

# Defence Secretary urges troops to support Poppy Appeal

Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace has urged members of the UK Armed Forces to support The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal despite changes to the National Service of Remembrance.

The open letter to the armed forces, signed by the Defence Secretary, recognises the huge role the armed forces play in selling poppies and collecting donations for the appeal every year.

Although large public gatherings and fundraising events can't take place this year, armed forces personnel and members of the public can still show their support by displaying a poppy and joining the 2 minute silence on Remembrance Sunday.

The Defence Secretary has visited The Poppy Factory in Richmond to meet the team making millions of poppies for the Poppy Appeal. The charity also provides employability support to former service personnel and makes poppy wreaths to be laid at the Cenotaph by the Royal Family.

2020 has been a challenging year but despite these hurdles, we won't neglect our duty to remember.

Remembrance season traditionally begins with the launch of The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal, scheduled this year for the 22 October. Every year, members of the armed forces wear the poppy with pride and help to collect donations from the public – at railway stations, supermarkets, or in our places of work. This year we face unique challenges, but ones that we can work together to overcome and demonstrate our Remembrance with pride.

It is the same can-do spirit that you, alongside our NHS workers, carers and countless volunteers, showed time and again this year as you took part in the nation's fight back against the virus. Overcoming huge logistical challenges, setting up Nightingales and providing hands-on medical care to those in need.

We faced the same challenge as we marked the 75th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day, but found poignant ways to pay tribute to all those who gave their lives for this country. This year's commemorations for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day will indeed feel different. However, Remembrance will take place in communities large and small across the country and we have now published advice for Local Authorities so that communities can find appropriate ways to pay their respects.

And, as it does every year, The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal will go ahead, the importance of fundraising to sustain a commitment to the people they support remains as vital as ever. So, maintain those links with local Legion groups and ensure you're aware of the local guidelines. There are many ways to get involved, and The Legion's website is packed full of information

about this year's Appeal.

With imagination and determination, you can play your part alongside The Royal British Legion in helping the UK mark this milestone that remains at the heart of our national calendar.

This November we will demonstrate our undiminished respect for those who have gone before, and our firm commitment to the continued safety of the British people.

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## [Next steps announced to boost road safety and close mobile phone loophole](#)

- consultation launched to update law on using a hand-held device while driving
- changes will help bolster enforcement and improve safe driving behaviour
- further measures – including a review into roads policing – to tackle phone use at the wheel and improve road safety

People using a hand-held mobile phone in all circumstances while driving will be breaking the law, under new government plans unveiled by Roads Minister Baroness Vere today (17 October 2020) to close a legislation loophole and improve road safety.

It's already a criminal offence to use a hand-held mobile phone to call or text while driving, but not for other actions such as taking photos. While still distracting, drivers have escaped punishment due to a legal loophole where such actions aren't seen as 'interactive communication', and therefore do not fit the current definition of the offence.

Now, following a review of the offence, a [consultation has been launched on bringing the law into line with modern technology](#) – meaning drivers caught taking photos, playing games or scrolling through a playlist behind the wheel will be clearly breaking the law on mobile phone use.

Recognising that mobile phones are commonly used as a method of payment – such as at drive-thrus – an exemption will apply under the new proposals set out by government today to contactless payments, if a vehicle is stationary, and if goods or services – such as a takeaway meal – are delivered immediately.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

Our roads are some of the safest in the world, but we want to make sure they're safer still by bringing the law into the 21st century.

That's why we're looking to strengthen the law to make using a hand-held phone while driving illegal in a wider range of circumstances – it's distracting and dangerous and for too long risky drivers have been able to escape punishment but this update will mean those doing the wrong thing will face the full force of the law.

Ministers have rejected calls to go further by banning the use of hands-free functions – drivers will still be able to continue safely using devices 'hands-free' while driving, such as a sat-nav secured in a cradle.

#### [mobile phone while driving consultation](#)

The proposals come as new research published today gives a further [snapshot into driver behaviour in the UK](#). The project, commissioned by the Department for Transport and carried out by the University of Leeds, looked at footage of 51 drivers and found over 765 trips, 662 mobile phone interactions were observed with only 38 completely hands-free. At 30mph, a car travels 100 feet in 2.3 seconds – meaning even a split-second lapse from changing a song on a playlist or checking an app could result in a crash.

By updating the law, police powers will be bolstered to tackle this behaviour even further – ensuring they can take immediate action if they see a driver holding and using their phone at the wheel. The penalties in place for using a hand-held mobile phone while driving are 6 penalty points and a £200 fine.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Roads Policing, Chief Constable Anthony Bangham, said:

Using a mobile phone while driving is incredibly dangerous and being distracted at the wheel can change lives forever.

Police will take robust action against those using a hand-held mobile phone illegally and proposals to make the law clearer are welcome.

AA president Edmund King OBE said:

There's no excuse for picking up a mobile phone when driving so we're pleased this loophole will be closed. Phones do so much more than calls and texts, so it's only right that the law is changed to keep pace with technology. Tweets, TikTok and Instagram snaps can all wait until you park up.

These new rules will clarify the law and help drivers realise that this dangerous act can have the same consequences and be as socially unacceptable as drink driving. If you cannot resist the temptation to pick up your phone, then you should convert your glovebox into a phone box.

The government is also tackling phone use behind the wheel through a [review of road traffic policing and wider traffic enforcement](#) – to look at how roads policing currently works, its effectiveness, and where improvements could be made. As well as this, the department runs dedicated [THINK! campaigns](#) to show drivers the risk they're taking and the potentially devastating impact of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

In addition, the [road safety action plan](#) sets out over 70 measures to reduce the number of people killed or injured on roads around the country.

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## New 'Diversity Built Britain' coin unveiled

- new coin launched following discussions with the 'We Too Built Britain' campaign
- 2.5 million "Diversity Built Britain" 50p coins will enter into circulation next week
- designed by Dominique Evans – one of the UK's foremost coin designers – reflecting her own experience of diversity

Around 2.5 million of the coins, which recognise and celebrate Britain's diverse history, will be released on Monday. The coin features a geodome, which represents a community of connection and strength, with each section working together to build something greater.

It was designed by Dominique Evans, one of the UK's foremost designers, who has previously designed coins to mark VE Day, the Sapphire Coronation and Jane Austen. It was inspired by Ms Evans' own personal experience growing up as a mixed-race woman.

The new 50p signals the intent of the Royal Mint and the Chancellor to include a wider range of people on coins and notes in the future.

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, commissioned the coin earlier this year following discussion with the 'We Too Built Britain' campaign, which works for fair representation of minority communities' contributions across all walks of life.

He held a roundtable on Thursday with coin designer Dominique Evans, Blondel Cluff CBE (CEO of the West India Committee), campaigners Zehra Zaidi, Professor Patrick Vernon, and Deputy Master of the Mint Anne Jessopp to mark the launch of the coin.

Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said:

I have seen first-hand the contribution made by ethnic minority

communities to Britain's history. That is why I backed the "We Too Built Britain" campaign and requested that the Royal Mint introduced this coin to celebrate it.

This coin, and the rest of the series, will act as a fitting tribute to the very profound impact ethnic minority communities have made on Britain, and I am grateful to the Royal Mint for turning this around at record speed.

Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister, said:

Congratulations to Dominique Evans the designer of The Royal Mint's new 50 pence coin – 'Diversity Built Britain'.

Her design is the first in a series of coins The Mint will be producing, celebrating those who have helped shape our national history and culture.

I had the great pleasure of welcoming Dominique to a Cabinet meeting, along with Anne Jessopp, the first female Deputy Master of the Mint and Blondel Cluff CEO of the West India Committee and Advisor to The Royal Mint.

This new coin echoes the government's commitment to building a fairer society for all.

Alongside the release of the coins, the Royal Mint and the West India Committee will also issue education packs to primary schools in England and Wales, so children have the opportunity to learn about these achievements.

The government will consult with stakeholders including "We Too Built Britain" and other groups representing minority communities on the themes of future coins in this series.

Dominique Evans, coin designer at The Royal Mint, said:

When designing this coin, I began by thinking about the people who inspire me and what diversity has meant in my life. I believe that no matter where you are born, we all belong under the same sky and this was the starting point of the design.

The background of the coin features a geodome with a series of interconnecting lines and triangles that form a network. Each part is equal, and symbolises a community of connection and strength. The words 'Diversity Built Britain' talks about the differences between us, and the connection which gives us unity. The design also looks to the future, and the bonds which will continue to grow and make us stronger together.

Zehra Zaidi said:

Ethnic minority people, as well as all under-represented groups, need to see themselves represented in British institutions. They need to see their contributions to Britain recognised. It is a part of an invisible social contract and it can build cohesion, promote a sense of belonging, inspire young people and unite us as a nation, showing that we all have an equal stake in society. We are a diverse, modern and global Britain – let's show that. This coin helps bridge our nation's past, its diverse present and its future, looking outward, positively, together.

### **Further information**

Anne Jessopp, CEO of The Royal Mint, said:

This is one of the most significant coins produced by The Royal Mint, and signals a change in our nation's coinage.

For over 1000 years the nation's story has been told on coins struck by The Royal Mint, but often the contribution of ethnic minority communities has been unrecognised – this marks the beginning of a new chapter with more coins to follow.

In addition to creating this pivotal 50p, we have launched a new diversity hub on our website where people can share their stories, and access free educational resources. Working in partnership with the West India Committee we have created education packs which will be issued to every primary school in England and Wales, and are available for anyone to download. The first of these packs explores the contribution of Black Britons, and has been launched to coincide with Black History Month.

- further images of the coin can be found on [HM Treasury Flickr](#)
- the Chancellor had a call with Dominique Evans, Blondel Cluff CBE, Zehra Zaidi, Professor Patrick Vernon and Anne Jessopp to talk about the coin on Thursday- clips of this will be available on social media on Saturday

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**[588 more arts organisations saved by £76 million in latest Culture Recovery](#)**

## Fund grants

- This funding builds on the biggest tranche of money awarded from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund announced on Monday, taking the total to £333 million this week.
- Venues and organisations benefiting across England include the Military Wives Choirs, The Hepworth Wakefield, Night and Day in Manchester, Whitby's famous Gothic Festival, London's Somerset House and Kneehigh Theatre in Cornwall

Comedy clubs, circuses, festivals, regional theatres and local museums are among 588 arts and cultural organisations receiving a share of more than £76 million in essential support, Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has announced.

### **Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:**

This is more vital funding to protect cultural gems across the country, save jobs and prepare the arts to bounce back. Through Arts Council England we are delivering the biggest ever investment in the arts in record time. Hundreds of millions of pounds are already making their way to thousands of organisations.

These awards build on our commitment to be here for culture in every part of the country.

This funding will provide a lifeline for organisations and venues engaging local communities with culture across England. It will protect nationally and internationally renowned organisations like the Military Wives Choir, the Kneehigh Theatre in Cornwall, the Comedy Store venues in Manchester and London and the Hepworth Wakefield's collection of modern British art. The West End's longest running play, The Mousetrap, will also receive a grant of £228,973 to help restart performances to socially distanced audiences.

### **Melanie Nightingale, Director, Military Wives Choirs, said:**

We are incredibly grateful to have been awarded part of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund. This much-needed support enables the Military Wives Choirs to continue in our mission of increasing wellbeing through singing, to our inclusive network of over 2,000 women across the military community and audiences across the country and abroad. We are thrilled that this funding enables our 73 choirs to sing, share and support one another and feel stronger together through music.

A wide range of art forms will benefit from these awards including operating circuses and training for future performers. Zippos Circus, one of the oldest circuses still running in the UK, will receive £628,986 to continue with covid-secure performances across the country and the National Centre for Circus Arts will be able to safely provide workshops and classes for artists and young people thanks to a grant of £466,000.

**Kate White, CEO, National Centre for Circus Arts said:**

The National Centre for Circus Arts is thrilled to have been successful in our application to the Cultural Recovery Fund. The grant is a real lifeline and will allow us to offer support to many circus artists, who as freelancers have been without work and income for many months now. As we have reopened our building we are able to subsidise fees for professionals as they ease back into training and creation.

We will further develop our support for teachers as we create new and innovative ways of teaching and creating circus in a COVID safe way. The investment from DCMS and ACE will enable us to adapt our business model, testing new ways of working, to achieve long term financial viability.

Funding is also going to festivals across the country from grassroots arts festival BlackFest based in Liverpool, which is receiving £50,000 to trial socially distanced events, to Shangri-La Glastonbury, the contemporary art producers behind one of the iconic festival's most legendary stages where some of the world's biggest artists including Lady Gaga and Madonna have performed, which is being awarded £61,059 to develop a new digital art and music event platform and continue work with emerging artists.

There are also grants for grassroots music venues like Night and Day in Manchester whose support for local unsigned artists has launched major careers for well-known acts like Elbow.

Comedy venues and festivals from Liverpool to London are also benefiting from this tranche of grants. The internationally renowned Leicester Comedy Festival is the longest running and largest comedy festival of its kind in Europe and a grant of £105,000 will allow planning to continue for next year's festival. Liverpool's only purpose built comedy club, The Hot Water Comedy Club, is receiving a £450,000 grant from the Culture Recovery Fund to cover fixed costs for the comedy club and the additional measures needed to make the venue Covid-safe for performances. The Comedy Store, the largest employer of professional comedy performers in the UK and one of Europe's most significant comedy institutions, will receive £964,252 to retain staff in both city locations and deliver an exciting programme that will provide fees for more than 250 freelancers.



## **Don Ward, founder and CEO, The Comedy Store, said:**

Over 41 years have passed since I opened the very first alternative comedy venue in London, after 20 years I added a second venue in Manchester. Comedy is now rightly recognised as an art form and I am so proud to be known as the Godfather. I was devastated last March when we had to close both venues due to the Coronavirus and all the relative problems it brought to the understandably enforced closure. The investment will ensure that we will be back to entertain live audiences as soon as it is safe to do so, protecting livelihoods and the artform of comedy itself.

Today's funding will help allow socially distanced performances to restart where safe to do so, venues to plan for reopening, protect jobs and create opportunities for freelancers. It follows £257 million in grants awarded to a range of arts organisations and cultural venues on Monday October 12 by Arts Council England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Organisations have been awarded grants under £1 million in the first two rounds of funding this week. Darlington Hippodrome in County Durham is receiving the largest grant of £1 million to run a programme of engagement activities including youth theatre courses, adult dance classes and community events ranging from themed tours of the theatre to art classes for local people.

Further details of grant awards of up to £3 million and £270 million in repayable cultural finance will follow in the coming days and weeks.

Other organisations that will be receiving funding include:

- Kneehigh Theatre, Cornwall – £249,833 will enable Kneehigh to reopen in December and deliver safe, accessible, outdoor artistic experiences including a walk-through exhibition and performances by firelight.

Kneehigh is an award-winning international touring theatre company, based in Cornwall and celebrated across the UK. They have been active during lockdown and created new walks on their free storytelling app Walk With Me. Alumni include Dawn French, who recorded a number of stories for the company, and former Artistic Director Emma Rice who went on to work at Shakespeare's Globe in London, before starting her own new company Wise Children in 2018.

- Whitby Gothic Festival, North Yorkshire – £55,000 will provide Whitby Gothic Festival financial stability it needs to grow the internationally renowned festival in 2021 and to support its digital strategy for the Autumn.

The biannual Gothic Festival has been a pilgrimage for fans of Bram Stoker's famous novel, Dracula, for over 25 years and has also attracted visitors due to the architectural and cultural heritage of the town. The festival is of huge economic importance to Whitby as it provides a huge influx of visitors

for two off-peak weeks of the year and raises the profile of the town to bring additional tourists year-round.

- Night and Day, Manchester – £64,745 will enable Night and Day to host local socially distanced showcases from December until it can host the live music events for which it is best known.

Night and Day is Manchester's most renowned grassroots live music venue which has hosted tens of thousands of bands and musicians over nearly 30 years contributing directly to the local economy and culture. It provides a platform for local unsigned artists and hosts end of year shows for music schools such as the Royal Northern College of Music. Bands who have performed include Elbow, Kasabian, Jessie J, Arctic Monkeys and Manic Street Preachers.

- Military Wives Choir, London – £92,057 will ensure the continuation of the central charity team which supports choirs across the country, helping them to find and fund rehearsal venues, pay musical directors, deliver weekly rehearsals and continue to offer safe spaces for over 2,000 women.

The Military Wives Choir rose to fame through the BBC documentary series with Gareth Malone and was recently the subject of a film starring Kristin Scott Thomas and Sharon Horgan. It creates cultural opportunities across the UK, often in very remote areas where there is limited access. It is run by, for and with women in the military community, often giving voice to overlooked talented creative practitioners.

- Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Yorkshire – £50,000 will go towards producing a 3-day event across what would have been the opening weekend of this year's festival. The programme will include 3 live broadcasts, 2 socially distanced installations, 8 new commissions, and a small number of live performances for a limited audience. The grant will also increase its Learning and Participation provision from Autumn 2020 – March 2021, to ensure that it is serving and creating opportunities for the local community.

The Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival is one of the UK's foremost festivals dedicated to contemporary and experimental music and is recognised worldwide as for the quality and innovation of its artistic programme and high production values.

- Walk the Plank, Salford – £170,268 will allow Walk the Plank to continue working with clients on socially distanced outdoor arts solutions for events as well as adapting its training programme to include new learning resources.

Walk the Plank are highly regarded outdoor arts specialists and innovators working in public spaces. Producing civic and community-led celebrations fusing performance, puppetry, choreography with spectacular making, fire, music and sfx, Walk the Plank has a track record of excellence in environmental sustainability and support for its freelance workforce.

- Solfest, Cumbria – £100,000 will be used to salvage events from the cancelled 2020 programme due to take place in August to take place throughout the winter. It will also enable planning for Solfest 2021.

Solfest is Cumbria's longest running outdoor music festival offering a range of different stages on a single event, offering world music, traditional folk, reggae, dance and traditional Cumbrian arts.

- Circus Berlin, Gateshead – £423,000 will help fund performances with socially distanced audiences to continue through the months ahead.

Circus Berlin has offered a culturally diverse and modern take on traditional circus for 30 years and mixes a variety of facts from different cultures.

- ZoieLogic Dance Theatre, Southampton – £50,544 will enable ZoieLogic to deliver outdoor dance events designed for social distancing, which will be initially taught online before a live Covid-secure event.

ZoieLogic Dance Theatre is recognised as a national leader in the development of boys and male dance and a centre of excellence for youth and community engagement through training practitioners, creating job opportunities and providing mentoring.

- Create Studios, Swindon – £195,222 will enable Create Studios to purchase a mobile unit for crucial outreach work across the country that will enable young people to participate in digital and creative activities without having to travel.

Create Studios are a film and digital media community interest company and social enterprise based in Swindon which supports local talent development with ground-breaking mentorship and training programmes that give young creative people from diverse backgrounds the skills to equip themselves for the creative industries. Create supported the first film of David Yates, who went on to direct many of the Harry Potter films and the Fantastic Beasts series.

- Somerset House, Westminster, London – £850,000 will enable Somerset House to reboot its sustainable business model, adapt its creative spaces for social distancing, and restart its Creative Careers Programme as well as develop a limited cultural programme.

Somerset House is a working arts centre & home to the UK's largest creative community, including 20 National Portfolio Organisations and Makerversity, which supports professional makers. Each year it welcomes 3 million visitors to its historic site which has been used for many major film and TV shoots including Suffragette, The Duchess, Love Actually and Mary Poppins Returns and has also hosted London Design Week.

- Paraorchestra, Bristol – £156,000 will enable Paraorchestra to develop small-scale work adhering to social distancing guidelines, adapt their indoor immersive work for outdoor settings and produce hybrid performances to allow musicians still shielding to perform.

Paraorchestra is the world's only large-scale integrated virtuoso ensemble of professional disabled and non-disabled musicians offering a new model of inclusive orchestral practice and an approach to providing a representative platform for disabled musicians to work at the highest level. They are the only orchestra to headline a stage at Glastonbury Festival.

\*The Puppet Theatre Barge, London – £52,352 will be used to support a staged reopening, starting with digital productions and live streaming and moving towards regular live performances.

The Puppet Theatre Barge has been putting on a programme of unique puppet shows on a converted 72ft-long Thames barge for over thirty years and is one of the only venues specialising in using string marionettes.

- The Hepworth Wakefield Trust, Wakefield, Yorkshire – £146,726 will support The Hepworth Wakefield to present a free exhibition drawn from its own extensive collection.

The Hepworth Wakefield is home to Wakefield's art collection – an impressive compendium of modern British art, including works by Ben Nicholson, Patrick Heron, L.S. Lowry, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore as well as work by significant contemporary artists such as Frank Auerbach, Maggi Hambling, Anthea Hamilton, Martin Parr and Eva Rothschild.

- Chiltern Open Air Museum, Buckinghamshire – £219,008 will secure the future of the museum's collection and enable it to remain open.

Chiltern Open Air Museum rescues threatened historic buildings which would otherwise be demolished, including Tudor barns and a Victorian toll house, and rebuilds and preserves them in a traditional Chilterns landscape. The Museum has been a filming location for Call the Midwife, Horrible Histories, Downton Abbey, Midsommer Murders, Boomers, Grantchester, The Suspicions of Mr Whicher, Drunk Histories, Mandown, Lightfields and many more.

- Hofesh Shechter Company, Brighton – £250,000 will enable Hofesh Shechter Company to run a reduced programme, including completion of an exciting new commission that will premiere in March 21, as well as development of a digital learning programme for schools.

Hofesh Shechter Company is recognised internationally as a boundary-breaking dance company founded by Israeli choreographer, dancer and composer Hofesh Shechter who was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Choreography in 2016 for his work on Bartlett Sher's revival of Fiddler on the Roof.

- Britten Sinfonia, Cambridge – £197,810 will enable Britten Sinfonia to run a range of activities, including a programme of 90 socially distanced and accessible concerts and learning events across remote and rural areas in the East of England.

Britten Sinfonia is a flexible ensemble with an established national and international reputation with strong roots in the East of England and artistic residencies in Cambridge, Norwich, Saffron Walden alongside London's Barbicans. It is one of only seven non-BBC orchestras to make a Proms

appearance.

- Kings Place, Islington, London – £562,000 will support Kings Place to offer hour-long, socially-distanced performances plus low cost family events, talks and local walks.

Kings Place is an arts centre with a critically-acclaimed programme of national importance, known for its innovative formats for music and spoken word and championing new music through regular commissions, the Luminare series and Cryptic's Sonica Festival.

- Berkshire Maestros, Reading – £783,746 will ensure Berkshire Maestros can continue to deliver music lessons and projects for as many young people as possible across the county through a mixture of online and face-to-face teaching.

Berkshire Maestros is the longest standing independent music trust in the UK since it began in 1982 and has hosted a concert of its students in the Royal Albert Hall.

- Vindolanda Trust, Hexham – £250,000 will enable Vindolanda Trust to open its significant historical Hadrian's Wall sites during the traditionally low-income October to March 'shoulder' season.

The Trust owns and administers two significant Hadrian's Wall Sites, one at Vindolanda, now regarded one of the most important Roman sites in Britain, and the other at Roman Magna/Carvoran which awaits excavation.

- Future DJs, Knutsford – £175,000 will enable Future DJs to build on its existing work with schools and introduce virtual classrooms to work with music teachers to build in-school remote teaching programmes and run artist masterclasses.

Future DJs provide digital music education for children and young people across Cheshire and work with artists such as Goldie MBE and double Ivor Novello nominee, Ghetts.

- Nottingham Museums – £180,000 to help reopen Wollaton Hall, an Elizabethan mansion, and stabilise the future of the group which looks after seven unique sites of historical importance in the area. They will also continue working on a two-year exhibition planned for Wollaton Hall Natural History Museum, featuring a 65 million year-old T.rex.

The exhibition, planned for 2021, will be the first time in more than 100 years that a T.rex has been exhibited in England.

- Moseley Folk and Arts Festival, Birmingham – £50,000 will help the organisers prepare for the festival in 2021.

Acts performing at the festival in previous years include Don McLean, Laura Marling, Jethro Tull, The Monkees, Jose Gonzalez, Amy Macdonald, Tinariwen, Songhoy Blues and Ocean Colour Scene.

- The British Motor Museum, Warwick – £707,000 will protect the world's most extensive collection of historic British cars and associated artefacts. The archive showcases the motor industry in Britain, from its inception to the present day.
- Leicester Comedy Festival – £105,000 will stabilise this internationally renowned festival and allow the organisers to plan a programme of events for 2021.

Leicester Comedy Festival is the longest running, largest festival of its kind in Europe which has featured top stand-up names such as Jo Brand, Jack Dee, Jimmy Carr, Frankie Boyle, Russell Brand, The Mighty Boosh, Dara O' Briain, Simon Pegg, Lee Mack, Dave Spikey and Harry Hill.

**Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England, said:**

Culture is an essential part of life across the country, helping to support people's wellbeing through creativity and self-expression, bringing communities together, and fuelling our world class creative industries. This latest set of awards from the Culture Recovery Fund builds on those announced recently and will help hundreds of organisations to survive the next few months, ensuring that the cultural sector can bounce back after the crisis. We will continue doing everything we can to support artists and cultural and creative organisations, with further funding to be announced in the coming weeks.

**Neil Mendoza, Government Commissioner for Culture Recovery and Renewal, said:**

We are at a serious moment for the economy and jobs, but especially for the cultural sector. Culture provides a life-enhancing force. It contributes to our national good in so many ways, from wellbeing to economic growth, in every single part of the country.

Today's funding announcement covers a range of performing arts and museums right across the country from Hadrian's Wall to Truro. Arts Council England have worked hard to judge applications carefully ensuring that the Fund can release grants quickly while protecting taxpayers money. We are here for culture.

All four nations are benefiting from the UK Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, with Scotland receiving £97 million, Wales receiving £59 million and Northern Ireland receiving £33 million. This funding will enable them to increase the support already available to the arts and

cultural sectors in each nation if they wish to.

The Culture Recovery Fund builds on more than £200 billion of support through the Job Retention Scheme; more than £13.5 billion through the Self Employed Income Support Scheme; and a hundred billion pounds of tax cuts, tax deferral, direct grants and government backed loans.

This is in addition to £104 million of emergency funding already distributed by Arts Council England to organisations and individuals, and £96 million currently available to support the arts and freelancers, through programmes like National Lottery Project Grants and Developing Your Creative Practice.

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## **Notes to Editors**

The full list of recipients is available [here](#)

## **Additional quotes**

### **Simon Wallis, Director, The Hepworth Wakefield, said:**

We are hugely relieved to receive this grant. It makes a very welcome contribution to helping us get through the unprecedented financial losses of this year as we prepare to creatively meet the upcoming challenges and opportunities that the entire world now faces together. This money will encourage many others to continue investing in our work and our future. Culture will play a key part in building back better and levelling up what is currently an increasingly widening north-south divide in the UK. Our sector provides a superb return on investment for the country and we'll be delighted to use this money at The Hepworth to continue demonstrating the significant part we play for the proven benefit of the economy, audiences, artists, tourism and education.

### **Robson Green, Patron, The Vindolanda Trust, said:**

This really is wonderful and extraordinary news. This money will not only secure financial viability, covering the core costs over the long and uncertain winter but will also enable them to get more robust systems in place for 2021. Having just recently completed a TV series telling the incredible story of Hadrian's Wall the experience reminded me that History makes us what we are and gives us a wider awareness of the issues that faced, are facing, and will face the world we are growing up in.

Along with the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through our extraordinary history from one generation to the next, The Vindolanda Trust reminds us all that knowing our origins not only teaches us about the past and the world we live in today but

more importantly it allows us learn so much about ourselves.

**Jennifer Smithson, Director, Night and Day, Manchester, said:**

We're delighted to have received support from the Cultural Recovery Fund. The grant enables us to plan for the future when we look forward to having live music back at the venue once again.

**Hilary Davan Wetton, Artistic Director, Military Wives Choirs, said:**

I am delighted that the unique and far-reaching contribution that choral singing makes to the lives of our military families has been recognised by the Government's Culture Recovery Fund. It will enable the Military Wives Choirs to maintain their ambition through the many obstacles of the current situation; in these grim times this award shines out like a beacon in a dark night.

**Helen Wallace, Artistic Director, Kings Place Music Foundation, said:**

We are deeply grateful that Kings Place has been announced as a recipient of the government's Culture Recovery Fund. We would like to thank the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Arts Council for recognising Kings Place's position at the heart of a community of ensembles, freelance musicians, arts charities, promoters, podcasters, technicians and diverse audiences.

In the most devastating year in the venue's 12 year history, this invaluable support will enable us to retain our dedicated core team and work with our family of artistic partners to present a vibrant programme in the next six months, both in our Covid-secure hall and online.

Since August we have run more than 100 events, from one-on-one Culture Clinics to acclaimed concerts to the London Podcast Festival, and developed an exciting digital platform to share our work. This funding also allows us to continue to offer spaces to music education charities, community groups, and for schools and family concerts.

With 70% of seats lost in our halls, Kings Place remains in an extremely fragile position. But this grant, and the generous support of our audiences, have given us the wherewithal and courage to continue our mission to enrich lives through music and spoken word.



**Meurig Bowen, Chief Executive and Artistic Director, Britten Sinfonia, said:**

We are so grateful for our award from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, which will enable us to develop an extensive, Covid-compliant strand of work encompassing nearly 100 new live events for communities throughout the East of England. That means crucial income for our freelance musicians who have endured so much financial hardship in recent months. This award helps us to bring our audiences and our musicians back together again in the way that we, and they, have all longed for – sharing the experience of live, world class music with each other.

**Hofesh Shechter, OBE, Artistic Director, said:**

I feel an incredible sense of relief that Hofesh Shechter Company has been supported by the DCMS and ACE through the Culture Recovery Fund. To those who made this decision – thank you. This is a meaningful step, a meaningful moment and a critical one, bringing renewed hope to the dancers, the team, the company and all its freelance collaborators and will, in return, have a direct impact on all those we wish to inspire.

The last 7 months have been difficult for all of us collectively and this offers the arts an opportunity to rebuild the foundations for a creative future. There are still many challenges ahead – but it is the lifeline we need to move forward with more certainty. It allows us to progress from survival mode to the hopeful state of recovery. We will continue in our endeavours to bring the company back to action, back to work, to create, to inspire and engage audiences, students, the professional dance scene as well as all art forms and people. We must do so whilst adapting and finding new ways to help the arts thrive again. This fund gives us a chance to do this and we will do all we can to achieve it.

Thank you for giving a much needed sense of hope in these trying times.

**Sam Hatfield, Museum Director, Chiltern Open Air Museum, said:**

We have faced many challenges this year, we've worked hard to adapt but with limitations in place it's been incredibly tough. This funding is very welcome news and will support us and enable us to continue to operate and deliver cultural and educational experiences to our visitors and community. We believe outdoor museums like ours are increasingly important, we providing visitors with access to 45 acres of Chilterns landscape and over 35 historic

buildings from the region in an environment which enhances health and wellbeing.

**Michelle C-Palmer, CEO, Kneehigh Theatre, said:**

The overnight loss of box office income and international touring placed our company into a precariously vulnerable position. Throughout the last six months we have continued to create, releasing our first film, The Neon shadow, launching new stories on our Walk With Me app, and setting creative challenges to thousands online in our Windows to the World project. Securing Cultural Recovery Funding will now enable Kneehigh to reimagine its operating model, reignite its creativity and prepare the company to present its work in front of live audiences once again – and we can't wait.

**Mike Shepherd, Artistic Director, Kneehigh Theatre, said:**

Kneehigh would welcome the chance to tour the world again, meanwhile...we've reinvented! We have focussed on our creative space – the barns – a space for artists to seed, develop and embrace ideas. We have recently prototyped outdoor performance by firelight: Calvino Nights blazed under the stars and has the real potential to live stream globally. We plan to re-open our Asylum venue in Cornwall next year – a welcoming space predisposed to magic-music, food, drink, welcoming faces and a host of daring performances.

**Joe Wright, Director (Pride and Prejudice and Atonement) and Associate/supporter, Kneehigh Theatre, said:**

Kneehigh remain an inspiration for many throughout the sector, they've never got "stuck" and have always been quick to adapt to new challenges. Their mission to remain local whilst telling stories that reflect all our lives is vital in helping us all through these unprecedented times

**Charles Hazelwood, Award-winning conductor and Artistic Director, Paraorchestra said:**

This grant truly provides Paraorchestra with a financial lifeline. We are tremendously grateful to DCMS and to The Treasury for recognising the immeasurable value that culture brings to this country, not just economically but in terms of the joy and purpose

it brings to the population at large. We will now be able to re-ignite our artistic work, creating rich music experiences across a range of spaces and places over the next six months and beyond, with a perfectly integrated orchestra of professional disabled and non-disabled musicians. We are fully committed to seeing an inclusive recovery from the pandemic and this grant will help us continue our on-going work to ensure that none of our disabled musicians will be left behind as the industry builds back better.

**Shahina Johnson MBE, CEO and Artistic Director, Create Studios, said:**

The team at Create Studios are absolutely delighted to have been supported by the Culture Recovery Fund and ACE to be able to anchor our mission to grow diverse talent for the Digital Creative Industries. Our outreach, talent and diverse heritage commitment to Swindon and the region has been secured by the grant. We are excited that this grant will enable us to appoint 2 apprentice roles for young people and have 2 new members in our team to extend our outreach and practice in response to Covid. Most importantly we can support freelance roles that are the life-blood of the creative sector. This grant is a game-changer for Create and for our offer to Swindon's community. Thank you.

**Helen Shute, Chief Executive, Rambert, said:**

We are delighted and uplifted to see the recovery funds are reaching arts organisations today. The support of small as well as large organisations and regional theatres, many of whom are our touring partners and who play an essential role in providing access to the arts across the country is particularly welcomed. The support of small local London organisations such as Theatre Peckham with whom we are proud to be working ensures that the integral role they play in helping diversify the sector is allowed to continue throughout the crisis and beyond.

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**[UK statement ahead of the Presidential Elections in Guinea on 18 October](#)**

**2020.**



Minister for Africa, James Duddridge said:

“As Guinea goes to the polls on Sunday, we urge all parties to ensure that the presidential elections are conducted in a peaceful, transparent and credible manner. The UK is a friend of Guinea. We want to support Guinea in protecting democracy and to promote good governance.

“We are concerned by the violence and loss of life in Guinea following the legislative elections and referendum in March. Recent violence has exacerbated these concerns. We urge the Guinean authorities to ensure that deaths are properly investigated.

“We call on all parties to reduce tension, engage in constructive dialogue, and refrain from violence. Doing so will ensure the people of Guinea can enjoy the benefits of a free and democratic society.”

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1. 17 October 2020

Minister is incorrectly labelled Minister for State

2. 16 October 2020

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