Over the last two decades, significant investment in new buildings has transformed the arts and cultural landscape in England. There has been lots of debate this year about how public funding for arts and culture is distributed across England, and if the balance of funding disproportionately favours London. We know we face a real challenge in bringing great art and culture as close to home as possible for everyone, and we are listening carefully to the many differing opinions about how this can be approached.

Our approach is to direct our investment in a way that benefits the whole arts and culture ecology, using our 10-year strategy. We need to do more – there are still parts of England where provision is not as it should be – but it’s also important to recognise what has already been achieved in building cultural provision outside of the capital.

The majority of Arts Council investment is made outside of London, and this trend is continuing. Over the last three years, more than 70% of our Lottery investment has funded projects whose benefit is delivered outside of London – it was previously 60% per cent. Since the Lottery began, 28 per cent of the total value of grants awarded in England has been channelled into the 10 per cent most deprived local authority areas.

Our national arts organisations have a role in artistic development, pioneering digital platforms and touring across England. They have international reputations which benefit everyone, help to generate £4.5 billion worth of tourist spending every year and sustain over 100,000 jobs across the country. Many but not all of these organisations are based in London. We believe it is best to strengthen capacity outside London rather than weakening investment in the capital.

The £37 million Creative people and places programme is helping us to address the challenge of how to invest in places where public involvement in arts and culture is significantly below the national average. It focuses on long-term collaborations between local communities and arts organisations, museums, libraries, and other partners; Hull was awarded a £3 million grant in 2013 to develop the city’s cultural offer – this led to the development of a strategy that secured Hull the title of UK City of Culture for 2017.