

Culture department expands its Northern regional presence

- Hundreds of staff to be located in Manchester and Darlington
- Government strengthens commitment to levelling up and recruiting from wider talent pool
- Move will also see staff based in Cardiff, Belfast and Loughborough

The department has today announced the official opening of its new hub, accommodating up to 400 staff, in Marble Street in Manchester to create a large presence in the city.

The department is expanding its presence across the UK with staff based to be in Cardiff, Belfast, Edinburgh, Loughborough and Darlington. The Darlington Economic Campus, a new shared site in the north east for the Treasury, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and the Department for Education, will have almost 200 DCMS staff based there.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The days of London-centric decision making belong in the past. It's an exciting time for DCMS as we expand our regional offices and tap into a more diverse talent pool.

Our strength comes from our people and this will allow us to recruit the best, wherever they may be, to deliver the wide range of DCMS policies which drive growth and enrich lives all over the UK.

The move comes following the government's publication of its Levelling Up White Paper outlining its ambition to breathe new growth and create jobs and wealth in all parts of the country.

The white paper includes the government's Places for Growth Strategy which seeks to address regional inequalities and improve areas by making sure local and regional considerations are central to government decision making.

These plans will ensure that decisions being made about the arts, culture, sport, media and heritage better reflect the communities they impact. In particular, the plans will allow greater proximity to the department's Arms Length Bodies and partners in the media, cyber and digital sectors.

The new DCMS Manchester HQ will contain the head office for Building Digital UK (BDUK) which recently announced it was becoming executive agency status. BDUK is the driving force behind Project Gigabit, the government's £5 billion plan to roll out faster broadband to hard-to-reach and rural areas and deliver gigabit-capable connections to 85 per cent of UK homes by 2025.

Councillor Bev Craig, Leader of Manchester City Council:

This is welcome news. Not only is it a reflection of Manchester's role as a northern epicentre for culture, media and sport – and our thriving tech sector – it is also a move which should help stimulate further innovation and investment in the city and beyond.

The city is at the heart of a huge and diverse talent pool and tapping into will benefit the Government as well as bringing hundreds of jobs and other opportunities here.

Councillor Martyn Cox, GMCA lead for Culture:

A new DCMS office in the centre of Greater Manchester will create hundreds of good quality jobs in the city-region for our residents. The city-region is the fastest-growing digital and tech hub in Europe, and Greater Manchester is a great fit for the new Building Digital HQ. This is also a step in the right direction of redirecting decision-making from London to our regions.

Tim Newns, Chief Executive, MIDAS, Greater Manchester's Inward Investment agency:

We're incredibly excited about DCMS establishing its primary base outside London in Manchester, one of Europe's leading digital cities. Digital has never been more important as a primary driver of growth across both Greater Manchester and the UK's key industry sectors. However, DCMS also reflects other critical industries to Greater Manchester including Culture, Media and Sport, all of which we excel in and are the cornerstone of the Greater Manchester Strategy and Economic Vision.

DCMS, with its focus on cutting-edge and growing sectors such as digital and technology, is one of the government's fastest-growing departments with more than 2,000 employees. DCMS is aiming to be the most diverse and inclusive government department by 2025 and the moves announced today will play a vital role in achieving these aims.

As part of the plans, sporting bodies including UK Anti-Doping and Sport England will move to Loughborough University SportPark. DCMS will also move some of its Whitehall policy roles to the world-class sports facility in the East Midlands.

Staff based in Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast will help ensure DCMS continues to deliver for everyone across the UK.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The Government has committed to relocating 22,000 civil service roles out of central London and the south east by 2030.