**PRESS RELEASE**

**Public urged to back Newcastle in competition for Great British Railways headquarters**

Newcastle City Council are leading the bid to bring the Great British Railways new national headquarters to the North East, with support from NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) and are asking for the city’s support.

Voting is now open to the general public from 5th July – 15th August and the results will be used to measure the level of support for each destination and will be considered as part of the final decision making.

Newcastle beat off stiff competition from over 40 other UK towns and cities, and is now in the running alongside Birmingham, Crewe, Derby, Doncaster and York.

Newcastle City Council and NGI are urging everyone to vote for Newcastle and help their city win.

The competition seeks to recognise places with a rich railway heritage, strong links to the national network and public support for the selected location, creating a great opportunity to promote communities as the proud home for the start of a new era in Britain’s railways.

**Leader of Newcastle City Council, Cllr Nick Kemp, said:**

“It’s fantastic news that Newcastle has been shortlisted as the location for the headquarters of Great British Railways. We have a strong and proud history with the railways going back generations so I cannot think of a better home for this new headquarters.

“This announcement is not only a vote of confidence in the city, a potentially significant investment, but also the opportunity to bring new jobs to Newcastle.

“We have to compete against five other towns and cities on the shortlist, so I urge as many people as possible to back us in the public vote and let’s win this for Newcastle.”

**Jennifer Hartley, Director of Invest Newcastle (part of NewcastleGateshead Initiative) who led on the bid to bring the Great British Railways headquarters to Newcastle, said:**

“As the birthplace of the railways, we could not be prouder that Newcastle has made the official shortlist to become the new headquarters for the GBR HQ. This is a visible commitment to the levelling up agenda, we could not think of a more fitting home.

“Newcastle is the home of the locomotive and is a destination with a rich historic relevance – our offer is compelling. Our sites at Stephenson Quarter and Forth Goods Yard are perfectly aligned to GBR requirements, providing strong links to our railway heritage, the UK, and the rest of the world.

“The economic and social impact of this national investment will leave a lasting legacy and will benefit the whole region, creating jobs and opportunity at all levels and acting as catalyst for further regeneration and investment. An exciting new chapter in the history of our railways.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who played their part in developing the bid, this would not be possible without the support of our partners. We look forward to this next step and encourage everyone to vote for Newcastle.”

To find out more and vote, visit here: <https://www.ngi.org.uk/great-british-railways-hq-vote-newcastle/>

**Notes to editors:**

**About NewcastleGateshead Initiative**

NGI is a destination and inward investment agency that delivers for Newcastle, Gateshead, and the wider region. Every single one of our projects are dedicated to making a lasting social and economic impact. As drivers and enablers of economic growth, we champion our offer on a world stage and we maximise our impact through our partnerships.

We engage with stakeholders and policy makers to influence on a national and regional level to benefit the people who live and work here. We promote the distinctiveness of our region, its culture, and its people to create an authentic voice that makes us stand out from the crowd. We work across key growth sectors and use insight and intelligence to drive innovation, inward investment, and business growth. In addition, we attract world class conferences that reinforce our sector strengths and the strategic importance of tourism.

We play our part in delivering the regions sustainable and inclusive ambitions, creating a world class distinctive city to enjoy, stay and invest.We exist to benefit people by making a better and more distinctive place to live, enjoy, stay, and invest.

[ngi.org.uk](http://www.ngi.org.uk/)

**About Invest Newcastle**

Part of NewcastleGateshead Initiative, Invest Newcastle drive and deliver economic growth in Newcastle and Gateshead. They secure capital investment, work to attract new businesses and create jobs. They help businesses to locate, expand and thrive through a bespoke range of services. They champion the region and its strengths on a national and international stage, promoting Newcastle as a city to collaborate, innovate and thrive. Since it was established in 2013, it has supported more than 200 new businesses to relocate or expand, helping to create and safeguard more than 11,000 jobs.

[investnewcastle.com](https://investnewcastle.com/)

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**100 word summary**

Newcastle has been shortlisted to be the new location for the Great British Railways Headquarters (GBR HQ).

The city has beat off stiff competition of over 40 UK towns and cities to be shortlisted and the competition is now down to the final six.

The competition is open to the public vote 5-15th August, which will inform the final decision and Newcastle is up against five other destinations: Birmingham, Crewe, Derby, Doncaster and York.

Newcastle now needs everyone’s support to help bring the HQ to the home of the railways. This will be creating jobs, opportunities for the future and a recognition for our city as a leading UK destination of choice.