

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS1267)

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Written Statement made by: **Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Lisa Nandy)** on 22 Jan 2026.

Significant investment in the arts and culture sector

I am writing to update colleagues across the House on this Government's commitment to funding arts and culture.

Arts and culture are not a luxury. They are central to our national life, our identity, and our sense of belonging. They tell the story of who we are as a country. Yet for too long, the arts have been treated as an afterthought: undervalued, underfunded, and too often left to decline.

That neglect is visible across the country. Cultural buildings with leaking roofs. Libraries closed or hollowed out. Local museums struggling to survive. When cultural spaces are allowed to fail, it sends a damaging message to communities – that they do not matter. This Government will not accept that.

This government was elected on a mandate to deliver national renewal, and culture is a central part of that mission. We believe that excellent culture belongs to everyone, everywhere, and not just in a handful of cities or institutions, but in every town, city and village in this country. We reject the false choice between access and excellence. The country deserves both.

That is why this Government has already begun to fix the foundations through the £270 million Arts Everywhere Fund. Today, we go further.

I can confirm that over the course of this Parliament, the Government will invest £1.5 billion in capital funding for arts and culture – the largest investment of its kind for a generation. This funding will support more than 1,000 projects to restore and renew cultural buildings, protect local museums, upgrade libraries, and strengthen the cultural infrastructure that anchors communities across England.

This is a decisive break from the short-termism and managed decline of the past. It provides long-term certainty for a sector that has endured years of instability. But this investment also comes with a clear expectation of change. It is not a blank cheque, and it is not about preserving the status quo.

In return, we expect cultural organisations to open their doors wider, reach new and more diverse audiences, reflect the communities they serve, and ensure that excellence is no longer concentrated in a small number of postcodes but is genuinely spread across the country. Public investment must deliver public value.

This approach will help deliver the reforms set out in the Review of Arts Council England led by the Rt Hon. the Baroness Hodge of Barking DBE, which will guide this Government's work to rebalance, renew and democratise our cultural system over the coming years.

This is an investment in people and places. In local communities, opportunity and belonging. When culture thrives, communities thrive with it.

This Government has laid the foundations for a new settlement for arts and culture. We now expect the sector to meet the ambition of the moment and play its full part in the national renewal our country urgently needs.