



# DRAFT News Release

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## **Minister calls on Hollywood to come to the East Midlands**

Phil Hope, Minister for the East Midlands, today called on the world's top film-makers to come to the East Midlands to create their next blockbuster.

Pointing to recent critical hits – such as Anton Corbijn's *Control*, which was set in the north-west but financed and made in Nottingham – the Minister said he wanted to build on such successes to develop and promote the region's burgeoning film industry.

Phil Hope said: "The East Midlands film industry is a hidden success story for the region. As well as award-winning directors such as Shane Meadows and dynamic production companies such as Wellington Films, we're home to critically acclaimed actors including Paddy Considine, Jim Broadbent and Samantha Morton.

"The industry is already a major contributor to the region's economy - in one year alone, film and TV companies spent £20 million here. I want even more film companies to know just how much this region has to offer and will be working hard to make the East Midlands a hub for the creative industries. The sector already employs 60,000 people here and has huge potential for further growth."

The Minister was speaking after accompanying representatives of the region's film industry on a recent mission to Cannes, where he met with senior figures from the international film industry to promote the East Midlands as both a location and a source of highly skilled crew. He joined the delegation

attending the Cannes Film Festival at the request of regional screen agency EM Media, which aims to put media at the heart of the region's economy.

In 2002 EM Media secured a £6million ERDF investment fund from the European Commission which it has invested in over 50 feature films, video games and interactive projects and regional talent. The fund has enabled first time feature filmmakers and established talent to launch their product on the world stage and the successes have led to a high profile internationally for the region as a centre of filmmaking talent.

During the festival the Minister attended the World Premiere of *Better Things*. The feature film was part of the Cannes Film Festival's official selection and was made by Nottingham production company Wellington Films.

Debbie Williams, chief executive of EM Media, said:

"We are delighted the Minister was able to witness first-hand the impact East Midlands' films and talent are having in the global market place. The East Midlands has a reputation internationally as a centre of filmmaking talent and we heartily support the Minister's intention to promote the region as a creative industries hub."

## Notes to editors

1. Films made in the East Midlands include independent productions such as Control (winner of the British Independent Film Award for Best Film), This Is England (winner of the Bafta for Best British Film) and Dog Altogether (winner of the Bafta for Best Short Film). Big-budget blockbusters that have recently used the region as a location include Atonement, The Da Vinci Code, The Other Boleyn Girl and The Golden Compass.
2. While in Cannes the Minister attended the Critic's Week screening of Better Things, the critically acclaimed new film by Duane Hopkins. The film was part funded by EM Media. He also saw a screening of Hush, made by low-budget digital studio Warp X.
3. Photos of the Minister in Cannes with Debbie Williams are available from Alex Marklew in the Cabinet Office press office – call 020 7276 0436.
4. For more information on EM Media, contact Emily Lappin on 0115 934 9090

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