

News story: The Mersey Beatles

headline Astana Expo

The tribute band recreated the magic of the Fab Four as part of a British showcase promoting trade and culture in the region. The 2 performances drew full crowds. Their sets covered some of the most iconic tracks in pop history, including 'Can't Buy Me Love' and 'Hey Jude'.

The performances are part of a wider UK showcase in the closing weeks of Astana Expo 2017, to promote British culture, technology and innovation. UK participation at Astana Expo ends on 10 September.

UK Deputy Commissioner Sara Everett said:

The UK at Astana Expo has delivered a strong cultural and business programme, in this fast-growing economy.

The popularity of this concert highlights the UK's immense creative and cultural contribution to the world, making the creative industries one of our strongest and most vital sectors and leading the Confederation of British Industry to forecast the UK as the world's leading creative hub by 2025.

Mersey Beatles

The Mersey Beatles are childhood friends who grew up in Liverpool. They had a record collection in common. The Beatles were at the top of their collections as they are to this day.

The friends have been recreating the sound of the Beatles since 1999. They were resident at The Cavern Club in Liverpool for 10 years and have since toured the world.

Steven Howard, Mark Bloor and Brian Ambrose attended secondary school together in Liverpool. David Howard and Steven Howard are cousins. Tony Cook, another friend from Liverpool, is the fifth Mersey Beatle. His keyboard skills make the hits of the later years come to life. The Mersey Beatles love of the Beatles music shines through in every performance.

British showcase at Astana Expo

The Mersey Beatles were part of a British showcase across the Expo site and on the UK Pavilion that included:

- 22 August: Engineering Day in association with the [British Chamber of Commerce](#)
- 25 August: Arrival of the [British Bloodhound](#) at Expo, the fastest car in

the world

- 26 August: Jane Austen Day in association with the Astana Book Club

UK Pavilion at Astana Expo

The UK is promoting the UK as a business partner of choice at Astana Expo 2017 through a Pavilion designed by UK architect Asif Khan with a team of British and international creative talent, and a British cultural programme.

The International Business Festival

The Mersey Beatles Live at Expo was sponsored by The International Business Festival – the world's biggest business event. Hosted every 2 years in its home city of Liverpool, the festival captures the dynamism and diversity of the global marketplace.

Held across 3 weeks in June 2018, the third edition of the International Business Festival is set to be the biggest and boldest yet, with a programme focused on 9 key industry sectors including manufacturing, life sciences and culture, media and sport.

British Engineering Day at the UK Pavilion at Astana Expo

[British Engineering Day](#), held in the UK Pavilion on 22 August, showcased British capabilities and excellence in manufacturing and engineering technologies. It provided a networking opportunity for British and Kazakhstani companies to build contacts and meet with potential partners and distributors to sell their services and goods.

Jane Austin Day

Jane Austen Day, held on 26 August, celebrated the 200th anniversary of the renowned and internationally loved novelist. It was held in collaboration with PRObooks, a club consisting of over 900 active participants in Astana.

British Bloodhound

[Bloodhound](#) was at the National Day Stage at Astana Expo until 5 Sept.

Bloodhound is an international education initiative based around a 1,000mph jet and rocket powered car. The primary aim of the programme is to inspire the next generation by showcasing science technology, engineering and maths subjects in the most exciting way possible, by setting a world land speed record and sharing the adventure along the journey.

Statement to Parliament: Update on draft Airports National Policy Statement process

In my [statement](#) on 13 July this year, I said I would set out the next steps of the [draft Airports National Policy Statement](#) (NPS) process following the summer recess.

The government [consulted on a draft Airports NPS](#) between 2 February and 25 May this year.

We received over 70,000 responses, and work to analyse them is ongoing. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to feed in their views.

In the consultation document, my department was clear that further work was underway to update the evidence base, including revised aviation demand forecasts and the government's final air quality plan. It was intended these documents would be presented for consideration during the initial consultation, but the timing of the general election meant this was not possible.

I am therefore confirming that there is a need to conduct a short period of further consultation to allow this updated evidence to be taken into account. This further consultation will focus mainly on the specific elements of the NPS affected, and is expected to begin later this year.

I appointed the former Senior President of Tribunals, Sir Jeremy Sullivan, to provide independent oversight of the consultation process. I am very grateful to him for his hard work in helping to ensure that the consultation was as open, fair and transparent as possible. Today (7 September 2017) I am publishing his [report on the initial consultation](#), and can announce that he has agreed to oversee the period of further consultation.

In my statement in July I said that the timing of the election – in particular the need to re-start the [Select Committee process](#) – meant we now expect to lay any final NPS in the first half of 2018 for a vote in the House of Commons. This government remains committed to realising the benefits that airport expansion could bring, and I can confirm that we do not expect this additional period of consultation to impact on the timetable for parliamentary scrutiny of the NPS.

News story: Government backs innovative technology to slash shipping emissions to zero

The government has committed to help fund innovative technologies and fuels to reduce maritime emissions, ultimately helping create a zero-emissions sector.

The government, in partnership with industry, has committed to spending over £6 million on funding trials of innovative energy saving devices, such as:

- state of the art propellers
- on board waste heat recovery
- rotor sails that use wind power to cut fuel consumption

In addition to funding trials, we are also now providing technical backing and expertise through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for the following projects:

- work in Scotland to prove the use of hydrogen fuel cells for ferries in the UK
- Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries ongoing work to deliver innovative vessels such as hybrids, and their longer term efforts to prove the use of innovative propulsion and fuels for the next generation of ferries

The UK is playing a leading role in implementing binding energy efficiency targets for shipping, which we helped secure global agreement on in 2011. By 2025, the majority of new ships will be expected to be 30% more efficient than current designs.

Maritime transport emits around 1,000 million tonnes of CO₂ annually worldwide, and is responsible for about 2.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. If emissions from international shipping are not addressed, studies suggest they will account for almost a fifth (17%) of global emissions by 2050, highlighting the need for urgent action.

Speaking in the run up to London International Shipping Week 2017, Maritime Minister John Hayes said:

The UK is home to a wealth of expertise in maritime technology, but more needs to be done to move this sector towards a zero emissions world.

That's why this government is committed to backing vital technology to meet this goal, and we are looking to deepen our technical expertise to further support industry.

I will relay this message during London International Shipping Week

2017, where we will showcase the UK's exciting future as a powerhouse of maritime innovation.

The government has also been working closely with industry to develop international regulations to support liquid natural gas and other alternative fuels. Vessels fuelled with liquid natural gas are regularly refuelling in the UK at ports including Teesport, Southampton and Immingham.

The UK already has several hybrid ships operating in its waters. These systems offer local air quality benefits, can be quieter for port communities and provide opportunities for further energy efficiency on board a vessel.

Press release: International protection for UK's second largest seabird colony

The newly designated Northumberland Marine Special Protection Area (SPA) stretches 12 miles from the coastline into the North Sea, and covers an area of more than 120,000 football pitches.

It's the most important site in the UK for Arctic, common and roseate terns, the second most important site for sandwich tern, and the third most important site for Atlantic puffin.

International designation will help ensure any disturbance to the birds' essential open water feeding areas is minimised, so the birds have a safe space to feed in.

It builds on the protection already afforded to important breeding sites via the network of SPAs at Coquet Island, Farne Islands, Lindisfarne and Northumbria Coast. Today's designation will help to protect the full range of habitats needed by the birds.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

We already have one of the strongest track records in the world when it comes to looking after our precious marine environment, and today's designations will strengthen our blue-belt of protected areas while helping seabirds across the country thrive.

Andrew Sells, Natural England's Chairman said:

This is a momentous day for a huge number of our best-loved and most charismatic seabirds, many of which have suffered population declines over recent decades.

These designations will protect vital feeding areas for seabirds along the English coast, creating safe havens to help the birds thrive for generations to come.

Chris Corrigan, Director, RSPB England said:

It is fantastic to see these special places being recognised and given the protection they so need and we hope to see more designations in the very near future.

As the UK moves closer to leaving the EU, we urge the government to continue to recognise the significance of protecting these sites, based on scientific evidence, and they continue to protect and manage these sites to the same or even higher standards than those currently secured by European law for generations to come.

Along with the new Northumberland Marine SPA, Natural England also announced extensions to Hamford Water SPA in Essex and Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA in Cumbria.

These designations add an area of more than 150,000 football pitches (450 square miles) to the existing Marine Protected Area network. This gives international protection to feeding habitats for over 425,000 seabirds for the first time.

As an important breeding site in the UK Northumberland Marine SPA ranks:

- top for Arctic tern (9,564 individuals), common tern (2,572) and roseate tern (160)
- 2nd for sandwich tern (43,24 individuals)
- 3rd for Atlantic puffin (108,484 individuals)
- 4th for common guillemot (65,751 individuals)
- 11th for little tern (90 individuals)

Arctic terns make the longest annual migration of any bird species in the world – an average of 44,000 miles each year.

The new Northumberland Marine SPA covers a 41 mile stretch between Scremerston and Blyth.

The most important site for breeding seabirds in the UK is at Flamborough, along the Yorkshire coast.

Contact Natural England for more information

Mary Tomlinson, Senior Press Officer, Natural England. Email:

Press release: Great North Run joins next year's Great Exhibition of the North

The Simplyhealth Great North Run – the world's largest half marathon – will form part of the finale of next year's Great Exhibition of the North, Culture Secretary Karen Bradley announced today.

The mass-participation race, which attracts 57,000 runners a year, will be the centrepiece of the Exhibition's final weekend in September 2018.

The Great Exhibition of the North is set to be the biggest event in England next year. The Exhibition, supported by £5 million of Government funding, will showcase the best of art, culture, design and innovation across the Northern Powerhouse.

Karen Bradley, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said:

"The Great North Run is a British sporting institution that has raised the profile of Tyneside across the world. It is a fantastic example of how events like these can change a city's culture and I am thrilled it is partnering with the Great Exhibition of the North.

"The race will be the perfect finale to the three month Exhibition, which will celebrate the very best of art, design and innovation across the whole of the North of England and help boost investment and tourism in the region to leave a lasting legacy."

Brendan Foster, founder and chairman of The Great North Run, said:

"2018 will be another milestone year for the Simplyhealth Great North Run as the centrepiece to the Great Exhibition of the North's final weekend.

"The region is at the very heart of mass-participation running and this partnership should help to inspire even more people to get active and take part in running, the most accessible and inclusive sport of all."

Newcastle and Gateshead's world-class venues and unique outdoor spaces are hosting the Exhibition, which will feature a summer of amazing exhibits, inspired technology, and cutting edge culture.

The space suit worn by astronaut Helen Sharman when she visited the Mir Space Station will be on display in the North of England for the first time. It

will be exhibited at the Great North Museum alongside a range of star items, including the last piano John Lennon ever played.

Sharman, from Sheffield, was the first British astronaut and the first woman to visit the Mir Space Station in 1991. The 22lb suit she wore after being selected from over 13,000 applicants to represent the British Juno Mission has never been displayed in the North before. It has been loaned by the Science Museum and will be one of the star exhibits at the Great North Museum next year.

Helen Sharman said:

"It's fantastic to see that the Sokol space suit from my 1991 journey to the Mir Space Station will feature in the Great Exhibition of the North 2018. I'm delighted that the loan of my space suit by the Science Museum Group will help the Great Exhibition of the North to celebrate the many incredible scientific, technological and cultural contributions made by northerners. I hope that the story of a young person from Sheffield becoming the first Briton in space will inspire young visitors to believe that they too can achieve something completely unexpected."

[Find out more about the the Exhibition](#)

Also on display will be John Lennon's Record Plant Piano that featured on Double Fantasy, the last album he released before his death in 1980. The piano, which has also been used by the likes of Bob Dylan, Lou Reed, and Elton John, has been loaned by The Beatles Story visitor attraction in Liverpool.

Martin King of The Beatles Story said:

"Any exhibition of great things from the North of England should reference The Beatles, or at least one of them. John Lennon's favourite piano from his New York years featured on many of his solo works and, poignantly, was the last instrument he ever played. We hope visitors will look upon it and think about the four lads from Liverpool who are still, 50 years on, considered to be the world's greatest ever band."

Sir Gary Verity, Chair of the Board for the Great Exhibition of the North, said:

"The programme highlights we've announced today reflect what an exciting event the Great Exhibition of the North will be 2018. We're telling the story of the North through its people, music, art and inventions.

"Never before have pieces such as Helen Sharman's space suit and John Lennon's Record Plant Piano been on display together in one venue. They'll be joined by many more iconic objects from across the North. We'll also be celebrating the North of England's strengths in digital, health and innovation, and how Northern inventions continue to shape the world we live in.

"Today's announcement is just a flavour of what people can expect when the

Great Exhibition of the North takes over the buildings, streets and public spaces in NewcastleGateshead next summer."

Visitors will be able to discover the story of the North of England through three walking routes themed around art, design and innovation, beginning at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Sage Gateshead or Great North Museum: Hancock.

The BALTIC will present the best in Northern contemporary art including a new solo show from Turner Prize nominee Michael Dean. The Newcastle-born artist is renowned for creating sculpture out of words, using everyday materials such as concrete, steel, soil and sand.

The Sage Gateshead will commission an animated, musical adventure called "Seven Bridges", developed by composer Ed Carter and children's television script-writer Katie Simmons. Set along the River Tyne to Dunston Staiths, the film will be presented live with music from the Royal Northern Sinfonia and introduce children to the architectural and engineering landmarks of the region.

The Exhibition will highlight the North's strengths in key sectors, including digital, health innovation and energy, as well as profiling great Northern innovations such as Graphene, which was discovered by scientists working at the University of Manchester in 2004.

It is expected to attract an additional 1.2 million visitors to Newcastle and Gateshead and bring a £184 million boost to the North East, showing how cultural investment can benefit and inspire entire communities.

For more information visit www.getnorth2018.com

-ENDS- Notes to editors:

- Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group, said: "It's a pleasure to support the Great Exhibition of the North 2018 with two remarkable objects telling the story of the north's contribution to the global development of space research and railways. Both Stephenson's Rocket and Helen Sharman's spacesuit are hugely significant objects in our collection and with over 150 years between them, they tell the story of the UK's continuing scientific prowess."
- The Great Exhibition of the North was first announced by Government in April 2016 and a competition was launched to secure £5m of government funding to stage the exhibition.
- In October 2016, NewcastleGateshead was selected to host the Great Exhibition of The North; NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) led the bid and is the lead delivery partner for the Exhibition, working closely with colleagues at Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, BALTIC, Sage Gateshead, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and a board chaired by Sir Gary Verity.
- The Newcastle and Gateshead programme for the Great Exhibition of the North 2018 will span three months, opening over the weekend of the 22 June 2018. It will celebrate innovation and creativity across Northern

England and will help boost investment and tourism, while leaving a lasting cultural and economic legacy.

- Ambitious plans will use the whole destination as the stage, with a newly commissioned creative programme taking place in a range of venues and outdoor spaces across NewcastleGateshead. Further details on the content will be announced in the coming months.
- NewcastleGateshead Initiative is a destination management and marketing agency; a public-private partnership supported by Gateshead and Newcastle City Councils, working with around 170 private sector partner organisations. It's mission is to inspire people to visit, and to live, learn work and invest in Newcastle and Gateshead and the wider region.

The Great Run Company

The Great Run Series is the world's favourite run with over 230,000 participants a year taking part. The events programme stretches across the UK from Aberdeen to Portsmouth offering a full range of distances from 5k through to the half marathon. A full range of online training services are available from Great Run Training. Great Run Local is a series of weekly events staged in our key cities. All designed to provide the support and advice for participants of all abilities to achieve their personal goal.

To find out more about the events and services provided by Great Run and its partners visit www.greatrun.org.