

Press release: A record year for culture in the Northern Powerhouse

- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport figures show that between April and October 2018 there were 912,468 (21.5%) more visitors across the 9 venues compared to the same period last year.
- It is the highest number of visitors across these museums and galleries in the April to October period since comparable records began in 2011-12.
- National Museums Liverpool attracted 2,885,842 visitors between April and October, a 39% increase on the same period last year and their best Apr-Oct on record.

Museums and galleries sponsored by the government in the Northern Powerhouse are enjoying a record year in 2018 with visitor numbers topping 5 million for the first time.

Between April and October, there were 5,141,165 visitors across the 9 institutions in the Northern Powerhouse region – an increase of 912,468 (21.5%) on the same period last year.

It's also the highest number of visitors across these Northern museums and galleries in the Apr-Oct period since comparable records began in 2011-12.

Five museums saw an increase in visitor numbers compared to the same period in 2017-18.

National Museums Liverpool attracted a record-breaking 2,885,842 visitors between April and October, a 39% increase on the same period last year and their best April to October to date.

Tate Liverpool saw visitor numbers up 14.6% to 480,271 – their best April to October for a decade.

Imperial War Museum North in Salford welcomed 210,572 visitors, up 35% on April to October 2017-18 and the best for this period since 2014-15.

More than 537,000 people visited The National Railway Museum in York, an increase of 11% on same period last year.

The Science and Industry Museum in Manchester attracted 433,508 visitors, up 3.6% on the same period last year.

The government is continuing negotiations of a proposed Tourism Sector Deal, to help attract more domestic and overseas visitors and drive major economic growth across the UK.

And £15 million has been invested in cultural regeneration projects across the North to help showcase the region as a great place to live, work, visit

and invest in – a key pillar of the government’s Northern Powerhouse strategy.

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse Jake Berry MP, said:

This is more good news for the culture of the North coming on the heels of the Rochdale bells being broadcast to the nation by the BBC on Christmas Eve.

I congratulate the world-class museums and galleries of the Northern Powerhouse for attracting so many visitors with their outstanding exhibitions in 2018.

This government continues to support culture across the North through the Coastal Revival Fund which has provided £4.7 million to revive more than 100 heritage sites around the country and by investing £8 million in new venues for Blackpool and Bradford.

As we look forward to 2019, I’d encourage more people to join the 5 million who have already seen why the North’s rich art, culture and heritage is at the heart of the UK’s history and its future.

Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, Michael Ellis MP said:

Our museums and galleries are world famous for their outstanding collections and are visited by millions every year.

From the Terracotta Warriors in Liverpool, the Poppies at IWM North and Stephenson’s Rocket at the National Railway Museum, our Northern museums have had an excellent year, which I hope they will build on in 2019.

Laura Pye, Director, National Museums Liverpool, said:

We opened China’s First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors in a wonderful year of culture for Liverpool, which also saw another great Biennial and Tate Liverpool’s 30th birthday. Huge public events such as The Giants have celebrated 10 years since we were the Capital of Culture.

We’re so proud to be part of the fabric of Liverpool’s rich culture and to have delivered the Terracotta Warriors exhibition for our visitors this year. Congratulations to our colleagues across the city on coming together to deliver a fantastic year-round offer and keeping us at the top of the UK’s cultural calendar.

Judith McNicol, Director of the National Railway Museum (part of the Science Museum Group), said:

It's fantastic to see 2 museums in the Science Museum Group experiencing such positive growth in visitor figures.

At the National Railway Museum this growth can be attributed to a renewed focus on customer service and the presentation of our museum spaces, the launch of popular new exhibitions and our smart new branding. As well as the history of the railways, we're increasingly telling contemporary stories of innovation and engineering in collaboration with the current rail industry.

We have also seen the benefits of working in partnership with other organisations across the city and beyond. We will continue to work hard to maintain this increase into next year, as we launch the next phase of our ambitious and exciting Vision 2025 master plan which we hope will transform the museum to deliver an even better visitor experience.

Statistics on the [number of visits to government sponsored museums and galleries](#) are published every month.

The National Railway Museum in York and The Science and Industry Museum in Manchester are both part of the Science Museum Group.