

£3.5 million to support Coventry City of Culture

- Funding will help the city deliver celebrations this summer in line with Covid-19 restrictions
- Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said: “Coventry has demonstrated a remarkable resilience and ability to adapt during these challenging and unprecedented times”

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has awarded £3.5 million to Coventry City of Culture to help the city deliver its celebrations this summer in line with Covid-19 restrictions.

The funding will help Coventry City of Culture host events with enhanced Covid-19 safety and hygiene methods, providing reassurance to audiences and ensuring the celebrations can go ahead as restrictions ease over the summer. It will allow the live streaming of events so that people from all over the West Midlands and the UK can join in with the launch of UK City of Culture 2021 from the safety of their own homes.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Coventry has demonstrated a remarkable resilience and ability to adapt during these challenging and unprecedented times. Now more than ever, it is vitally important that we bring our communities together through culture, arts and heritage.

This additional funding will help the city as it begins its exciting year of celebrations for UK City of Culture and I look forward to seeing how the next 12 months will benefit the local area as we build back better from the impact of Covid.

Martin Sutherland, Chief Executive of Coventry City of Culture Trust, said:

This funding will help us to deliver our promises to Coventry and to the visitors we hope to welcome soon, starting with a Summer of Surprises. We are excited to share the extraordinary creativity from Coventry and explore new ways to use digital platforms and broadcast channels to reach new audiences both in person and at home.

It's been an incredibly challenging 12 months for the sector; this new funding enables us to support the organisations, artists, freelancers and communities who are so key to delivering a safe, secure and exciting year for the city”.

The funding will address the specific financial challenges the pandemic has brought about and will help Coventry unlock additional support to allow the 2021 programme to maximise its impact and reach.

The additional £3.5 million announced today brings the total government support for Coventry's tenure as UK City of Culture to over £18.5 million. This includes £8.5 million of capital funding for key heritage and cultural organisations including the Daimler Powerhouse, FarGo Box, Belgrade Theatre, Drapers Hall, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and Coventry Cathedral. The Cultural Investment Fund provided £6.58 million to the Coventry City of Culture Trust for resource and legacy projects including a new digital art gallery.

In addition, Arts Council England has allocated £4.9 million to support Coventry's success as City of Culture and over £8.8 million of the government's unprecedented £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund has been awarded to 28 organisations in Coventry to help them through the Covid-19 pandemic.

More than £170 million has been awarded to over 1,000 organisations in the Midlands from the government's unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund.

UK City of Culture is a competition run by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport every four years. The competition celebrates culture in all its forms across the UK and helps to stimulate economic growth, create jobs in the community and attract inward investment, leading to a lasting legacy of social, cultural and economic change.

Coventry is planning a spectacular year of events and activities, from the opening city-wide "Coventry Moves", through established events such as the Booker Prize and Turner Prize announcements both being held in the city this year, to productions created especially for City of Culture.

It is expected that Coventry's year as City of Culture will see an economic boost of £211 million with an additional 2.5 million visitors. It is hoped that 80% of the city's residents will engage with the programme three or more times across the year, and it will attract around 10,000 volunteers and create more than 900 jobs.

Coventry is the third UK City of Culture with Derry-Londonderry the first city to take up the mantle in 2013, followed by Hull in 2017. Partner is the British Council.