

An open letter to The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Dear Mr Hancock,

In November 2017 it was announced that the restoration and reopening of the iconic 1930s Bradford Odeon building would be Leeds City Region's chosen project to be considered for funding from the Government's Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund.

Since this welcome milestone was reached, the public support for this ambitious project has continued to gain momentum as the city and wider region looks forward to the transformation of this much-loved and historic cultural landmark. Over 2,800 members of the public have signed a petition calling on the government to allocate funds from the Northern Cultural Regeneration initiative. A rejuvenated Bradford Odeon will become the beating heart of a city that is synonymous with the arts, yet has not benefited from investment in the creative industries in recent years when compared to other areas.

Bradford, the world's first UNESCO City of Film, is home to the Alhambra Theatre; Impressions Gallery; the National Science and Media Museum; and the newly opened Hockney Gallery at Cartwright Hall, to name just a few of our acclaimed cultural institutions. Later this year it will once again welcome audiences and artists back to the splendour of the Grade II* St George's Hall. Bradford is the birthplace of literary icons, renowned composers, acclaimed artists and world-famous pop stars – all talented individuals who've gone on to inspire millions.

We now urge you to inspire the next generation of Bradfordians by backing this incredibly important project and helping us to show the world that Bradford is a true city of culture, and one to be proud of.

From representatives and friends of Bradford's arts and creative community – please see below for a full list of signatories.

Steve Abbott, Film Producer

Syima Alsam, Director, Bradford Literature Festival

Eleanor Barrett, Co-Director, The Brick Box

Clio Barnard, Director

Duncan Bedson, Executive Director, Dance United Yorkshire

Dom Burch, Chair, BCB Radio

Alastair Campbell, Writer and Strategist

Yvonne Carmichael, South Square Centre

Alex Chisholm, Artistic Director, Freedom Studios

David Craig, Director, Assembly Bradford

Alex Croft, Creative Producer, Kala Sangam

Jane Crowther, Editor-in-Chief, Total Film

Rachel Feldberg, Festival Director, Ilkley Literature Festival

Rosie Freeman, Co-Director, The Brick Box

Natalie Gavin, Actor

Lee Goater, Graphic Designer

Bob Hardy, Musician, Franz Ferdinand

Martyn Johnson, Managing Director, HowDo Yorkshire

Aisha Khan, Artistic Director, Freedom Studios

Kamal Khan, Actor and Writer

Mick Martin, Director, Bent Architect

Evie Manning, Co-Artistic Director, Common Wealth

Anne McNeill, Director, Impressions Gallery

Dara Ó Briain, Comedian and Presenter

Adam Renton, General Manager, Bradford Theatres

Jo Quinton-Tulloch, Director, National Science and Media Museum

Haigh Simpson, Editor, The Bradford Review

Julia Skelton, Executive Director, Mind The Gap

Adelle Stripe, Writer

Benson Taylor, Composer

Richard Warburton, Artistic Director, Theatre in the Mill

Timothy West CBE, Actor

David Wilson, Director, Bradford UNESCO City of Film