

Communities Secretary marks national Thank You Day

- Robert Jenrick thanks all those who have gone above and beyond during the pandemic
- Events up and down the country will be a chance to celebrate local heroes
- Communities Secretary encourages all to fill the airwaves with thanks for everyone who played their part

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick is backing Thank You Day to shine a light on the unsung heroes who have served local communities during the pandemic.

Across the UK, people will be gathering to show their gratitude by hosting Covid safe BBQs, picnics, street parties and certificate ceremonies in honour of those who have selflessly given their time to help those in need.

The Communities Secretary is calling on people to fill the airwaves by sharing their thanks and tributes on local radio and social media.

Unsung heroes include people such as:

- Averil Pooting, a Community Champion, who set up a pop-up vaccination centre at St Barnabas church, getting the vaccine to the most vulnerable in our society
- Tabitha Resta in Bedford who worked tirelessly to ensure people experiencing homelessness had access to vaccinations
- Faith leaders who embraced technology to ensure communities could celebrate religious festivals online and opened up places of worship as vaccination centres
- The many volunteers who delivered food parcels and those who were always there at the other end of the phone or on the doorstep to smile, listen and talk so people did not feel alone
- Volunteers and charities who worked to get rough sleepers off the streets and provided lifesaving support for those fleeing domestic abuse
- Council staff, social workers and refuse collectors who kept vital services going during the most challenging times.

The Prime Minister will be joining the festivities with a 'BB-Thank-Q', hosting community leaders, NHS workers and representatives from the Royal Voluntary Service.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

This past year has been challenging for us all. But in the darkest of times, when people were most in need, the actions of our friends and neighbours to support our communities have shone the brightest.

Across all faiths, ages, backgrounds and languages, our communities have shown off the best of this country.

You are all our community heroes and on behalf of government I want to say thank you.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis said:

Over the past year, each of us has experienced immense change in our lives, during this incredibly difficult period of time. However, we have come together, supporting our friends, families, colleagues and communities.

As restrictions continue to ease and life begins to represent normality, it is essential that we remain kind and compassionate to one another. Today, of all days, I want each of you to say 'thank you' to those most important to you.

[Thank You Day](#) on Sunday 4 July is a community initiative with events and activity held across the country as a way of thanking each other and of building on the community spirit that so many felt during lockdown.

The day is being marked by faith communities. For example, Imams will be including Thank You Day in their sermons, reminding the importance of all communities coming together to continue to help and support each other.

Churches up and down the country will be thanking their congregations and volunteers for helping get through the year. Jewish and Muslim women are organising picnics together around the country.

Members of the public are being encouraged to mark the day in numerous ways from picnics to BBQs and street parties while sticking to Covid guidelines.

Case studies

Just some of those who have made an invaluable contribution to our communities:

Sam Dorney-Smith is a specialist nurse in inclusion health in London, and is also a Fellow for Pathway Health charity. Sam mobilised health care in hotels in London at the beginning of Everyone In, ensuring that individuals had access to health care. She also advised the teams working in the hotels on how to implement interventions to protect staff and residents and keep people safe from COVID-19, such as PPE protocols.

Tabitha Resta is a rough sleeper co-ordinator in Bedford. She worked with the local public health team to ensure that people experiencing homelessness could register with a GP and could also access vaccinations. She also co-ordinated health care into the hotel housing people experiencing homelessness.

Averil Pooten from St Barnabas Church, Walthamstow is Filipino. She co-chaired an event about the vaccine answering questions with NHS Barts trust medical professionals and East London Mosque. Following the event, Averil got contacted by NHS Barts Trust team to set up a pop up vaccine clinic at St Barnabas's church that was safe and free for all people who wanted to take on vaccine. Over 40 people were vaccinated as a result.

Averil then got in touch with the Jesuit Refugee Centre who shared a positive message about their pop-up clinic with refugees and asylum seekers they support and other organisations. As a result nearly 100 people got vaccinated who were refugees and asylum seekers, many of them from the Philippines.

After a **Luton Council of Faiths** vaccination review meeting with faith leaders, some of Luton's Jewish congregation contacted the community council officer to know if there was help available for an elderly Jewish man (88) who needed his 2nd dose of vaccine and he was having difficulty getting through to his surgery. The officer made arrangements and this elderly man was vaccinated on 30 March at 1.45pm during the Jewish religious festival and observance of Passover.

The story offers an everyday example of how people of different faiths have pulled together in the pandemic – the elderly person was Jewish, a local councillor who accompanied was a Muslim of Pakistani origin and the doctor who administered the vaccination was a Sikh of Indian origin and the officer was an Irish Catholic.

With support from MHCLG funding, **The Dash Charity** in Slough continued to provide a full and specialised service to families fleeing to their refuges at crisis point throughout the pandemic. Thirty-three families were fully supported throughout their stay and were provided with one-to-one support through a dedicated Refuge Independent Domestic Violence Advocate, alongside support from our Children's Services Team where appropriate.

Blackburn with Darwen Council identified issues around Muslim burial rites and requirements very early, including swift burial, visitation, washing and shrouding of the deceased, burials rather than cremation, congregations for burial and the need for women to be lowered into the grave by immediate blood relatives.

To address these issues the Council established a strong partnership with key local organisations including the Blackburn Muslim Burial Society, Lancashire Council of Mosques, and local councillors. Together the Partnership engaged directly with Mosques, scholars, Imams, residents and the community to find acceptable solutions.

In Birmingham, **Centrala** supports social integration and cohesion of Central and Eastern European communities. Many members of their community have post war traumas from war experience from their homelands. They were scared of the pandemic as it reminded them of the war in Bosnia, as it was not safe for them to leave their homes for months.

Centrala's friendly team of volunteers were there for them as an outreach

support when going to appointments, including vaccination appointments. They also provided help with interpretation, booking an appointment, arranging transport or simply offering information and advice, including translation of the NHS vaccination leaflets.

[First Homes available for key workers and first time buyers in Cannock, Staffordshire](#)

- Ten First Homes come onto the market today in Cannock, Staffordshire to support local people who struggle to afford market prices in their area
- Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick visits the site and meets key workers and families set to benefit from the scheme
- Scheme is part of the Government's pledge to build 300,000 new homes a year as we Build Back Better and level up opportunity across the UK
- 'Own Your Home' campaign to highlight the support available to get people on to the housing ladder

Families and key workers in Cannock, Staffordshire are set to benefit from First Homes, the new Government housing scheme being made available today (2 July 2021).

The scheme will support local people struggling to afford market prices in their area but want to stay in the communities where they live and work.

The Housing Secretary today met with local key workers and families who are benefitting from the scheme which is delivering ten new homes in the area at a discount of at least 30% compared to the market price.

That same percentage will then be passed on with the sale of the property to future first-time buyers, meaning homes will always be sold below market value – benefitting local communities, key workers, and families for generations to come.

Further sites are set to launch across the country in the coming months. A further 1,500 will join the market from the end of the year, with up to 60,000 First Homes projected to be built across England and Wales by 2029-30.

Delivery of the scheme is part of the Government's wider pledge to build 300,000 new affordable and attractive homes a year and help put home ownership within reach for people across the country. This is part of the Government's promise to Build Back Better and level up opportunity across the UK.

Major high-street lenders Lloyds and Nationwide, along with local building

societies and community lenders, announced that they will be offering high loan-to-value mortgages against First Homes to support the roll-out of the scheme.

Housing Secretary RT Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Enabling more people to buy their own home is at the heart of the mission of this Government, and First Homes will offer a realistic and affordable route into home ownership for even more people who want to own their own home.

I am delighted to come to Cannock to see the new First Homes as they go onto the market. Offering more local people and families a route into home ownership where they already live while also supporting key workers by giving many of them a chance to buy a home at a 30% discount.

First Homes follows on from the 95% mortgage guarantee scheme which helps first-time buyers secure a mortgage with just a 5% deposit and coincides with the Government's 'Own Your Home' campaign showcasing the range of flexible home ownership options available.

The campaign highlights the support available to help make home ownership a realistic and affordable option for more people than ever.

Broadcast, digital and radio adverts continue to showcase the range of Government schemes available to aspiring home-owners to help them get their foot on the housing ladder.

First-time buyers can find the right scheme for them via the [Own Your Home](#) website which provides a single gateway for all routes to home ownership.

The website is an easy and accessible way for first-time buyers to start their home ownership journey and find the right Government scheme for them.

Cannock Chase Council's Deputy Leader, Councillor Bryan Jones said:

New homes in the district and especially affordable homes are high on our priorities, so we are delighted to be part of the Phase 1 Pilot for First Homes that launched last month and aspires to give people the chance to own their own home.

The site will provide 10 First Homes on the site. This is in addition to the shared ownership and rented properties that were secured as part of the original planning application. The site now offers an excellent range of affordable housing options.

Chief Executive of Vistry Partnerships, Stephen Teaglesaid:

We're keen to support the Government's housing targets and we are currently working towards our own ambitious target of delivering 6000 mixed-tenure homes by the end of 2022, working with housing providers and local authorities nationwide to get more affordable homes built at scale, and new tenures such as First Homes will help to contribute to that.

Cannock Chase is among the first local authorities to take part in the First Homes scheme. The Council gave planning permission in 2018 for 116 homes to be built at Cannock Chase. As part of the S106 planning agreement 20 per cent are to be provided as affordable housing with a mix of rented and shared ownership homes.

Councils will also be able to prioritise the homes for keyworkers such as nurses and teachers who have been looking to get on the housing ladder while supporting their community throughout the pandemic.

Each individual local authority can set a local connection test to determine who should be prioritised for the scheme based on the needs of their communities.

Vistry Partnerships are building 116 new homes at Walkmill Lane in Cannock on land formally owned by Homes England. 58 of the homes will be affordable housing working with Bromford Housing Association; all of which will be offered as affordable, social rented and shared ownership dwellings to local families and those in housing need. The remaining 58 homes will be developed and sold through the group's award winning Linden Homes brand. The first homes being occupied as the project progresses.

First Homes

- First Homes will be for first-time buyers only, and councils will be able to prioritise them for local people and for key workers. This scheme is a part of the Government's commitment to deliver 1 million homes by 2024.
- First Homes will make a proportion of new homes available with a minimum 30% discount on the open market value which will be passed on with the sale of the property to future first-time buyers. This means homes will always be sold below market value and local communities will benefit for generations to come.
- The Government working with several regional and national lenders to deliver the first of these homes in Bolsover and elsewhere in England
- The first 'First Homes' will be marketed over the summer of 2021, and the Government will be funding a further 1,500 homes to come to the market from the end of 2021.

Government home ownership schemes

- 95% Mortgages: The mortgage guarantee scheme allows first time buyers to purchase a home with only a 5% deposit. The scheme will help to increase the supply of 5% deposit mortgages for credit-worthy households by

supporting lenders to offer these products through a government-backed guarantee.

- **Help to Buy: Equity Loan:** A government equity loan that supports first time buyers with a low interest loan towards their deposit.
- **Shared Ownership:** Gives first time buyers the option to buy a share of their home (between 10% and 75%) and pay rent on the remaining share. Our new Affordable Homes Programme aims to deliver around 180,000 homes with around half of these available to purchase through shared ownership. We are making shared ownership more accessible by reducing the initial share you can buy in your new home from a quarter to 10% and allowing you to increase your share in 1% instalments. This means that you can increase your share of the property in manageable payments when you want, at a pace that is right for you
- **Help to Build:** Scheme to help self and custom home building become a realistic option to get onto the housing ladder through lower deposit mortgages. Lowering the required deposit will free up capital, so people can build the home that they want and need whether it's a commissioned, made to order home, or a new design from scratch. The scheme will provide an equity loan on the completed home, similar to the Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme.

[£60 million to protect our national heritage](#)

- From ancient objects to palaces, observatories and accessible toilets, projects are underway to maintain our historic national institutions and increase accessibility
- Funding will support projects to welcome back visitors this summer

Museums, galleries and heritage organisations have been awarded £60 million to ensure nationally important museum collections and heritage assets are protected for future generations.

The funding, which has been awarded to organisations including the V&A, The Natural History Museum and the British Library has supported 100 projects for essential maintenance works delayed by the pandemic. It will help projects that were stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic reach completion to allow institutions to welcome back visitors this summer.

It will increase accessibility at national tourist attractions including the Royal Armouries in Leeds and the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford. The funding will also help organisations meet net-zero targets by supporting energy efficiency projects at The Royal Armouries, providing grants for electric boilers at the Imperial War Museum Duxford in Cambridgeshire, and upgrading insulation at Tate Liverpool.

This £60 million investment in some of the nation's beloved institutions builds on the almost £2 billion invested in the arts, heritage and cultural sectors through the Culture Recovery Fund, which has supported more than 5,000 organisations through the pandemic.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We've given £60 million to safeguard the priceless collections and heritage at many of our beloved cultural institutions so they can be enjoyed by future generations. This builds on our £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund, ensuring that we continue to protect our heritage and culture throughout this pandemic and are able to open up our historic institutions for everyone to enjoy this summer.

A grant of £9.8 million has gone to the world-famous British Museum for essential maintenance work which will ensure the Museum's priceless collections are preserved for future generations. £2.7 million of this will care for the fabric and roofs of galleries.

London's Natural History Museum will receive £4.6 million to restore the original Waterhouse Wing, home to the Human Biology Galleries that chart the origins and evolution of humanity. More than £1 million will help the V&A in London preserve the unique terracotta facade of the Grade I listed garden courtyard building and £800,000 will help the Walker Art Gallery, part of National Museums Liverpool, preserve the ornate sandstone cornice that adorns the gallery's entrance.

As well as galleries and museums, funding is also helping organisations including The Royal Parks whose green spaces were enjoyed by Londoners during the pandemic. £2.2 million will maintain footpaths, create nature habitats, protect parkland and landscapes, and repair boundary walls and bridges. It will help parks including Richmond, Bushy, Greenwich, St James's, Brompton Cemetery and Hyde Park welcome visitors for years to come.

Funding has also been awarded to public bodies to help their efforts to hit net-zero targets. Decarbonisation projects have been funded at the Imperial War Museum in Duxford, the National Gallery, the Natural History Museum and Science Museum Group sites in Manchester and York. From upgrading lighting to LED systems which will reduce consumption by up to 70%, to insulating roofs and enhancing glazing, work is underway across our national institutions to build back greener.

Recipients include the Royal Armouries in Leeds whose £1.1 million grant is being used to build a changing places toilet that will open up facilities at the museum for people who have complex needs. The new facilities will include generous space for wheelchair users and allow space for users to be accompanied by carers and height adjustable wash basins and changing benches. More than £350,000 will go to the National Science and Media Museum and the Museum of the Home to reconfigure entrances and modernise lifts to make both sites more accessible.

The Horniman Museum and Gardens will receive £510,000 to fund essential upgrades to its buildings, along with significant investment in infrastructure.

Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum said:

Over the coming years significant investment in the BM estate is required to maintain appropriate conditions for the collection, improve public access, and ensure long-term sustainability. We are very grateful indeed for the additional support we have received from the Government. It enables us, at a difficult time, to progress essential work on our building fabric and infrastructure, to keep the Museum safe and allow us to welcome visitors back.

Jonathan Newby, The Science Museum Group's Acting Director and Chief Executive said:

This government funding is vital to our work to reduce our carbon footprint and ensure our museums are accessible and welcoming to everyone who visits. Investment in our infrastructure underpins the inspiring experiences we offer in our museums; the platform lifts being replaced at the National Science and Media Museum were part of an award-winning approach to accessibility when installed two decades ago, but aren't suitable for some modern wheelchairs.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A said:

The Infrastructure Fund has provided critical support to the V&A, enabling us to repair some of the most vulnerable parts of our Grade 1 listed building. Not all of these projects are glamorous, but they are essential and the funding we have received means we can continue to provide public access to some of the most beautiful and best-loved parts of our estate – including the terracotta Garden façade.

Diane Lees, Director-General of Imperial War Museums said:

This welcomed support from the Government will help IWM to pursue our goal of achieving net zero greenhouse emissions by 2050, in line with the UK Government's de-carbonisation timeline. The funds will enable us to invest in the removal of fossil fuelled heating across our estates in favour of decarbonising infrastructure, such as electric boilers supplied wholly by UK renewable green zero carbon energy, and to work towards becoming an environmentally sustainable organisation. These important changes may not be visible to our visitors, but they are crucial to us being able to

care for our sites and collections sustainably.

Doug Gurr, Director of the Natural History Museum said:

We are very grateful for this support which will be vital in sustaining our estate and collections for future generations and support our drive to become net zero. In particular, it will enable us to reveal and celebrate more of our architectural heritage by renewing the Western Waterhouse galleries roofs which cover galleries in the oldest part of our Grade 1 listed world-famous Waterhouse building – as well as making our building more energy efficient and reducing our impact on the environment.

Dr Edward Impey, Director General and Master of the Armouries said:

We are delighted to be able to invest a substantial sum in the infrastructure of the Royal Armouries Museum at Leeds. One of the improvements this makes possible is the installation of a 'Changing Places' toilet, a gold standard facility for the use of people with severe disabilities, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties. This will not only be of value to visitors and provide a public service during opening hours, but encourage more people to visit the museum and explore Leeds Dock and the South Bank area of Leeds city centre.

Tom Jarvis, Director of Parks at The Royal Parks, said:

We are very grateful to receive this government funding which will help us protect and improve the landscapes of the parks, particularly where they have become so eroded in the last year. Part of the funding will also go towards increasing the parks' biodiversity through the creation of new nature and wildlife habitats, and a significant amount will go towards repairing and maintaining the historic boundary walls, bridges and reservoirs. The parks have been a lifeline for many during the pandemic, and this funding will help make sure that their natural and historic landscapes continue to be enjoyed safely by visitors now and in the future.

Paddy Rodgers, Director of Royal Museums Greenwich said:

This additional funding from Government will help Royal Museums Greenwich to provide vital services across our wide and varied estate – including the National Maritime Museum, Royal Observatory, Queen's House and Cutty Sark – and support essential infrastructure

that will underpin our plans to rebuild our audiences as we emerge from the pandemic.

Kirsten Walker, Director, Collections Care and Estates at the Horniman Museum and Gardens says:

We are really grateful to the DCMS for this funding, which is supporting much needed infrastructure refurbishment, which would be difficult to fund from other sources.

The £60 million Public Bodies Infrastructure Fund aim is to enhance public access to national heritage and collections, and maintain much-loved historic buildings nationwide.

The additional funding builds on an unprecedented package of support for public bodies through the pandemic. National museums, galleries and heritage organisations have received approximately £100 million in additional grant in aid support from DCMS to offset the financial impact of the pandemic. An additional £90 million was announced by the Chancellor at Budget for continued support for government-sponsored national museums and cultural bodies in England.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Funding was awarded via a competitive process and recognises the impact of the pandemic on commercial revenue streams and cyclical planned maintenance.

Full list of recipients:

- The British Museum – £9,800,000
- Natural History Museum – £7,605,000
- Science Museum Group – £6,171,000
- V&A – £5,788,000
- TATE – £5,042,000
- Imperial War Museums – £3,850,000
- National Museums Liverpool – £3,800,000
- Historic Royal Palaces – £3,560,000
- National Portrait Gallery – £2,968,810
- The Royal Parks – £2,255,000
- Royal Museums Greenwich – £1,775,000
- British Library – £1,301,249
- Royal Armouries – £1,138,000
- British Film Institute – £1,075,000
- National Coal Mining Museum – £1,000,000
- Wallace Collection – £575,000
- Horniman Museum and Gardens – £510,000
- National Gallery – £437,000
- Sir John Soane Museum – £242,000

- Museum of the Home – £175,000
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Celebrities get back to the ‘Rhythm of Life’ in new film supporting COVID-19 vaccination programme

- The star-studded film is released today ahead of the NHS’s 73rd birthday celebrating the success of the vaccination programme to support the easing of restrictions
- Everyone aged 18 and over is eligible to get a vaccine and people are urged to get their second doses
- [Watch the film](#)

Celebrities including Jim Broadbent and David Walliams have joined forces to encourage everyone to get their coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines in a new uplifting film released today (Saturday 3rd July).

Set to the toe-tapping tune The Rhythm of Life, written by Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields, from the 1966 classic musical, Sweet Charity, and donated by the Cy Coleman estate, the heart-warming film will celebrate the success of the vaccination programme in supporting the easing of restrictions as outlined in the roadmap.

Conceived and directed by Josie Rourke, the former artistic director of the Donmar Warehouse, the short film, written by Rourke and James Graham, is being released ahead of the NHS’s 73rd birthday. It first sees Jim Broadbent enter an empty theatre before a star-studded cast of David Walliams, Asa Butterfield, Colin Salmon, Derek Jacobi, Don Warrington, Nicola Roberts, Russel Tovey, Sandra Marvin and West End dancers – dressed in iconic NHS blue – take to the stage to passionately perform the song

In-between the dancing, Asa Butterfield calls on viewers to “get that vaccine”, Don Warrington advocates “I’ve had mine!” and Jim Broadbent delivers the final “just get that vaccine” concluding plea to encourage people to play their part in getting us back to the ‘rhythm of life’. The film was produced by Charles Finch and Peregrine Kitchener-Fellowes at Standalone Pictures.

Comedian, writer and actor David Walliams said:

The NHS has done an absolutely fantastic job rolling out COVID-19 vaccines at such speed and, as we do in the film, I want to implore everyone to get their vaccine when called, so we can get back to the all-singing, all-dancing, rhythm of life that we love.

Actor Jim Broadbent said:

The film gave us the chance to show our appreciation and celebration for the vaccine roll-out in the best way we know how.

Thank you to the millions who have already received their vaccinations and please 'just get your vaccine' to the rest. Vaccines are helping us get back to everything we love and every industry – including the arts – couldn't be more grateful to each and every person for getting their vaccine.

The film follows the launch of a national campaign urging people to get their vaccine and join the millions of people who have already received their jabs, as 'every vaccination gives us hope'.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Vaccines save lives so it is fantastic to see some of our most beloved stars in entertainment back the vital vaccination roll-out, which is helping this country fight this pandemic.

The evidence is clear: the vaccine is the best way to help protect yourself and your loved ones, so if you get the call do not delay in booking your appointment as we do everything we can to get back to normal life.

Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms and even more unlikely to get serious COVID-19, to be admitted to hospital, or to die from it and there is growing evidence that they are less likely to pass the virus to others.

In June, the Prime Minister announced that second doses for all over 40s will be accelerated by reducing the dosing interval from 12 weeks to 8 weeks.

The move follows advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which has considered the latest available evidence and has recommended reducing the dosing interval to counter the threat of new variants of concern.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

I'm extremely humbled every day when I see how many people are booking and receiving their jabs, joining the millions of adults who have already received theirs, as the country continues to play its part in helping us defeat this virus.

Vaccines have prevented an estimated 7.2 million infections and 27,000 deaths in England alone, and each vaccine delivered is another step forward in helping us get out of this pandemic as we

fight it together, side by side.

Latest modelling analysis from Public Health England (PHE) and Cambridge University's MRC Biostatistics Unit suggests that the COVID-19 vaccination programme has so far prevented an estimated 7.2 million infections and 27,000 deaths in England alone.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Vaccines are saving lives, protecting the NHS and will ensure we get bums back on seats safely. Every adult in the country can now get their jab. Thank you to all these stars for getting the message out. Let's get them back on stage by finishing the job with the vaccine roll-out.

ONS polling also shows the UK continues to top the list of nations where people are willing to have a COVID-19 vaccine or have already been vaccinated and ONS data published on 2 July shows that more than 9 in 10 (96%) adults reported positive sentiment towards the vaccine.

Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England, which includes Riverside Park Stadium, Hull City Hall and Sunderland Nightingale amongst others.

[Government confirms support for tennis and athletics](#)

The Sports Minister has confirmed that the governing bodies for tennis and athletics have been awarded funding to support the delivery of their calendars of summer events, whilst the phased return of spectators continues under the roadmap out of lockdown.

As part of the Government's Sport Survival Package, a loan of £14.3 million has been made available to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), which meant that they could make a commitment at the beginning of the year to ensure that the grass court season could go ahead. The backing of the loan support allowed the LTA to host two events in Nottingham, and further events in Birmingham, Eastbourne and the Queen's Club, in the lead up to The Championships at Wimbledon.

All of these events had significantly reduced gate receipts and double the usual net costs due to restricted spectator capacities and COVID-19. The tournaments at Nottingham, Birmingham and Eastbourne were all elite women's

events and helped to ensure that British and international players could prepare for The Championships whilst remaining in COVID safe environments.

Meanwhile UK Athletics has been offered £1.2 million in loans which has supported the delivery of the British Athletics Championships, the Olympic trial event, which took place in Manchester between 25-27 June, and therefore provided the platform to help a number of athletes to qualify for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. The funding will also help the Diamond League British Grand Prix, the final major warm-up event on home soil, to take place at Gateshead International Stadium on 13 July.

Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston said:

There was a genuine risk that our tennis and athletics talent would not have had the opportunity to properly prepare and compete ahead of major events, like the Olympics.

This funding has meant that tennis and athletics events could plan with confidence, supporting our sport stars and making sure that the Great British summer of sport goes on.

Scott Lloyd, Chief Executive of the Lawn Tennis Association, said:

We'd like to thank the Government and Sport England for their help over the past seven months. Knowing the loan support is available has allowed us to plan with a degree of certainty and commit to expenditure when faced with only being able to admit 25% of spectators to stage our early summer events safely and our investment levels being double the normal cost.

Whilst we have reduced costs internally to manage through this period more generally, we can now plan ahead to 2022 and look to capitalise on increases in participation by supporting indoor community and public venues as they help recover from the aftermath of pandemic.

Joanna Coates, Chief Executive of UK Athletics, said:

We are delighted to have been offered funding from the Sport Survival Package from the DCMS. The reduction in permitted spectator numbers at events and the uncertain climate caused by COVID has challenged many sports over the last 15 months and such support makes a significant difference to athletics.

The funds have already helped to ensure we were able to deliver the Muller British Athletics Championships, our Olympic trial event, and will also ensure we are able to support the Muller British Grand Prix later this month.

These events are hugely significant competitive opportunities that prepare our athletes to be at their best when competing at the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, and we are grateful to be in receipt of the package at such a crucial point for our sport.

Chair of the independent Board, Sir Ian Cheshire said:

These loan funding awards to both the LTA and UK Athletics are another important step in the government's commitment to supporting spectator sports to continue operating through the pandemic.

Following March's Budget announcement confirming a £300 million extension to the Sport Survival Package, the Independent Board continues to work at pace to get appropriate support to sports who are in need.

The Sport Survival Package is the most generous bespoke support from any Government for its domestic sport sector in the world.

The [£300 million winter phase](#) has focused on helping those major spectator sports severely impacted by coronavirus restrictions survive the winter and cover essential costs. Over recent months funding has also been provided to rugby union, National League and women's football, horse racing, rugby league, badminton, basketball, netball, ice hockey, speedway and drag racing. Submissions for support were made by individual sports to an [independent decision-making Board](#), supported by Sport England.

In March [the Chancellor announced a further £300 million of support](#), expected to benefit major summer spectator sports, as the path out of lockdown continues and the majority of sports stadia open at reduced capacities, unless they host accredited pilot events under the Government's Events Research Programme.

Further details on the £300 million funding programme are available [online](#), with further announcements to follow as support is agreed.

In all, the sport and leisure sector has benefited from more than £1.5 billion worth of business support made available by the Government, including the furlough scheme, business rates relief and business interruption loan scheme that has helped many sports clubs and leisure businesses to survive.

ENDS