherever they’re from. The Northern Culture APPG provides a vital voice in Westminster for promoting the excellence we know can be found in communities across the North and I’m grateful to them for their report which everyone in the cultural sectors should pay attention to.”



Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP,
Secretary of State for Digital,
Culture, Media and Sport

INTRODUCING THE NORTHERN CULTURE INQUIRY INTO THE NORTH’s CULTURAL CAPITAL

Culture is key to how we feel about where we live, work, rest and play. It is vital to the North’s economy.

We all love culture, but too often it’s sidelined or not seen as essential investment or infrastructure. The North is home to some of the UK’s most celebrated cultural institutions, world-class creative industries, extraordinary heritage and an abundance of homegrown talent. From our major cities to our towns, rural and coastal communities, culture is part of what makes the North distinctive.

Our cultural assets do far more than entertain. They create jobs, attract visitors, support businesses, regenerate places and bring communities together. They are a great source of Northern pride and a major contributor to the UK’s economic and social prosperity.

But the North’s full cultural potential is far from fully realised. Imagine how much more we could do if Northern Culture was ‘untapped’ and our cultural assets were working smarter to deliver hope and opportunity?

This Northern Culture APPG Inquiry shows us how integral culture is to creating strong, safe and vibrant communities across the North. We conducted this Inquiry to change the mindset and put culture at the heart of the North’s future industrial strategy.

Our Inquiry makes the case for why the North’s cultural capital must be untapped.

“The North does not need to create its cultural capital. It needs the powers, people, investment and infrastructure to unlock it.”

The Northern Culture APPG Northern Culture Untapped Inquiry:

- **Examines the true capital value of the North’s cultural assets, looks at what is holding back its growth potential and identifies how investment, infrastructure, skills and devolution could help unlock its full economic and social value.**
- **Asks the simple question: how can we turn the North’s cultural strengths into greater opportunities for growth?**
- **For the purposes of this Inquiry, cultural capital means more than buildings, venues or institutions. It encompasses the people, places, heritage, skills, creativity, ideas, events and infrastructure that together generate cultural, economic and social value.**

DID YOU KNOW?
THE NORTH’S CULTURAL ECONOMY IS WORTH BILLIONS...

£10.4 BILLION

The estimated economic contribution of the North’s arts, culture and heritage sectors, identified in the 2022 NP11 Place Strategy.

£2.7 BILLION

The potential additional GVA that could be unlocked through better coordination and investment in Northern cultural and heritage assets.

£10 BILLION

The potential additional GVA from the North’s wider creative industries by 2030, under a scenario of stronger growth.

£3.36 BILLION

Heritage’s combined economic contribution across the North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber was estimated at in 2022

THE NORTH ALREADY HAS THE CULTURAL CAPITAL. THE OPPORTUNITY IS TO UNLOCK ITS FULL ECONOMIC POTENTIAL.

Sources: Historic England / NP11 (2022); RSA / Creative PEC (2023). Figures are from separate studies and are not additive.

THE NORTH IS RICH IN CULTURAL CAPITAL:

£54.8 MILLION: EUROVISION, LIVERPOOL

Net economic boost to the Liverpool City Region from hosting Eurovision 2023.

£48 MILLION: LOWRY, SALFORD

Estimated annual GVA contribution from one of the North’s major cultural institutions.

£681 MILLION: THE GLASSHOUSE, GATESHEAD

Estimated GVA generated by The Glasshouse International Centre for Music over 20 years.

£450 MILLION: BBC NORTH, SALFORD

Approximate GVA contribution from BBC North, supporting thousands of jobs in the North’s creative economy.

FROM WORLD-CLASS EVENTS TO ICONIC CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS, NORTHERN CULTURE IS ALREADY DELIVERING FOR UK PLC.

Sources: Eurovision 2023 economic impact evaluation; Lowry, Making Culture Count; The Glasshouse economic impact assessment; BBC North evidence to the Northern Culture APPG Inquiry.

IMAGINE WHAT MORE THE NORTH’s UNTAPPED CULTURAL CAPITAL COULD DO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NORTH IS RICH IN CULTURE.
IT’S TIME TO UNLOCK ITS FULL POTENTIAL.

The North’s cultural capital is rich. Its cultural assets need to be untapped. We now need the levers to turbocharge the North’s full growth potential by creating cultural infrastructure and opportunities across the North.

Northern Culture is good for the North’s economy and UKplc

Northern culture is already making a substantial contribution to the economy. From major institutions and creative industries to heritage sites and grassroots organisations, cultural activity supports employment, investment, regeneration and local supply chains.

The Northern Culture “Untapped” Inquiry found that:

- **The North’s cultural and heritage assets are worth billions to the economy but could be worth billions more for UKplc**
- **Investment in major cultural infrastructure can transform places and drive long-term economic growth.**
- **Culture creates jobs, attracts investment and supports businesses far beyond the cultural sector itself.**

Culture is not simply a public service to be funded, but an economic asset capable of supporting growth, employment and investment across the North. Culture must be considered as central to Mayoral growth strategies and essential to future Northern growth.

> *“To ‘untap’ Northern culture, we need to stop thinking about the North as a training ground and see it rather as a centre of production and leadership.”*
>
> **Mojisola Kareem,**
> Founder and CEO, Utopia Theatre

Northern Cultural offer attracts huge numbers of visitors, investment and creates opportunities for its people and places

From Liverpool’s Eurovision and Bradford’s year as UK City of Culture to the North’s museums, music venues, festivals and historic attractions, culture gives people a reason to visit, explore and spend time in Northern places

.

The benefits extend far beyond the cultural sector itself, supporting hospitality, retail, transport, accommodation and local businesses.

The Northern Culture Untapped Inquiry found that:

- **The North’s cultural offer is a major driver of tourism and the visitor economy.**
- **Major cultural events and attractions bring visitors, spending and investment into Northern places.**
- **Cultural investment can revitalise high streets, regenerate communities and create lasting economic opportunities.**

The Inquiry found that whilst the North has an exceptional cultural offer, greater coordination and investment are needed to maximise its contribution to the visitor and wider economy. We need to ensure that the benefits reach not only our key and core cities but are felt in every local place and community.

Northern Culture builds stronger communities and diversity

Culture plays an important role in shaping the places we live and the opportunities available to us. It brings communities together, strengthens pride in place, develops skills and inspires the next generation of creative talent.

Yet the Inquiry heard that cultural opportunities are not equally accessible across the North, with geography, infrastructure and fragmented career pathways creating significant barriers.

The Northern Culture Untapped Inquiry found that:

- **The North has the creative talent, but lacks a joined-up pipeline from education to employment and leadership.**
- **Too many creative jobs, investment opportunities and industry decision-makers remain concentrated in London.**
- **Cultural opportunity remains a postcode lottery, with transport, infrastructure and access to finance holding back Northern talent.**
- **Northern culture builds pride in place, strengthens communities and creates opportunities for the next generation.**

The Inquiry found that unlocking Northern culture must also mean unlocking opportunities for Northern people, ensuring that cultural participation, skills and careers are accessible across the whole region.

> *“The North does not lack cultural capital, it already delivers amazing social value at scale. What’s missing is a policy framework that views northern culture as a connected ecosystem and joins-up thinking.”*
>
> **Julia Fawcett CBE,**
> CEO, The Lowry

The North has the cultural assets - but lacks the investment, infrastructure and powers to unlock them

The Inquiry heard that Northern culture’s full potential cannot be realised through cultural policy alone. Skills, transport, planning, regeneration, infrastructure and investment all influence whether cultural organisations can thrive and whether communities benefit from their success.

Devolution presents an opportunity to connect these priorities and strengthen the role of Northern places in shaping their cultural and economic futures.

The Northern Culture Untapped Inquiry found that:

- **Culture must be at the heart of devolution and the North’s wider economic growth plans.**
- **Short-term, fragmented funding is holding back long-term cultural ambition and investment.**
- **Northern places need greater powers and financial flexibility to invest in their own cultural economies.**
- **Devolution must unlock new opportunities, not simply transfer responsibility for shrinking budgets.**

Research into the wider Northern creative industries has suggested the potential for approximately £10 billion in additional GVA by 2030 under a scenario of stronger creative industry growth. While this is not an estimate produced by the Inquiry, it illustrates the scale of the wider economic opportunity.

The Northern Culture APPG’s Inquiry demonstrates that culture is already an important driver of economic growth, opportunity and community prosperity across the North.

Its findings point to the need for a more ambitious, coordinated and long-term approach to cultural investment, supported by stronger connections between national policy, devolved leadership, cultural organisations and the wider economy.

In summary, it is clear that the North does not need to create its cultural capital. It just needs the investment, infrastructure, opportunities and powers to unlock the potential of what it already has.

THE NORTHERN CULTURE “UNTAPPED” INQUIRY INTO THE VALUE OF THE NORTH’S GREAT CULTURAL CAPITAL

What is the true value of the North’s cultural capital?

Cultural capital is not simply buildings or institutions. It’s true value is so much more. It is the combination of **places, people, heritage, institutions, skills, ideas, events and infrastructure** from which cultural, economic and social value can be created. A healthy cultural ecosystem depends as much on makers, creators and participants as it does on physical assets.

We asked:

- **How can the true value of the North’s cultural capital be recognised and unlocked to drive growth, investment and opportunity across the North and the wider UK?**
- **What does cultural “value” look like? How is it measured and how should we define it in the terms of this Inquiry?**
- **How can Northern culture better articulate its value to Government, investors and the public to secure long-term, sustainable support?**
- **What is needed to unlock greater public, private and partnership investment in the North’s cultural infrastructure and cultural economy, and what impact could this have on regional and national growth?**
- **What are the key barriers and pinch points holding back growth in the North’s cultural sector, and what practical changes are needed to break them down?**
- **What’s the true economic and social value of Northern culture to the UK and globally - if untapped - and why isn’t culture more central to the delivery of economic and industrial strategy?**
- **Why is culture still not sufficiently embedded within economic and industrial strategy, despite its proven contribution to productivity, place-making and competitiveness?**

We heard:

The North has enormous cultural capital and untapped assets

The North possesses rich but untapped cultural capital AND there is a huge opportunity to unlock its full value

From internationally recognised venues, museums and heritage assets to broadcasting clusters, festivals, grassroots organisations and creative talent, the North has a wealth of cultural assets.

Understanding the value of Northern cultural capital begins with defining what it is.

> *Culture isn’t peripheral. It’s central to the North’s renewal. Unlocking its full potential requires bold leadership and a new compact between local, regional and national government- one that trusts the North to shape its own cultural future.*
>
> **Claire McColgan CBE,**
> Director of Culture Liverpool and Associate Director of Culture for the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Investment in culture creates economic value

Evidence submitted to the Inquiry demonstrated that cultural investment generates economic returns far beyond the cultural sector itself.

As evidence from the University of Lancashire argued, healthy cultural infrastructure encompasses not only organisations and buildings but people: makers, creators, participants and contributors capable of creating self-sustaining cultural ecosystems.

Major investments and institutions such as MediaCity and The Glasshouse sit alongside newer large-scale cultural infrastructure, historic assets such as the Piece Hall, and the North’s extraordinary industrial, musical, sporting and social heritage. Festivals, museums, theatres, grassroots venues and community cultural organisations add another layer of assets spread across cities, towns, rural areas and the coast.

The question is whether we are extracting their full economic and social value. The North’s cultural assets are already delivering substantial value. Stronger investment, connectivity and coordination could enable them to deliver significantly more.
Evidence to the Inquiry demonstrates that cultural investment should not be viewed simply as expenditure.

The Glasshouse provides perhaps the clearest quantified example. Its estimated £681.2 million GVA contribution over 20 years sits alongside millions of pounds of annual visitor spending and hundreds of jobs.

The same principle applies to heritage. The Heritage Fund told the Inquiry that heritage’s combined economic contribution across the North’s three regions was £3.36 billion in 2022. Its £7 million investment in the Piece Hall helped conserve a historic building while reactivating it as a centre for cultural events and businesses.

The central economic proposition is therefore:

Cultural assets create value when the infrastructure, investment and ecosystem around them allow them to do so.

Culture drives the visitor economy

The visitor economy is one of the principal ways through which cultural capital is converted into economic value and growth.

Visitors drawn by music, heritage, festivals, exhibitions, major events and cultural experiences spend money in hotels, restaurants, shops, transport and other local businesses.

Liverpool provides one of the North’s strongest examples.

From European Capital of Culture in 2008 to Eurovision in 2023, Liverpool has demonstrated how major cultural events can raise international profile while being integrated into a wider cultural ecosystem. Claire McColgan pointed to EuroStreet, River of Light and Africa Oyé as examples of locally led activity capable of delivering social and economic impact when supported by long-term, place-based investment.

The proposal for a **UK Major Event Innovation Lab** is particularly important because it moves the conversation beyond simply hosting events towards capturing their expertise, supply chains, skills and legacy.

Lancashire demonstrates the same opportunity across a different geography. Blackpool Central represents a planned £300 million investment in new visitor experiences; Eden Project Morecambe represents £100 million of investment; while Preston Guild 2032 is expected to attract more than £20 million in direct investment alongside further indirect spending and spillovers.

The opportunity is not simply to attract more visitors. It is to **use cultural assets to increase visitor numbers, dwell time, spend and repeat visits - and capture more of that value for the places creating it.**

This requires infrastructure.

Cultural infrastructure enables growth

The evidence we heard describes cultural infrastructure at several scales: internationally significant venues and institutions; production and performance facilities; heritage buildings; creative workspace; studios; rehearsal and storage facilities; and smaller community assets.

Arts Council England told the Inquiry that there remains **significant untapped need for capital investment across the North**, including urgent remedial work, while emphasising that cultural infrastructure can unlock wider creative, economic and social opportunities.

The Inquiry found that the North possesses substantial cultural capital, but too many assets are **under-utilised, under-connected or under-invested in.**

The opportunity is not to invent the North’s cultural economy. It is to unlock the one that already exists.



We found:

Northern culture isn’t just a national treasure. It’s a national economic asset

The North isn’t short of cultural capital - it’s bursting with it. From world-famous venues and creative industries to extraordinary heritage and homegrown talent, our cultural assets are already driving jobs, investment and regeneration. We found that culture has earned its place at the heart of the UK’s industrial strategy and Northern growth plans. It’s not simply something to fund and protect - it’s something to invest in, grow and unleash as a driver of economic prosperity.

The North has the assets. Now it’s time to connect the dots

The North is home to an incredible collection of cultural assets, but too often they’re working in isolation, held back by fragmented funding and missed opportunities for investment. We found that bringing together Northern Mayors, government, cultural organisations and investors around a shared vision could turn individual success stories into a much bigger Northern success story. By identifying our strengths, connecting our cultural infrastructure and targeting investment where it can make the greatest difference, we can unlock opportunities right across our cities, towns, rural and coastal communities.

Northern culture brings in the crowds. Let’s make that count.

Government and Strategic Authorities should recognise major events, festivals, heritage and cultural destinations as economic assets, developing strategies that increase visitor spending, strengthen local supply chains and secure long-term benefits for host communities.

What will untap culture, skills and the talent pipeline?

We asked:

How can the North develop, attract and retain cultural and creative talent? What barriers prevent people from accessing opportunities, and how can education, skills, infrastructure and investment create a stronger pipeline from participation to employment?

- **How do we ensure all areas - urban, rural and coastal - across the North have fair access to equal opportunity to work in the jobs the cultural sector needs?**
- **How do we unlock cultural capital and investment in the future jobs and skills the North needs to turbocharge the cultural economy?**
- **How can devolved education and skills budgets be better aligned with the North’s cultural sector and the need to train, recruit and retain talent?**
- **Together, can Mayors turbocharge the future talent pipeline in skilled digital and creative jobs in the cultural sector?**
- **What impact will Artificial Intelligence (AI) have on the cultural economy, traditional skills and the future of work across the North? Will AI help untap cultural capital?**
- **What more can be done to break down the barriers to cultural opportunities for under-represented groups across the North and untap the skills and talent the North’s cultural economy needs?**
- **Is poor transport and connectivity in the North damaging the cultural economy and the North’s full growth potential?**
- **Does culture help root young people in place, helping to break down the barriers to study and want to stay and work in the North in jobs they want to do?**

We heard:

Talent is an asset too

The North does not lack talent. It lacks consistent pathways for that talent to develop, progress and remain in the North.

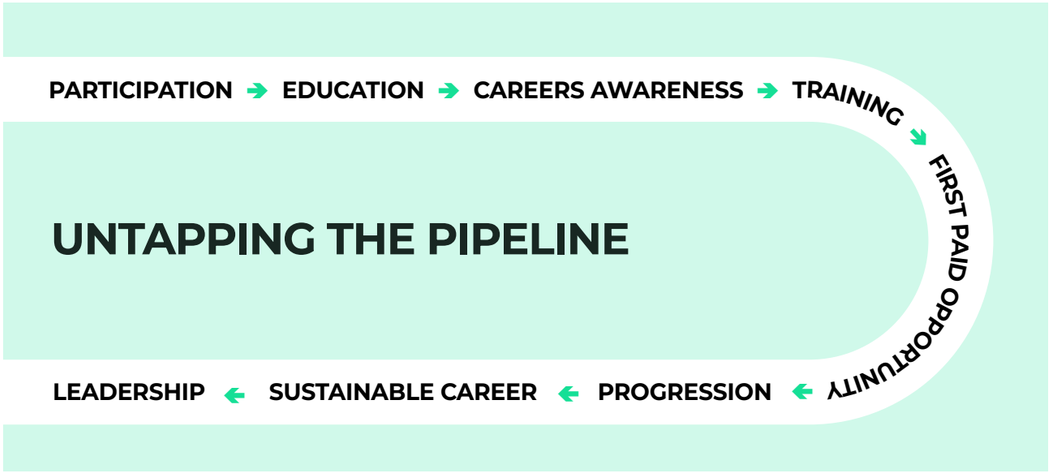
Northern cultural talent is abundant, but opportunities are unevenly distributed and the route into sustainable creative careers is fragmented.

“Access is the gateway to unlocking talent. Communities without local venues or infrastructure need affordable, safe and regular transport to cultural opportunities. At the same time, investment in micro-local cultural provision ensures inclusion at the grassroots level”

(Edge Hill University, P.1 Written Evidence)

It’s often too hard to navigate or access opportunities for a career in the cultural sector, A strong cultural emphasis on opportunities being in London remains. The Writers’ Guild identified the continued concentration of creative-industry opportunities in London. Of 797 production companies represented by the Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television (Pact), only 54 were located across Yorkshire and the Humber, the North East and North West, compared with 485 in London. Northern writers reported difficulty accessing commissioners, development executives and other industry gatekeepers and pressure to travel or relocate to London.

> *Young people only aspire to be what they see, we’ve got to use culture to inspire young people; primary education and secondary education - investment in spaces are all key to this.*
>
> **Sarah Towan,**
> Vice Principal Recruitment. & Communications, Bradford College P.13 Oral Evidence Session 2



The problem is not an absence of Northern talent. It is that access to the opportunities required to turn talent into a career remains inconsistent.

If Northern talent has to leave to progress, the North loses skills, spending, businesses, intellectual property and future industry leaders.

To ‘untap’ Northern culture, we need to stop thinking about the North as a training ground but as a centre of production and leadership

Mojisola Kareem,
Founder and CEO, Utopia Theatre

The pipeline must begin earlier

A successful pipeline cannot begin when somebody applies for their first creative job. A successful talent pipeline begins with access to cultural experiences and participation in childhood. It continues through education and careers advice, and needs clear routes into paid work.

The Inquiry heard strong evidence for earlier and more consistent exposure to cultural and creative opportunities and for pathways which make creative careers **visible, viable and valued**.

This also means designing skills systems around the reality of cultural employment — including freelance and portfolio careers — rather than expecting the sector to fit conventional employment models.

The Writers’ Guild called for stronger Northern training and education, investment in organisations developing Northern creators and ring-fenced development opportunities capable of establishing regional talent pipelines.

We need to create clear and accessible routes for people into the sector throughout their lives. We need a curriculum that encourages people to engage with film and moving image, which includes quality careers advice, qualifications which give people the skills they need to move in their careers, includes local needs, and crucially includes paid routes into the sector.

Jack Powell,
BFI, Director of Policy & Public Affairs,
P.10 Oral Evidence Session 2

The North’s geography determines opportunity

There is no single Northern skills problem.

Evidence from the University of York’s Creative Economy Census found there were distinctly different barriers according to geography: **coastal respondents experienced greater difficulties accessing finance; rural respondents were more exposed to inadequate transport and weak access to creative networks; and urban respondents experienced greater problems finding affordable and appropriate workspace**.

One in five respondents identified poor local transport as a barrier to their organisation or business, with rural respondents particularly concerned about accessing networks and opportunities outside metropolitan centres.

Creative and cultural opportunities in the North cannot meaningfully be described as “Northern” if they are not in reach of smaller towns, rural communities or coastal areas.

Infrastructure and talent are mutually dependent

The Inquiry heard that these barriers extend beyond the creative industries themselves. Transport, education, employment support and access to cultural infrastructure all influence whether people can participate in cultural life and pursue creative careers. Investment in cultural infrastructure must be matched by investment in the people who will use, operate and grow it.

Buildings, institutions and events cannot generate sustainable growth without people.The North’s cultural talent pipeline should be understood as part of its cultural infrastructure.

Evidence from Sheffield Hallam University highlighted the potential for a joined-up education to employment pathway connecting schools, further education, higher education and industry, supported by apprenticeships, work-based learning and graduate retention, while aligning cultural infrastructure with regeneration and innovation investment.

Heritage has its own urgent pipeline challenge. The Heritage Fund cited **72 critically endangered and 93 endangered heritage crafts**, demonstrating that failure to train the next generation can directly jeopardise the physical assets the North is seeking to exploit.

Unlocking Northern cultural capital means investing simultaneously in assets and people. One cannot realise its value without the other.

We found

Northern talent is everywhere. The opportunities aren’t

The North is bursting with creative talent, but too many young people struggle to turn their passion into a career. From that first spark of inspiration in the classroom to apprenticeships, paid work and leadership roles, the pathways aren’t always clear or connected. We found that the North needs a stronger, end to end, talent pipeline that gives people the opportunity to build a creative career - and a future - right here in the North.

Devolved skills powers can help unlock Northern creative potential

Northern Mayors have an opportunity to better connect skills investment with the needs of their local cultural economies. We found that closer collaboration between employers, colleges, universities and cultural organisations could help develop the skills the sector actually needs, while recognising that creative careers often involve freelancing, project-based work and multiple roles.

Your postcode shouldn’t determine your potential

The North’s cultural talent doesn’t stop at the city limits, but access to opportunity often does. Poor transport links, limited local facilities and fewer industry connections can make it harder for people in smaller towns, rural areas and coastal communities to get their foot in the door. We found that unlocking the North’s full cultural potential means breaking down these barriers and making sure opportunities reach every corner of the region.

Northern Culture APPG : Northern Culture 'Untapped'





"Before coming to Bradford College, I had no experience of performing live. Now I've performed at loads of gigs, learned to play different instruments and had opportunities I never thought I'd have."

Student, Bradford College

NORTHERN CULTURE IS A CATALYST FOR

GROWTH

TWO CITIES. ONE BIG LESSON.

Bradford and Salford may be at different stages of their cultural journeys, but both demonstrate the extraordinary potential of Northern places when culture is recognised as an asset for growth.

One is harnessing the energy of a landmark cultural year. The other demonstrates what decades of investment and ambition can deliver.

Imagine what we could achieve if every Northern city, town and community had the investment, infrastructure and powers to unlock its own cultural potential?







"I think we recognise that there are too many people who are disenfranchised from culture, arts and music. In the North we've become known over the years for making sure it's accessible to everyone. In doing that, not only does it add to the rich tapestry of our region, but it has real economic benefits too."

"In Salford we've seen the transformational economic impact that making our arts inclusive can have on our local economy."

Rebecca Long-Bailey MP

BRADFORD: culture rooted in place

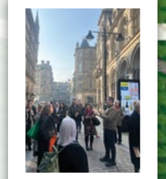


Bradford has never been short of culture, creativity or character. From its rich industrial heritage and extraordinary diversity to its grassroots talent and thriving communities, culture has always been part of the city's DNA.

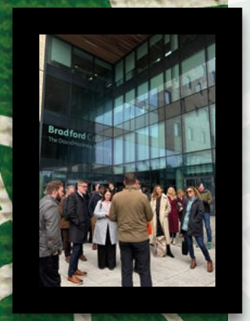
As UK City of Culture 2025, Bradford put its cultural identity on a national stage, showcasing its people, places and creative talent to audiences far beyond Yorkshire.

Bradford shows that cultural investment isn't just about major institutions or headline events. It's about building a pipeline of Northern talent, giving young people the skills and confidence to pursue creative careers, and ensuring that opportunities reach grassroots organisations and communities.

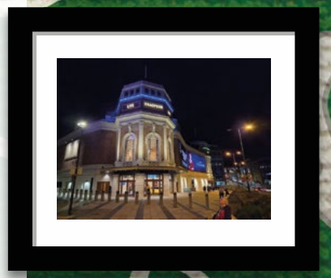
The real prize goes beyond a year of celebrations. Bradford is a shining example of what the North can do. It shows us how to turn cultural energy into lasting opportunities: strengthen creative careers, attract visitors and investment, support regeneration and make sure the benefits are felt long after the spotlight moves on.



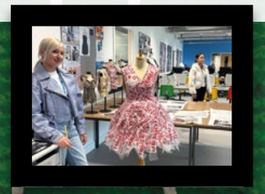














"We don't just do culture differently in the North - we do it better in the North".

Patrick Hurley MP











SALFORD: From Industrial Powerhouse to Creative Powerhouse

Salford knows a thing or two about reinvention. Once synonymous with its docks and industrial heritage, Salford Quays has become one of the North's most recognisable cultural and creative destinations, home to Lowry, MediaCity and a growing cluster of creative and digital businesses.

We saw this transformation and economic impact first-hand.

The BBC's move North helped accelerate Salford's transformation. Today, BBC North employs more than 3,500 people and contributes around £450 million in GVA. Since the relocation, Salford has experienced significant growth in its wider digital and creative economy, with the number of businesses increasing by 70% and creative employment by 142%.

Salford shows us what happens when cultural ambition is matched by sustained investment, infrastructure and a long-term vision for place. Culture doesn't just regenerate places — it can help build entirely new economies around them.









Should Northern Mayors have more power to untap cultural capital?

We asked:

Should Northern Mayors and Strategic Authorities have greater powers over cultural investment and decision-making? How can devolution connect culture with wider economic growth, and what responsibilities should remain with national institutions?

- **Who should be in charge of driving cultural capital and should it be fully devolved or balanced with national oversight?**
- **Are devolved powers a problem or a solution for cultural leadership?**
- **Can Mayors and Combined Authorities do more to embed culture in their local plans and economic growth strategies?**
- **How can Mayors work with each other and with national bodies (DCMS, Arts Council England) more strategically?**
- **Does a fully devolved North risk greater competition between the North’s regions OR strengthen collaboration over the need to invest in the North’s cultural economy?**
- **How can rural and smaller towns benefit, fairly, from devolved cultural powers and untap their potential and talent pipeline?**

> *Mayoral leadership can accelerate development of the talent pipeline by coordinating skills networks, funding apprenticeships, and fostering partnerships between cultural organisations and education providers. By prioritising digital and creative skills alongside traditional heritage trades, Mayors can help ensure the cultural sector’s workforce is fit for the future and representative of all communities.*

National Lottery Heritage Fund, P.4, Written Evidence

We heard:

Culture makes the case for devolution

The devolution agenda is about culture and place. Culture must be part of the devolved ecosystem. The evidence strongly suggests that greater place-based leadership can help unlock Northern cultural capital.

But the argument for cultural devolution is broader than simply asking **who distributes arts funding.**

Many of the biggest barriers identified by this Inquiry are not controlled by traditional cultural policy at all. They include **transport, skills, regeneration, planning, economic development, infrastructure, investment and the visitor economy.**

These are precisely the areas in which Mayors and Strategic Authorities increasingly possess powers and strategic influence. Devolution creates an opportunity to stop treating culture as a standalone portfolio and integrate it into the wider economic strategy of a place.

Devolution can work to better connect the pieces

A Mayor can help connect a cultural venue with a regeneration scheme; a creative cluster with skills provision; a major event with transport planning; heritage investment with town-centre renewal; and cultural strategy with the visitor economy.

Evidence from Sheffield Hallam University makes this case explicitly, arguing that devolved investment could align economic development and cultural growth, support multi-year priorities, create a regional skills and talent programme and coordinate investment in creative clusters and infrastructure.

Heritage Fund evidence similarly argues that Mayors and local authorities can use coherent local strategies to align investment and increase investor confidence.

The Overnight Visitor Levy could be a new fiscal lever to drive cultural investment

One of the most significant developments since this Inquiry began has been the Government’s confirmation that Mayors can choose to have the power to charge an Overnight Visitor Levy.

Strategic Authorities will be able to choose to introduce a percentage-based levy on paid overnight accommodation following local consultation, with revenue available to support the visitor economy and wider local priorities.

This is important not simply as a new revenue stream, but as an example of **fiscal devolution directly connecting culture, visitors and place.**

It creates the possibility of a virtuous cycle:

invest in cultural assets → attract visitors → generate economic activity → capture some of that value locally → reinvest in the place and visitor economy

This development strongly reflects evidence received by the Inquiry. Claire McColgan advocated an overnight accommodation levy for Liverpool, arguing that visitor revenue could be reinvested directly in tourism infrastructure and culture.

Liverpool’s hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 shows what happens when a major cultural moment becomes a major economic opportunity. An independent evaluation found that the event delivered a £54.8 million net economic boost to the Liverpool City Region, bringing visitors, spending and activity into the local economy. Culture doesn’t just fill venues - it fills hotels, restaurants, shops and high streets.

The policy landscape with regard to Mayoral powers has shifted during the lifetime of this Inquiry:

Devolution must be about growth, not about devolving scarcity

There was **not** a consensus in the evidence for simply transferring Arts Council England or national cultural budgets wholesale to Mayors.

Manchester City Council warned that ACE’s arm’s-length status protects artistic independence, equity and national coherence, and that direct political control could introduce short-termism and uneven distribution.

The Heritage Fund similarly argued that national organisations remain necessary to invest at scale and coordinate across regional boundaries.

The distinction is fundamental:

The purpose of cultural devolution should be to give places additional capacity to unlock their assets - not simply transfer responsibility for an already constrained funding pot.

The Inquiry therefore supports a hybrid model: national investment and arm’s-length expertise where scale and national coordination are needed; stronger Mayoral powers and investment for place-based priorities; and local and community involvement in delivery.

Devolution should grow the cultural economy, not devolve the management of scarcity.

> *There’s a real opportunity with devolution, you could have bootcamps in local areas to help move people forward in their careers especially in digital and AI. This helps to retain people in their workforce, this vital in building local culture, but also essential to local workforces.*

Jack Powell,
BFI, Director of Policy & Public Affairs,
P.10-11 Oral Evidence Session 2

We found:

Culture must be the heart of the devolution revolution

Devolution is about giving places the power to shape their own futures - and culture has a huge role to play in that. We found that Northern Mayors have an opportunity to bring culture into the heart of decision-making, connecting it with the big levers of growth: skills, transport, regeneration and investment. Culture shouldn’t be treated as an optional extra. It should be woven into the wider ambitions and economic strategies of our towns, cities and regions.

All Northern places need to have the tools to turn cultural success into lasting growth

The North has the cultural assets, the talent and the ambition. What it needs is greater flexibility to invest in them. We found that stronger local funding powers could help Northern places capture more of the economic value their cultural attractions and visitor economies generate - and reinvest it where it matters. The planned Overnight Visitor Levy is one example of how places could turn visitor spending into long-term investment in venues, events, infrastructure and the communities that make Northern culture thrive.

> *Devolved spending and decision-making can complement the national agenda, ensuring that investment aligns with broader cultural priorities while drawing on the specialist knowledge of Arts Council England and their regional teams. Local decision-making can respond to community needs while maintaining strategic coherence with national policy.*

(Queen’s Hall Art, Hexham, P.2, Written Evidence)

> *Entry level opportunities are highly competitive and often taken up by young people from more affluent areas of Greater Manchester outside of Salford- due to barriers around access, finances & opportunity leading up to post 16 or post 18 entry points. This represents a profound missed opportunity that devolved education, and skills budgets could address.*

Salford CEP, P.2, Written Evidence

More powers for culture should be moved closer to Northern places, but we need the strength of national institutions too

Unlocking Northern culture isn’t about simply shifting funding pots from Westminster to Mayors. We found that the greatest opportunity lies in combining the local knowledge and ambition of Northern leaders with the funding, expertise and reach of national cultural institutions. Stronger Mayoral investment, long-term national support and independent cultural bodies all have a role to play. The goal is to give Northern places more power to grow their cultural economies - not simply hand them responsibility for managing tighter budgets..



Is it time to re-imagine how we “do” culture?

The simple answer to this question is YES!

We asked:

Does the current approach to cultural funding and investment enable the North to realise its full potential? What needs to change to create a more sustainable, coordinated and place-led cultural economy?

- **What needs to change to unlock cultural investment in the North?**
- **Should cultural funding be devolved away from DCMS and could Mayors have greater revenue raising and fiscal powers to turbocharge cultural capital?**
- **Which funding models (public, private, devolved, place-based, tourist taxes, partnerships) would best support future cultural innovation, skills and growth?**
- **What can we learn from other parts of the UK’s cultural economy - and what other international or devolved models could work for the North?**

We heard:

We need to shift the mindset from cultural spending to cultural investment

The evidence suggests that the traditional policy distinction between “culture” and “economic growth” increasingly makes little sense. Culture must be treated as an asset to invest in, not simply an activity to fund.

If a cultural asset attracts visitors, supports hospitality and retail spending, provides jobs, anchors regeneration, develops skills, attracts businesses and makes a place more attractive to live and invest in, then investment in that asset is also economic infrastructure investment.

This requires a shift in the question the Government asks.

Not:
How much can we afford to spend on culture?
But:
What economic and social value could this cultural asset generate, and what investment is required to unlock it?

To untap the North’s Cultural economy we need to shift from funding short term isolated projects to investing in long term productive assets and infrastructure

Short-term competitive funding emerged repeatedly as a barrier and limits long-term potential.

It can finance activity, but it is much harder for it to build institutions, maintain buildings, retain skilled workers, develop audiences, attract private investment or establish sustainable career pathways.

Evidence from Manchester City Council calls for long-term, place-based investment that rebuilds infrastructure and combines national funding, devolved co-investment, local revenue mechanisms and longer-term financial models.

Similarly the National Lottery Heritage Fund argues for a mixed model combining national and devolved public investment, private and philanthropic capital, place-based funding and partnerships.

Northern Culture must be seen as a growth generator beyond individual events and attractions, it feeds the wider cultural ecosystems and benefits

The North’s greatest cultural successes do not exist in isolation.

MediaCity works because institutions, businesses, skills and infrastructure cluster around one another. Major venues depend upon transport, hospitality, supply chains and audiences. Festivals depend upon local production capacity. Heritage destinations support surrounding businesses. Universities feed innovation and talent into cultural industries.

Policy should therefore increasingly invest in **ecosystems rather than isolated projects.**

And that requires Northern places to collaborate.

The North is not a single cultural geography. Cities, towns, rural and coastal communities possess different assets and face different barriers. Future investment must recognise those differences and ensure that opportunities are not concentrated solely in major urban centres. Devolution must avoid simply recreating national centralisation at a regional level.

The Heritage Fund argues explicitly that Mayors should ensure smaller towns and rural communities are included in cultural priorities and investment, preventing resources becoming concentrated solely in larger urban centres.

> *The North is physically and economically closer together than people often assume and should be marketed as a coherent investment story + stressed the need to get the interface between creative industries and capital right, because it is not always a natural fit.*

Karim Palant,
Director of External Affairs, UK Private Capital, P.9, Oral Evidence Session 4

> *A mixed funding model offers the most sustainable pathway for cultural innovation and skills development in the North. This includes combining: Public investment through national and devolved funds, Private and philanthropic contributions, Place-based approaches that align with local regeneration plans, and, Partnership models that enable co-investment and shared expertise.*

National Lottery Heritage Fund, P.7, Written Evidence

We need to untap the opportunity to create wealth

The Inquiry’s evidence does not provide a single figure for what Northern cultural capital could be worth if fully untapped.

It does, however, provide repeated examples of the returns generated when individual assets receive sustained investment - from MediaCity and The Glasshouse to heritage-led regeneration and major events.

Separate external research into the wider Northern creative industries has suggested that better connecting and growing the North’s creative economy could generate around £10 billion in additional GVA. That figure is not a valuation produced by this Inquiry, nor does it measure cultural capital alone. It nevertheless provides important context for the scale of the wider economic opportunity. And that’s just the creative economy, were talking about the cultural capital of people, places etc....

The North’s cultural economy is already a major economic asset. Research underpinning the NP11’s Place Strategy for the North identified £10.4 billion in existing economic contribution from arts, culture and heritage, with the potential to unlock a further £2.7 billion in GVA through a more joined-up approach to investment, regeneration and place.

We found:

The North possesses cultural assets of enormous existing value. The economic prize comes from unlocking more of them, in more places, for more people.

Long-term, place-based cultural investment would be a game changer

The North’s cultural ambitions are big, but short-term funding doesn’t always match them. We found that constantly chasing the next funding pot makes it harder for cultural organisations to plan ahead, invest in their people and buildings, and build for the future. Moving towards longer-term, place-based investment would give Northern cultural assets the stability and confidence to grow, thrive and deliver lasting economic value for the places they call home.

It’s time to think bigger, invest smarter and work together

The North is packed with extraordinary cultural assets, but unlocking their full potential takes more than individual projects working in isolation. We found that bringing together Northern Mayors, cultural organisations, businesses, universities and investors could open the door to new funding opportunities, stronger partnerships and greater private investment. By joining up our cultural strengths with the wider economy, the North can turn individual successes into a powerful, connected cultural economy that attracts investment and drives growth.

> *Salford is already doing culture differently by treating it as infrastructure, joining sectors together and linking local delivery to national and international systems.*

Paul Dennett, Mayor, Salford,
P.11, Oral Evidence Session 4)

> *Culture is too often framed around participation while creative industries are framed around growth, when in practice the same people, skills and values underpin both.*

Sam Ingleson,
Associate Dean of Knowledge Exchange in School of Arts, Media and Creative Tech, University of Salford, p.4, Oral Evidence Session 4

The North’s cultural growth must reach every corner of the North

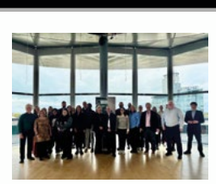
From our major cities and industrial towns to coastal communities and rural villages, Northern culture comes in all shapes and sizes - and so do the challenges it faces. We found that a one-size-fits-all approach to investment risks leaving some of our greatest cultural assets and untapped talent behind. Unlocking the North’s full potential means recognising what makes each place special, backing grassroots venues and local infrastructure, and making sure investment and opportunity extend far beyond our biggest cultural centres.

> *Cultural capital in the North represents more than artistic excellence. It is a resource driving social inclusion, civic identity, and economic progress. Its full value will only be realised when policy and investment frameworks measure and reward this integrated contribution, recognising culture as essential infrastructure for the North’s future prosperity.*

Sheffield Hallam University, P.2-3, Written Evidence

THE STANDOUT HEADLINES FROM NORTHERN CULTURE UNTAPPED





The North’s cultural capital is rich. Our cultural assets need to be untapped. We need the levers to turbocharge the North’s full growth potential by creating cultural infrastructure and opportunities across the North.

Cultural capital is not simply buildings or institutions. It is the combination of places, people, heritage, institutions, skills, ideas, events and infrastructure from which cultural, economic and social value can be created. Evidence argued that a healthy cultural ecosystem depends as much on makers, creators and participants as it does on physical assets.

Heritage is already a £3.36bn Northern economy

Heritage’s combined economic contribution across the North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber was estimated at **£3.36 billion in 2022**. From the Piece Hall to historic high streets, evidence showed how investment in existing heritage assets can generate footfall, enterprise, regeneration and visitor appeal.

Culture gives people a reason to come North — and a reason to stay

Liverpool’s journey from **European Capital of Culture to Eurovision** demonstrates the power of major events to build profile, attract visitors and create longer-term cultural and economic legacy. The opportunity is to connect events more deliberately to tourism, local supply chains, skills and investment — capturing more of the value they create.

Major cultural infrastructure can change the economic trajectory of a place

Fifteen years after the BBC’s move to MediaCity, its Northern workforce has grown from around **2,000 to more than 3,500 employees**, including 180 apprentices. BBC North contributes around **£450 million in GVA**, while Salford has experienced a **70% increase in digital and creative businesses and 142% growth in creative employment** since the relocation.

£681m — the contribution of one Northern cultural asset

The Glasshouse International Centre for Music estimates that it has generated approximately **£681.2 million in GVA over 20 years**. Today it generates **£13.5 million in local audience and visitor spending each year**, supports around **750 FTE jobs** and estimates that every £1 of funding it receives generates **£10.80**.

The next generation of cultural assets is already being built

Lancashire’s evidence alone points to **£300m Blackpool Central, the £100m Eden Project Morecambe**, the Morecambe Bay Triennial and Preston Guild 2032 — with the Guild expected to bring more than **£20m in direct investment**, alongside further indirect spending and spillovers.

The North doesn’t have a talent problem. It has a pipeline problem.

The Inquiry heard repeatedly that Northern talent exists, but the route from **participation and education to training, paid work, progression and leadership** is fragmented.

“To ‘untap’ northern culture, we need to stop thinking about the north as a training ground but as a centre of production and leadership”

Mojisola Kareem, Founder and CEO, Utopia Theatre

485 vs 54 — opportunity remains heavily concentrated

Of the **797 production companies represented by Pact**, Writers’ Guild evidence identified **485 in London compared with only 54 across the North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber combined**. Northern creators reported difficulty accessing commissioners and other industry gatekeepers without travelling or relocating.

Where you live changes the barriers you face

There is no single Northern cultural geography. Research submitted by the University of York found **coastal creatives faced greater problems accessing finance, rural creatives faced greater transport and networking barriers, while urban creatives faced greater pressure finding affordable workspace.**

Transport can determine whether cultural opportunity exists at all

One in five respondents to the York & North Yorkshire Creative Economy Census identified **poor local transport as a barrier to their business or organisation.**

We’re at risk of losing cultural skills as well as talent

The Inquiry heard that **72 heritage crafts are critically endangered and a further 93 endangered**, creating risks for the North’s heritage assets as well as future jobs.

Devolution can unlock culture because culture depends on more than cultural policy

Skills. Transport. Regeneration. Planning. Infrastructure. Investment. The visitor economy.

These are all integral to cultural growth — and increasingly sit within the responsibilities or influence of Mayors and Strategic Authorities.

But devolution must not simply devolve scarcity

The evidence points towards **national investment and arm’s-length expertise alongside stronger devolved powers, place-based investment and local decision-making** — not simply transferring constrained national cultural budgets from one tier of government to another.

And devolution is moving

Since the Inquiry took evidence, Government has confirmed that Strategic Authorities in England will be given the power to introduce an **Overnight Visitor Levy**. Local leaders will be able to choose whether to use the power and reinvest revenues in the visitor economy, infrastructure and other local priorities.

It is a tangible example of the kind of fiscal devolution discussed throughout this Inquiry: **giving places greater ability to capture and reinvest some of the value generated by their own assets and visitor economies.**

The wider prize could be enormous

Separate research into the wider Northern creative industries has estimated an opportunity of around **£10 billion in additional GVA** if the North’s creative potential is better unlocked. This is **not an Inquiry estimate or a valuation of cultural capital itself**, but it provides context for the scale of the wider economic opportunity.







CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a real opportunity to tap into the North’s cultural capital. The social and economic benefits go far beyond the cultural sector. Unlocking talent, creating skills and spaces and generating diverse and inclusive communities where people love to live and are invested pays a huge social dividend. The North is good at culture, its got great talent but not necessarily the investment and infrastructure it needs to connect and grow its cultural capital.

The Inquiry concluded that the North’s cultural capital is a rich economic asset which needs to be untapped. Its people, places, institutions, heritage, infrastructure, events and creative businesses already generate significant economic and social value but it could do so much more to generate growth and greater opportunities for the North’s people and places.

The North’s visitor economy needs to be harnessed and is one of the principal mechanisms through which value is realised. Major events, heritage, music, venues, festivals and cultural experiences attract people and spending into Northern places, reaping benefits extending far beyond the cultural sector. The new Overnight Visitor Levy where Mayors can charge a small tax on overnight stays provides a means to invest in their own visitor economies. Making sure that all city regions and communities are benefitting from the cultural capital raised is key.

Having great cultural assets alone is not enough. Infrastructure, transport, investment and an end-to-end skills and talent pipeline determine whether cultural capital can be converted into sustainable growth — and the barriers vary substantially by geography.

Devolution is an opportunity to do culture in the North differently. A more decentralised approach is central to unlocking the North’s cultural capital. Mayors increasingly hold powers over the skills, transport, regeneration and economy. Culture is integral to future growth and it is time to better connect cultural policy with Mayoral growth plans. With the prospect of even greater powers, fiscal devolution and a fully devolved North - untapping cultural capital, investment and infrastructure must be mainstreamed. We know major sporting and cultural and community events boost the visitor economy.

The North needs an investment model, not a scarcity model. Greater devolution should complement rather than simply redistribute national funding. Long-term national, regional, local and private investment should be brought together around the objective of growing the North’s cultural asset base and the economic value it generates. Too often communities are left competing against each other over scarce resources and funding regimes.



Recommendations

The Northern Culture APPG ‘Untapped” Inquiry recommends that:

Cultural capital is put at the heart of Northern growth plans. Government and Strategic Authorities should formally recognise cultural assets and infrastructure within regional growth, investment, regeneration and industrial strategies.

Mayors are given greater powers and resources to unlock cultural assets. This should include stronger integration of culture with devolved skills, transport, regeneration and investment powers, alongside greater fiscal flexibility.

The new Overnight Visitor Levy is used to support cultural and visitor-economy growth. When Strategic Authorities introduce a levy, they should consider how revenues can support the cultural assets, events, infrastructure and public realm that attract visitors and sustain successful destinations. This new power should be treated as an opportunity to create a long-term cycle of local investment and growth, rather than simply an additional revenue source.

Long-term cultural investment frameworks need to be established. Mayors, local government and other funding partners should work towards establishing long term cultural frameworks to secure multi-year co-investment in strategically important Northern cultural assets and untap ecosystems.

End-to-end Northern cultural talent pipeline is needed. Creative participation, careers education, FE and HE, apprenticeships, paid entry-level opportunities, freelance support and leadership development should form a connected pathway, with devolved skills funding used more deliberately to support cultural and creative careers.

Investment in infrastructure must support and scale-up cultural capital and generate growth opportunities. This means major venues and institutions but also studios, production facilities, rehearsal space, heritage assets, grassroots venues, digital infrastructure and the maintenance of existing cultural buildings.

Transport is recognised as vital to cultural infrastructure. Affordable, safe and reliable transport connects people to culture. Regional transport strategies should consider access to cultural employment, education, venues and the evening economy, particularly for rural, coastal and lower-income communities.

Major events, festivals and venues in the North are included in long-term economic strategies of Mayors. Northern places should use major events to develop permanent skills, supply chains, international profile, visitor demand and community legacy rather than treating them as one-off interventions. Liverpool’s proposal for a UK Major Event Innovation Lab provides one model worth exploring.

National cultural infrastructure must be protected while strengthening devolution. Greater Mayoral power should sit alongside national arm’s-length institutions capable of investing at scale, protecting artistic independence and supporting activity crossing regional boundaries.

A shared Northern cultural asset and investment framework must be developed. Northern Mayors should work together to identify complementary cultural strengths, investment opportunities and gaps across cities, towns, rural and coastal communities — creating a stronger proposition to Government and investors without forcing Northern places into competition with one another.

There is a real opportunity to re-imagine the North’s cultural assets and make them work to deliver greater wealth and prosperity.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to

Our wonderful hosts in Bradford and Salford for showing us what Northern Culture has achieved and the difference Northern Culture makes to the lives of so many and how our communities are enriched and regenerated by Culture. Particular thanks to **Bradford Council's Jamie Saunders, Bradford College, Sarah Towan, Anita Ladva-Cheung, The Lowry, Julia Fawcett, Gwen Oakden, University of Salford, John Mckenna and Robbie Beale.**

Grateful thanks to

All our members and officers of the Northern Culture APPG for all their passion and pride in the North's great cultural potential, who invested so much time and contributed to this report:

- (Vice Chair) Tom Morrison
- (Vice Chair) Lord Watson of Wyre Forest
- (Vice Chair) Lord Vaizey of Didcot
- Rebecca Long-Bailey MP
- The Lord Alton of Liverpool
- Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top
- Lewis Atkinson MP
- Lord Brady of Altrincham
- Alison Hume MP
- Lord Hunt of Wirral
- Afzal Khan MP
- Lord Liddle
- Andy MacNae MP
- Rachael Maskell MP
- Lord Mendoza
- Anneliese Midgley MP
- Julie Minns MP
- Lord Parekh
- Alex Sobel MP
- Lord Storey
- Martin Vickers MP
- Lord Watts
- Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay

The Northern Culture APPG thanks

All those who gave evidence and their time to contribute and support this important Inquiry into the North's cultural capital. Without their help this would not have been possible:

- Adlib Audio Ltd, Andy Dockerty.
- Arts Council England, Rebecca Ball
- BBC, Josie Cahill, Heidi Dawson
- British Film Institute, Jack Powell
- Booksellers Association, Lauryn McCormack
- Bradford College, Sarah Towan, Anita Ladva-Cheung
- Bradford City Council, Susan Hinchcliffe (former leader of Bradford City Council)
- Bradford Producing Hub, Lisa Mallaghan
- British Film Institute, Charlotte Doyle
- Crafts Council UK, Nicky Dwear
- Creative Lives, Max May
- Crewe Creates CIC, Novae Baghurst
- Culture Commons, Trevor MacFarlane
- Culture Consortium Leeds, Edward Appleyard
- Department for Culture Media and Sport, Anya Harvey
- Edge Hill University, Michael Young
- English National Opera, Marina Jones
- Festival of Making CIC, Simon Webbon
- Film & TV Charity, Marcus Ryder
- GPS Culture, Peter Stark
- Guild of Media Arts, Chris Bailey
- HEY Creative, Max May
- Historic England, Deborah Wall
- Into the Light, Julia Handelman-Smith
- Independent Cinema Office, Catharine Des Forges
- Kirklees Council, Adele Poppleton
- Lancashire Combined County Authority, Edward Matthews-Gentle FRSA
- Libraries Connected, Emma Hoddinott

- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Claire McColgan
- Lowry, Julia Fawcett, Gwen Oakden
- Manchester City Council, Dave Moutrey OBE
- Mayor Paul Dennett
- More Music, Marianne Barraclough
- Music Mark, Chris Buglass
- Music Venue Trust, Talia Newmark, Sophie Asquith
- National Centre for Early Music, Cherry Fricker
- National Science and Media Museum, Science Museum Group, Charlotte Connelly
- National Science and Industry Museum, Sally Macdonald OBE
- National Trust, Mike Innerdale
- Newcastle Circus Arts CIC, Julie Ward
- New Writing North, Claire Malcolm
- Northumberland Music, David Francis
- Octagon Theatre Bolton, Roddy Gauld
- Opera North, Michael Wilkinson
- Orchestras Live, Sarah Derbyshire
- Professor Katy Shaw, Director UK Creative Communities; Director of Cultural Partnerships, Northumbria University
- Queens Hall Arts Centre, Katy Taylor
- Salford Cultural Education Partnerships, Lynsey O'Sullivan
- ScreenSkills, Laura Mansfield
- Sheffield Hallam University, Roger Bateman
- The Glasshouse International Centre for Music, Tony King
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Paul Bristow, Tom Exall
- The National Saturday Club Trust, Lucy Kennedy, Alex Bird
- The Stitch Company, Charlotte Meek
- The Writers' Guild, Lisa Holdsworth, Eleanor Dawson
- University of Lancashire, John Scanlan
- University of Salford, Sam Ingleson, Robbie Beale
- University of Sheffield, John Wilson
- University of York, Jonathan Brockbank
- Utopia Theatre, Mojisola Kareem
- UK Hospitality, Tony Sophoclides
- UK Music, Tom Kiehl
- UK Private Capital, Karim Palant
- XR Stories, University of York, Jay Harrison
- York Museums Trust, Kathryn Blacker
- York St John University, Christopher Bailey

With grateful thanks to

The University of York, Professor Rachel Cowgill for her support, insight and expertise and to Northern Culture APPG's Secretariat, the **Devo Agency's Gill Morris, Eleanor Eyles, Sam Whyte, Taya Clarke and Karen Newman** for all their hard work, patience and diligence in making this important Inquiry possible.

Please get in touch with the Devo Agency to join the Northern Culture Club and support our work to showcase Northern Culture.

UNIVERSITY of York

devo agency.

Get in touch:



appg

Northern Culture
All-Party Parliamentary Group

Co-Chair	Patrick Hurley MP
Co-Chair	Lord Watson of Wyre Forest
Vice-Chair	Lord Vaizey of Didcot
Vice-Chair	Tom Morrison MP

NORTHERN CULTURE CULTURE CLUB

NORTHERN CULTURE
'UNTAPPED'

Supported by: UNIVERSITY of York