

Levelling up boost for landmark cultural asset in Peterborough

- Chancellor Rishi Sunak visits Peterborough to see how £20 million Government investment will help build part of new bustling university campus to boost the economy and create more than 500 jobs .
- Local community and 1,700 students set to benefit from new interactive science lab and education space – which has been awarded funding as part of £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund
- Regeneration of city centre brownfield site forms centrepiece of the new University Quarter Cultural Hub, expected to attract 50,000 visitors a year.

Rishi Sunak visited the site of the new Anglia Ruskin University campus to see how £20 million of government investment will transform the derelict city centre brownfield site into a new interactive science lab and education space for 1,700 STEM students.

The new university campus will help boost Peterborough's economic recovery, creating more than 500 jobs and help develop the skills needed for the future.

Part of the space will also be open to the public, showcasing the city's net-zero future through events and exhibitions – including 'festivals of ideas', immersive displays and evening classes.

Peterborough is one of the five places in the East of England which received a share of £87 million from the first round of the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund, as announced by the Chancellor in last month's Budget.

Following his visit, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

One of our key priorities is to level up the UK by spreading jobs, investment and opportunity.

So it has been fantastic to come to Peterborough and see levelling up in action, with £20 million from our Levelling Up Fund transforming the city-centre site into a vibrant cultural hub that local people can be proud of, all while boosting jobs and the economy.

Professor Ross Renton, Principal of ARU Peterborough, said:

This new Levelling Up funding will help us deliver state-of-the-art facilities which will be of enormous benefit to our students, the people of the Peterborough and the wider region.

The new development will include a publicly accessible science resource, called The Living Lab, which will be at the heart of the city's new University Quarter. This will improve Peterborough's cultural offering and create an exciting destination for both locals and visitors.

The Chancellor also met business owners on the high street including a florist and a clothes retailer who will also benefit from the increased footfall from the university site.

The Living Lab will be the centrepiece of the new University Quarter Cultural Hub, part of Anglia Ruskin University Peterborough due to open in in 2022 and is expected to attract 50,000 visitors a year.

The project also helps to upgrade, create and connect existing and new museums, an arts venue, two theatres and two libraries in 50 acres of renewed, open, green space, part of the regeneration of the river embankment that will open up a key leisure area for the city centre.

This investment to create the University Living Lab and additional teaching space, builds on £23 million from the Towns Fund, which will fund a range of projects including 'The Vine' library, culture and community hub, that will regenerate the town centre.

As announced at the Budget and Spending Review, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will receive funding for 30 zero emission buses, in addition to millions of pounds of investment in local transport improvements and to fill potholes.

This is alongside improvements made to strategic roads in the region, such as the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet and six A47 dualling and upgrade schemes between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth.

Further information:

- The first round of the Levelling Up fund announced at the Budget, will invest £1.7 billion in 105 local infrastructure projects across the UK.
- Photos are available on the Treasury's Flickr page.