

Press release: Five towns and cities shortlisted for UK City of Culture 2021

The announcement comes following a meeting of the independent advisory panel chaired by Phil Redmond. Of the eleven towns and cities that registered bids for UK City of Culture 2021, five have been shortlisted for the prestigious award.

In December 2017, either Coventry, Paisley, Stoke, Sunderland or Swansea will be named the third UK City of Culture, following in the footsteps of Derry-Londonderry and Hull.

Hull is the current City of Culture and its programme includes 365 days of cultural events. It is estimated that City of Culture has brought a boost of £60 million to the local economy in 2017. Nine out of 10 residents have attended, or taken part in, an event as part of Hull 2017 and the city has seen over £1 billion of investment since winning the title in 2013. The winner of UK City of Culture 2021 will also have access to a £3 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

John Glen, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism said:

We have received strong bids from across the UK and now have a fantastic shortlist of five that reflect the diversity and cultural ambition of our towns and cities.

I want to congratulate all eleven bids which offered brilliant examples of how to celebrate their own unique culture and heritage, and showed just how prestigious and coveted the UK City of Culture is.

The strength of the competition showed us how valuable our cultural assets are to our towns, boosting tourism and jobs in local communities. I have seen first hand how Hull has embraced its status as City of Culture 2017, and how beneficial it has been for the area. I am looking forward to seeing what will come in 2021.

Phil Redmond, Chair of the UK City of Culture panel said:

The quality, commitment and enthusiasm that came across from the eleven bidders made deciding a shortlist to recommend to Ministers

as difficult as it was for the two previous UK City of Culture competitions. The appetite for using culture to bring about regeneration and to strengthen communities is clearly stronger than ever. Overall the panel thought that five cities' bids showed the potential to deliver a UK City of Culture 2021 programme. I want to thank all eleven bidders for all their work and look forward to final bids from Coventry, Paisley, Stoke-on-Trent, Sunderland and Swansea later this year.

Martin Green, Director of Hull 2017, said:

We're only halfway through the year and we're already seeing the huge benefits Hull is enjoying as UK City of Culture, not only in raising the profile of the city on a national and international scale but also increasing pride and participation among the people who live and work here.

At least 450 events, exhibitions and cultural activities took place during the first season, attracting over 1.4 million visits, which is boosting the economy. But what has impressed me the most is how the people of this city have taken ownership of their year with 90% trying at least one cultural event in the first three months.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the vision and leadership of Hull City Council, which successfully bid for Hull to become UK City of Culture, the support and collaboration of partners, as well as the strong community of artists that will continue to ensure it remains a vibrant cultural centre.

The shortlisted areas will now be invited to submit a final bid by the end of September. The panel will assess the final bids from the shortlisted cities before a winner is announced in December.

The unsuccessful areas will each receive detailed feedback on their bids. Ministers and officials will also engage with them on how best they could realise their ambitions for widespread recognition for their cultural offer.

ENDS

For further information and interview requests please contact Faye Jackson in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport press office on 020 7211 6263 or faye.jackson@culture.gov.uk

Notes to editors

- The eleven initial bids were made by Coventry, Hereford, Paisley, Perth,

Portsmouth, St David's and the Hundred of Dewisland, Stoke-on-Trent, Sunderland, Swansea, Warrington and Wells.

- To unlock the funds of the HLF Grant, the successful bidder will need to demonstrate that their programme is underpinned by heritage and builds on existing investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Follow us on Twitter ([@DCMS](#)) and Facebook ([dcmsgovuk](#)) to find out who's made the shortlist. Get involved in celebrating these great places by sharing photos using #CityofCulture2021
- Hull was named the second [UK City of Culture](#) in November 2013. While there is no monetary support or prize attached to the UK City of Culture title, Hull has successfully secured £15 million in government funding, as well as funding from Arts Council England (£3m) and Heritage Lottery Fund (£3m). The Heritage Lottery Fund has also recently awarded £15 million to the "Hull: Yorkshire Maritime City" project. Nine out of ten residents have attended or experienced a cultural event or activity as part of Hull 2017 and 70% say it is positively affecting their lives. In the first three month season there were around 1.4 million visits to more than 450 events and activities. The economic boost is substantial too. It amounts to 60 million pounds in 2017 alone. Hotel occupancy is up 14 per cent and train journeys by 17 per cent. Almost 90 new businesses and 550 new jobs have been created since 2013 and more than half of city centre businesses reported benefits in the first three months of 2017
- Full details of [Independent Panel](#) (PDF, 89.1KB, 3 pages)

[News story: Programme for second round of negotiations with European Commission](#)

Second round of talks to begin on Monday, July 17.

Monday, 17 July 2017

9:15: David Davis, UK Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, and Michel Barnier, Chief Negotiator, meet at the Berlaymont (VIP corner)

9:30: Opening Session (Office of Michel Barnier, photo opportunity)

Afternoon:

Coordinators' meeting

Negotiating Groups

Tuesday, 18 July 2017

Coordinators' meetings

Negotiating Groups

Wednesday, 19 July 2017

Negotiating Groups

Thursday, 20 July 2017

Coordinators' meeting

Closing Plenary

Press Conference by Principals (to be confirmed)

Note:

There are three negotiating groups covering citizens' rights, financial settlement and other separation issues. The issues related to Northern Ireland and the governance of the withdrawal agreement will be addressed by the Coordinators.

[Press release: Road show to show you road works](#)

The organisation is using a mobile visitor centre, which will for the first time give road users and local residents the chance to speak to staff who will be coming to their area. The minibus facility will open out into a larger exhibition, which will feature displays and presentations about road works in the area and road safety.

This innovative new approach builds on the success of the team working on the new A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon road, which has deployed a similar exhibition to engage with the public about that work.

Now drivers will be able to speak to Highways England staff about a whole

range of road works that are happening soon and further in the future, with the new visitors centre set to tour the region.

Staff will be on hand to answer road users' queries and address their concerns, with the focus of the exhibition being on essential major maintenance work happening soon throughout the region but staff also able to talk about upcoming work such as the significant improvements that will be delivered through the Roads Investment Strategy. Over the next week, the visitor centre will travel to the following locations as detailed below, being manned and available between 12pm (midday) and 7pm:

- Tuesday 18 July – Haycocks Hotel, Wansford
- Wednesday 19 July – Serpentine Shopping Centre, Peterborough
- Thursday 20 July – Play2Day, Gull Road, Guyhirn
- Friday 21 July – Tesco, Dereham

Throughout the rest of July and August, the exhibition will also be visiting the following locations, with times and dates to be confirmed:

- Bedford
- Sandy
- Biggleswade
- Spittals Interchange, Huntingdon
- Baldock
- Toddington
- King's Lynn
- Attleborough
- Great Yarmouth
- Hopton
- Lowestoft
- Harwich
- Hockliffe

Members of the public are invited to attend the mobile visitor centre to speak with Highways England staff, which will include traffic officers at some of the exhibitions.

Highways England Capital Delivery Team Leader, Aran Nugent, said:

We are aware that the work we do has an impact on our road users, and so Highways England is eager to better engage with drivers and local residents so we can hear their comments, allay their concerns and answer any questions they may come to us with.

This mobile exhibition offers us an excellent opportunity to better get into those communities we will be working alongside, so we can speak with people to explain the work we are doing and the benefits it will bring for them, their town and this region.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Traffic officers make sure jumpers find their way to disabled riding championships](#)

Quick-thinking Highways England traffic officers ensured that the Riding for the Disabled Association's fundraising effort was not left short-changed at this weekend's National Championships in Gloucestershire.

Highways England received reports of debris lying in lane 3 of the M5 near Sedgemoor Services yesterday afternoon. Dispatched to the scene, traffic officers Andy Pollard and Andy White closed off the lane of the motorway and removed a large box from the carriageway.

What they found, in fact, was a box of hooded jumpers belonging to the Riding for the Disabled Association and bound for the annual National Championships at Hartpury College.

Realising the championships were getting under way today, team manager Lee Evans tracked down the RDA, made contact and repatriated the hoodies last night – in good time to make one of the fundraising stands.

Richard Hunter, a merchandiser, sells clothing at the event to help raise funds for the RDA and the box had become dislodged from his trailer as he made his way to the event. The box was transferred via a number of patrol vehicles and Mr Hunter was able to collect the hoodies at services near junction 11A at Gloucester.

He said:

What an amazing level of service, way above and beyond what anyone could have expected. A big thank you to all Highways England staff Involved.

Rob Penney, service delivery manager for Highways England, added:

We were really pleased to help out in this instance and to ensure that the owner was found.

We pride ourselves on the service we provide to road users across the country, it was a good team effort, and we hope the championships are a success for all those involved.

Find out more information on [Highways England's traffic officer service](#).

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[Press release: £1.1 million junction improvements to benefit drivers, cyclists and pedestrians](#)

The Highways England project at Two Mills, where the A550 meets the A540, is due to start on Monday 17 July. A new 320 metre cycle path will be created through the junction, with traffic lights and toucan crossings making it easier to cross the A550.

The right turn lanes onto the A540 from the A550 will also be improved and a new high-friction road surface will be laid to reduce the risk of collisions at the junction.

The A540, which runs between Chester and Hoylake, is popular with cyclists and group rides set off from a cyclists' café near the Two Mills junction during most weekends throughout the year.

Phil Tyrrell, Project Manager at Highways England, said:

We're committed to significantly improving safety across our road network, and the new cycle path as well as the wider and longer right turn lanes will make it much easier and safer for drivers,

cyclists and pedestrians to cross the junction.

We will do everything we can to keep disruption to a minimum while the work is taking place, and look forward to seeing the new cycle path open in time for the spring.

The new cycle path, which will be shared by cyclists and pedestrians, will run along the southbound A540. The route will cross two new islands on the A550 at the Two Mills junction before continuing along the A540.

Two crossings will also be created at either end of the cycle path for people travelling in the opposite direction. The bus stop on the A540 will be moved to the opposite side of the junction to allow space for the new cycle path.

Peter Williams from Neston is a member of the Chester Cycling Campaign, which campaigns for new and improved cycle routes. He said:

We're really pleased to see this scheme taking place as the junction is used by lots of cyclists every week – either commuting to work or for leisure. I tend to meet up with members of the Chester and North Wales Cyclists' Touring Club twice a week at the Eureka cyclists' café near the junction before we set off on a ride.

You have to be really careful when you cross the junction at the moment and a few people I know have had their bikes clipped by drivers who haven't seen them, so the new cycle path will definitely make it safer.

Most of the work will be carried out overnight between 8pm and 5am, with some work also taking place at weekends. A series of overnight lane or road closures will be in place on most nights, with clearly-signed diversions. The scheme is due to be completed by spring 2018.

The cycling project at the Two Mills junction is one of 200 cycling schemes taking place across England up until 2021 paid for by a £100 million government fund for cycling. The schemes are designed to make it easier for cyclists to cross motorway junctions and use major A roads.

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