



Baltic Flour Mill, Gateshead.

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## **UPDATED Northumbria leads the call on levelling-up Northern culture**

An All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) report calling for culture to be embedded in the Government's levelling-up white paper has been written by Northumbria University's Director of Cultural Partnerships, Professor Katy Shaw.

For the first time Northern MPs, regional mayors, local authority, and cultural leaders have come together to make the case for Northern culture.

The Northern Culture APPG's levelling up inquiry gathered a significant body of evidence on what the North needs to rebuild, rebalance and recover and achieved pan-Northern and cross-party consensus on its findings and recommendations.

Its 10-point action plan makes it clear that Northern culture must be embedded - and not ignored - in the Government's levelling up White Paper.

[Professor Shaw](#) says [the Case for Culture report](#) – which officially launches today (Wednesday 19 January) – highlights the huge economic contribution Northern culture makes to the UK and the need to unlock its full potential.

“The North has always been a powerhouse for culture,” she said. “But in recent decades the cultural sector and the North of England have been doubly disadvantaged by legacies of deindustrialisation, and most recently by a global pandemic that has hit the North and the arts most profoundly. To go forward today, we must get up off our knees together.

“This inquiry will recognise the capacity of culture to build innovative foundations for a new vision of the North in the 21st Century. The inquiry offers a vital opportunity to think about how we work together to build the sustainable creative skill sets in education, the infrastructure in capital build and digital connectivity and the culture of participation and inclusion across the many and varied geographies of our regions that we need to super charge the North as a cultural powerhouse fit for the future.”

The North possesses a rich seam of talent and a strong and proud cultural heritage. The Case for Culture report sets out what the Government needs to do if it is to truly level-up Northern culture, including maximising the North's cultural soft power, investing in greater economic and cultural infrastructure and opening-up opportunities and access to training and education.

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at Northumbria University, said: “The arts, cultural and creative industries in the North can play a vital role in the region's economic renewal and recovery from the pandemic. Levelling up will not be achieved without place-based partnerships of cultural, educational, public, private and third sector organisations working together to tackle challenges and to build a new future

for everyone in the North.

“Northumbria University welcomes this report. As an anchor institution in the North East region, we are delighted to have been able to play a key role in its development.”

The Case for Culture report calls on Government to level up investment in culture for the next generation. It states that if we invest in our regions, our economy, and our wellbeing - we invest in ourselves and our country - and begin to generate the opportunities and solutions that will define the post-Covid world.

James Daly MP and Julie Elliott MP, Co-Chairs of the [Northern Culture APPG](#), added: “We know that Northern Culture makes a huge contribution to the UK economy but now is the time for the North to seize this ‘once in a generation’ opportunity to increase diversity, sustainability, accessibility and resilience in its talent pipeline.

“Our Case for Culture report makes it clear that it is time to maximise the social and economic benefits which stem from our cultural assets and time to tap into the North’s rich seam of talent – if we are to unlock the North’s cultural capital and truly level-up”.

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