

Over 100 places to see improved access to culture and arts across England

- More than 100 locations to be prioritised for new arts funding
- Cultural organisations in London to be supported to expand operations beyond the capital so more communities benefit from their work

Access to arts and culture across the country will be transformed with plans to increase and better distribute funding for the sector to previously overlooked or neglected areas.

This aim is to generate more opportunities for people in the regions, with more arts jobs on offer and better access to cultural activities so people do not have to travel as far to see world-class arts.

An additional £75 million will be provided by 2025 to make sure places which have been culturally under-served in the past get a better distribution of arts funding.

Cultural investment by the government via Arts Council England (ACE) is expected to rise to almost £250 million by 2025 across England outside London. This is the equivalent to a 19 per cent increase by 2025, the final year of the Spending Review period.

Arts Council England will oversee the distribution of the funds which will support new and established thriving arts organisations in the regions so people can enjoy activities in their area.

The move comes after the government set out a commitment to raise cultural spending significantly outside of the capital in its Levelling Up White Paper. It is part of plans to level up people's opportunity to experience the benefits of culture – from seeing performances to taking part in activities.

ACE and DCMS have identified 109 'Levelling Up for Culture Places' which will be targeted for additional investment. Organisations old and new in areas that historically have had low investment in arts and culture will be encouraged to bid for funds, meaning places such as Wolverhampton, Hartlepool, Rotherham, Peterborough and Oldham could be given the extra support they need to build on their rich cultural heritage.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

I have said from day one in this role my priority is to increase access to arts and culture across the whole country.

Today marks a big step in achieving this aim as we shift new cultural investment into places previously at the back of the queue.

Culture enriches people's lives. It entertains us, brings us together and can be a catalyst for regeneration. Everyone should have access to it no matter where they live or what their background.

Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal Lord Mendoza said:

Culture policy will play a critical role in levelling up.

This announcement confirms an increase in financial support which will enable more people and more places across the country to play a part in the nation's outstanding cultural sector.

Arts Council England chair Sir Nicholas Serota said:

The Arts Council welcomes this increase in funding from the government.

It will enable more people in more places to reap the benefits of arts and culture and will accelerate our commitment to parts of the country that deserve more investment.

We will be able to do more to nurture new creative talent, support work that makes us healthier and happier, renew our high streets and, above all, ensure that everyone, everywhere has the opportunity of a rich cultural and creative life.

Tony Butler, Executive Director, Derby Museums said:

Being part of the Arts Council's National Portfolio enables a balanced financial model where public funding provides a platform for private investment. It's underpinned our development of the critically acclaimed Museum of Making which explores 300 years of manufacturing in Derby and it has ensured that cultural heritage frames the future ambition of our city as a place of innovation and creativity.

Our STEAM-based learning programme inspires young people to be the thinkers and makers of the future, focusing on both knowledge and skills, the head and the hands.

Nic Millington, Chief Executive, Rural Media said:

All too often the needs of rural communities, especially those most disadvantaged, are poorly understood and often overlooked. With Arts Council's investment to the NPO network, arts organisations up

and down the country are able not only to develop and deliver creative projects and cultural products of national significance, but have capacity to engage isolated and under-represented communities through participation, skills and audience development.

Furthermore, investment enables NPOs to share their professional and organisational expertise with freelance artists and young entrepreneurs, thereby attracting cross-sector investment, the retention of talent in rural areas and the growth of rural creative industries. Improved digital connectivity in rural areas and innovative hybrid working models are pointing towards an exciting new dawn for cultural development in rural areas. Watch this space!

Chris Stafford, Chief Executive of Leicester's Curve theatre, said:

We believe everyone, irrespective of their circumstances, should have equal opportunity to engage with world-class culture and fulfil their creative potential. We welcome the new Arts Council investment programme which will see a greater balance of public investment across the country, ensuring no one is left behind.

As an NPO located in the heart of England, we create work with, in and for our local communities every day of the week. Each year we engage up to 60,000 people through free and low-cost creative programmes and activities, we welcome over 330,000 people to our Leicester home and our productions on tour are seen by in excess of 500,000 people across the UK – none of this would be possible without the crucial investment from Arts Council England.

National Portfolio Organisations

The increase and redistribution of investment will see many arts and culture organisations become National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) – organisations which receive public funding and with a significant national or local cultural offer – for the first time.

Around 80 new NPOs could be created and more than 100 existing NPOs are set to receive funding from the redistribution plan.

ACE will be expected to support London-based cultural bodies wishing to expand or become established across other parts of England. This could mean, for example, new centres, permanent spaces and extended tours, performances and exhibitions to generate a truly national cultural offering.

Separately, the largest nationally and internationally renowned cultural organisations, which receive the greatest level of public subsidy, will be expected to increase the total proportion of their activity in 'Levelling Up for Culture Places' collectively by 15 per cent by March 2026.

London distribution

Arts Council England will also seek to ensure its funds are more evenly distributed across the capital's boroughs so people in places such as Brent and Barking & Dagenham get better access to the arts.

A further £48 million from the Cultural Investment Fund

On top of this, the government will shortly announce the recipients of £48 million of funding from the latest round of its Cultural Investment Fund. This will go to more than 50 organisations, the majority of which will be outside London in another boost for promoting better access for people in their local area. Libraries, museums and creative projects in areas in need of levelling up will benefit, with a further £150 million to be invested from the Cultural Investment Fund over the rest of the Spending Review period.

Diversity and inclusion

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries has also written to national arts and culture organisations asking that they be more ambitious on diversity in all areas. This will mean they engage with a wider potential audience and better reflect the community they serve.

Marking taxpayers' contribution

Recipients of government funding in the arts will be asked to do more to ensure their visitors are aware of the contribution made by taxpayers and will be expected to have physical plaques in or on their buildings, and carry branding on their websites.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The government supported organisations through the pandemic with its unprecedented £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund. Together with today's announcement it means there has never been greater levels of investment by the taxpayer in culture in the post-war period.
- Levelling Up for Culture Places: These places were identified by DCMS and Arts Council England as areas of historic low cultural engagement and spending.
- [List of the 109 places](#)

[Child rapist has sentence increased](#)

following referral to the Court of Appeal

News story

A man who raped a child and sexually assaulted another has had his sentence increased under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.



A man who raped a child and sexually assaulted another has received an increased sentence after his case was referred to the Court of Appeal by the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP.

On separate occasions the offender, who cannot be named for legal reasons, raped and sexually assaulted one child under the age of 13 and sexually assaulted another child under the age of 13. In addition to these offences, he recorded the rape and created indecent images of children, distributing one of them.

On 17 December 2021, having pleaded guilty, the offender was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and a licence period of 5 years.

Following the sentencing, the Solicitor General referred the offender's sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme.

On 23 February 2022 the Court of Appeal found his original sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 14 years and 8 months' imprisonment with a 5 year extended licence.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP said:

These were horrific acts of sexual violence against two children, including rape. No sentence can completely repair the damage caused by this man's appalling actions, but I do welcome this increased sentence which better reflects the gravity of the crimes he committed.

Home Secretary meeting with 'Five Eyes' counterparts

News story

Home Secretary discusses issues relating to Ukraine with security counterparts from the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.



Home Secretary Priti Patel convened and chaired a virtual meeting with her ministerial counterparts from the 'Five Eyes' alliance yesterday evening.

Ministers from the UK, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand discussed the concerning developments in and around Ukraine and how to work together to protect domestic resilience and homeland security across the 5 countries.

They condemned Russia's actions and reiterated that the international community should be united in its response.

The Home Secretary briefed her counterparts on the sanctions that the Prime Minister announced in response to the Russian aggression in Ukraine and underlined the need for like-minded countries to coordinate their response to this challenging situation.

The ministers agreed that it would be especially important to continue cooperation on cyber defence, given increased potential for cyber-attacks, and to counter disinformation. Ministers also agreed on the need for cooperation to combat illicit finance in the current circumstances.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Our trusted Five Eyes partners represent a vital international alliance with whom we can work and collaborate to help protect our

homelands and stand up to aggressors.

The current situation in Ukraine is deeply concerning but by working with long-standing friends and allies, we are showing our solidarity with Ukraine and demonstrating that the international response to Russia's actions will be united and robust.

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[UK proposes anti-dumping measures on Wire Rod imports be kept](#)

Press release

The UK TRA has proposed that existing anti-dumping measures on imports of Wire Rod from China are kept.



In its initial findings, the [UK's Trade Remedies Authority \(TRA\)](#) has today (23 February 2022) proposed that existing measures on imports of iron and steel Wire Rod be maintained. The TRA's provisional findings, contained in the Statements of Essential Facts, would mean that the UK's Wire Rod industry continues to be protected from dumped Wire Rod from China. A 30 day period for comments is now open.

Investigation findings

Following a transition review, the TRA has recommended that [anti-dumping measures be kept on bars and rods of hot-rolled iron, non-alloy steel or alloy steel other than of stainless steel from China](#).

Wire Rod in the UK is predominantly used in construction, tyre reinforcement and steel springs in vehicles. The UK market for Wire Rod is estimated to be

worth more than £740 million per year.

Historically, the UK was an attractive market for Chinese exporters of Wire Rod before the existing measure was imposed. Since the measure was imposed by the European Union in 2008, the volume of imports dropped significantly. The TRA's investigation found evidence of high production and significant inventories of Wire Rod in China suggesting that dumping would be likely to occur again if the measures were removed.

The TRA has recommended that the measures on Wire Rod be maintained at their current levels until 30 January 2026 – that is five years subsequent to the date when the measure would have expired (30 January 2021) had no transition review been initiated.

Following today's publication, there will be a 30-day period in which interested parties can comment on the report. Comments can be submitted by Interested Parties to the TRA via the [Trade Remedies Service](#) website.

The TRA will then consider and produce a Final Recommendation, which will be sent to the Secretary of State for International Trade who will make the final decision on whether to uphold the TRA's recommendation.

Notes to editors:

- The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) is the independent UK body, established in June 2021, as the first non-departmental public body of the Department for International Trade, that investigates whether trade remedy measures are needed to counter unfair import practices and unforeseen surges of imports.
- Read more about the TRA's mission in its [Business Plan](#).
- Anti-dumping duties allow a country or union to take action against goods sold at less than their normal value, which is defined as the price for 'like goods' sold in the exporter's home market.
- Read the full [Statement of Essential Facts in the anti-dumping transition review](#).
- Trade remedy investigations were carried out by the EU Commission on the UK's behalf until the UK left the EU. Forty-four EU trade remedy measures of interest to UK producers were carried across into UK law when the UK left the EU and the TRA is currently reviewing each one to assess whether it is suitable for UK needs.

Free cyber skills training for thousands of school pupils

- Cyber Explorers will teach 11 to 14-year-olds essential digital skills to meet demand for future talent in the cyber security sector
- Schools in Newport, Newry, Inverclyde, Birmingham and Bradford among first areas to benefit from extra learning events

Thousands of secondary school students will learn essential cyber security skills for free through a new online learning platform being rolled out in schools across the country.

The move is part of government plans to create a highly-skilled and more diverse pipeline of talent for the UK's fast-growing and in-demand cyber security industry.

Cyber Explorers aims to introduce 30,000 11 to 14-year-olds to important security concepts such as open-source intelligence, digital forensics and social engineering.

Along with the help of both the friendly Cyber Ranger and the knowledgeable Cyber Squad, students will explore a variety of scenarios and collect virtual badges for making smarter choices online. Using characters, quizzes and activities, the free website will show students how digital, computing and cyber skills can lead to a range of career paths, including social media content creation, sports technology and medical research. Brand new content and characters will launch over the coming weeks.

Last week [new data](#) published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport showed cyber security in the UK is growing from strength to strength. The sector is now worth more than £10 billion and more than 6,000 new jobs were created last year.

But only a third of companies are confident they will be able to access the digital skills they need in the years to come. The lack of relevant training is a barrier, keeping young people from some of the country's most innovative and exciting careers.

Cyber Minister Julia Lopez said:

For years the UK has led the world in cyber security but we're now looking ahead to the future. This sector is home to some of our most exciting, innovative jobs and they must be open to everyone.

Cyber Explorers will give thousands of young people the opportunity to learn digital skills they need for the modern workplace and get the best possible start on their journey towards a career in cyber.

Girls and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are underrepresented in IT courses at GCSE and equivalent levels and the trend continues into today's cyber workforce. Just 16 per cent of roles in the sector are filled by women and many senior roles are not fully representative of wider society.

Designed to engage younger students before they choose subjects for their GCSEs and equivalent qualifications, Cyber Explorers aims to improve the diversity of pupils picking computer science courses at Key Stage 4.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Steve Barclay, said:

The UK's cyber security industry is growing from strength to strength and we must continue to unlock the opportunities it brings to our economy by investing in the right skills and training.

Cyber Explorers is a fantastic opportunity to encourage a new generation to learn the essential digital skills they need for the future and get the best possible start to their careers, as well as meet demand for future talent in the sector.

Suitable for in-classroom teaching, after school clubs and independent learning at home, the programme has been specifically developed to help teachers and parents introduce digital skills to young people while complementing the wider school curriculum.

The new platform is being rolled out as part of the government's National Cyber Strategy. It will complement the existing CyberFirst programme of activities led by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

A series of events will be run by local businesses and networks in Newport, Birmingham, Bradford, Newry and Inverclyde to ensure young people from ethnic minority and socially deprived backgrounds have the support and access they need to benefit from the programme.

Chris Ensor, NCSC Deputy Director for Cyber Growth, said:

Cyber security is a growing industry in the UK, with a huge variety of exciting career paths on offer that help defend our digital world.

Supporting young people to develop cyber skills is vital for addressing the sector's skills gap and for keeping the UK the safest place to live and work online.

Cyber Explorers will play a key role in making cyber more

accessible to young people, complementing the wider CyberFirst programme and inspiring students to pursue careers in the field.

ENDS

Notes for Editors

About Cyber Explorers

- Cyber Explorers is the latest HM Government backed initiative to complement the existing CyberFirst programme of activities, which is led by the National Cyber Security Centre. It is ensuring more opportunity through education, providing the right skills, and retraining and helping to develop societal infrastructure.
- Cyber Explorers can be accessed through schools. Teachers can register for their students to gain access to the platform at www.cyberexplorers.co.uk.

About the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) – a part of GCHQ

- The NCSC is the UK's lead technical authority on cyber security and offers unrivalled real-time threat analysis, defence against national cyber attacks and tailored advice to victims when incidents do happen. The NCSC leads the CyberFirst programme which offers a range of activities for young people to learn about the exciting world of cyber security, including free courses for all age groups from 11-17 and a university bursary and apprenticeship scheme.