

Communities across the UK can bid for Levelling Up funds to save pubs, clubs and historic buildings

- Second round of £150 million [Community Ownership Fund](#) opens to hundreds of places across the UK
- From historic buildings to sports facilities, pubs and music venues, local people are encouraged to apply to protect prized assets in their community
- Eligibility criteria has been expanded so more community groups can apply for funding, supporting more local economies to grow

Community groups across the UK can today (11 June 2022) bid for levelling up funding to take back control of pubs, music venues, sports facilities, and historic buildings for the benefit of the public.

Groups will be able to bid for a share of the government's £150 million Community Ownership Fund to rescue cultural buildings in their area that could otherwise be lost forever, as the second round of funding is open.

The first round of funding has already helped local people transform their communities into a more desirable place to live, work and visit, supporting 39 projects across the UK. This included £550,000 to establish a boxing gym in Oldham, £250,000 to rescue a historic spinners mill in Leigh and £1 million for Bury fans to rescue Gigg Lane stadium.

Changes to the fund announced at the end of May will ensure it is more inclusive and flexible, so that more communities can benefit and more local economies are supported.

Minister for Levelling Up, the Union and Constitution, Neil O'Brien MP said:

We want to help communities across the UK save the pubs, sports clubs and historical buildings which matter most to them, and would otherwise be at risk of being lost forever.

This is part of our plan to spread opportunity, boost local pride and level up every corner of the UK while growing the economy to address the cost of living.

Backed by £550,000 of government funding, a historic Victorian building in

Oldham has been transformed into a boxing gym and personal development centre which provides support for vulnerable young people. Without this funding, the centre would have been forced to move and local young people would have missed out on the opportunity to flourish in their local community.

In Leigh, locals stepped up to take ownership of the historic Spinners Mill, which has been vacant for many years and was at risk of being lost to deterioration. With £250,000 from the Fund, the building will now be restored and used to create new sports and leisure facilities alongside an area for creative arts whilst protecting wider access to the heritage-rich building.

Eric Noi, head coach at Oldham Boxing and Personal Development Centre said:

The gym is already a major part of the community, and this funding will help us improve our facilities and allow us to continue supporting people of all ages, including some of the most vulnerable in society.

For organisations such as ours, funding like this is a vital lifeline – without it we would not be able to help people improve their lives, fitness and futures.

Director of Leigh Building Preservation Trust, Peter Rowlinson, said:

Leigh Building Preservation Trust is delighted at the support from government to allow the further development of Leigh Spinners Mill.

We believe this project is a true example of Levelling Up by being a community partnership restoring the heritage of the town of Leigh whilst also creating new jobs and community facilities. The restoration of Leigh Spinners Mill would not have been possible without the Community Ownership Fund assistance.

The fund has been updated to widen eligibility criteria, including removing the requirement that assets have had a use within the last 5 years and will now consider any asset which has had a previous community use, massively expanding the projects eligible to apply.

Applicants who have a minimum of a 15-year lease on an asset would now also be considered for funding. Previously, leases were restricted to a minimum of 25 years.

Today's announcement is part of the government's ambition to level up local communities across the country, create more local jobs, boost local businesses and build up local economies as a result.