

# UK's major year of sport and culture to be showcased at Expo 2020 Dubai with Culture Secretary visit

- Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries and Minister for Exports Mike Freer to lead the government's delegation at UK National Day at Expo 2020 Dubai
- Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will be showcased to a global audience at Expo as the UK gets set for the Games
- The Queen's Baton Relay and the Birmingham 2022 Business and Tourism Programme will be landmark fixtures of UK National Day celebrations

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries and Minister for Exports Mike Freer will promote the UK's blockbuster year of sport and cultural events at Expo 2020 Dubai on UK National Day as the Queen's Baton Relay makes an historic visit to the region.

Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, and Unboxed: Creativity in the UK will showcase global Britain on the world stage and be a driving force for international tourism, trade and investment to the UK this year.

Their visit comes as the government confirms the UK is now one of the strongest and most open economies in Europe, as testing and quarantine restrictions end for fully vaccinated visitors.

As part of the Birmingham 2022 showcase at Expo, the Queen's Baton Relay will attend UK National Day alongside His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge to bring Commonwealth nations attending Expo 2020 Dubai together in anticipation for the upcoming Games. After Expo 2020, the Baton will continue on its 72-nation tour before arriving in Birmingham for the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games on 28 July.

Nadine Dorries, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, says:

2022 is set to be an incredible year of celebration for the UK, with three amazing global events on home soil. The arrival of the Queen's Baton Relay in Dubai will help build excitement about Birmingham 2022, the Platinum Jubilee and Unboxed.

As world leaders convene at Expo 2020 Dubai, I'm proud to be promoting the very best of global Britain at UK National Day, encouraging people to come and experience our spectacular year of sport and culture.

UK National Day will feature new and diverse music, theatre, arts, poetry, comedy, film, food and innovation across the whole Expo 2020 site, inviting

the world to see things differently about the UK as it celebrates extraordinary UK talent.

Laura Faulkner OBE, UK Commissioner General for Expo 2020 Dubai, says:

UK National Day will be the highlight of our participation in Expo 2020 Dubai, offering visitors from 191 countries the opportunity to see things differently, to celebrate our extraordinary talent from the UK and discover how we innovate all over the world.

I'm delighted to see the Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton Relay is officially part of the celebrations, combining the strong relationships we have with each and every Commonwealth nation with an opportunity to appreciate the world-class sporting talents we have in the UK.

Ten years on from London 2012, the UK is also hosting the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, the Rugby League World Cup and the World Gymnastics Championships, in addition to the Birmingham Commonwealth Games. The visit to Expo 2020 Dubai is part of a wider international programme across the Gulf region from 7-11 February, including a major keynote address from the Culture Secretary at the formal launch of [VisitBritain's newly-announced £10 million international GREAT Britain marketing campaign](#), promoting the blockbuster year of 2022 to the UK's most valuable markets.

The Culture Secretary will also speak at the 'Culture and Sport in the Global Economy' event (9 February) alongside global sporting organisations including Qatar 2022, the Global E-sports Federation, Rugby League World Cup, City of Gold Coast and World Games 2022. The summit will explore the transformational impact the major cultural and sporting events of 2022 will have on the social and economic recovery of the UK.

This event is hosted by the West Midlands Growth Company and is part of a series of events across the UAE for Birmingham 2022's Business and Tourism programme – a £24 million central and local government investment into the West Midlands – to demonstrate the scale of the economic opportunity available in the Games' host city and long-term capital investment potential of the region.

In addition to the programme of activity with the Culture Secretary, Minister for Exports Mike Freer will be attending Expo, and talking to the business community to promote the Government's Export Strategy published at the end of last year and the 'Race to £1 Trillion' target to boost exports and ensure the UK recovers from the pandemic and builds back better and greener.

His visit to the region follows the closure of the Department of International Trade's public consultation on a new trade deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), of which the UAE is a founding member, with the intention of negotiations on a new agreement being launched this year. The UK government already has a strong trading relationship worth £32.5 billion with the large, diverse and vibrant group of the GCC countries. A new deal will

take this a step further, helping the UK become a truly Global Britain, breaking down barriers to trade and supporting growth and jobs for UK workers.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Please see supplementary quotes from Birmingham 2022 partners in Annex A.

Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games

The [Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games](#) will take place from 28 July to 8 August 2022 and will be the biggest sporting and cultural event ever held in the city featuring thousands of world-class athletes and over a million spectators. Home to more than 187 nationalities, Birmingham 2022 will be a home Games for every nation.

Backed by £778 million of public funding, Birmingham 2022 will deliver 11 days of amazing sport. Alongside the sport programme, the Games will be accompanied by a six-month cultural festival and the Queen's Baton Relay will travel around the Commonwealth and the UK before arriving in Birmingham for the Opening Ceremony. A £24 million business and tourism programme will convert the excitement and interest generated by the Games into increased trade, tourism and investment opportunities for the West Midlands, promoting the region and the UK to the world.

The UK at Expo 2020 Dubai

The UK is participating in Expo 2020 Dubai, taking place from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022. More than 200 participants, including 190-plus countries, are taking part in what will be the Arab world's largest event. The overarching theme for Expo 2020 Dubai is 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future'. Under the theme 'Innovating for a Shared Future', the UK's participation will boost the UK's global reputation, drive future partnerships and provide long term economic benefit.

The UK's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai will be led by the [Department for International Trade \(DIT\)](#), with support from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, the Department for Transport, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the Devolved Administrations. The UK's presence will consist of a self-build country Pavilion, based in the 'Opportunity' District and an accompanying business, cultural, tourism and education events programme.

Annex A: Supplementary quotes from Birmingham 2022 partners

Ian Reid, Chief Executive of Birmingham 2022, says:

The Queen's Baton Relay is a much-loved tradition – it brings together people, athletes and communities from across the

Commonwealth as excitement builds for the Games. Our involvement in UK National Day provides another opportunity to connect and strengthen relationships with the Commonwealth nations and territories present at the Expo, as we work towards hosting the biggest sport and cultural event to ever be staged in the West Midlands. The Queen's Baton also highlights the region's innovation and creativity, making it a special moment to showcase these skills at a world expo.

CGF President Dame Louise Martin, DBE, says:

The Queen's Baton Relay symbolises hope, solidarity and collaboration across the Commonwealth, at a time when it is needed most. The visit to the Expo site on UK National Day provides a unique opportunity for the Baton to further engage with Commonwealth nations that have come together in one place. It marks another exciting moment for the Baton to inspire communities on its journey to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony on July 28th.

Cllr Ian Ward, Leader of Birmingham City Council, says:

As the excitement builds for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, we're pleased to be bringing the Business and Tourism Programme to Expo 2020 Dubai, highlighting Birmingham and the wider West Midlands' aspirations on the world stage.

The Games present a unique opportunity to forge new ties with our international counterparts across trade, tourism and investment, as well as cement existing ones. The West Midlands boasts one of the UK's most vibrant displays of arts and culture, coupled with a business environment that has attracted more foreign investment than any other UK regional location, for four consecutive years.

Our programme of strategic engagement across the Commonwealth and UAE markets aims to advance mutual opportunities for economic prosperity and we look forward to meeting international partners at Expo 2020, and of course, at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

VisitBritain CEO, Sally Balcombe, says:

We know there is pent-up demand for travel and this year's landmark events, set to be global tourism draws, are exciting and timely opportunities to promote our welcome to the world and to showcase the outstanding experiences that visitors can only have here in Britain.

As well as harnessing these global events, we're shining the spotlight on our vibrant cities, telling the stories of our renowned heritage with a modern twist, our buzzing contemporary culture and innovative food and drink scene, showing that Britain is packed full of fresh and exciting experiences to come and see today and that now is a fantastic time to book a trip.