

Nation pays tribute to the Windrush Generation and their descendants

- Communities across the country are getting ready to mark national Windrush Day on June 22
- The second national day of celebration is backed by a £500,000 Windrush Day Grant Scheme overseen by a panel of community representatives.
- Theatre productions, concerts, exhibitions and lectures will all be available free online

On Monday 22 June 2020, the nation will pay tribute to the outstanding and ongoing contribution of the Windrush Generation and their descendants.

With online lectures and readings, cooking classes, and theatrical and musical events, the country will recognise how British Caribbean communities have changed our society for the better.

Building on the success of the inaugural national Windrush Day last year, 49 projects across the country were awarded funding to mark Windrush Day 2020 and commemorate the seminal moment 72 years ago when the Empire Windrush arrived at the port of Tilbury.

Many of the government funded projects have been adapted due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and will now take place online.

The majority of projects to celebrate and recognise the arrival of the Windrush Generation and their contribution from theatre productions to exhibitions to lectures are now being delivered online. These include:

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Britain would not be the strong and vibrant nation it is today without the immeasurable contributions that the Windrush Generation have made to our country.

These are men and women who built their lives and made their home here in Britain, enriching all spheres of our society as a result.

From supporting and leading community networks and public services, to elevating our arts and culture, this generation has contributed so much to our society and our economy.

I also want to say a deep and heartfelt thanks to all those working in our NHS, councils and all other key sectors – including children and relatives from the Windrush generation.

You are the true heroes working on the frontline in the battle against coronavirus: a battle that we are winning thanks to your efforts.

Wherever you are in the country I'd encourage you to share in the celebrations and enjoy the range of thought-provoking materials online, marking the day in a way that it so deserves from your home.

Faith Minister Lord Greenhalgh said:

Windrush Day is a fantastic opportunity to recognise and celebrate the huge contribution made by those who first stepped ashore at Tilbury docks more than 70 years ago.

They came to rebuild the nation following the war and they and their descendants have continued to enrich social, economic, political and religious life ever since.

The 22 June 1948 was a pivotal event in our national story and Windrush Day keeps their legacy alive for future generations, ensuring that we all understand the diversity of Britain's history.

Chief Executive of The Voice Newspaper and Windrush Day Advisory Panel Member Paulette Simpson, said:

We are living in extraordinary times, but the commitment and effort shown by community groups around the country to adapt and adjust their plans to ensure Windrush Day 2020 is acknowledged and celebrated is both inspiring and heart-warming.

It clearly demonstrates the depth of feeling that exists for the Windrush Generation and their descendants and all they have contributed and continue to contribute to British Society – and that's to say nothing of the great resilience and fortitude they showed.

With each passing year, Windrush Day becomes more firmly embedded in the national consciousness. It might not be a Windrush Day like we saw last year, but it will remain a Windrush Day honoured by a community fiercely proud of their heritage, and a day that provides an opportunity for us all to celebrate our shared culture and heritage.

Other plans for the lead up to Windrush Day and on the day itself include:

- The National Theatre's epic production of Andrea Levy's Orange Prize-winning novel, *Small Island*, filmed live during its sold-out run in 2019, is streaming for free with [National Theatre at Home](#).
- A 'celebrate at home' art and activities pack hosted on the [Voice](#) newspaper online including:
- A playlist of the 10 most important Windrush related records developed

by leading black music expert and cultural commentator, Lloyd Bradley.

- Album covers for colouring in/window decoration
- Empire Windrush colouring in poster, and Windrush Day branded posters.
- Residents across Lambeth, London are being encouraged to join in the singing of a special recording of You Can Get It If You Really Want It, first performed by Desmond Dekker at 10:27am, representing the arrival of 1,027 people on the original Empire Windrush.

Windrush Day

In June 2018, the government announced an annual Windrush Day to encourage communities across the country to commemorate the Windrush story on Windrush Day and throughout the year.

The national celebration is backed by a £500,000 Windrush Day Grant Scheme overseen by a Windrush Day Advisory Panel of community representatives.

Launched in October 2019, the Windrush Day Grant Scheme received over 200 bids for funding from community groups, charities and local authorities across England.

This year's successful bids came from across the country from Bristol to Birmingham and Leicester to Leeds indicating the breadth of enthusiasm in communities across the country to mark Windrush Day 2020.

Windrush Generation

Windrush Day marks the anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush at the Port of Tilbury, near London, on 22 June 1948. The arrival of the Empire Windrush nearly 72 years ago marked a seminal moment in Britain's history and has come to represent the rich diversity of this nation.

Those who arrived on the Empire Windrush, their descendants and those who followed them have made and continue to make an enormous contribution to Britain, not just in the vital work of rebuilding the country and public services following World War 2 but in enriching our shared social, economic, cultural and religious life.

Overcoming great sacrifice and hardship, the Windrush Generation and their descendants have gone on to lead the field across public life, in business, the arts and sport. Britain would be much diminished without their contribution.

Further information

The MV Empire Windrush docked at the Port of Tilbury on 21 June 1948. However, passengers disembarked a day later on 22 June 1948 – hence why this has come to be known as Windrush Day.