# Dame Caroline Dinenage calls for urgent recognition of UK’s electronic music venues as cultural institutions



Dame Caroline Dinenage, chairwoman of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, has voiced a significant concern regarding the perception of electronic music and club culture within the UK. Speaking at a recent event organised by the Night Time Industries Association (NTIA) in London, she lamented the nation’s failure to grasp the cultural and economic value of these vibrant cultural hubs, urging for venues to be recognised as "the real cultural institutions that they are."

Damen Caroline articulated that music is a pivotal asset for the UK on the global stage, underscoring the profound importance of the electronic music sector. This sector doesn’t merely contribute to entertainment; it represents a crucial part of the UK’s identity and cultural output. Her comments come at a time when the financial and operational challenges faced by many grassroots music venues are mounting, jeopardising their future.

Recent parliamentary debates have highlighted the plight of these venues, with alarming statistics revealing that over a third have closed their doors in the last two decades. This trend has continued into 2023, with 125 venues ceasing live music altogether within the year. Prominent examples such as Fabric and Ministry of Sound illustrate how these establishments serve as cultural cornerstones, offering not just a space for music, but a community hub for cultural exchange and participation.

The economic pressures facing these venues are stark. Rising rents and surging utility costs, exacerbated by post-pandemic recovery efforts, have made sustainability increasingly difficult. Many venues are finding it harder to keep afloat, which could lead to a significant loss of cultural diversity in UK's music scene. This issue has prompted calls for governmental recognition and support to ensure that the invaluable contributions of electronic music and club culture are adequately acknowledged and protected.

In response to these pressing challenges, initiatives are underway aimed at revitalising the night-time economy. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, recently announced the establishment of an independent Nightlife Taskforce designed to address various industry challenges—including staffing shortages and licensing issues. This task force is crucial for developing solutions that prioritise the health of the night-time economy in the capital, ensuring that vibrant scenes can continue to thrive amidst adversity.

Meanwhile, the NTIA is gearing up to host Europe’s largest Night Time Economy Summit in Birmingham, which will welcome participants from 20 countries. This summit aims to foster international dialogue and collaboration within the nightlife industry, highlighting the importance of innovation in overcoming obstacles that impede the sector's growth.

Taking cues from successful models implemented in cities like Greater Manchester and Bristol, the NTIA advocates for the appointment of night-time economy advisors throughout major UK cities. This initiative is seen as vital to support the recovery and sustainability of independent bars, clubs, and live music venues—about 1,200 of which the NTIA currently represents.

Ultimately, the call for recognition of club culture as a legitimate and valuable aspect of the UK's cultural landscape reflects a broader need to safeguard the creative industries. As the sector contributes approximately £125 billion to the economy and employs around 2.3 million people, its health is intrinsically linked to the country’s cultural identity and economic vitality. Only through concerted action and recognition can we ensure that the lifeblood of electronic music and club culture continues to flow, enriching not just our nation’s economy but its heritage and future as well.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/music/value-of-club-culture-not-recognised-in-uk-says-committee-chairwoman/a2116968897.html)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/music/value-of-club-culture-not-recognised-in-uk-says-committee-chairwoman/a2116968897.html)
* Paragraph 3: [[3]](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-01-27/debates/750BE15E-0700-4787-9DE4-25C272517A85/CreativeIndustries)
* Paragraph 4: [[3]](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-01-27/debates/750BE15E-0700-4787-9DE4-25C272517A85/CreativeIndustries)
* Paragraph 5: [[5]](https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/mayors-press-release/Mayor-launches-independent-new-Nightlife-Taskforce-to-help-support-capital%E2%80%99s-life-at-night)
* Paragraph 6: [[4]](https://www.ncass.org.uk/news/ntia-to-host-europes-largest-night-time-economy-summit-in-birmingham/), [[6]](https://www.festivalinsights.com/2024/11/birmingham-set-largest-night-time-summit/)
* Paragraph 7: [[7]](https://www.restaurantonline.co.uk/Article/2021/12/02/Night-Time-Industries-Association-calls-for-night-time-economy-advisors-in-every-major-UK-city-to-save-sector)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/music/value-of-club-culture-not-recognised-in-uk-says-committee-chairwoman/a2116968897.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/35193e17-0c06-4379-a1fc-a684875b3d15> - Baroness Shriti Vadera, chair of Prudential and the Royal Shakespeare Company, has been appointed as the next chair of the Creative Industries Council. She will succeed Sir Peter Bazalgette and co-lead a task force to assist the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in developing a creative industries growth strategy. The Creative Industries Council, established in 2011, aims to develop policies to unlock private investment, enhance exports and innovation, and build skilled workforces. The sector, valued at £125bn and employing approximately 2.3 million people, is crucial to the UK's economic growth ambitions.
3. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-01-27/debates/750BE15E-0700-4787-9DE4-25C272517A85/CreativeIndustries> - In a parliamentary debate, concerns were raised about the decline of grassroots music venues in the UK. It was noted that over a third of such venues have closed in the past 20 years, with 125 closing or stopping live music in 2023 alone. The discussion highlighted the cultural significance of venues like Fabric and Ministry of Sound, emphasizing their role as cultural institutions. The debate also touched upon the impact of economic pressures, such as rising rents and utility bills, on the sustainability of these venues.
4. <https://www.ncass.org.uk/news/ntia-to-host-europes-largest-night-time-economy-summit-in-birmingham/> - The Night Time Industries Association (NTIA) is set to host Europe's largest Night Time Economy Summit in Birmingham. The event will welcome participants from 20 countries across Asia, Australia, Europe, South America, the United States, and the Middle East. The summit aims to serve as a platform for international and domestic collaboration and dialogue within the nightlife industry. Confirmed representation includes countries such as Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Spain, United States, and Wales.
5. <https://www.london.gov.uk/media-centre/mayors-press-release/Mayor-launches-independent-new-Nightlife-Taskforce-to-help-support-capital%E2%80%99s-life-at-night> - Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced the formation of an independent Nightlife Taskforce to support London's night-time economy. The taskforce brings together experts from the capital's nightlife sector to examine and address industry challenges, including the impact of the pandemic, rising rents, staffing shortages, and licensing issues. Over six months, the taskforce will assess these challenges and provide recommendations to ensure the capital's night-time economy can thrive.
6. <https://www.festivalinsights.com/2024/11/birmingham-set-largest-night-time-summit/> - The Night Time Industries Association (NTIA) is preparing to host the largest Night Time Economy Summit in Birmingham. The event will feature participants from 20 countries across Asia, Australia, Europe, South America, the United States, and the Middle East. The summit aims to highlight the vital importance of the night-time economy sector and serve as a platform for innovation, collaboration, and addressing key challenges faced by the industry.
7. <https://www.restaurantonline.co.uk/Article/2021/12/02/Night-Time-Industries-Association-calls-for-night-time-economy-advisors-in-every-major-UK-city-to-save-sector> - The Night Time Industries Association (NTIA) has called for the establishment of night-time economy advisors in every major UK city to support the sector's recovery from pandemic closures. The NTIA represents approximately 1,200 independent bars, clubs, and live music venues across the UK. Night-time economy advisors have been set up in Greater Manchester and Bristol, with the NTIA advocating for similar roles across the country to help the sector rebound.