

**PRESTON CITY CENTRE BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)**

[Press Release](#)

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Preston's Business Improvement District (BID) has thrown its full support behind the Blog Preston Campaign, urging the Secretary of State for Culture, Lisa Nandy, to provide vital support for the reopening of Preston's historic Guild Hall.

This landmark venue, which has been largely non-operating since 2019 due to structural issues related to RAAC materials used during its construction, stands as a crucial cultural asset for the city and its residents.

Since opening in 1969, the Guild Hall has been a cornerstone of Preston's cultural landscape, hosting legendary acts such as Led Zeppelin, Elton John, The Jacksons and Blondie. Beyond its role as a major performance venue, it has served as a vital space for community groups, amateur productions and business events, enriching the city's social and cultural fabric.

The City Council has recently commissioned a feasibility study to explore options for the future of the Guild Hall, whether to refurbish the current facility or consider a new, purpose-built venue. While the council remains committed to reestablishing a major arts and culture hub in Preston, it has acknowledged that funding remains a significant problem and support from national government is essential.

In support of this initiative, the BID has formally written to the Secretary of State for Culture, calling on her team to champion Preston's cause and ensure the city receives the necessary backing for a vibrant cultural asset.

A new petition, launched by local news and community platform Blog Preston, also encourages residents and supporters to voice their demand for government intervention.

Preston urgently needs a modern, purpose built arts and entertainment venue to safeguard its cultural standing and compete with regional destinations. Lancashire, in particular, continues to face regional funding disparities from national bodies like the Arts Council,

receiving approximately £7 per capita annually, compared to £35 in Liverpool and £38 in Manchester clearly highlighting the need for targeted investment in Preston.

Speaking on behalf of Preston BID, its chairman, John Boydell said “A new, state of the art Guild Hall would not only provide a platform for national and international acts but also stimulate local businesses, especially in the hospitality sector.

“Supporting Preston’s cultural future is vital for the city’s growth and vibrancy. A reopened, modern Guild Hall would be a game changer, drawing visitors, supporting local business and enriching community life.

“Preston remains committed to delivering a thriving cultural scene, but decisive national support is needed to ensure the city’s arts and culture sector continues to flourish”

Carlo Bragagnini, of San Marco Group, who operate two venues in Preston city centre, reports that with a programme of show sat the Guild Hall, businesses like his could expect to welcome an additional 100 covers on a show night, boosting the local economy during challenging times for the hospitality sector.

Carlo said: “Preston is a great place to visit, and we’re thankful that we have loyal customers who supporting our family restaurant.

But we know that the city is crying out for a large-scale leisure and entertainment venue, which would undoubtedly encourage more people in to the city and support its hardworking and committed businesses, who want to see the city succeed.

“We’re urging the Secretary of State to help Preston level up, and assist us in bringing forward a modern facility for the city.”

**Ends.**

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## **Notes To Editors**

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