

What is the UK City of Culture?

UK City of Culture is a competition run by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (**DCMS**) every four years. Previous winners are Derry/Londonderry in 2013 and Hull in 2017 and Coventry in 2021.

Each successful city has experienced a major boost in tourism, as people travelled to visit a wide and inclusive series of arts, cultural and sporting events that were developed as part of their winning bids. Cities also benefited from an increase in investors opening new businesses and more opportunities to support the local community, not just for the year but with a legacy of culture being in the spotlight.

We know that culture makes a vital contribution to our lives and where we live. But it can also provide a powerful stimulus to recovery and renewal. Culture is a catalyst for attracting investment and new and returning tourists, bringing people together, and defining and reaffirming a sense of place and local pride. In short, culture is a vital tool in this government's central mission: to unite and level up the country. Those opportunities for the bidders and winner of UK City of Culture 2025 are more important than ever as we build back better from the pandemic.

Why Derby is on the shortlist

Derby has created a bid which combines the best of contemporary culture alongside its rich and vibrant heritage. We see culture as wider than just the arts therefore food, sport, connections with nature and faith are also part of our bid. Ensuring diversity is a key focus is also a priority as we will use the bid process as a way of getting previously hidden voices a chance to be heard.

Derby has put its rich and vibrant heritage at the centre of its bid to become UK City of Culture 2025. It is the birthplace of the industrial revolution, the site of the world's first factory, and a leader of the English enlightenment. A city of innovation, today it is home to Rolls-Royce, Bombardier, Toyota and many others.

Through city-wide collaboration, effort and focus, Derby's bid will act as a catalyst for culture-led regeneration in the city. It is also about using culture as a starting point to address inequalities within the city's population and improving wellbeing, life opportunities and social mobility.

Adam Buss, interim Director of the Derby's City of Culture bid, said: "Putting Derby on the map as a destination for culture helps create a sense of pride, but we also want to enrich the lives of the people who live and work here.

"We want to give our artists the chance to develop and create opportunities for residents and young people to train and work alongside them. It's about harnessing culture to help build people's confidence, encourage their wellbeing, and improve their prospects. When Liverpool was European City of Culture in 2008 it generated over £750m in economic impact and huge changes to civic pride and perception. We believe the impacts on Derby will be in these areas and more."

Regeneration

Current plans include the physical regeneration of the city centre, with the delivery of the new 3,500 capacity Becketwell venue and refurbishment of the Victorian Market Hall and

Guildhall Theatre. In the pipeline is a new purpose for the Assembly Rooms site and the creation of a cultural quarter around the Market Place.

The bid also talks about bringing life back to the city centre, by finding new uses for empty shops and creating cultural events to attract visitors, seen recently with the success of the Derby Ram Trail. City centre living will provide purpose for vacant property, particularly upper floors that have stood empty for many years. Research has evidenced connections between where people choose to live, with good quality of life, and a strong cultural offer, and in 2020 a survey commissioned by Derby City Council showed that 76% of people felt that an enhanced cultural offer would make them visit Derby city centre more frequently.

Derby City Council and the University of Derby are exploring options to relocate Derby Theatre into a new purpose-built building on the site of the former Assembly Rooms, helping to realise the vision of creating a new cultural heart for Derby around the Market Place area.

Arts and Culture

Culture-led regeneration is a cornerstone of Derby's bid. Recognising that culture is fundamental to the city's recovery, and its ambition to create a confident, diverse economy, and a place of health and happiness.

Derby already has a long history of making and creativity sits alongside Derby's diverse cultural community and organisations that have worked together to create many vibrant events including Derby Festé, Format, Derby Folk Festival, Darley Park Concert, Caribbean Carnival, St George's Day celebrations and Derby Market Place. Derby is a city with many cultural institutions to be proud of; QUAD, Derby Theatre, Sinfonia Viva, Déda, and Derby Museums to name a few.

We are also excited about Surtal Arts' Derby Season of Light with its Lantern Parade and all the South Asian and cross cultural arts events that started to happen across the city with various cultural partners from September to December.

Diverse Community

Derby is a city that has always had creativity and innovation at its heart, but more importantly we believe that every resident and visitor should benefit from the power that arts and culture have to change people's lives for the better.

Whilst Derby has one the highest GVA per employee of any UK city it also has communities that are amongst the highest deprived in the country. The city's bid will recognise culture can play a huge role in supporting wellbeing and building aspiration. Derby's bid will ensure that all communities have opportunity to celebrate their own culture and take part in activity that is important to them.

Our bid for City of Culture will draw together the heritage of the city alongside the voices of the young people of today to help us work together for a brighter future. Derby is diverse, global city and our City of Culture bid will reflect both the unique qualities of the city and the unifying human qualities that bind us together.

We're ready!

Derby is at its best when it works together, and the city's bid will unite communities, organisations and businesses. We have already received so much support from businesses,

arts and cultural organisations and media – and we have only just started. Win or lose, this is our opportunity to create a united, vibrant city where all voices are heard.

#CityofCulture2025 #CultureDerby2025 <https://culturederby.co>.