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Northern Culture
All Party Parliamentary Group

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The Case for Culture

What Northern Culture Needs to Rebuild, Rebalance and Recover

Levelling-up Inquiry

Report and Recommendations

January 2022

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About the Northern Culture APPG Inquiry

The Northern Culture All Party Parliamentary Group (NC APPG) was established in 2021 to provide a strong and cohesive voice in Parliament. It brings Northern MPs and Peers - from all parties - together to advocate for Northern Culture and heritage.

This All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Northern culture provides timely and important evidence on what the North needs to recover from the current crisis and to build back support for, and investment in, the cultural sector in a post-covid and post-Brexit world.

The Northern Culture APPG was created to promote and champion the huge economic contribution made by the North's cultural sector. It works to:

- ➔ **Provide a united voice on pan-Northern culture asks and priorities in order to shape and influence future Government decision making**
- ➔ **Generate debate on how to boost skills, create equal opportunities for all, promote diversity and support ambitions to empower future generations**
- ➔ **Level-up investment in Northern culture**
- ➔ **Maximise the soft of power of Northern culture to promote a strong and cohesive brand for the North**
- ➔ **Establish wider recognition of the world class reputation of Northern culture**
- ➔ **Build back the North's cultural potential now, and in the longer term.**

The North has a proud and celebrated cultural offering. Alongside the significant social, health and wellbeing benefits it provides, Inquiry evidence demonstrates that Northern culture has a critical role to play in achieving economic growth and upskilling ambitions for the UK as whole. In the context of ever-growing regional and economic disparities, and the pervasive need to "level-up", it seems likely that the impact of the pandemic on the cultural sector will be felt far more acutely in the North.

The Inquiry heard evidence from cultural stakeholders across the North on how to level-up opportunities to increase diversity, sustainability, accessibility and resilience in Northern Culture. This report provides for cross party consensus and a powerful and united voice on pan-Northern cultural asks and priorities. We hope its findings, recommendations and 10 point action will help shape and influence future Government decision and policy making on what Northern culture needs to level-up.

"Levelling up has got to be more than just an economic mission. It's got to be about improving how people feel about the places where they live. Culture does this; it adds colours to people's lives and makes a place somewhere that we want to live, study, work and invest in. No one deserves to live in black and white. There is a real opportunity now to level up the North and culture must be central to that."

Dan Jarvis MP, South Yorkshire Metro Mayor



Foreword

The real power of this report is that it has achieved cross party consensus and support from MPs and Peers across the North and that our recommendations have been forged from the wealth of evidence we heard and received from all parts of the North's cultural sector. For the first time the North has come together as one, to champion the North's rich cultural tapestry.

The North has a proud history and heritage. Culture connects us like nothing else and the pandemic has reminded us that place and participation matters now more than ever. The challenge is to preserve what we have and create new culture, as well as ensuring that culture is by all, and for all, going forwards.

We believe that the Northern Culture APPG Inquiry recommendations represent a significant milestone for all those who live, work, rest and play in the North. Our report makes the Case for Culture and sets out clearly what Northern Culture needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover.

Taken together, our findings and recommendations map a bold post-pandemic pathway to recovery and sustainable growth for Northern culture. The North could easily become a leader in sustainable cultural production and consumption and sustainability needs, to become a central tenant of any post-covid UK cultural sector.

We know that Northern Culture makes a huge contribution to the UK economy but now is the time for the North to seize this 'once in a generation' opportunity to increase diversity, sustainability, accessibility and resilience in its talent pipeline. Our Case for Culture report makes it clear that it is time to maximise the social and economic benefits which stem from our cultural assets and time to tap into the North's rich seam of talent – if we are to unlock the North's cultural capital and truly level-up.

We believe it is time to invest and kick start the North's cultural future. It is time to level-up and time to place culture at the heart of North's recovery.



James Daly

James Daly MP
Co-Chair NC APPG



Julie Elliott

Julie Elliott MP
Co-Chair NC APPG

The Case for Culture:

What Northern Culture needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover?

When we think of the North, the first images that come to mind are of its cultural identity and heritage – the Angel of the North, the sculpture of Henry Moore, the music of Manchester, the art of Sheffield, the film and television shows produced in Yorkshire, the buildings and landscapes we cherish, and Northern cities, city regions, coastal and countryside communities.

Yet the North has been particularly hard hit by the global pandemic and a legacy of deindustrialisation. Cultural practitioners, organisations and audiences across the North experienced very different impacts as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry examined those impacts and looked at how to rebuild, rebalance and recover and heard that culture is probably the quickest and most under-used lever for levelling up today.

UK creative industries make a greater contribution to the UK economy than to any comparable nation. With annual GVA of £115bn, providing 2.1m jobs and growing at three times the rate of the economy overall since 2008, the size and economic weight of the Creative Industries is still surprising to many. But any level of surprise that the sector is larger (in terms of GVA) than the Life Sciences, Automotive, Aerospace and Oil and Gas sectors combined is understandable, because the idea of the Creative Industries as an industrial rather than a cultural sector is relatively 'new', being only conceptualised and defined in the last 25 years.ⁱ

Arts and Humanities Research Council

Clearly culture should be seen as a vital tool to help Government achieve its aim “to unite and level up the country”.ⁱⁱ The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove, has asserted that when it comes to levelling up, government “should always be receptive to bold new policy proposals”.ⁱⁱⁱ The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry shows how culture is uniquely positioned to work across policy agendas relating to digitalisation, decentralisation, decarbonisation as well as delivering the ‘four principles’ of levelling up: enhancing local leadership, raising living standards, improving public services and generating pride in place.

A dramatic shift in thinking is required if we are to rebuild, rebalance and recover the North’s rich cultural capital. This change has been needed for a long time, but the pandemic has heightened that need and provides a catalyst for re-thinking the way we approach our cultural future to boost and create diverse and dynamic regions across the UK.

In the context of the pandemic, the Northern Culture APPG Inquiry looked at a lot of evidence and gathered views on the state of Northern culture. It asked: ‘what does the North needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover?’ We found that:

➔ Rebuild

Despite assistance from the DMCS Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF) and a government furlough scheme for workers, the cultural sector suffered widespread losses across 2020-21. Cultural organisations were closed to physical audiences and limited in engagement and fundraising opportunities due to the pandemic. Cultural venues whose business models had evolved in recent years to ensure a greater reliance on self-generated income found themselves at higher levels of financial threat because of the pandemic. Many freelancers and self-employed creatives were not eligible for furlough support, while some live performers like musicians and stand-up comedians also fell between support systems and did not qualify for any formal assistance. A whole generation of young people starting their careers in the creative industries were frozen in terms of job opportunities, work experience and talent development.

→ Rebalance

The phrase 'levelling up' has become a mixed metaphor that variously aims to tackle place-based inequality and strengthen place-based identity by reducing inequality between places and maintaining or enhancing outcomes in all places. Until the pandemic, culture was not always visible in debates about levelling up. When the UK became one of the first nations to implement a government-backed cultural recovery fund to ensure the protection of cultural organisations and heritage sites - culture came into a new spotlight. The prospectus for the Levelling Up Fund recognises the role that "cultural infrastructure can play in rejuvenating places, leading to "positive economic and social outcomes at a local level".^{iv} Yet, as PEC reminds us, "Levelling Up' policy must take the particular needs and existing capacities of different places into account if there is any hope of creating a level playing field that equitably addresses social need and increases the health and wealth of the nation".^v

→ Recover

During the first 13 months of the pandemic, 29.4 per 100,000 died of covid in the North compared to the rest of England, representing **a 17% higher mortality rate in the North**.^{vi} Lockdown lasted 6 weeks longer in the North and damage to mental health was significantly worse.^{vii} There was also a 55% increase in minor psychiatric disorders – such as anxiety and depression – in the North compared to a 50% increase in the rest of England. The depth of the damage done to lives and livelihoods across the North means that the contribution of cultural venues is central to a fair and sustainable recovery for everyone across the North. Research shows that access to arts, culture and heritage, including participation opportunities, benefits health and wellbeing, improves educational attainment, combats loneliness, boosts community cohesion and resilience^{viii} and attracts inward investment.^{ix}

There is a clear and strategic case for investment in culture in the North. The soft power of culture can meaningfully contribute not only to our economic recovery, but to the wellbeing agenda and our national identity in the years ahead.

We know that regional inequalities benefit no one and that it is in the interests of everyone if we can level up and reduce prevailing regional and intra-regional disparities. Investing in new cultural initiatives that will enable regions to become market makers and enhance pride in creative placemaking across the North makes sense as does a less centralised and more devolved/localised approach to investment in Northern cultural priorities. The Northern Culture APPG's Inquiry sets out recommendations on how to level-up Northern culture and maximise access to culture and create opportunities for all.

We all owe parts of ourselves to the culture that made us. This is our chance to invest in culture for the next generation. In doing so, we invest in our regions, our economy and our wellbeing - we invest in ourselves and our country - and begin to generate the opportunities and solutions that will define the post-covid world.

“The arts, cultural and creative industries in the North can play a vital role in the region's economic renewal and recovery from the pandemic. Levelling up will not be achieved without place-based partnerships of cultural, educational, public, private and third sector organisations working together to tackle challenges and to build a new future for everyone in the North. Northumbria University welcomes this report and the 10 point action plan as a clear pathway forward.”

Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive Northumbria University

Executive Summary

The Northern Culture APPG's Case for the North report represents a significant body of evidence and cross-party consensus on how the North can rebuild cultural confidence, how we adapt and become more resilient and how we can develop new audiences for culture. In summary, we found that:

- ➔ By bringing people closer to opportunity - to access skills, retrain, and retain talent in the regions - our arts, culture and heritage sectors are uniquely placed to generate spill-over benefits, from high street regeneration to public health targets and pride in place. Through connectivity and interaction, culture exercises vital soft power in creating identity and community cohesion.
 - ➔ We have a once in a generation opportunity to leverage the culture of the North as a social, economic and political asset. We must set out this new agenda for not only levelling up the playing field, but for establishing a whole new vision for the North in which investment in the cultural sector is at the heart of plans to supercharge recovery.
 - ➔ Northern culture is the coal of the contemporary - a vast seam that runs across the region that underpins wellbeing, placemaking, production and economic growth. Under extreme pressure, it has transformed into something extraordinary with limitless energy and potential.
 - ➔ The power of Northern culture and heritage goes beyond its contribution to the North's economic recovery. The benefits of arts and culture, heritage and museum sites, parks and gardens, to local communities and health and wellbeing needs to be more widely acknowledged by policy and place makers.
 - ➔ Culture connects us like nothing else and the pandemic has reminded us that place and participation matters now more than ever. The challenge is to preserve what we have and create new culture, as well as ensuring that culture is by all, and for all, going forwards.
 - ➔ Whilst the pandemic period was traumatic for many across the North, it has been a period of rapid learning that has made Northern culture reset and rethink challenges and opportunities for the immediate future.
 - ➔ There are barriers relating to inequality and precarity in cultural production and access across a range of stakeholders. This has made visible issues relating to Equality Diversity Inclusion and access that need to be addressed as matters of urgency in post-covid cultural planning.
 - ➔ Northern culture can play a key role in delivering post-covid priorities as an enabler to levelling up including net zero and climate change, domestic and international tourism, retail and hospitality, high street regeneration and digital integration.
 - ➔ Further devolution must be a bottom-up process by which creative industries, heritage organisations and regions determine their own path based on local aspirations and understanding of each unique area, and then set out the powers and responsibilities needed to realise that strategy.
- Every MP must recognise that culture is a central point of public policy, and a key driver for change. Timescale is key: everything in this report is important, but we now need to focus on what is urgent. The Northern Culture APPG hopes that this report will kick start an urgent debate on what Northern Culture needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover. We want our recommendations to lead to closer and collaborative working across Parliament and across central and local government to deliver our recommendations.

The Northern Culture APPG will work with Government, especially the DCMS and DLUHC, to make the case for culture in the North and to progress our recommendations:

To rebuild, rebalance and recover, Northern Culture needs to:

- 1 Invest in Next Generation Creatives**

We need our workforce of the future to be creative. To achieve that we must teach the spirit of innovation through a creative education in order to maintain our competitive position on the world stage. The North needs to see greater investment in a new creative curriculum from early years to HE that is co-designed and co-delivered with the creative industries, alongside new creative benchmarks, flexi-creative degree apprenticeships and creative enterprise skills, and a Great North Skills Survey to channel the skillsets, productivity and collaborations necessary to grow cultural production in the North and retain and retrain creative talent across the North.
- 2 Transform Technology to Unlock Growth**

New research is required into the barriers and opportunities of digital for producers and consumers of culture in the North. Digital engagement can work to connect creatives, audiences and freelancers but digital poverty poses real challenges to the same groups. Developing a pan-regional and city-region plans to transform hard and soft tech infrastructure would support growth, raise productivity levels, and establish the North as a key driver of national growth.
- 3 Build Back Opportunities**

There needs to be greater and more equal access to cultural opportunities in the North. Inclusion and diversity must be front and foremost in the recovery from the pandemic. The Boards of creative and heritage organisations must promote Diversity and new EDI training packages and mentoring schemes should be made available for future creative and heritage leaders to foster a new culture of inclusion as standard.
- 4 Generate Prosperity Partnerships**

The North needs to incentivise new collaborations between cultural, educational, public, third and private sector organisations and freelancers to maximise resources, enhance competitiveness and opportunities, share best practice and build resilience to tackle the challenges that lie ahead to rebuild and rebalance Northern culture. This includes mentoring and enhanced support for start-ups in the freelancer workforce.
- 5 Secure Flagship Funding**

Northern Culture needs more investment and better resourcing through collaborative development funds. More devolved and less centralised funding would better support creative ideas and generate greater cultural capital across the North. Northern leaders should collaborate and work together to leverage resources and support diverse cross-sector groups. Place-making and cultural ownership are key to recovery and must be prioritised for future funding if the North is to achieve greater reach and generate new cultural communities and creative centres.

6 Define the Cultural 'Value' of the North
The cultural value of the North needs to be assessed and evaluated. Establishing a Northern Culture working group with Northern universities would work to generate a robust evidence base for evaluating the value of the North's culture and soft infrastructure. This should be commissioned as a priority to inform the North's post-covid recovery plan.

7 Build back Confidence:
To fully recover from the pandemic and build back confidence, venues, creatives and audiences require long term support to normalise live engagement with culture and the arts, especially in relation to touring and festivals in the North.

8 Connect Health and Culture
The North should lead the way in creating health and culture partnerships that work to improve wellbeing. Existing health and culture partnerships should be scaled up and there should be greater collaboration to bring together public bodies in the health and cultural sectors to promote the role culture and heritage plays in the North's wellbeing and to map physical barriers to engagement with culture across the regions of the North.

9 Promote Creative Leadership
There needs to be less tension between national policies and local structures and a shift towards co-created and co-delivered culture by communities, for communities, with a global resonance and reach. Northern culture requires new models of leadership and advocacy but there is no one-size fits all model. Instead, Combined Authorities and Local Authorities, cultural compact and cultural consortia, LEP and local organisations should share datasets and better advocate and communicate together for the contribution made by Northern culture to the national economy and society.

10 Measure Up to Level Up
Place-based performance indicators are essential to enable point-to-performance metrics and to retain public engagement with the levelling up agenda. The North needs to adopt a more strategic and less fragmented approach to Northern culture; fewer short-term interventions, more joined up thinking, and enhanced focus on cultural literacy and leadership are required across the North to promote and prioritise the importance of Northern culture and heritage to the levelling up agenda.

1 Levelling up Northern Cultural Infrastructure

We asked:

How do we ensure a fair spread of funding for culture across our Northern communities?

We heard:

➔ An end to one-size-fits all funding models would create a more level funding field

“the North has a tapestry of cultural assets, environment, community, heritage and activity. A more devolved funding model would allow for individual cultural identities and ecosystems which make up the whole cultural tapestry within the North to receive adequate funding to support growth. Cultural recovery will need a coordinated response, but this must be nuanced and suited to each area within the North to allow for a sensitive recovery that works for all. Tailored business support, easily accessible seed funding and organisational development funding are vital for recovery of freelancers, small and large businesses and organisations alike.”

Maisie Hunt of Cumbria LEP

➔ There is a need to balance funding for new projects with the need to maintain the value of existing institutions was highlighted by the heritage sector in particular

“York may be known as a beautiful heritage city with fantastic cultural assets, this comes with the responsibility to be custodians of this heritage and culture and to maintain, protect and revitalise it. We are unable to perform this task adequately without appropriate funding for local government and the cultural sector and estimate that this cost would run into the tens of millions of pounds.” **The City of York**

In the wake of the pandemic, brand new ventures - including The Globe in Stockton on Tees, and the Fire Station in Sunderland - opened for the first time, proving capacity and demand for new cultural venues in the region.

➔ Focussing on signature investment for ambitious pioneering projects is needed to rebalance the funding landscape in the North

The South Yorkshire City Region claims that funders need to work with Northern Combined Authorities to ‘think big to identify potential future investment opportunities with the end goal to mainstream culture into regional frameworks for investment. For culture to be seen as a key economic driver and fundamental to inclusive growth, rather than an optional recreational activity.’

Recommendations

Soft Infrastructure, Hard Returns: funding is needed to establish signature investment opportunities involving public and private finance to launch new global centres of excellence and to preserve the cultural value of existing Northern heritage.

Flexi Funding: flexibility is needed in future funding initiatives in terms of balancing capital and revenue offers. Capital is required to bring new builds to the North, but we must also care for existing sites and work to reduce their environmental footprint. But revenue is also required alongside capital to create and sustain business models and operating contexts in which arts, cultural and heritage organisations can plan for the post-covid period.

We asked:

How do we level-up investment to help restore and rebuild cultural institutions?

We heard:

➔ **Funding schemes must encourage collaboration not competition.**

Creative Fuse NorthEast, a £2.2m action research programme supporting the cultural and creative economy, which includes the five North East universities of Newcastle, Durham, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside, identified, “a need to incentivise cross-regional collaboration. There are many possibilities in connecting cultural and creative businesses across regions to the mutual benefit of all participants, but currently we lack the links and mechanisms to join agendas. There are great opportunities to join forces across regions if we can devise policy instruments to incentivise partnerships. Levelling-up need not be growth in some regions at the expense of others.”

North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll has also written in a report for the Royal Society for Arts that his experience of working in a Combined Authority (CA) has shown that “competitive bidding, in particular, damages local accountability, strategic planning, and worst of all, local agency. It reinforces the belief that Westminster is both the cause of – and the solution to – regional inequality. You cannot level up the North from Whitehall.”^x

Salford Culture and Place Partnership reflected that “we have to support a paradigm shift from ‘competitive placemaking’ to a ‘collaborative placemaking’, incentivising collaborative bids from multiple local authorities that enable locally-led activity while sharing learning with neighbouring or like-minded towns or cities.”

West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin also thought that funding cannot carry on being, “a beauty contest where we’re all pitching against each other. The money and time spent in these bids is unfortunately so draining and then when you don’t win there’s nothing. It should be something the Government are committed to across the country so that we don’t have to bid against each other traitorously.”

➔ **To level up the playing field of funding, we must invest in capacity building for bidding among freelancers and SMEs.**

“Only the larger cultural organisations have dedicated funding teams, accountants and business managers to do this and the lack of knowledge within Local Authority Business Support Services is demonstrated by the low engagement they have with start-ups in the creative sector as lack of infrastructure for workers within the cultural industries is sporadic and patchy. All these factors weaken regions’ ability to attract funding and investment in the future especially as part of the levelling up agenda.” **The University of Sheffield**

➔ **Demystifying the dark art of bid writing is key to making funding more accessible**

Kate Parry from Cumbria Arts and Culture Network (CACN) told us that “funding is regarded by many as a dark art, to which only larger, already relatively resource-rich organisations know the secret. We need to upskill and support individuals and smaller organisations to develop and write bids themselves (perhaps with larger organisations taking a mentoring lead). We also need to grow creative ambition so that projects are readily fundable. That would pull more funding into regions like Cumbria. CACN has begun this work already (small-scale fundraising training delivered last year, regular showcasing of great case studies) but lacks capacity and funds to do more.”

➔ **The language of funding schemes was identified as a major barrier to funding**

Screen Yorkshire suggested that *“the problem, quite often with these big funding pots, is that they are so complex and so time consuming to apply for that they just are out of the reach of the people that actually need to get to them. Government needs to make sure that funding schemes are genuinely accessible to the people who need the most. The people who need the money get into page three of the form and they have no idea what it is they’re supposed to be saying because the forms are asking them to present themselves in a different language to that which they’re more familiar with.”*

Recommendations

Reframe Funding: funding should be reframed, redistributed and targeted at the hyperlocal in a post-pandemic context. Future funding calls should focus on building bidding capacity and collaboration, engage accessible language, transparent processes and timely outcomes, groups and include ring-fenced provision for freelancer inclusion and professional development.

Cultural ‘Value’: as well as providing provision for new projects, funding schemes should recognise the value of preserving cultural heritage and opening up existing resources to new audiences. Place-making and cultural ownership and engagement must be prioritised as fundamental requirements of future funding calls - alongside cross-sector collaboration - to achieve reach and to generate new communities of creativity across the North.

Let’s Talk: greater cross-government department communication is required to join up funding pots that will deliver on cross agenda issues, and this cross-agenda capacity must be reflected in the requirements and timelines of future funding calls.

We asked:

How do we improve the physical barriers to engagement with culture?

We heard:

→ We need an evidence base for physical barriers to access to culture in the North.

South Yorkshire City Region told us, “There is a need to map what the barriers are to both internal and external audiences’ engagement with Northern Culture and identify what interventions would be required to address these specifically.”

→ More devolved public transport funding and communication with cultural organisations within CAs would reduce physical barriers to engagement.

“Integrated and interconnected accessible bus routes which connect to railway stations and urban centres would reduce access barriers for those without a car and encourage green travel.” **English Heritage**

Andrew MacKay of Tullie House reflected that “there are three things that that make the development of culture in rural areas more challenging: transport, demographics and digital communication. Age is also an issue. More and more people are retiring into rural areas and there’s a sort of danger that that could lead to stagnation. Young people move out, old people come in. So there’s a number of different issues there that are specifically about physical barriers.”

→ Digital inequality and disconnectivity means that the new audience opportunities for engaging with culture that came with the shift to online provision in the pandemic were not experienced by everyone.

Salford Culture and Place Partnership told us, “the pandemic has worsened inequities in cultural access or engagement that existed prior to the pandemic. Many people have become accustomed to isolation and new activities, especially social ones which include communication, feel too challenging. The most vulnerable people are unlikely to engage online for various reasons (digital poverty, needing relationships with key workers to keep them on track, living in unhealthy/unsupportive environments etc) which means they are further disconnected.”

Recommendations

Look North: we need to map the physical barriers to engagement with culture to build an evidence base that can inform future policy making and investment decisions. From travel and transport, to price point and building access, we need to commission a full study to capture the regional disparities in physical engagement barriers between the public and cultural encounters in the North today.

We asked:

Should more powers and funding be devolved to build back culture in the North?

We heard:

- **Devolving funding power and decision making to the North will increase engagement and ownership of culture by the people, for the people.**

Theatre Space North East argued that “funding decisions being made in London or even Manchester are not based on a current understanding of our cultural map, challenges or opportunities. Decisions on hyper local projects and funding pots are being made hundreds of miles away by people with limited local knowledge leading to large investments being made on ‘safe bet’ partners, who have national profiles, and this in turn limits the support available to smaller organisations. The irony being the small organisations are doing so much more to provide access and ensure reach.”

- **The North is uniquely placed to facilitate more inclusive funding calls and diverse decision making.**

Carlisle Culture Board Chair Darren Crossley reflected that “the North has felt excluded from past funding so we’re trying to maintain the current level of culture as well as establishing new cultural opportunities for our city, residents and communities. To do that effectively, devolved powers and funding could be important assets.”

- **An important part of devolving funding to the North is decentralising the UK creative industries out of the South East and into the regions and nations.**

Comma Press said that “we must encourage more Northern ‘hubs’ or satellite offices for creative industries like publishing which are still so London-centric, but have been making efforts in recent years to move out of London, and encourage them to recruit from the region they are moving into where possible. Publishing ‘hubs’ in major Northern cities like Manchester could host events, CPD workshops, ‘hot desking’ space for publishing entrepreneurs, start-ups and freelancers and would make publishing more visible in the North of England”

Recommendations

Devolve Funding: the North needs to be empowered to decide where and how funding is allocated. The creative industries should be incentivised to relocate into the regions and nations of the UK and work in partnership with HEIs, CAs, LEPs and the private sector to generate sustainable, diverse project teams in the regions.

2 Increasing Access to Culture in the North

We asked:

How do we support and encourage young people's creativity and cultural job opportunities post-covid?

We heard:

- Embedding a new integrated creative curriculum from primary through to Higher Education should be a key area of focus for future recovery.

With the rise of AI and robotics, the future of work and educational reforms were pinpointed as key contexts in which to write a new creative curriculum. The most important cultural interventions start at school, especially in the Early Years. Liverpool-based, **Future Yard CIC** suggests that “positive aspiration building needs to start early. Cultural education faces stark challenges in schools.”

- We must not overlook to value-added experience of cultural encounters with cultural sites and creative professionals throughout the education journey

Sheffield Museums suggested that “learning outside the classroom, trips to the museum, theatre, adventure playgrounds, parks and woodland – nurture young peoples’ mental health and wellbeing through creative activity. It also means commissioning museums, galleries, theatres, creative practitioners to deliver in schools – to reintroduce cultural activity as a staple of learning in schools creating sustainable relationships and sequences of experiences rather than one off experiences.”

- Reversing Government cuts to creative courses in Higher Education will create a sustainable regional talent pipeline

Creative Fuse said that “cuts to Arts Education risks the talent pipeline to the creative economy that would leave a one-sided talent base for our creative industries. High growth sectors like digital marketing and content creation, which have become central to consumption throughout the pandemic rely on STEM analytical and coding skills, but also require inspired messaging and communications sensibilities that are derived from Arts and Humanities subjects. Limiting skills and talent development in this way risks damaging our creative economy and ‘starving the golden goose’.”

The Federation of Small Businesses also asserted that “the recently announced plans for 50% funding cut to arts subjects at universities is likely to have an impact on diversity and opportunities in this sector. We believe that all industries have creative roles so can benefit from these skills. Manufacturing companies do not just employ engineers, they also employ designers, marketing and computer programmers. Culture is a way to develop the skills that employers need.”^{xi}

➔ **Re-asserting the value of a creative skillset is core to changing the perceived value of creative education**

Chair of Carlisle LEP, Masie Hunt, claimed that *“the importance of creativity and imagination needs to be communicated with the same degree of importance as STEM skills. This needs a change in approach from careers professionals, and employers supporting careers education in schools, in highlighting creativity and imagination as important attributes regardless of careers ambitions and demonstrating the importance of these skills and attributes in job roles, sectors and career development. This will enable creative skills to achieve a parity of esteem with STEM skills and employability skills and provide the basis for the effective promotion of cultural job opportunities. This promotion must be driven through employers who understand the range of job opportunities available, the pathways into these roles and the careers that can be developed across the sector.”*

➔ **By educating teachers, careers advisors and employers about new opportunities in the creative industries, we can open the talent pipeline to a new generation of creative talent**

UCAS suggested that we need to *“embed equality and role modelling (see it be it) from an early age and ensure transition and career development as well as careers advice shows the full range of opportunities, when we expand work experience and create accessible affordable and responsive placements and experiences, and closer working between schools, FE, HE and creative industries.”^{xii}*

➔ **The ‘Billy Elliot’ effect, whereby creative careers are regarded as a form of failure or a waste of education and potential, remains a barrier to access**

Theatre Space North East said that *“we haven’t come far enough from the ‘Billy Elliot’ days when a member of our youth theatre was called a disappointment for achieving a place at university to train in theatre, rather than get a job. In order to address young people’s creativity, we need to address cultural value as a whole, broaden the understanding of what type of jobs are available in the North, the routes to them, fighting the ‘I must move south to be a creative’ and the ‘not a proper job’ understanding that is currently in place.”*

Sage Gateshead told us, access to creativity and creative careers will only be achieved when we stop *“viewing the arts and culture as recreation, rather than as a career.”*

➔ **Teaching young people the creative enterprise skills they require to operate as effective freelancers is vital**

The Musicians Union called for creative education to incorporate training in *“start-up, and individual and business support. Musicians entering the freelance profession encounter an unpredictable industry in its most volatile moment whilst not often having the business skills, aptitudes and funding that would prepare them for a niche industry. Dedicated advice, guidance, and mentoring would genuinely support musicians and artists and give them a much better chance of success.”*

➔ **There is a long-term knowledge gap in understanding the creative skills sets of the workforce across the North**

Screen Yorkshire told us that “we are all basing our knowledge and understanding of the skills gaps on largely anecdotal evidence. We need to do a big survey across the whole of the North to take a snapshot of where we are now, but also to understand where we are going to need to be in three to five years’ time as the economy as the green economy changes, technology changes. And then we want to be able to devise smart interventions into those markets to build the skills that we need.”

Recommendations

New Creative Curriculum: invest in the co-creation and co-delivery of a new creative curriculum with industry, mapped from primary to higher education, that educates students in creative practice and creative entrepreneurial skillsets; reverse to cuts to creative teacher training and higher education creative subjects; prioritise access to transformative cultural encounters in the early years and commit to the right of every child to have the opportunity to learn an instrument, creative skill or cultural encounter by the end of Key Stage Two; invest in Creative Industry Academies and draw on freelancers to teach the skills required to shape the workforce of the future.

Scale Up What Works: invest in LCEP (Local Cultural Educational Partnerships) - an existing network of place-based groups of influential experts, united by their desire to improve cultural education for local children and young people - to share opportunities, best practice and connect communities of young talent across the North.

New Benchmarks for Creative Education: implement a new skills-scaffold for creative subjects at GCSE and A Level to highlight the portfolio of transferable skillsets gained from studying creative and cultural disciplines, launch new creative benchmarks as a driver and measure of performance in relation to the national curriculum and its role in underpinning a sustainable creative industry talent pipeline, and fund creative careers education mobilising freelancers to share creative enterprise skills in the classroom.

Great North Skills Survey: training providers, local authorities, FE, HE and central government must work together to conduct the first ever Great North Skills Survey to identify areas of skills deficit and to capture opportunities and differences across the regions. All interested parties must then collaborate to invest in, co-design and co-deliver training that creates an inclusive and highly-skilled creative workforce in the North that is fit for the future.

We asked:

How do we help develop a supply chain for talent and harness what many towns and cities in the North have always done – acted as a ‘pool of talent’ with pathways into the creative sectors?

We heard:

→ **Strategic cross-sector partnership working can maximise resources, enhance competitiveness and opportunities, and build resilience**

Sinead Rocks, Managing Director for Nations & Regions for Channel 4, told us that *“the Channel 4 example illustrates how important close partnerships with local partners are in successfully delivering a strategy for levelling up. Having taken the decision to move to Leeds, Channel 4 have worked closely with the LEP, Council and Screen Yorkshire to set up a partnership board to develop and implement a joint strategy. Public and private sector partners like the LEP, the Council, the Screen Agency and local education providers – and of course C4 – all have different levers at their disposal and are impactful when used strategically together. We carefully engaged with the sector in the region, to understand key challenges and barriers to growth which included the need for training and skills to create a strong talent pipeline, and access to the finance and investment business support needed for growth.”*

→ **Enhanced routes into the creative industries for post-16 school leavers and for freelancers to change role within industries are needed in the wake the pandemic**

The North East Cultural Partnership (NECP) reminded us that *“18-25 year olds made up 82% of redundancies in England in 2020-21”*. In response, the NECP ran a pilot project called Creative Pathways aimed at disadvantaged 16-21 year olds, with funding from Tyne & Wear and Northumberland Community Foundation. It identified economically disadvantaged young people, who were struggling to start careers, and worked with them over a year. *“Every one ended up earning money from cultural work. We need long-term invest in similar programmes that provide introductions to cultural/creative work and personalised supportive pathways into cultural or creative work”*.

→ **Flexi Creative Industry Apprenticeships were identified as an effective means of meeting skills gaps and supporting creative industry business growth and productivity**

We heard that there was a lack of capacity for industry to support creative industry apprenticeships and this was sighted as a key area of challenge by educational providers. From the evidence we received there was a clear need for a creative apprenticeship agency model to enable portfolio-based approaches to learning and to match-make the best young talent with the creative industries sectors most in need of new recruits.

The TUC has also stated that *“apprenticeships are largely absent from the cultural sector. Apprenticeships within ‘Arts, Media and Publishing’ accounted for just 0.4 per cent of all apprenticeship starts in 2019/20.3 And this is not due to the impact of the pandemic. The cultural sector consistently has the second lowest number of apprenticeship starts each year. However, the cultural sector faces many issues which apprenticeships are known to address. These include low numbers of entry level positions and skills shortages, specifically relating to digital skills.4 In fact, according to Creative & Cultural Skills, 57.7% of businesses within the Arts Council England (ACE) footprint agreed that apprenticeships would become increasingly important in addressing future skills shortages. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that apprenticeships are not just available but are accessible. There is a large amount of evidence showing that certain groups - including women, BAME groups, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and disabled people – do not get fair access to the best apprenticeships.”*

→ **Targeted support for freelancers was needed**

Researchers from the Centre for Cultural Value at The University of Leeds told us that *“with the vast majority of funding in England going to organisations, venues and institutions, with many freelance and self-employed cultural practitioners falling through the funding cracks, it is fair to ask whether the question on levelling-up investment shouldn’t focus more broadly on ecosystem rebuilding rather than on institutional restoring and rebuilding.”*

➔ **Stable funding for universities is vital to ensure we maintain our competitive position in education and R&D internationally**

Universities from across the North submitted evidence which suggested HEIs are uniquely placed to grow the next generation of talent and support the cultural sector to innovate and adapt to a post-pandemic world. The recently announced civic university between five universities in Greater Manchester shows the power and potential of universities to drive growth at a regional level. In 2018/19 alone £2.4 billion was generated in turnover from graduate start-ups and university spin out activity directly benefiting local areas and creating new jobs.

➔ **Graduate retention was highlighted as a long-term challenge that results in the North losing its best new creative talent to the South, where opportunities are greater**

Creative Fuse revealed that *“more imaginative policies can lead to an increase local opportunities for graduates, for example by funding internships in cultural/creative organisations to advance specific innovation projects, in a targeted variation on the Knowledge Transfer Partnership model.”*

CREATIVE INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING WITH UNIVERSITIES:

Investing in new models of creative industries Higher Education partnership delivery was identified as a critical task to draw together academic, creative industry and business talent to create a sustainable talent pipeline in the regions.

The UK writing industry sets out how strategic partnerships can come together to tackle creative industry pipeline challenges post-pandemic challenges. Northumbria University is working with Hachette, the second biggest publisher in the world, and regional writing development agency New Writing North to help decentralise the publishing industry. Publishing is UK’s fifth biggest export but remains predominantly based in London.

NWN CEO Claire Malcolm told the Northern Culture APPG Inquiry how *“new research from the partnership has generated evidence and insights that have led to sector-changing developments including a major shift in strategic thinking and practice among the three leading UK publishing houses, new policies and the creation of 3 new literary development businesses in the UK regions. Nationally, partnership research has informed industry decisions to decentralise away from London, with several major publishers recently announcing new offices opening in North. To establish a sustainable creative skillset in the regions, Northumbria and New Writing North work together to deliver the annual Northern Writers’ Awards (including a specific award for Northumbria graduates) and have recently partnered with a global publisher to develop a new MA Publishing - the first in the world to be co-delivered by a university, publisher and writing agency - that will help train and retain creative talent in the regions and enable the growth of publishing and writing in the North for the years to come.”* Many inquiry contributors requested more fluid relationships between HE and the cultural sector to enable knowledge exchange opportunities like these.

Recommendations

Retain and Return Talent: incentives to the creative industries to target graduate retention, and to offer internships and work experience opportunities to local people, especially in coastal and country regions where there are fewer opportunities; invest in new post-16 bridging courses for those wishing to return to or change roles within into the Creative Industries post-pandemic based on this new information.

Flexi-CI Apprenticeships and CI Degree Apprenticeships: reverse cuts to creative courses at degree level and introduce a levy to support targeted development of new creative industry apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships in identified areas of skills shortages co-designed and co-delivered with industry partners, in which students can work through a central creative industry apprenticeship agency with multiple employers.

Freelance Focus: freelance resilience must be underpinned by training and support for our Northern freelance workforce to reduce the talent drain of young creatives leaving the sector.

Invest in R&D through FE and HE Skills Partnerships: grant funding support for universities to play a larger role in supporting the future cultural and creative skills pipeline with industry and community partners across the North to enable co-design and co-delivery of new training.

Writing Resilience: from the page to the stage and across the small and silver screen, the UK writing industry is the source supply for the wider creative production of the UK economy. The pandemic has highlighted the precarity of writers and writing as a profession as content suppliers to the creative economy and to the publishing industry, the fifth biggest UK export. An All Party Parliamentary Group for Writing inquiry is needed into how we can create a more resilient writing industry and how we can diversify our writers and publishing industry to ensure that it accurately represents the breadth of talent in the UK today.

We asked:

How do we increase levels of engagement with culture and promote diversity to empower future generations?

We heard:

→ **Sharing diverse stories about the history of the North is powerful means of enabling inclusion and engagement with culture**

Newcastle District National Education Union

confirmed that *“the North has great strengths, which have been partly forgotten in recent decades and this needs to be addressed. The North can still fairly say that it has a reputation for fairness, tolerance and solidarity, three values, which we are still in need of today. Young people in particular need to be reminded of the truly great cultural, scientific and social achievements of Northern people in the past so that they can aspire to follow in the footsteps of the great pioneers in the North’s past.”*

→ **Equality, diversion and inclusion was identified as a persistent problem in the creative industries that has been made worse by the pandemic**

A UKRI research report led by the Centre for Cultural Value with PEC and the Audience Agency reveals that geographic inequalities have been magnified by the pandemic, especially for already marginalised socio-economic groups.^{xiv} **Sally Johnson from Screen Yorkshire** claimed that *“the frustration is that funding for EDI programmes comes and goes really quickly. You’ve got industry buy-In, you’ve found the people, the momentum has built, and then you lose your funding and have to start all over again. And that is a major barrier to real progress in this area. Under-representation is a problem that has existed for decades. It’s not going to go away in two or three years. Short term funding doesn’t indicate that there is a strategic approach to tackling some of these issues.”*

→ **Enhancing the diversity of those working in the UK creative industries starts with access to culture and opportunity for work experience**

Theresa Easton from Artists Union England

highlighted that *“a common career path into the sector, particularly for graduates is through un-paid internships. These un-paid initiatives discriminate against those from marginalised groups who lack the financial cushion to subsidise such un-paid positions. The culture sector should be promoting Real Living Wage internships and target those from marginalised groups. Best practice should be addressed when employing an intern and employers should work closely with trade unions and work to industry standards.”*

→ **Embedding diversity in the leadership and governance of culture post-covid is a clear priority**

The NECP told us that the pandemic *“highlighted that ethnically diverse practitioners are underrepresented at all levels in our cultural institutions, from Board level, through management to freelancers. Some funded organisations have made pledges to change and are taking positive steps to prioritise recruitment and opportunities for BAME people to be able to access more opportunities in the cultural sector, but much more needs to be done to ensure a more diverse and representative cultural sector.”*

- ➔ **Promoting a new culture of co-production and co-creation as standard is a powerful means of helping communities shape their cultural offer**

Darren Crossely from Carlisle Culture Board

reflected that *“through our project Hope Streets, young people see that local heritage is theirs to own. It provides a platform for 11-25 year olds from diverse social, economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds to work with heritage organisations, artists and experts to interrogate, agitate and ‘re-present’ their local heritage to produce Festivals of Hope.”* Curious Minds also explained how embracing participatory models can *“develop a bold new vision for Northern culture. We need to agree a new, fit-for-now and fit-for-purpose definition of culture and cultural education – driven by the kinds of culture that children and young people are creating and participating in, letting our young people lead a cultural revolution across the North of England”.*

- ➔ **Highlighting the relevance and profiling the accessibility of regional culture was identified as key to generating new engagement opportunities**

ENGAGING DIVERSE AUDIENCES

An English Heritage project exploring the historic graffiti in the cell block at Richmond Castle is a great example of how the wider public can be engaged with the at risk heritage sites in a way which boosts opportunities for volunteering and cultural engagement. Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the £550,000 project saw local volunteers to research over 2,000 graffiti inscriptions to build a picture of who was in the building and why. The project developed educational resources for local schools and prompted discussion around historical themes linked to the building. Participants have helped to produce new interpretation for the English Heritage website, and created a travelling exhibition based around the graffiti stories. Young people also engaged with conservation work and responded to the graffiti and its stories through music, film and performance art.

Recommendations

Heterogeneous North: the history of the North is rich and varied and the product of many voices, nations and cultures. By making explicit connections between the ways in which we understand the past, in the present, for the future, culture can connect disparate groups to a civic identity and foster cohesion.

Embed EDI: equality, diversity and inclusion should be business as usual, not the subject of short-term funding calls. Embedding EDI as standard in all aspects of funding and a requirement of bidding organisations will ensure that an ecosystem of access and opportunity is fostered and rewarded in the creative industries and beyond.

Future Leaders: representative EDI in cultural leadership as well as on cultural boards, and new EDI training packages and mentoring schemes made available for future creative industry leaders to foster a new cultural of inclusion as standard.

3 Getting Northern Culture Back on Track

We asked:

What are the opportunities for Northern Culture?

We heard:

→ Cultural can help us repurpose our high streets and heritage sites

Manchester Museum describes the capacity of culture to “reclaim disused land, sites and shops to host cultural programmes, studios and activities. This would support the recovery of high streets, reach new audiences and develop skills. Incentives (reduced rents and grants, access to hire equipment) would encourage smaller organisations and freelancers to support this, including museums with mobile collections and resources.”^{3v}

→ Strategic partnership working offers a major opportunity to combine expertise, resource and agendas to level up through culture

Rhodri Talfan Davies, BBC Director of Nations, told us that “the central mission of the BBC is very much outlined by this Inquiry report. The BBC can play a part in rebalancing and rebuilding Northern culture and is keen to do so. But success requires partnership working and local support with a strategic vision.” There is an opportunity for a strategic programme of closer alignment, partnership, shared posts and funding between further/higher education sectors and the cultural sector. Developing a scaled up, strategic Northern Culture-wide partnership programme could transform educational opportunities and cultural engagement and support tackling inequalities and inclusion. Closer collaboration between culture and tourism would also level up a new visitor offer to domestic and overseas tourists. English Heritage call for “funding to promote the North of England in a cohesive way to wider audiences. Strong collaboration across Destination Management Organisations, to help finesse the marketing of ‘the North’ could be of particular benefits.” The BBC opening in Sunderland was supported by the Combined Authorities of North of Tyne and Tees Valley in a joint bid. The associated launch of Fulwell73 as a global production company with North East offices evidences training and production capacity building initiated by new Northern hubs of national cultural and creative organisations.

➔ **Digital can open Northern culture to global audiences**

DIGITAL HORIZONS

York Festival of Ideas reflected that “by transitioning to a virtual platform enabling the delivery of the festival for free opened up significant opportunities to support the reputation of and audience engagement with Northern Culture across the globe. The Festival’s 2020 virtual programme reached an audience of 45,000 people to 97 free events over 13 days from 130 countries as diverse as Colombia, China, India, Russia and the USA, and from every region of the UK from the Shetland Isles to the Channel Islands. A YouTube channel strengthened audience engagement and ensured most events could be accessed at any time by anyone regardless of personal circumstances, or time zone. The transition to virtual has opened up our vistas: opportunities to combine high profile speakers from around the world alongside programming speakers from our own city and region offer new curation and engagement opportunities that will define us as ambitious, accessible and authentic. We have found - ironically - that our engagement with international programme and festival partners has expedited through the impact of covid - our partnerships now span significant programme and sponsor partnerships not only in York and the UK but also with international festivals in India and Bangladesh as well as sponsoring partners from Greece, the USA, France and the Netherlands. We are confident that we can build new momentum and engagement that offer significant opportunity to showcase not only the excitement and relevance of higher education, but our city and our region.”

Recommendations

High Streets and Heritage Sites: harnessing dormant sites can unite communities to reclaim and repurpose creative spaces and regenerate civic pride, identity and opportunities for productivity, employment, investment and tourism.

For the Nation From the Regions: national organisations should be incentivised to decentralise into the Northern regions since such moves bring additional benefits and attract additional private sector investment.

Digital Global: R&D investment should be committed to creative industry development planning to support the sector in transitioning their systems and processes to hybrid online and offline delivery models.

We asked:

How do we get confidence back in our audience post-covid?

We heard:

→ Audience confidence in live in-person cultural experiences and encounters remains a challenge

Newcastle Cultural Compact told us that “many festivals and live performance events will require enhanced support for events in 2022, including things like covid risk assessments, clear messaging for audiences and providing evidence that safe events can happen”. As Sasha Lord asserts, recovery is not “just about galleries, it’s not just about theater. Popular culture needs to come to the forefront. Festivals and live music gigs are more relevant culturally than other parts of the of the sector.”

→ Touring artists and exhibitions face particular challenges in a post-Brexit post-pandemic context

English Heritage told us that that there are “significant opportunities for more touring exhibitions across sites in the North. We have hosted a number of art installations and other temporary exhibitions at our sites but there has not been the necessary infrastructure and cross-northern communication to enable these to be toured. This could be assisted by strategic investment in creating suitable exhibition spaces in key locations across the North and developing a Northern network for touring programmes.”

→ Cultural confidence could be enhanced by investing in new national venues based in the North, as well as Northern hubs of existing national cultural organisations and creative training institutions

Barrow Rock School suggested that having “a BRIT School in the North” would foster confidence and skills in the regions. “Having a new venue just outside of a main Northern city with satellite institutions reaching into the more remote or isolated areas of the North” would be a positive investment.

→ Confidence in culture can be informed by a better understanding of the value of culture to wider society and to the economy as part of post-pandemic recovery planning

Newcastle Cultural Compact said that “there needs to be greater recognition of the strength of the cultural sector in the North East, and opportunity for cross-regional activity. There is also currently uneven support of culture from LEPs across the regions - for some it is central to their thinking and for others it is not really on their radar. It would be easier to argue for displacements of money from London, if there was better evidence of the value local authorities and LEPs place on culture and its contribution across economy and society.”

Recommendations

Support Live: live cultural experiences require additional support to navigate the new normal of touring, covid compliance and customer confidence to achieve sustainable strategies for future delivery.

Renewal Resources: create flagship resources to refocus National Cultural Sites in the North: Echoing UK2070, the inquiry calls for investment in new national flagship institutions for culture and the arts based in the North and new Northern hubs of existing national organisations.

Cultural Capital: the ‘value’ of culture lies not just in its outputs but in the spill-over effects it creates in wellbeing and health, skills and education, soft power and nation advocacy. Culture has the unique capacity to tell new narratives about the North in the twenty-first century, and about the wider UK.

We asked:

What has been the impact on communities and welfare?

We heard:

→ **The pandemic has highlighted the potential of culture to positively impact on communities and welfare**

Newcastle Cultural Compact proposed that “the role that arts and culture can have in supporting wellbeing has been emphasised during the pandemic, and many have rediscovered the value of arts and leisure time. This only heightens the need to increase accessibility to culture, and to look to embed sustainable models of cross sector working to meet the needs of communities.”

South Yorkshire City Region reflected that “community cultural groups play a pivotal role in supporting community cohesion and creative grassroots practice. During the pandemic, many groups displayed initiative to make activities accessible in different and innovative ways, which may well have a place in a post-pandemic world. Such groups are also often the links to local diverse communities which otherwise have no voice and no visibility, with the ability to respond positively to local needs and preferences. However, it is groups like these who have missed out on funding opportunities such as CRF due to their lack of experience and know-how in navigating funding bid application.”

→ **Culture can play an important role in enhancing civic pride and creating a sense of identity**

Historic England demonstrated that “heritage and cultural really can really transform places for the better by driving up business confidence and civic pride, attracting visitors to strengthen economic growth and providing positive reasons for businesses and workers to locate in an area. The re-purposing of the many vacant and under-used textile mills, which are fundamental to the history and culture of Pennine Lancashire, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire, will greatly enhance local pride in place and deliver investment opportunities, delivering levelling up at scale.”

English Heritage also proposed that, “culture can be used to develop social cohesion and a sense of place and community. Heritage sites in the North exist in both affluent and deprived areas and can provide a focal point for regeneration and the development of community pride. The distinctiveness of places deriving from heritage can have, in turn, a significant positive impact on individual wellbeing, bringing people together and strengthening communities. While people often have strongly opposing views on what places should look like post-COVID, heritage is a rare uniting factor in what people value about the places around them. As our country recovers from COVID-19, heritage can be central to fully realising the value of local place and local identity, as well as adding significant further value to Northern tourism. Telling the authentic story of the North through its heritage has the power to inspire, unite and improve lives.”

➔ **Health-Culture partnerships can make manifest the benefits of culture for community wellbeing**

The evidence we received has demonstrated the lived benefits of cultural engagement in terms of enhancing wellbeing, personal growth, strengthening civic society and identity, and facilitating belonging and community cohesion. Greater Manchester is aiming to become first Creative Health city-region bringing together health and social care, local government, VCSEs and the cultural sector; placing culture and creativity at the heart of addressing health inequalities in Greater Manchester social prescribing programmes (extending the work of NASP across the North) and cross-sector partnerships with local health and community partners can build a case for further investment (including research and philanthropic support).” The ‘Orchestras in Healthcare’ report also demonstrates that approximately half of UK orchestras are engaged significantly in the area of health and wellbeing, and the business case for this work is being taken up strongly amongst those orchestras not yet involved.^{xvii}

Recommendations

Health Culture: healthcare partnerships should be scaled up in a co-ordinated approach that brings together public bodies in the health and culture sectors to lever the role of culture in wellbeing. By uniting regional Clinical Commissioning Groups and Integrated Care Systems and funding the evaluation of health-culture initiatives the North can generate a new evidence base for regional and national cross-sector collaboration and inform the growing social prescribing infrastructure.

We asked:

How do we promote a strong and cohesive brand for the North, building recognition of its' world class reputation?

We heard:

→ We need a paradigm shift to generate a new narrative of the North that captures our global cultural identity today

IVE said that “we need to consider the North brand identity and narrative. The branding should pull contrasts together, in a spirit of and to foster, celebration and generosity. We should aim to import and export great people and ideas.”

Historic England reflected that “Northern culture is the product of Northern heritage. The North is like nowhere else in the world, and its interlinked heritage, culture, places and landscapes are a vital part of the region’s diverse and unique identity. Effective work between public bodies in partnership with external partners including the wider business sector and local government can and should be a part of promoting ‘Brand North.’”

South Yorkshire City Region told us that “a strong ‘Northern Culture’ vision and brand depends on building a high-level narrative of place which articulates clear stories to engage people. Addressing any historic, outdated and unfair negative external perceptions without neglecting the unique selling points our heritage provides, to increase the attractiveness of engaging with culture in the region to external audiences.”

Historic England has recently identified 688 vacant or underused mills across the North which could be used to create 42,000 homes or over 84,000 jobs. These landscape-defining buildings have vast potential to facilitate levelling-up in many areas. Funding for feasibility studies will help unlock significant amounts of investment in areas in need of economic revival.

→ There is a shared recognition that Northern culture needs a stronger louder voice in national conversations

Screen Yorkshire told us they “would like to see much more support for profiling the North. We have had recent examples of people who, first of all, have no idea of the geography of the UK. Somebody actually asked me if Salford was in Yorkshire. American producers who have no idea where the North of England is, what ‘North’ actually means. And one of them said, ‘well, you can’t get much further North than Yorkshire, can you?’ Well, apart from the North East and Scotland?! There is quite a lot of work that we could do to better explain to people what goes on in the North and also to just celebrate some of our success stories so that we compete. We have to prove to people that all of this activity happens here and it’s absolutely great. We should not hide our talents and contribution. We should absolutely celebrate being in the North and the opportunity that represents.”

→ Pan-Northern cultural leadership is key to levelling up through culture

Sheffield Museums told us that “we require leadership that speaks as the North, one clear voice for culture, embracing many accents embracing and underscoring the importance and value of culture in people’s everyday lives. We need a strong northern brand, high profile ambassadors and a confident, consistent media presence. Working together, we could have a Northern Cultural Network, bringing northern cultural consortia and leaders together”.

Carlisle CLC also claimed that “there is a need for clear sectoral leadership across the North, jointly advocating, lobbying, supporting and challenging national cultural policy making and funding. Opportunities for our places to come forward and work together on education, employment, engagement and participation in world class organisations, programmes, events and partnerships.”

➔ **Leveraging the LEPs and rolling out the Cultural Compact model could leverage existing networks to deliver meaningful change.^{xviii}**

Newcastle Cultural Compact talked about the cultural compact model: *“we need to better coordinate and make visible existing provision. LEPS need to become champions for culture and institute resource across their portfolios.”* This can also take the form of investment in new strategic cultural leadership roles.

Historic England *“have recently recruited a jointly funded new post, NP11 Strategic Lead for Place and Culture in the North, to support strategic investment in culture and landscapes and better coordinate place-based activity through the creation of a Northern strategy for Place. This adds value to existing similar work at local authority, LEP and combined authority level, makes it simpler for local government to engage, and helps reduce competition between different parts of the North.”*

➔ **Metro Mayors must unite to become the most powerful champions of culture as a tool of levelling up**

The South Yorkshire CA believes that *“Metro Mayors across the North should be utilised as allies and champions of ‘Northern Culture’. They have a key role in driving this agenda forward, with leveraging and convening powers as well as resources.”*

South Yorkshire Mayor Dan Jarvis said that *“I’ve long held the conviction that the arts culture heritage sector is vital not just for our economy, but for our character and our spirit as a region and as a nation as such. Metro mayors have a key role in driving and championing this agenda.”*

West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin who stood on a manifesto of equality, inclusion, diversity and one of her manifesto commitments was to be an inclusive cultural champion for the North, saying that *“we need different voices if our culture is going to be diverse”.*

A number of elected Metro Mayors in the North have already made the ‘Creative Workforce Pledge’, and are committed to supporting the creative and cultural workforce in their areas as the sector recovers from the pandemic, as well as open up platforms for ongoing dialogue between the workforce and leaders into the longer term.

Recommendations

Brand North: there is a need for a new Northern narrative that captures ‘brand North’ as a dynamic and creative site of cultural production in the twenty-first century that connects across arts, heritage and tourism.

Cultural Leadership: strategic and sustainable leadership within and across Northern regions is key to levelling up. The NP11 shows what can be achieved by collaborative cross-sector working to combine resources, skills and experience to maximise opportunity and enable potential.^{xix} Mobilising Metro Mayors through new Levelling Up boards will enable effective communication and responsiveness within regions to growth opportunities and challenges, facilitate advocacy and help national opportunities to have regional reach.^{xx}

More Devolution: would benefit arts, culture and heritage in a post-covid context. Administrative infrastructure for culture across the regions and nations is uneven. Partial devolution means that there is a maze of Mayors, CAs, LAs, LEPs and local culture leads to navigate. Cultural literacy also varies across CAs, and this is a distinct disadvantage and barrier to some regions accessing funding and achieving representation. The mayoral model is an effective way to deliver funding, advocacy and connectivity for the cultural sector.

The Case For Northern Culture Recommendations

The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry tapped into a rich seam of evidence and provided for clear consensus and ideas on what Northern culture needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover. Our 10 point action plan sets out a clear pathway to promote Northern Culture as a vital part of the economic recovery and levelling up agendas.

The Case for Culture:

Levelling Up Northern Culture

Rebuild, Rebalance And Recover

10 Point Action Plan for The North

The Northern Culture Appg is calling on government to:

Invest in Next Generation Creatives

- ✓ **Opportunity for All:** investing in human capital is key to unlocking opportunities for everyone to participate. Through implementing a new creative curriculum mapped from primary to HE and reversing cuts to HE creative courses we can enhance creative careers education and reframe the value of a creative skillset to society;
- ✓ **Talent Pipeline:** to retain the next generation and turn around the brain drain from North to South, we must enable local skills development and align the design and delivery of education and training programmes with what cultural businesses in the regions need to be competitive.
- ✓ **Train, Retain and Return:** to incentivise graduate retention in the regions we must support local businesses to provide internships and work experience opportunities for local people and provide new post-16 bridging courses for those wishing to return to, or change job within, the creative and cultural industries;
- ✓ **Great North Skills Survey:** to identify areas of skills deficit and capture opportunities and differences across the regions;
- ✓ **Flexi CI-Apprenticeships:** introduce a levy to support targeted development of new Creative Industry apprenticeships and Degree Apprenticeships in identified areas of skills shortages co-designed and co-delivered with industry partners;
- ✓ **Strategic Partnership Working:** grant funding support for universities to play a larger role in supporting the future cultural and creative skills pipeline with industry and community partners across the North to enable co-design and co-delivery of new training;
- ✓ **Future Leaders:** enhance diversity and capacity building in cultural leadership models and offer new training packages and mentoring schemes for future creative industry leaders.

2 Transform Tech to unlock growth

- ✓ **Culture Connects:** culture brings together creatives, audiences and freelancers but digital poverty also poses a challenge to the same groups. Research is required into the barriers and opportunities for producers and consumers of culture in the North in a post-pandemic context. This will help us better understand and inform ways in which the creative industries in the North can develop and monetise interactions with international audiences, as well as country and coastal communities, and how this can compliment rather than compete with touring. R&D investment should be committed to creative industry development planning to support the sector in transitioning their systems and processes to hybrid online and offline delivery models;
- ✓ **Enhanced Connectivity:** investment in super-fast broadband and access to digital platforms across the North, with a focus on rural and coast regions, accompanied by CPD for creative industry experts to mobilise the latest technologies, with a special focus on freelancers and smaller creative organisations.

3 Embed Fairness as the foundation to build back opportunity

- ✓ **EDI:** inclusion must not be side-lined in the rush to recover from covid. Greater diversity on the boards of cultural organisations, and new EDI training packages and mentoring schemes should be made available for future creative industry leaders to foster a new culture of inclusion as standard;
- ✓ **Heterogenous North:** the North is not a homogenous space - it is a complex tapestry of cities and city regions, rural and coast sites, big cultural organisations and community groups, freelancers and artists. It requires recognition of this rich variance in policy making so that differentiated resources can support the development, sustainability and resilience of its Creative Industries and culture;
- ✓ **Soft Infrastructure Needs Hard Infrastructure:** social mobility and physical mobility go hand in hand. Connectivity enables build within regions. Tackling infrastructural tensions between opening access and people being able to get to those opportunities requires enhanced transport links so that communities can move quickly to take advantage of opportunities within and across Northern regions. Cancelling landmark transport schemes like the Eastern part of HS2 would work against the levelling up agenda.

4 Support more Prosperity Partnerships

- ✓ **Strategic Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange:** can play a central role in development initiatives and have the potential to maximise resources, enhance competitiveness and opportunities and build resilience in freelance communities to tackle the challenges that lie ahead. We must generate new multidisciplinary communities of knowledge and practice between national and local government, using Cultural Compacts and Consortia as models of best practice for commissioning, funding streams, knowledge exchange and the co-design and delivery of programmes aimed at developing creative skillsets and R&D;
- ✓ **Cross-Sector Collaborative R&D:** create opportunities for industry, academics and creatives to work alongside Creative Industries organisations and leaders as solution finders to future challenges facing the sector to generate evidence-based approaches to 'value' and return. This will help drive growth in key sectors, including the role of creative industries and creative economy in attracting businesses and investment to the Northern regions. Privatising Channel 4 flies in the face of this model of best practice and is a direct and significant threat to the government's levelling up agenda;
- ✓ **Prosperity and Public Good:** unleash innovation and growth by unlocking private investment, creating new businesses, supporting for SMEs to scale up what works and fostering the value and skillset of our cultural and creative freelancer community.

5 Generate more Flagship Funding

- ✓ **Future Funding:** should be devolved to regional level and must focus on collaboration to leverage the resources of diverse cross-sector groups. Place-making, cultural ownership and engagement must be prioritised as fundamental requirements of future funding calls to achieve reach and to generate new communities of creativity across the North;
- ✓ **Invest to Grow:** identify and support mixed investment growth opportunities for creative sectors and acknowledge the centrality of culture to place-making by embedding arts, culture and heritage considerations into all future place based investment, especially the Levelling Up Fund;
- ✓ **Reframe Funding:** funding schemes should incentivise collaboration not competition. By promoting cross-sector partnership bidding and cross-region focussed calls around key cross-sector thematic including culture and inclusion, culture and health, cultural sustainability, heritage assets, sustainable tourism, leadership and knowledge exchange as strategic priorities that cut across the North and underpin wider UK development. We need to move to place-based recovery funding that is tailored to regional variations, recognises gaps in operational and strategic capacity and can respond to local opportunities and skills bases.

6 Define the North's Cultural 'Value'

- ✓ **Robust Evidence Base:** a comprehensive review of the value of culture, heritage and soft infrastructure the North must be commissioned as a priority in post-covid recovery. The soft infrastructure that comprises Northern culture requires new models of leadership and advocacy through mayors and combined authorities, and greater evaluation and sharing of datasets between regional leadership and national government to help us better understand the contributions of Northern culture to the economy and society of the UK more broadly;
- ✓ **Soft Power Hits Hard:** the 'value' of culture and heritage lies not just in its outputs but in the spill-over effects it creates in wellbeing and health, skills and education, soft power and nation advocacy. Culture has the unique capacity to tell new narratives about the North in the twenty-first century, and about the wider UK. In a post-Brexit, post-covid context, the role of culture in changing our national story on a global stage should be harnessed to encourage international recognition and investment in our nation and regions;
- ✓ **Cultural Assets:** more research is required to better understand the value of our cultural and heritage assets in the North (in terms of discount rates and asset lifespans, bequest, altruistic and existence value, valuing digital assets and wellbeing and transferable benefits) and this data must be used to inform decision making about future needs and strategies.

7 Build Back Confidence

- ✓ **Long-term Support:** for venues, creatives and audiences to normalise live engagement with culture and the arts in a post-covid context, especially in relation to touring and festivals;
- ✓ **Source Industry:** from the page to the stage and across the small and silver screen, writing underpins the wider creative production of the UK economy. The pandemic has highlighted the precarity of writers and writing as a profession as content suppliers to the creative economy and to the publishing industry, the fifth biggest UK export. The North has the opportunity to become the biggest producer of content for the UK creative industries. To do this we have to invest in the infrastructure of writing and create more favorable conditions for new writers and literary businesses to grow and develop in the North;
- ✓ **A Northern Culture APPG Inquiry into Writing:** is needed to look at how we can create a more resilient writing industry and how we can diversify our writers and publishing industry to ensure that it accurately represents the breadth of talent in the UK today.

8 Inextricably link and promote Health-Culture

- ✓ **HIA Funding Requirements:** Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) should be integrated into all future funding bid requirements to foreground and maximise the wellbeing benefit of new cultural projects. We need to better understand the well-being value of culture and this means capturing impacts on economic performance, social cohesion and mental health so we can deliver public health targets;
- ✓ **Health-Culture Partnerships:** engagement with creativity can function as a preventative measure in health outcomes. A new network of NHS health-culture partnerships should be funded across Northern regions between Foundation Trusts, CCGs, CAs and HEIs in a co-ordinated approach that brings together public bodies in the health and culture sectors to leverage the role of culture in well-being and map for the first time physical barriers to engagement with culture across the regions of the North;
- ✓ **High Streets and Heritage Sites:** harnessing dormant sites can unite communities to reclaim and repurpose creative spaces and regenerate civic pride, identity and opportunities for productivity, employment, investment and tourism;

9 Promote Creative Leadership and Brand North

- ✓ **A New Northern Narrative:** that captures 'brand North' as a dynamic and creative site of cultural production in the twenty-first century is needed to effectively present opportunities to national and international markets, especially tourism; focussing on new narratives of North told by local creatives and audiences has the potential to create a paradigm shift in profile and identity for the region;
- ✓ **Advocacy and Ambassadors:** the pandemic has proved the power of the local. Identifying change makers and listening to creative communities, a new Culture Council North led by the Mayors of each Combined Authority would coordinate and advocate for the creative industries and freelancers, community groups, FE and HE to join up agendas between local and central government and working as apolitical DCMS and CA points of contact for the convergence of cultural and economic activity;
- ✓ **Enhance Local Leadership:** local government has a critical role to play in helping to enhance the hearts of communities using culture to create belonging and articulate local pride. Local government and CAs must operate as a mesh, not as hubs and spokes between the culture of cities and city regions, countryside and coastal communities. This can be achieved by extending funding and support to develop CA and LEP cultural leadership capacity at a local level to facilitate networking between regions and create sustainable leadership models across the North.

10 Measure Up to Level Up

✓ **Place-based Performance Indicators:** are required to enable point-to performance metrics and retain public engagement with the levelling up agenda. The fragmented approach of short-term interventions, the lack of join up between government departments and variations in cultural literacy and leadership between different regions are challenges to this agenda;

✓ **Devolution and Decentralisation:** devolution is the key to levelling up Northern culture post-Covid. We can not develop the North without devolving powers and resources back to the people who are writing its future here and now. That means central government funding and trusting Northern Mayors, LEPs and local authorities to enable the co-creation of change, cross-sector connectivity and capacity building opportunities. This work would be catalysed by establishing a Minister for the North based in the North, and new Levelling Up Boards within all Combined Authorities chaired by Mayors and led by representatives from across the economic, social and cultural sectors.

Conclusions

To date, culture has been a relatively untapped resource in wider discussions about ways to develop and invest in the North of England. Yet culture offers vast opportunity to develop tangential sectors and implement spill-over benefits to enable bleed through to related growth areas including tourism, digital and health. The pandemic period demonstrated the potential of place-based leadership and the power of culture to bring us close together in times when far apart. In lockdown we recognised the power of culture to communicate and create cohesion, community and a sense of place at a time when we were unable to leave our homes.

Our inquiry has evidenced for the first time the capacity of our creative industries and culture to build innovative foundations for a new vision of the North in the 21st Century. The inquiry report and its recommendations offer a vital opportunity to think about how we work together to build sustainable creative skill sets in education, the infrastructure in capital build and digital connectivity and the culture of participation and inclusion across the many and varied geographies of our regions.

The recommendations call for investment in the new hard and soft infrastructure that is required to enable a step-change happen. This dual investment reflects the interdependencies of transport, digital and estates as core elements that can not operate in isolation and together have the potential to break down boundaries to culture for people across the North. Covid recovery funding has ensured that many cultural organisations have survived and are now stable and able to think about how they can thrive in the years ahead. This is the ideal time for a new place-based recovery strategy that mobilises culture, co-creation and collaboration to reframe the North as a site of creative production locally, nationally and globally in the twenty-first century.

Taken together, the inquiry recommendations map a post-pandemic pathway to recovery and sustainable growth for Northern culture. In terms of policy making at regional national levels, the recommendations offering new ways in which Combined Authorities can increase job creation and productivity; the Levelling Up agenda can encourage national institutions and organisations old and new to relocate or establish new or hub sites in the North; High Street and heritage sites can be repurposed and recovered; social and civic cohesion can be enabled through culture to mitigate the impacts of the covid mental health crisis; and educational catch up can be facilitated through a new focus on creative curriculum, apprenticeships and life-long learning via new opportunities co-designed and co-delivered in partnership with industry and academia. As well as spill over benefits to tourism and hospitality, culture also has potential to help us meet the challenges of net zero and climate change. The North could become a leader in sustainable cultural production and consumption, and sustainability needs to become a central tenant of any post-covid UK cultural sector.

While some of these recommendations are applicable across UK in a post-covid context, the levelling up agenda offers a dynamic and timely framework for understanding and platforming step-change interventions and activities in culture across the North now. By recognising, resourcing and responding to the potential of culture as a valuable driver of wider growth. The Northern Culture APPG will take forward the recommendations in this report and promote Northern Culture as a rich asset which needs to be used to kick start recovery and level up in the North. Our 10 point action provides a clear call to action to achieve greater cultural opportunity, access, investment and infrastructure for all Northern cities, towns and communities as we emerge from the pandemic.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

The body of evidence received Session evidence help to inform the Inquiry report and post-covid action plan. With thanks to all those who contributed:

The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry Parliamentary Panel

The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry was led by its officers:

- James Daly MP, Bury North, Conservative, Co-Chair
- Julie Elliott MP, Sunderland Central, Labour, Co-Chair
- Alex Sobel MP, Leeds North West, Labour (Co-op), Vice Chair
- Jason McCartney MP, Colne Valley, Conservative, Vice Chair
- Tony Lloyd MP, Rochdale, Labour, Secretary

MPs and Peers from across Parliament joined together to hear evidence and participate in the Inquiry including:

- Alison McGovern MP
- Paul Howell MP
- Charlotte Nichols MP
- Tracy Brabin formerly MP for Batley and Spen and now West Yorkshire Metro Mayor
- Kim Johnson MP
- Ian Byrne MP
- Catherine McKinnell MP
- Andy Carter MP
- Ian Mearns MP
- Lord Richard Inglewood

Evidence Received

The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry heard oral evidence from:

- Kully Thiarai, CEO, Leeds 2023
- Tom Watson, Chair, UK Music
- Dave Moutrey, CEO, HOME & Director of Culture, MCC
- Graeme Thompson, Arts Council's North Area Council
- Sacha Lord, Night-Time Economy Advisor, GMCA
- Pete Massey, Director of Northern Economy & Partnerships, Arts Council
- Keith Merrin, Sunderland Culture
- Hannah Matterson, CEO, Generator
- Henri Murison, Director, Northern Powerhouse Partnership
- Richard Mantle, General Director, Opera North
- Dave Jenkins, The Old Courts
- Jubeda Khatun, Executive Director, BlackFest
- Tom Wilcox, Partner, Counterculture
- Alex Saint, CEO, CT Consults
- Jamie Nkoju-Goodwin, CEO, UK Music
- Rhodri Talfan Davies, Director of Nations, BBC
- Nick Grimshaw, Head of Partnerships, Creative Industries Federation
- Kelly Allen, Executive Director for Social Justice, Curious Minds
- Mark Bailey, Northumbria Lead, Creative Fuse North East
- Lee Stanley, Sharp Futures
- Syima Aslam, CEO, Bradford Literature Festival
- Julia Samuels, 20 Stories High
- Craig Pennington, Future Yard
- Hannah Blamire, Freelancers
- Chris Strong, Director of Skills and Employability, IVE
- Lord Mendoza, DCMS
- Tracy Brabin, Metro Mayor
- Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire
- Melissa Johns, DANC
- Andrew Mackay, Tullie House
- Dan Jarvis MP, Mayor South Yorkshire CA
- Ian Wray, UK 2070 Commission
- Sasha Lord, Parklife/GMCA
- Clare Devaney, NP11
- Catherine Dewar, Historic England
- Claire Malcolm, New Writing North

We received an overwhelming number of responses to our call for written evidence.

With grateful thanks to:

- Artists Union England
- Arts Council England
- Beamish Museum
- BBC
- Carlisle Culture and Carlisle City Council
- Centre for Culture Value Leeds
- Channel 4
- Comma Press
- Cumbria Arts and Culture Network
- Cumbria LEP
- Curious Minds
- Future Yard CIC
- English Heritage
- Eden Valley Artistic Network
- Fabian Society
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Freelancers from Across the North
- Girl Kind North East
- Guild of Media Arts
- Historic England
- Imperial Museum North
- Kirkgate Arts and Heritage
- Leeds 2021
- Littoral Arts
- Make it York
- Manchester Museum
- Media North
- Media Arts
- Museum of the Waggoners
- Musicians Union
- National Museum Director's Council
- Newcastle Cultural Compact
- Newcastle District National Education Union
- Newcastle Trades Union Council
- Newcastle University
- North East Culture Partnership
- Northern Culture Network
- NP11
- Orchestras Live
- Sage Gateshead
- Salford Culture and Place Partnership
- SCRMC: Sheffield City Region Mayoral Authority
- Sheffield City Council
- Sheffield City Trust
- Sheffield Museums
- Sheffield Philharmonic
- Sheffield Property Association
- South Lakes Rock School
- Joseph Rowntree Theatre
- The Studio Moreland
- University of Sheffield
- University of York
- Theatre Space NE CIC
- Tileyard North
- TUC Northern, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber
- Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums
- UK2070 Commission
- University of Salford
- We Are IVE
- West Yorkshire Learning Provider
- Whistling Crew Productions

With special thanks to:

Northumbria University

Northumbria University is the Northern Culture APPG's academic partner. The University is committed to research-underpinned teaching and impact excellence. Facilitating the exchange of ideas between academics, cultural organisations and MPs, Northumbria University has enabled research to inform knowledge transfer and future policy and decision making. Professor Katy Shaw, Director of Cultural Partnerships at Northumbria University has prepared and led the writing and production of the Northern Culture APPG's Inquiry report.



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DevoConnect acts as the Secretariat of the Northern Culture APPG. DevoConnect is a premier public affairs agency passionate about increasing the prosperity of regions across the UK by viewing Westminster and Whitehall through a devolved lens. With thanks to Gill Morris, CEO, Owen Stratford, Campaigns and Political Advisor, and Louis O'Halloran, Public Affairs Executive.



Appendices

Structure of the Inquiry

The Northern Culture APPG invited written evidence submissions from the North's cultural sector. Inviting them to respond to the 4 key questions posed by the Inquiry. The Northern Culture APPG Inquiry invited a selection of cultural organisations and leaders across the North to give oral evidence and participate. We held four oral evidence sessions in 2021 asking key questions on the priorities, access, infrastructure and opportunities needed to level-up and rebuild Northern culture:

Inquiry Launch and Oral Evidence Session I

Northern Culture in Recovery: What are the key issues facing Northern Culture in the immediate recovery of Covid?

Oral Evidence Session II

Increasing the North's Access to Culture: How do we support and encourage young people's creativity and cultural job opportunities post-covid?

- ➔ How do we boost skills, create equal opportunities for all, promote diversity and support ambitions to empower future generations?
- ➔ How do we help develop a supply chain for talent and harness what many towns and cities in the North have always done – acted as a 'pool of talent' with pathways into the creative sectors?
- ➔ How do we increase higher levels of engagement with culture?

Oral Evidence Session III

Levelling up Cultural Infrastructure in our Northern Towns & Cities: How do we ensure a fair spread of funding for culture across our Northern communities?

- ➔ How do we level-up investment to help restore and rebuild cultural institutions?
- ➔ How do we improve the physical barriers to engagement with culture, be that inaccessible venues or poor transport links?
- ➔ Should more powers and funding be devolved to build back culture in the North?

Oral Evidence Session IV

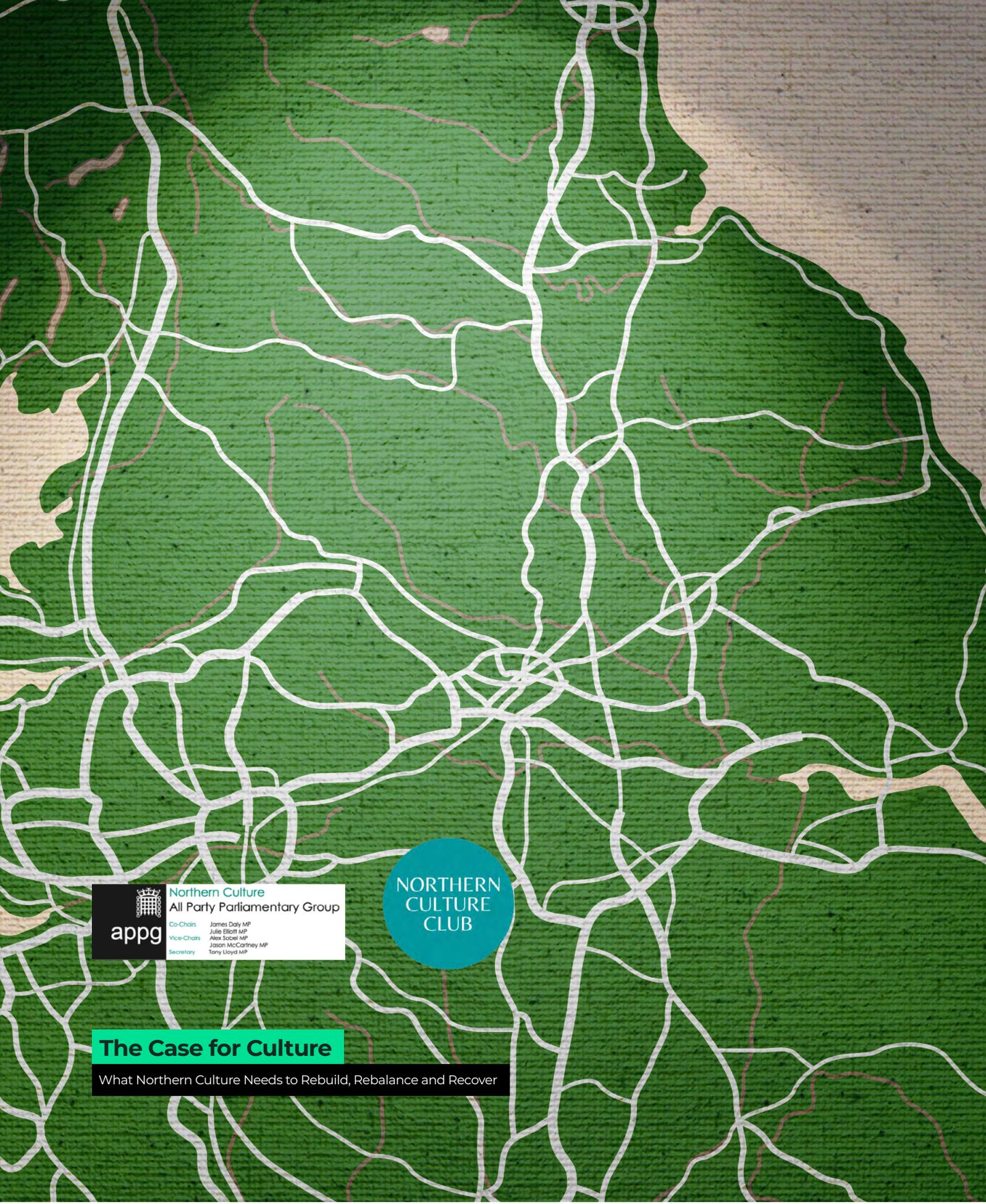
Getting Northern Culture back on track: What are the opportunities for Northern Culture?

- ➔ What are the opportunities for Northern Culture?
- ➔ How do we get confidence back in our audience post covid?
- ➔ What has been the impact on communities and welfare?
- ➔ How do we promote a strong and cohesive brand for the North, building recognition of its' world class reputation?

Footnotes and References

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- ⁱⁱ HMI Government, Levelling Up Fund Prospectus, p.1 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966138/Levelling_Up_prospectus.pdf>
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- ^{iv} HM Government, Levelling Up Prospectus, March 2021 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966138/Levelling_Up_prospectus.pdf>
- ^v Abigail Gilmore, Ben Dunn, Victoria Barker, Mark Taylor, PEC: Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, When policy meets place: 'Levelling Up' and the culture and creative industries, 13 July 2021 <<https://www.pec.ac.uk/blog/when-policy-meets-place>>
- ^{vi} NHTSA, 'A year of COVID-19 in the North: Regional inequalities in health and economic outcomes', October 2021, p.4 <<https://www.thenhsa.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/09/A-Year-of-COVID-in-the-North-report-2021.pdf>>
- ^{vii} Munford, L., Khavandi, S., et al, A year of COVID-19 in the North: Regional inequalities in health and economic outcomes, Northern Health Science Alliance, Newcastle, 2021 <<https://www.thenhsa.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/09/A-Year-of-COVID-in-the-North-report-2021.pdf>>
- ^{viii} Arts Council England, The Value of Art and Culture to People and Society, 2014 <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Value_arts_culture_evidence_review.pdf>
- ^{ix} Cebr, The Economic Value of Arts and Culture to the North of England, 2019 <<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/The%20Economic%20Value%20of%20Arts%20and%20Culture%20in%20the%20North%20of%20England%20report%204th%20July%20.pdf>>
- ^x Jamie Driscoll, 'Regional wealth generation: Focusing on local wealth generation', Royal Society For Arts, October 2021 <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/_foundation/new-site-blocks-and-images/reports/2021/10/regional_wealth_generation.pdf>
- ^{xi} Creative Fuse is unique partnership between the North East's five universities – Newcastle, Durham, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside. Academics work alongside industry, cultural organisations, charities and the public sector, to explore how creative, digital and IT firms can have a sustainable future in the region adding value to the region's broader employment base.
- ^{xii} UCAS, Where Next? What Influences The Choices School Leavers Make? 2020 <<https://www.ucas.com/file/435551/download?token=VUdIDVFh>>
- ^{xiii} Manchester University, 'First ever civic university agreement for Greater Manchester signed', 27 September 2021 <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/news/first-ever-civic-university-agreement-for-greater-manchester-signed/?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=news>
- ^{xiv} Anthony Sargent, COVID-19 and the Global Cultural and Creative Sector – What have we learned so far? 2021 <<https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/COVID-19-and-the-Global-Cultural-and-Creative-Sector-Anthony-Sargent.pdf>>
- ^{xv} Open Doors, Pilot Programme Report, October 2020 <https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/meanwhile-foundation/redactor2_assets/files/207/Open_Doors_-_Pilot_Programme_Report.pdf>
- ^{xvi} York Ideas YouTube Channel <<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVJT6bNhaD52wO3cS4dgdFQ>>
- ^{xvii} Orchestras Live, Orchestras In Healthcare Report Launch, 25 February 2021 <<https://www.orchestraslive.org.uk/news/orchestras-in-healthcare-report-launch>>
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- ^{xviii} Cultural Compacts bring together local authorities, businesses, education providers, cultural and community leaders, driven by a shared ambition for culture and place, to co-design and deliver a vision for culture within a place. 20 Cultural Compacts were launched by DCMS and ACE across England in 2019.
- ^{xix} The NP11 Place & Culture Partnership offers a useful case study, bringing together 11 Northern Local Enterprise Partnerships, Arts Council England (ACE), the Heritage Fund, Historic England and the Environment Agency with Steering Group representation from the North Culture Network and Nature North. These key partners are committed to the North's quality of life and attractiveness as a place to live, visit, work and invest and recognise its collective arts, cultural, heritage and environmental assets as a key driver in pan-Northern recovery, resilience and future progress.
- ^{xx} Levelling Up Boards have also been proposed by North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll in his October 2021 RSA report: 'Regional wealth generation: Focusing on local wealth generation', Royal Society For Arts <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/_foundation/new-site-blocks-and-images/reports/2021/10/regional_wealth_generation.pdf>
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Northern Culture
 All Party Parliamentary Group
 Co-Chairs James Daly MP
 Julie Elliott MP
 Vice-Chairs Alan Scaife MP
 Jason McCartney MP
 Secretary Tony Lloyd MP



The Case for Culture
 What Northern Culture Needs to Rebuild, Rebalance and Recover

Prepared for the Northern Culture APPG by our Academic Partner:



Members of the Northern Culture Club and supporters of the Northern Culture APPG:

