

# Press release: Blockbuster year for the Brits

Spend on UK film and TV production in the UK soared in 2016, reaching £1.6 billion, a 13 per cent increase on 2015, according to figures released by the BFI. Of that, £1.35 billion was invested by 48 major inward investment films basing themselves in the UK.

Showing that we're more than capable of competing on the world stage, this year's top three grossing films at the UK box office were all made on British soil: Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and Bridget Jones's Baby. Overall there was a good turnout at the UK box office too, with cinema ticket sales at a second time high, raking in £1.227 billion.

But film wasn't the only sector to thrive in 2016. TV too had its moment, with overseas companies flocking to the UK to spend £478 million on making high-end TV shows such as The Crown and Game of Thrones.

Foreign markets were also clamouring for our creative content, with figures from PACT's UK Television Exports Report showing that UK's sales of television exports to international markets have risen by 10 per cent, from £1.2 billion in 2014/15 to £1.3 billion in 2015/16. There's also been a large increase in sales in the Chinese market, which is up 40 per cent on 2014/15, with the UK and China TV co-production treaty signed at the end of last year sure to further boost those numbers.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said:

It's no surprise that our creative industries go from strength to strength when we can boast such superb talent and expertise. The UK is an international powerhouse of film, TV and music and this Government will keep backing our creative brilliance. As we prepare to leave the European Union this success story is a great advert for Global Britain – an outward-looking, globally-minded country that is open for business.

Proving that music is the UK's forte, figures released by UK record labels' association the BPI, showed that the continuing surge in audio streaming and accelerating demand for vinyl LPs helped achieve another successful year for British music in 2016. We were listening to even more music last year thanks to an explosive rise in audio streaming, which has increased 500 per cent since 2013.

Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of BPI and the BRIT Awards said:

Propelled by the remarkable talent of its artists, and the

investment and digital engagement of its record labels, British music has conquered the world. This success has not just fuelled our music exports – in 2015 accounting for 1 in 6 albums sold around the world – it has enhanced the global appeal of British culture and in the process also made music the UK's international calling card.

Our acts dominated the UK charts, with 7 out of the year's top 10 best-selling artists coming from the UK. The popularity of Tottenham's Adele showed no sign of diminishing, with the songstress again winning 2016's best-selling artist album – the 12th year in a row the best-seller has come from UK. Other British acts that fared well include Michael Ball and Alfie Boe, whose duets album Together was the 2016's best-selling new release artist album, while The 1975 topped both the UK and US charts. With the BAFTAs and Grammys set to take centre stage this evening, and the BRIT awards and Oscars just around the corner, it looks like there will be even more to celebrate in 2017.

Adele and the late David Bowie lead the charge at this year's Grammys, and there's a visual feast of TV and film up for nomination at this year's BAFTAs including Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.

The Brit awards will be the ultimate British celebration of some of our best talent, and with a slew of British talent vying for Oscars, we will be able to reaffirm to the world that our creative industries are a force to be reckoned with, even though we contain less than one per cent of the world's population.

According to the British Film Commission, there are a whole host of UK-made films set to wow us this year as they hit the big screen including Warner Bros.'s Ready Player One, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Lucasfilm's Star Wars: The Last Jedi and Twentieth Century Fox's Murder on the Orient Express.

And proving that Britain is still open for business and has the global reputation to attract talent from overseas, expect to see the likes of Mary Poppins Returns and detectives Holmes and Watson being filmed in the UK this year.

Amanda Nevill, CEO of the BFI said:

British stories and British talent are firing the global imagination. Films and television series such as I, Daniel Blake, Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them, Notes on Blindness and The Crown are generating investment, creating jobs and thrilling audiences – and fingers crossed winning yet more awards – at home and internationally. UK Film and TV employ tens of thousands in the UK, help bring international investment to our shores and take British culture to nations around the world. We can all be justifiably proud of the UK's success in these most dynamic and exciting art-forms.

As for TV produced in the UK, we can expect to see more of HBO's Game of Thrones on our sets, along with Netflix/Left Bank's The Crown, Starz'/Company Pictures The White Princess, Crackle's Snatch, TNT's Will and Sony's Outlander.

It looks to be a stellar line-up for music too, with the likes of Stormzy, Gorillaz, Paul McCartney, Ed Sheeran, Tinie Tempah, Liam Gallagher and Deep Purple all set to put out new music.

## Notes to Editors

- The UK-China TV Co-Production Treaty was signed in December 2016. Building upon the Film Co-Production Treaty, this is the second country to have this in place.
- Inward investment for Film is: £1.35 billion and for TV is 250 million.
- In 2014, the UK film industry had a turnover of £7.7 billion. The industry's direct contribution to Gross Domestic Product in 2014 was £4.3 billion. The industry exported £1.2 billion worth of services in 2014, made up of £519 million in royalties and £655 million in film production services. Exports in 2014 were 21 per cent higher than in 2005. The UK film trade surplus in 2014 was £715 million. (BFI).
- Exports for Music in 2014 stood at £644 million.

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## [Lesley Griffiths: Have your say on fly-tipping](#)

Currently, Local Authorities can issue fixed penalty notices for a number of offences, such as littering and dog fouling. The only way to penalise those who undertake small scale fly-tipping though is to prosecute through the Magistrate Courts. Many consider this to be expensive, time consuming and disproportionate for small scale offences.

The majority of respondents to a previous consultation felt introducing fixed penalty notices offered a relatively simple, quick and cheap way of dealing with offenders, which would remove existing financial and resource burdens on enforcing authorities and on the Court system.

The [12 week consultation](#) launched today proposes Local Authorities should have the ability to set the fixed penalty amount at between £150 and £400, depending on their local circumstances. If no amount is specified then the default would be £200. Local Authorities could then use the money raised to help contribute to the costs of enforcement and the clear-up of fly-tipping.

Larger fly-tipping incidents such as a van tipping a load of building waste would still be prosecuted through the courts.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs welcomed the launch of the consultation. Lesley Griffiths said:

“Fly-tipping is undoubtedly one of those lower-level offences that generates much discussion and discontent among the public. It is unsightly, environmentally unfriendly and it creates extra work for the people who have to clear it up.

“The purpose of the consultation we are launching today is to gain the views of all interested parties on our proposal to give local authorities the power to introduce fixed penalty notices. The conversations we’ve had so far indicates this is a measure that would prove to be popular among the public but we need to ensure if we are going to pursue this option that it is proportionate and workable.

“I hope as many people as possible take the opportunity to respond to the consultation and play their part in developing a system that helps to reduce waste crime and improve the appearance of communities across Wales”.

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## [Lack of SNP planning sees courts and police buildings lying dormant](#)

- [Home](#)
- [All News](#)
- Lack of SNP planning sees courts and police buildings lying dormant

11 Feb 2017



Around one in six Police Scotland buildings are not in daily use, while the Scottish Government is sitting on £1 million worth of empty courtrooms.

Information obtained by the Scottish Conservatives has revealed that, of 412 police properties across Scotland, 60 are “not currently in day-to-day use”.

And the research also revealed that sheriff courts which have shut, but not sold, total an estimated value of around £1.13 million.

The Scottish Conservatives have said it shows a lack of forward-planning by the SNP, which is prepared to oversee the closure of courts and police buildings without thinking about what to do with the buildings thereafter.

Police Scotland embarked on a programme of front counter closures in 2014, and outlined plans for even more to shut last year.

The Scottish Conservatives criticised that move, saying people still valued local police stations and they played an important role in cutting crime.

In its response to the party's Freedom of Information request, Police Scotland said: "Out of 412 properties, 60 are not currently in day-to-day use. A number of those are still used occasionally and some are subject to ongoing engagement with stakeholders regarding future use."

A number of court closures have also occurred on the SNP's watch, with 17 sheriff and justice of the peace facilities closing since the decision was announced in 2013.

However, it has now emerged many of these buildings are still on the taxpayer's books, including Arbroath, valued at £240,000; Cupar, valued at £200,000; and Stonehaven, valued at £330,000.

The Scottish Conservatives also criticised the court closures programmes, warning it would make life harder for victims and witnesses, and add an additional burden to those courts remaining.

**Scottish Conservative MSP Margaret Mitchell, convener of Holyrood's justice committee, said:**

"We were critical of SNP plans to close police stations and court buildings from the outset.

"But what this shows is that those proposals went on regardless, without any thought as to what to do with the buildings.

"It means the public has far reduced access to justice, yet the taxpayer hasn't benefited as a result.

"In the face of the absolute refusal to change its mind on these closures, at the very least the money raised from their sale, now the Scottish Government has deemed them surplus to requirements, could go some way to improving justice in Scotland.

"It's yet another example of the SNP making sweeping decisions without even trying to think the whole process through."

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To see a copy of the Freedom of Information response from the Scottish Courts Service, visit:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Scottish-Courts-FOI-response.pdf>

To see a copy of the Freedom of Information response from Police Scotland, visit:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Pol>

[ice-FOI-response.pdf](#)

The Scottish Government's programme of police station closures has been roundly criticised:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-37850332>

Similarly, the nationalists have been under fire for closing a fifth of Scotland's courts:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2015/09/sheriff-courts-less-efficient-in-wake-of-snp-closure-programme/>

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## [New houses and Grazeley](#)

I was given some more information about the Council's possible project for a new town at Grazeley with 15,000 homes at a meeting on Friday. This is the project the Council is currently consulting about.

My comments included

1. Will the Council seek some guarantees that were it to go ahead at Grazeley there would be a direct reduction in pressure on other sites around the Borough?
2. What will the bid be for infrastructure investment? It would need to be large given the number of people who would go to live there.
3. What impact would 30,000 more cars have on the area? What extra capacity would be needed on our current highway network?
4. What would the impact of the railway plans be on Mortimer and on current rail use on that line?
5. How many primary and secondary schools will be needed – the indication is 5 and 2 – and is there provision for them?
6. What would the impact be on flooding and drainage patterns?
7. What extra provision will be needed for NHS and social care services?

Our infrastructure and public service provision is struggling to catch up with all the latest developments. Before committing to any major new project there needs to be detailed plans to tackle the extra required and to deal with the backlog.

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## [The Government has completely failed](#)

# to deliver on NHS workforce planning- Madders

Justin Madders MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, responding to reports that a lack of Government planning means that Locum Doctors are being paid up to £363 an hour, said:

"The Government has completely failed to deliver on NHS workforce planning and now they are losing control of NHS finances as well.

"It's not right that this amount of money is leaking out the system to agencies and temporary staff at a time when funding is so tight that operations are being cancelled and services cut back.

"The cap on agency payments has been breached a shocking 2.7 million times in just nine months. The Government needs a solution to help the NHS get the permanent staff it needs to keep patients safe.

"Jeremy Hunt should be making sure money meant for the NHS is going to patient care, not private agencies."

Ends