

National Windrush monument unveiled at London Waterloo Station

- Members of the Windrush generation and HRH Duke and Duchess of Cambridge gather at London Waterloo Station for unveiling of the National Monument
- Monument will be a permanent place of reflection, fostering greater understanding and celebrating the talent, hard work and contribution of the Windrush generation who arrived in Britain between 1948-1971
- 35 projects across England also hosting events and activities to celebrate Windrush Day 2022

Members of the Windrush generation joined HRH Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at London Waterloo Station today (22 June 2022) to witness the unveiling of the National Windrush Monument.

Designed by renowned Jamaican artist Basil Watson and delivered with £1 million funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Monument symbolises the courage, commitment and resilience of the thousands of men, women and children who travelled to the UK to start new lives from 1948 to 1971.

It acknowledges and celebrates the Windrush generation's outstanding contribution and has been created as a permanent place of reflection, to foster greater understanding of the generation's talent, hard work and continuing contribution to British society.

The three figures – a man, woman, and child – dressed in their “Sunday best” are climbing a mountain of suitcases together, demonstrating the inseparable bond of the Windrush pioneers and their descendants, and the hopes and aspirations of their generation as they arrive to start new lives in the UK.

Secretary of State Michael Gove MP said:

“Seeing Basil Watson’s magnificent monument, it’s easy to imagine the excitement, hope and apprehension that the Windrush pioneers must have felt as they arrived in the UK.”

“Overcoming great sacrifice and hardship, the Windrush Generation and their descendants have gone on to make an immense contribution to public life. Britain would be much diminished without them.”

Communities Minister, Kemi Badenoch MP said:

“This is a special moment in our nation’s history and I am grateful to all those who worked tirelessly to bring it into being.”

“Basil Watson’s sculpture perfectly captures the spirit of Windrush. In it we see the strength, hope and expectation of those who arrived with little and yet gave so much.”

“As a first-generation immigrant myself, the Windrush story resonates with me and it is important we recognise the contribution of those who have so enriched our country.”

The Windrush generation has come to be defined as those people who emigrated from the Caribbean to Britain between the arrival of the MV Empire Windrush on 22 June 1948 and the Immigration Act 1971.

Following public engagement in 2021, in which Basil Watson’s design resonated the most, he was commissioned to create the Monument by the Windrush Commemoration Committee (WCC), chaired by Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE DL. Basil worked collaboratively with a team at [Pangolin Editions](#) in Stroud, Gloucester to complete the monument.

The Monument’s location, London Waterloo station, was chosen due to its significance in the Windrush story as thousands of people who arrived from the Caribbean passed through the station on their way to start their new lives across the country.

The Monument was delivered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with the support of the Windrush Commemoration Committee, and [UP Projects](#).

The Monument’s unveiling was [live streamed](#) across the country including at Birmingham New Street Station and the National Railway Museum in York and will also be watched by communities across the country.

Thirty Five different projects across England are also celebrating the day providing community events and activities funded by share of £500,000 from the Windrush Day Grant Scheme.

2022 is the fourth annual National Windrush Day and this year’s projects will focus on bringing communities together – across different ages and ethnic backgrounds – to commemorate, celebrate and educate their local area about the contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants across the country.

Chair of the Windrush Commemoration Committee Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE DL said:

“The National Windrush Monument will be a permanent place of reflection, celebration and inspiration for Caribbean communities and the wider public, especially children.”

“It will act as a symbolic link to our past and a permanent reminder of our shared history and heritage for generations to come. I hope it will be a catalyst for other monuments across Britain commemorating the extraordinary contribution to this country by the Windrush generation.”

“I am grateful to the members of the Windrush Commemoration Committee for their boundless dedication to ensuring this monument comes to fruition, and hope the Caribbean communities who we have sought to serve, believe that we have done them justice.”

World renowned Artist/Sculptor Basil Watson who created the Monument said:

“It has been an honour to design and create this monument which pays tribute to the Windrush generation migrants as they arrived in Britain with their dreams and aspirations, courage and dignity, skills and talents.”

“They arrived with the idea of laying a foundation for their families and their future, and a hope of contributing to a society that they expected would welcome them in return.”

“From this seemingly auspicious beginning despite many challenges, they spread their culture across Britain influencing many aspects of the society.”

“My parents, along with a great many others, took the long arduous voyage from the Caribbean with very little or nothing other than their aspirations, their courage and a promise of opportunity for advancement. This monument tells that story of hope, determination, a strong belief in selves and a vision for the future”

Andrew Haines, Network Rail Chief Executive, said:

“We are deeply honoured to be able to host this wonderful monument at London Waterloo station – a place that has a very proud and rich connection to the Windrush generation. After arriving in Britain at Southampton port, thousands upon thousands of Caribbeans travelled to Waterloo before they started their new life across the country.”

“Many of course then went on to work and become part of our railway family, supporting the efforts to build new railways and connect communities.”

“Waterloo is one of the capital’s biggest transport hubs, with millions of passengers passing through this station every year. To have this permanent monument displayed in this easily accessible station, that is right in the heart of London, is a real privilege.”

For more information on the about the Windrush story and the memorial please [visit a new website](#) which will go live on 22 June.

National Windrush Monument

In June 2018, Liberal Democrat peer Baroness Floella Benjamin was commissioned by the Prime Minister to chair the [Windrush Commemoration Committee](#), which provides advice on how best to create a permanent, fitting tribute to the Windrush generation and their descendants.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (previously Ministry Housing, Communities and Local Government) [announced a £1 million budget](#) towards a Windrush monument to be constructed within London Waterloo Station in 2019.

The Monument's location, London Waterloo Station, was chosen due to its significance in the Windrush story. Millions of people pass through Waterloo station every year and when they see the Monument, they will be reminded of the incredible impact that the Windrush generation has had on the UK and our British history.

Public art consultants, [UP Projects](#) were appointed to manage the selection process of the artist to design and make the monument and ensure that the views of the Caribbean community in the UK were sought on what would represent a meaningful legacy.

After an extensive search with the support of over 250 international and British cultural leaders, curators and leaders in the Caribbean community, 16 national and international artists were longlisted, with a [final 4 chosen to be shortlisted](#). Each of these artists was of Caribbean heritage. Following the shortlisting, 6 weeks of public engagement took place between July and August 2021. This phase sought to engage with the public to ascertain their thoughts on the shortlisted artists: Jeannette Ehlers, Valda Jackson, Basil Watson and Thomas J Price.

In Oct 2021 internationally renowned artist Basil Watson was announced as the artist [chosen to design the National Windrush Monument](#).

UP Projects has worked closely with the WCC and DLUHC since 2020 to support the artist commissioning process and monument fabrication, their team includes Curatorial Advisor Karen Alexander, Curator and Caribbean Community Engagement Consultant Melanie Abrahams, and Caribbean Networks Consultant Svetlana Leu, bringing both professional expertise and lived experience to this complex subject.

The monument has also been made possible by the support of a number of additional partners including [Ramboll](#), [APS Group](#), [Live Group](#), [Abi Wright](#), [Juicy Media](#) and [DAC Beachcroft](#).

The dedication text that accompanies the monument at London Waterloo Station was designed by Abi Wright, British graphic designer of Caribbean heritage. For the title graphics, Abi has used a sans serif font designed by black British graphic designer Greg Bunbury called Empire Windrush, a typeface inspired by the iconic lettering on the **HMT Empire Windrush** passenger ship, paying tribute to the Windrush arrivals through a typeface that is as unique

as the passengers who stepped off the boat over 70 years ago.

Windrush Day Grant Scheme:

- [35 projects across England](#) have been given a share of £500,000 funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Local Government to help commemorate Windrush Day 2022 which marks the outstanding contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants.
- Windrush Day marks the anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush at the Port of Tilbury, near London, on 21 June 1948. However, passengers disembarked a day later 22 June 1948 – hence why this has come to be known as Windrush Day.
- The arrival of the Empire Windrush nearly 74 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 WWII but in enriching our shared social, economic, cultural, and religious life.
- This year's projects will focus on bringing communities together – across different ages and ethnic backgrounds – to commemorate, celebrate and educate their local area about the contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants across the country.

The Grant Scheme is overseen by the Windrush Community Funds and Schemes sub-group made up of community and government representatives. The group provides advice to Government and helps to ensure that winning bids meet the objectives and requirements

This National Windrush Day (22 June) sees the unveiling of **two public sculptures in Hackney** to honour the Windrush generation, alongside a series of celebratory events outside Hackney Town Hall free to the public. The figures by London-based artist Thomas J Price, will depict representations of the Windrush generation and their descendants.

The artworks complete the Council's Hackney Windrush Artwork Commission, established in partnership with Create London in 2019 with support from Art Fund and Freelands Foundation, which last year saw the unveiling of the UK's first permanent public sculptures honouring the Windrush generation, by celebrated artist Veronica Ryan OBE.