

Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Madagascar

Press release

Mr David Ashley has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar in succession to Dr Phil Boyle.



Mr David Ashley has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and Her Majesty's Non-Resident Ambassador to the Union of the Comoros in succession to Dr Phil Boyle. Mr Ashley will take up his appointment during December 2020.

Full name: David William Ashley

Married to: Mrs Sophari Ashley

Children: 1 son

Year	Role
2018 to 2020	FCD0, Deputy Head (for Syria and Iraq), Near East Department
2017 to 2018	Dhaka, Deputy High Commissioner
2014 to 2016	Kabul, Political Counsellor
2011 to 2014	FCD0, Head – Levant Team, Near East Department
2009 to 2011	Colombo, First Secretary – Regional Conflict Advisor (South Asia)
2006 to 2009	Nairobi, First Secretary – Regional Conflict Advisor (Central and East Africa)
2004 to 2006	FCD0, Head, Justice and Rule of Law Team, Conflict Issues Group
2002 to 2004	Belgrade, Second Secretary – Political
1999 to 2001	FCD0, International Criminal Court Desk Officer, War Crimes Section, UN Department

Published 12 October 2020

PM Commons statement on coronavirus: 12 October 2020

Mr Speaker, with your permission, I will make a statement on our continuing fight against coronavirus

and how we intend to fulfil our simultaneous objectives

saving lives, protecting the NHS

while keeping our children in school and our economy running,

and protecting jobs and livelihoods

This morning the Deputy Chief Medical Officer set out the stark reality of the second wave of this virus

the number of cases has quadrupled in the last three weeks

there are now more people in hospital with Covid

than when we went into lockdown on March 23

and deaths are already rising

and of course there are those who say that on that logic we should go back into a full national lockdown

of indefinite duration

closing schools and businesses

telling people again to stay at home as we did in March

once again shuttering our lives and our society

I do not believe that would be the right course,

We would not only be depriving our children of their education

we would do such damage to our economy as to erode our long term ability to fund the NHS and other crucial public services

And on the other side of the argument there are those who think that the patience of the public is now exhausted

and that we should abandon the fight against Covid

stand aside, let nature take her course, and call a halt to these repressions

of liberty

and of course I understand those emotions

I understand the frustration of those who have been chafing under the restrictions, the sacrifices they have made

But if we were to follow that course Mr Speaker, and let the virus rip,

then the bleak mathematics dictate that we would suffer not only an intolerable death toll from Covid,

We would put such huge strain on our NHS, with an uncontrolled second spike

that our doctors and nurses would be simply unable to devote themselves to the other treatments

for cancer, for heart disease and hundreds more

that have already been delayed and that would be delayed again

with serious long term damage to the health of the nation

and I am afraid it is no answer to say that we could let the virus take hold among the young and fit

while shielding the elderly and vulnerable

because the virus would then spread with such velocity in the general population that there would be no way of stopping it from spreading among the elderly

and even if the virus is less lethal for the under 60s

there will still be many younger people for whom, alas, it remains lethal

So Mr Speaker, we don't want to go back to another national lockdown

We can't let the virus rip

and so we have followed since June a balanced approach with the support of many Members across the House

to keeping the R down

while keeping schools and the economy going

and controlling the virus by changing our behaviour so as to restrict its spread

That is why we have the Rule of Six,

and why we have restrictions such as a 10pm closing time on our hospitality sector.

Mr Speaker, I take no pleasure whatsoever in imposing restrictions on these businesses, many of which have gone to great lengths to reopen as safely as possible.

Nor do I want to stop people enjoying themselves,

but we must act to save lives.

And the evidence shows that

in changing our behaviour

in restricting transmission between us our actions are saving lives.

Left unchecked each person with the virus will infect on average between 2.7 and 3 others

but SAGE assess that the current R nationally is between 1.2 and 1.5.

So we are already suppressing that R to well below its natural level

which is why the virus is not spreading as quickly as it did in March.

But we need to go further.

In recent months, we have worked with local leaders to counter local spikes with targeted restrictions.

But this local approach has inevitably produced different sets of rules in different parts of the country

that are now complex to understand and enforce.

So just as we simplified our national rules with the Rule of Six,

we will now simplify and standardise our local rules

by introducing a three tiered system of local Covid Alert Levels in England – set at medium, high, and very high.

The “medium” alert level, which will cover most of the country, and will consist of the current national measures.

This includes the Rule of Six and the closure of hospitality at 10pm.

The “high” alert level reflects the interventions in many local areas at the moment.

This primarily aims to reduce household to household transmission, by preventing all mixing between different households or support bubbles indoors.

In these areas, the Rule of Six will continue to apply outdoors, where it is harder for the virus to spread, in public spaces as well as private gardens.

Most areas which are already subject to local restrictions will automatically move into the “high” alert level.

As a result of rising infection rates, Nottinghamshire, East and West Cheshire and a small area of High Peak will also move into the “high” alert level.

The “very high” alert level will apply where transmission rates are rising most rapidly and where the NHS could soon be under unbearable pressure without further restrictions.

In these areas the government will set a baseline of prohibiting social mixing indoors and in private gardens

and, I’m sorry to say, closing pubs and bars,

We want to create the maximum possible local consensus behind this more severe local action,

so in each area, we will work with local government leaders on the additional measures which should be taken.

This could lead to further restrictions on the hospitality, leisure, entertainment or personal care sectors.

But retail, schools and universities will remain open.

As my Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor has set out, the government will expand its unprecedented economic support to assist those affected by these decisions,

extending our Job Support Scheme to cover two-thirds of the wages of those in any business that is required to close,

and providing those businesses with a cash grant of up to £3,000 a month, instead of £1500 every three weeks.

We will also provide Local Authorities across England with around £1 billion of new financial support, on top of our £3.6 billion Towns Fund.

And for very high areas, we will give further financial support for local test and trace, and local enforcement

and assistance from the armed forces – not for enforcement but rather to support local services, if desired in the local area.

Mr Speaker, I can report that we have been able to reach agreement with leaders in Merseyside.

Local Authorities in the Liverpool City Region will move into the “very high” alert level from Wednesday.

In addition to the baseline I have outlined, that is as well as pubs and bars, in Merseyside gyms and leisure centres, betting shops, adult gaming

centres and casinos will also close.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Steve Rotheram and his colleagues for their cooperation in very difficult circumstances.

Engagement with other leaders in the North West, the North East and Yorkshire & Humber is continuing.

I know how difficult this is – they like, like everyone in the House, us are grappling with very real dilemmas – but we cannot let the NHS fall over when lives are at stake.

So let me repeat the offer that we are making to those local authorities – work with us on these difficult but necessary measures in the areas that are rated very high areas, in return for:

- more support for local test and trace
- more funding for local enforcement
- the offer of help from the armed services
- the job support scheme as announced by the Chancellor

I believe not to act would be unforgivable, so I hope that rapid progress can be made in the coming days.

Regulations for all three Covid local alert levels are being laid today. They will be debated and voted on tomorrow, before coming into force on Wednesday.

We will also keep these measures under constant review, including a four-week sunset clause for interventions in “very high” areas.

A postcode search on gov.uk, as well as the NHS Covid-19 app, will show which local alert level applies in each area

and we are also publishing updated guidance to explain what the Covid alert levels mean for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

And while these levels specifically apply to England, we continue work closely with the Devolved Administrations to tackle this virus across the whole of United Kingdom.

Mr Speaker

This is not how we want to live our lives,

but this is the narrow path we have to tread

between the social and economic trauma of a full lockdown

and the massive human and indeed economic cost of an uncontained epidemic

With local and regional and national government coming together

in a shared responsibility

and a shared effort

to deliver ever better testing and tracing, ever more efficient enforcement of the rules

and with ever improving therapies, with the mountains of PPE and the ventilators that we have stockpiled

With all the lessons we have learned in the last few months we are becoming better and better at fighting this virus

and though I must warn the House again that the weeks and months ahead will continue to be difficult

and will test the mettle of this country

I have no doubt at all that together we will succeed

And I commend this statement to the House

[Queen's Birthday Honours for Sellafield employees](#)

News story

The work of 2 Sellafield Ltd employees throughout our COVID-19 response has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours.



Kathryn McCloghrie and Mark Roberts have both been awarded Medallist of the Order of the British Empire (BEM).

Kathryn has been recognised for services to business and the community in Cumbria during the COVID-19 response, and Mark for services to the community of Cumbria during COVID-19.

Kathryn said:

So many people have done amazing things this year that I feel quite humbled to have received this recognition.

I see it as thanks to the whole team for our efforts and an indication of how important the ongoing safe secure management of Sellafield is to the country as well as the local community.

Mark said:

Beyond the initial shock, I feel strongly that the recognition belongs to everyone who I've worked with as part of the Community Support Cell, and the Crisis Management Support Team – those people, and many others, have worked incredibly hard with very long hours, through weekends, and often under significant pressure.

I'm very proud to have worked with those people; and I'm still working with some of the same people day-in, day-out, and they haven't expected anything in return.

Similarly, the Sellafield Ltd employees who have volunteered in various ways, whether that's supporting call centres, community groups, or providing their specialist skills and experience gained within Sellafield Ltd and beyond.

Chief Executive Martin Chown, Sellafield Ltd said:

Throughout our response to the pandemic I have been incredibly proud of the efforts of our employees.

Not only have they kept Sellafield safe and secure and brought work across the site safely back on line, they have also worked hard to make a difference in our local communities.

We were proud to work as one team with community leaders and organisations, and to use our resources where they could help those with immediate and urgent needs in the community.

The work of Kathryn and Mark in that effort was vital.

Published 12 October 2020

CNC and Kent Police joint initiative going strong one month after launch

Press release

On 11 September, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) entered into a joint patrolling initiative with Kent Police which has seen officers from both forces on patrol together within the local community.



In the relatively short period since it began, Kent Police and the CNC have conducted a number of patrols together around Lydd, New Romney and the wider force area of Folkestone and Hythe.

The initiative is intended to further enhance the protective security arrangements around the Dungeness Nuclear Site, through closer working and interoperability between the two forces, whilst supporting the local community with an increase in visible police presence.

PC Lee Stokes, based at Dungeness, said: "Having supported Kent Police locally for many years it is great to be able to get out and about with them to see the sorts of jobs they attend. It's not only a good relationship builder but it affords us the opportunity to build on our skills within the general policing arena, taking that experience back to our colleagues at Dungeness."

Insp Andy Oatham, Unit Commander at Dungeness, said: "The feedback from our officers has been very good. They have dealt with a number of incidents ranging from domestic abuse to theft. This operational exposure is crucial in giving our officers the ability to fully support our Home Office colleagues whilst maintaining our protection of critical national infrastructure."

Inspector Andy Brittenden, from Kent Police, said: "We are really excited about this project as it is giving officers from both forces the opportunity to work together, share their skills and experience and provide a first class service to the residents of Folkestone, Hythe and the Romney Marsh."

The initiative has also given Kent Police the opportunity to increase their

first responder capability. All CNC officers are trained to a national standard of first aid including the use of defibrillators, with some officers trained additionally as Police Medics giving them an advanced CPR capability. This in turn can offer greater life support prior to the arrival of the ambulance service.

Published 12 October 2020

[£257 million to save 1385 theatres, arts venues, museums and cultural organisations across England](#)

- Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden reveals details of cultural organisations across England receiving a share of £257 million
- Funding is the biggest tranche of money awarded so far from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund
- Venues benefitting from funding include the Cavern Club in Liverpool, Royal Academy of Dance in London, Bristol Old Vic, Beamish in County Durham and Stowmarket's John Peel Centre for Creative Arts

More than 1,300 arts and cultural organisations are benefitting from a share of £257 million as part of a vital financial boost from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has announced.

Organisations that applied for grants under £1 million in the first round of the Culture Recovery Fund were informed this morning of their awards by Arts Council England which is distributing funding on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

The allocation is the biggest tranche of funding distributed to date from the Culture Recovery Fund, bringing the total amount of grant funding awarded so far to more than £360 million. Further funding for organisations is due to be announced in the coming days and weeks.

Today's funding will help 1,385 theatres, galleries, performance groups, arts organisations, museums and local venues survive the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic.

It will boost iconic organisations and venues known around the world, such as the London Symphony Orchestra, the Bristol Old Vic Theatre and Liverpool's Cavern Club. It will also protect hundreds of local organisations that have launched many stars of the British cultural scene and sit at the heart of their communities. This includes the Finborough Theatre in Earl's Court,

London, Beamish Living Museum in County Durham, the Northcott Theatre in Exeter, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in Wakefield, and The Young Vic in London.

This funding will help allow performances to restart, venues to plan for reopening and help protect jobs and create opportunities for freelancers.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

The government is here for culture and we have worked around the clock to get this record investment out to the frontline.

It will allow our wonderful theatres, museums, music venues and cultural organisations to survive this crisis and start putting on performances again – protecting jobs and creating new work for freelancers.

This is just the start – with hundreds of millions pounds more on the way for cultural organisations of all sizes that still need our help.

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

Theatres, museums, galleries, dance companies and music venues bring joy to people and life to our cities, towns and villages. This is a difficult time for us all, but this first round of funding from the Culture Recovery Fund will help sustain hundreds of cultural spaces and organisations that are loved and admired by local communities and international audiences. Further funding will be announced later in the month and we are working hard to support creative organisations and individuals during these challenging times.

Earlier today, the Culture Secretary and Dame Darcey Bussell visited the Royal Academy of Dance which will receive £606,366 to enable students and teachers to get back to rehearsals and restart opportunities for local people of all ages and abilities to get involved with dance. Programmes like Silver Swans dance classes improve wellbeing for the over 55s and RADiate engages young people with special educational needs and disabilities with dance.

Dame Darcey Bussell, DBE, said:

We sincerely welcome the support from DCMS and are very grateful to receive this significant grant from the Culture Recovery Fund. It was my pleasure to welcome the Culture Secretary to the RAD today, in this our Centenary year, and introduce him to our students who will go on to join our network of RAD teachers, who empower young people in the UK and worldwide with our leading ballet training. We

cannot overestimate the value of arts and culture in our lives, and its ability to build community, resilience and bring joy.

The multi-award-winning, 50-seat Finborough Theatre will receive £59,574 to secure their iconic location and maintain in-house skills to be able to reopen successfully and sustainably in the future. The Finborough, founded in 1980 above a pub in Earl's Court, has launched the careers of international stars like Rachel Weisz and maintains a track record of discovering practitioners who go on to become leading voices in British theatre including Jack Thorne, who co-wrote Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, and James Graham whose plays, including This House, Ink and Labour of Love, enjoyed hugely successful runs in the West End and Broadway.

Playwright James Graham said:

It's such a relief then to see these significant funds now reaching organisations who want to begin making work for their communities to enjoy.

It's also important that these theatres are spread nationwide, are big and small, and include venues like the tiny Finborough pub theatre – which is where I cut my teeth and wouldn't be a playwright or screenwriter without it.

London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) will receive £846,000 to help them begin a phased return to full-scale performance. The LSO has established an international reputation as one of the top orchestras in the world and through its extensive touring the LSO plays a key role in promoting Britain as a leading exponent of artistic excellence.

Sir Simon Rattle OM, CBE, Music Director, London Symphony Orchestra, said:

We have refused to let live music be silenced, but it cannot survive on energy and optimism alone. Today's announcement is incredibly important for orchestras and the whole live music sector, threatened with devastation by the effects of the pandemic. We need, and are grateful for, this support as we take our first steps in public performance once more, enabling us to show the full power of our creative community.

Organisations that will be receiving funding include:

- Hallé Concerts Society, Manchester – £740,000 will support the organisation to live stream fortnightly concerts from the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester.

The Hallé, established 142 years ago, has the world-renowned Sir Mark Elder as its Music Director. Over a quarter of a million people heard the Hallé

live last season. It's education programme reaches tens of thousands of people and it strives to create a wider enjoyment and understanding of music throughout the community.

- Royal Liverpool Philharmonic – £748,000 will enable the orchestra to provide a short, socially distanced programme, all of which will be recorded to stream at a later date.

It is the oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra in the country with its origins dating to 1840. The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic was the first orchestra to create its own recording label and has collaborated with international artists such as Sir Paul McCartney, Elvis Costello and OMD.

- Wigmore Hall, London – £1 million to sustain the future of this international centre for chamber music and song.

Every year, Wigmore Hall presents a diverse programme of some 500 years of repertoire, performed by the finest international artists, whilst also providing cultural opportunities for those least likely to experience high-quality live music.

- Cavern Club, Liverpool – £525,000 will fund the recording of local musicians' live performances which will be streamed digitally to provide opportunities for local artists and technicians.

The Cavern Club, one of Liverpool's top tourist attractions, is the place where The Beatles musical identity was formed and now a thriving live music destination showcasing up and coming bands and established artists.

- National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Falmouth – £485,000 to sustain the future of the museum that promotes Cornwall's maritime heritage.

Home to gold-medal winning sailor Ben Ainslie's boat from the London 2012 Olympics.

- Exeter Northcott Theatre, Exeter – £183,399 – to help them develop a new business model to sustain the business. This flagship theatre is a key part of the local cultural offer serving the communities of mid-Devon.

Exeter Northcott Theatre first opened its doors in November 1967 and has helped launched the careers of celebrated actors including Imelda Staunton, Celia Imrie, Robert Lindsay, John Nettles, Geraldine James and David Suchet, and seen world premieres from playwrights such as Anthony Mingella and Howard Barker.

- Beamish, the Living Museum of the North – Co Durham £970,000 to support the business through the winter and restart a capital project. Beamish preserves examples of everyday life in urban and rural North East England at the climax of industrialisation in the early 20th century
- Beamish has been seen on screen in many shows including Downton Abbey

and Dark Angel. Perennial children's favourite Blue Peter has visited several times and it's also been seen in Fred Dibnah's Victorian Heroes, Ant & Dec's A History of Tyneside and the Antiques Roadshow.

- Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), London – £606,366 to stabilise and recommence its activities.

RAD is one of the world's most influential dance education organisations and is of both national and international cultural significance. The Margot Fonteyn International Ballet Competition is one of the most prestigious competitions in the world and attracts young dancers from around the globe. RAD also has a vital impact on communities, providing cultural opportunities wherever they operate.

- Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield £804,013 to help the park to adapt its buildings to new regulations and help it continue to reopen safely.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park shows work by British and international artists including Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. Its collection of the works by Moore is one of the largest open-air displays of his bronzes in Europe.

- Hackney Empire, London – £585,064 to help support a new model of responsive programming and address increased costs driven by the pandemic.

This iconic theatre plays a key role in the cultural, civic and economic life of its community.

- Theatre by the Lake, Keswick, Lake District, £878,492 to support the theatre – one of the biggest employers in the area – to help cover losses as a result of coronavirus. Set on the edge of Keswick, amid the magnificent western fells of the Lake District, it has two stages – a 400 seat Main House and 100 seat Studio.

Theatre by the Lake opened on the shores of Derwentwater in August 1999 as a permanent replacement for the Blue Box, an extraordinary mobile theatre created after the Second World War to take plays to towns and cities with no active theatres. Dame Judi Dench is its patron.

- Birmingham Royal Ballet – £500,000 to help off-set loss of earnings from performances and touring. The Birmingham Royal Ballet has performances planned at Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Sadler's Wells in London at the end of this month.

Carlos Acosta CBE, who has danced with the Royal Ballet and the National Ballet of Cuba, was appointed as Director in January.

- Bristol Old Vic Theatre – £610,466 to help transform its business model including a mix of live and online performances as well as support for its creative workforce.

The oldest continuous working theatre in the English language, Olivia Colman, Kwame Kwei Armah and Daniel Day Lewis all started their careers there.

- Young Vic, London – £961,455 to help it partially open between October and March, remotely operating its Directors Programme and its outreach activities with local communities.

The Young Vic's work is highly acclaimed, and since Kwame Kwei-Armah joined as Artistic Director, it has mounted productions on Broadway, the West End, BBC Radio 4 and in Zimbabwe, Manchester, Ipswich, Birmingham.

- Storyhouse, Chester, Cheshire – £730,252 to help open the building safely and put performances on. Storyhouse is a library, theatre, cinema, community hub, cultural centre and restaurant.

Storyhouse, Chester was voted the UK's Most Welcoming Theatre 2019/20 in the UK Theatre Awards.

- Curve, Leicester – £950,000 to help with plans to re-open the theatre. This large producing theatre has often transferred work to the West End.

Well-known names to have appeared at the theatre include Pixie Lott (Breakfast at Tiffany's) Danny Mac (Sunset Boulevard) and former X-Factor winner Alexandra Burke (Sister Act.)

- Lighthouse, Poole – £987,964 to help this multi-artform venue and home to Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra remain sustainable with a phased programme of reopening and to ensure the orchestra's work to connect with the local community can continue.

Many well-known Great British artists have performed at Lighthouse, Poole; including The Who, The Clash, Kate Bush and Ozzy Osbourne.

- Wiltshire Creative (runs Salisbury Playhouse, Salisbury Festival and Salisbury Arts Centre) – £446,968 will help this pan-arts organisation deliver their fantastic outreach and community programmes and develop local creative talent in the area.
- Salisbury Arts Centre has seen many well-known performers grace its stage throughout their careers, including John Cooper Clark in the 80's, and The Levellers, Buzzcocks and Manic Street Preachers in the 90s. Wiltshire Creative have commissioned and produced plays from writers such as Timberlake Wertenbaker, Howard Brenton, Barney Norris and Chris Chibnall (who wrote Broadchurch and is the lead writer for Dr Who). The late actor Sir Alec Guinness opened the Salisbury Playhouse building in 1976.
- Grimm & Co, Rotherham, Yorkshire – £86,000 to help them survive in order to provide support for children with creativity and writing. This literacy charity supports children aged 7 to 18 to improve their

confidence and skills around creativity and writing. This includes one-to-one mentoring to spark children's motivation to write.

The charity counts actor and screenwriter Mark Gatiss, author Joanne Harris MBE and poet Ian McMillan among their patrons. 1 million listeners heard their children's scripts performed by professional artists on BBC Radio 4.

- Theatre Peckham, London – £150,000 to help deliver covid secure classes for its pipeline of young talent and provide support for freelance artists.

This theatre company, aimed at young people in south London, was where Star Wars' John Boyega first learned to act and is now a patron. Last year, the organisation welcomed 19,000 local people through its doors.

- The Brudenell, Leeds – £220,429 to host a free weekly event as well as stream events working with partners such as Music:Leeds and Made With Music.

The Brudenell Social Club is a centrepiece of the Leeds music scene. Famous for hosting secret gigs for bands like Franz Ferdinand and the Kaiser Chiefs, it hosts events most nights of the week, which are put on by a variety of local promoters and which cover a wide spectrum of genres.

- The Georgian Theatre Royal, Richmond – £52,960 will help the theatre to provide tours of the building and restart its youth theatre virtually.

Built in 1788, the Georgian Theatre Royal is Britain's oldest working theatre still in its original form. The theatre also houses an accredited museum collection and has strong ties to York University which uses the venue for academic events such as recreating Georgian productions. Dame Judi Dench is its president and Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall are its patrons.

- Theatre Royal Stratford East, London – £495,625 will help the theatre to continue to adapt their work including digital offerings and live work that supports local young people, schools and community groups.

Stratford East is a launch pad for many diverse theatremakers, directors, writers and performers including Meera Syal, Barbara Windsor, Don Warrington, Sheila Hancock, Indhu Rubasingham, Tanika Gupta, Roy Williams and Cynthia Erivo.

- John Peel Centre for Creative Arts, Stowmarket – £84,335 will allow the community-owned Centre to make necessary adjustments to enable it to reopen safely and restart a variety of music performances featuring established acts and emerging talent, as well as poetry, film, theatre, and comedy.

The John Peel Centre for Creative Arts is an ambitious project to provide a lasting tribute to the life and career of the much-loved broadcaster and create a high-quality, community-owned, arts centre in the heart of Suffolk.

John lived with his family near Stowmarket and involved himself in the local community.

- Deafinitely Theatre, London – £95,830 will fund a broad, bold cultural programme of events that will provide a key access point to the isolated deaf community and a youth theatre service that will provide London's only fully accessible arts provision for deaf young people. They will deliver 20 events by March 2021 for emerging deaf theatre makers, produce a new online play and commission 20 deaf freelance artists to devise new British Sign Language (BSL) performances.

Deafinitely Theatre is the UK's first deaf-led theatre and leader in this field which offers support, representation and BSL / deaf-specific training across live performance mediums.

- Gifford's Circus, Stroud – £240,000 will enable Gifford Circus to continue to trade to the opening of their 2021 season in April next year.

Gifford's Circus is a traditional, family run, village green circus that tours England. They still make their costumes, paint their own sets and train their horses themselves.

- Backyard Comedy Club, Tower Hamlets, London – £200,000 makes it possible for grassroots showcases, touring bands and comedy nights attracting some of the best comics on the circuit to be restarted at the largest purpose-built comedy club in London.

Backyard Comedy Club is one of the most acclaimed comedy venues in the country, hosting performances by a diverse range of famous comedians, including Jo Brand, Russell Howard, Omid Djalili, Sara Pascoe, Alan Carr, and providing a stage for the next generation of comedians to showcase their talents.

- Heugh Battery Museum, Hartlepool – £71,573 will fund vital conservation work on the collection at the UK's only open air museum dedicated to the First World War.

The Heugh Battery Museum sits on the site of the only First World War battlefield in Britain and tells the story of the Bombardment of the Hartlepoons, which took place on Wednesday 16th December 1914.

- Corey Baker Dance, Birmingham – £124,836 will help Corey Baker Dance to deliver new digital dance projects.

Corey Baker Dance is a production company, led by Artistic Director and Choreographer Corey Baker, creating work across stage and screen including 'Bathtub Swan Lake' which recently featured as the most watched of the BBC's Culture in Quarantine series.

- Rutland County Council Museums, Oakham – £132,100 will support Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle, two significant heritage sites in Rutland, to gradually re-open and work towards a full relaunch in April

2021.

The sites are the main visitor attractions for Oakham and important event venues for local community groups in Rutland, which is the smallest county in the country.

- Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne – £140,500 will enable the gallery to fully restart activities and an expanded creative programme.

The Towner Art Gallery was founded in 1923 as ‘an art gallery for the people’ and remains the largest purpose-built gallery in the South East, featuring historical work alongside the work of diverse contemporary artists. The gallery welcomed a record number of visitors during 2019.

Today’s announcement will be followed by further allocations of grants and loans to successful applicants to the government’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund in the coming days and weeks.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For media queries please call the DCMS press office on 020 7211 2210

[A full list of the recipients announced today is here](#)

The £1.57 billion Cultural Recovery Fund builds on unprecedented support from the government and our arms length bodies for the culture sectors. This includes

the Job Retention Scheme; a years’ business rates holiday for leisure businesses and the Bounce Back Loans scheme.

It is also in addition to £200 million in emergency public funding and £115 million made available by Arts Council England to support the arts and freelancers.