

445 heritage organisations saved by £103 million investment from Government

- Culture Secretary announces a massive rescue package to protect our heritage, save jobs and prepare for a cultural bounceback
- Almost 450 heritage organisations in England have been awarded cash from the first round of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage
- Grants of up to £1 million will deliver a lifeline for the heritage sector in England with further support to follow and larger grants for capital projects awarded through the Heritage Stimulus Fund
- First major tranche of funding from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund

Heritage organisations across the country are set to receive a lifesaving financial boost from the government thanks to the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund to help them through the coronavirus pandemic.

445 organisations will share £103 million to help restart vital repair and maintenance work on cherished heritage sites, to keep venues open and to save jobs and livelihoods.

This vital funding is from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage and the Heritage Stimulus Fund – funded by Government and administered at arms length by Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Both funds are part of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund which is designed to secure the future of Britain's museums, galleries, theatres, independent cinemas, heritage sites and music venues with emergency grants and loans.

433 organisations will receive a share of £67 million from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage to help with costs for operating, reopening and recovery. This includes famous heritage sites across the country, from Wentworth Woodhouse in Yorkshire to Blackpool's Winter Gardens, Blyth Tall Ship to the Severn Valley Railway, the International Bomber Command Centre in Lincolnshire to the Piecehall in Halifax. The funds will save sites that define communities across the country.

Beneficiaries also include famous locations that have starred in film and TV and are huge draws for tourists the world over, such as Gloucester Cathedral – whose cloisters formed the backdrop for Hogwarts in the Harry Potter films – and Highclere Castle – the setting of Downton Abbey. These sites define how our nation is seen around the world.

Grants are between £10,000 and £1 million with a further round of grants of up to £3 million due to be announced imminently.

12 organisations, including English Heritage, Landmark Trust, Historic Royal

Palaces and the Canal and River Trust, will receive £34 million from the Heritage Stimulus Fund to restart construction and maintenance on cherished heritage sites to preserve visitor attractions and protect livelihoods for some of the most vulnerable heritage specialists and contractors in the sector.

The Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) has also been awarded a grant from the Culture Recovery Fund through Historic England. The AHF will use the funding to support charities and social enterprises occupying historic buildings to develop new business plans and strategies for organisations affected by the pandemic.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

As a nation it is essential that we preserve our heritage and celebrate and learn from our past. This massive support package will protect our shared heritage for future generations, save jobs and help us prepare for a cultural bounceback post covid.

Lucy Worsley, Chief Curator, Historic Royal Palaces, said:

There's no truer way to experience the past than to walk in the footsteps of those who have lived it – that's why preserving our built heritage is so important.

At Historic Royal Palaces, we care for six nationally significant buildings, opening them to the public and preserving them for future generations. Sadly, the pandemic meant that we had to stop some of our critical conservation work. The grant we have received from the Culture Recovery Fund will enable to this work to resume – so we can give some of Britain's most historic buildings the care and attention they deserve, while supporting the specialist craftspeople who are vital for the future of our national heritage. We are enormously grateful to the Government for this support.

Duncan Wilson, Historic England's Chief Executive said:

It is heartening to see grants, both large and small, from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund helping heritage sites and organisations across the country which have been hit hard by the effects of Covid-19. These grants range from giving skilled craft workers the chance to keep their trades alive to helping heritage organisations pay the bills, and to kick-starting repair works at our best-loved historic sites. The funding is an essential lifeline for our heritage and the people who work tirelessly to conserve it for us all, so that we can hand it on to future generations.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said:

It is absolutely right that investing in heritage should be a priority during this crisis and this support by Government is crucial. Heritage creates jobs and economic prosperity, is a major driver for tourism and makes our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live. All of this is so important for our wellbeing and will be particularly vital when we start to emerge from this incredibly difficult time.

Our heritage is still facing a perilous future – we are not out of the woods yet. But this hugely welcome funding from Government, and the money we continue to invest from the National Lottery, has undoubtedly stopped heritage and the organisations that care for it being permanently lost.

Kate Mavor, Chief Executive of English Heritage, said:

This support for our nation's heritage is fantastic news. Over the last few months, our teams have been working hard to welcome visitors back safely to the great castles, stone circles, abbeys and historic houses in our care. This funding will help us invest to safeguard the historic fabric of these much-loved places, which everyone can learn from and enjoy.

Matthew Mckeague Chief Executive of the Architectural Heritage Fund:

Social enterprise and charitable organisations based in historic buildings play a range of critical roles in communities across England – offering chances to learn, create and come together, helping foster local identity and social capital and by providing key services. This funding announced today will be a crucial lifeline to many organisations and projects, enabling them to carry on delivering their vital work in the months and years ahead.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

A full list of successful organisations for the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage can be found attached.