

Fiona Hill

[Video: Fiona Hill in room with bookshelves, author's book *There is Nothing For You Here* prominently placed]

[Fiona Hill, Advisor to three US presidents and author] Hello my name's Fiona Hill. I grew up in County Durham as the daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter of coal miners who moved around the region looking for work and opportunity. In 1984 when I left school my father told me "There's nothing for you here pet." County Durham had fallen on the hardest of times with all of the jobs disappearing and for youth in particular there was a mass unemployment crisis. I went to university in St Andrew's in Scotland and from there I went to Harvard university on a scholarship to study Russian and Modern History. I ended up as an advisor to three presidents in the United States moving literally from the coal house to the White House. And I'm supporting County Durham's bid right now to become the UK City of Culture for 2025 because all of the things that made that possible began in County Durham. Even at the darkest of times County Durham continued to invest in culture, arts and education. I had all of my education paid for. I had world class museums and art galleries right there on my doorstep that I could visit because they were subsidised by the county. There were school exchanges, language programmes, choirs, orchestras, everything to enrich a young person, even someone like me coming from a family of coal miners where my father had gone down the pits at 14. If it wasn't for any of that I wouldn't be sitting here today having just written a book where I drew on the title, drew the title from what my father had said back in 1984 when I was leaving. But I do want to say to turn that title around that there is something for you here in County Durham. County Durham really deserves to win the title of UK City of Culture for 2025, which would help to give a boost to a really unique place with uniquely resilient people who are innovative and talented but who have not been able to keep themselves in the spotlight. At one point County Durham was the centre of the industrial revolution, the heartland of the United Kingdom along with the rest of the Northeast of England. This is one of its times to shine again and for people to rediscover it. And I do hope that you will give this bid the most serious consideration. Thank you.

[Text: Durham. No ordinary county. Follow County Durham's bid for the UK City of Culture 2025. Logos: D2025 UK City of Culture Bid, UK City of Culture Bidding City]