

# Ancient mosaic from Roman Dorset at risk of export

- 2400 year old floor fragment gives us an insight into the life of Roman leaders

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage has placed a temporary export bar on a panel of mosaic from a Roman villa at Dewlish, Dorset.

Thought to date to the 4th century AD, the mosaic is considered by many to be an exceptional piece and is at risk of being lost abroad unless a buyer can be found to match the £135,000 asking price.

The mosaic would have been part of an elaborate pavement in the reception room of a luxurious villa and includes a depiction of a leopard pouncing on the back of an antelope as blood drips from its wounded prey.

Floor mosaics like this would have been chosen to reflect the values and beliefs of the villa's owner and can help modern viewers understand the aspirations and education of country landowners who held power in the final decades of the Roman Era.

Apart from one smaller piece in the Dorchester Country Museum, much of the mosaic floor at the Dewlish Roman villa has now been destroyed, so this fragment is of crucial importance to understanding the whole composition.

This fragment has strong similarities to other fourth century mosaics found in the region surrounding Dorchester, ascribed to a Durnovarian School of mosaic workers. Although notable examples survived, including the Hinton St Mary mosaic in the British Museum, many of the mosaics assigned to the Durnovarian school have been reburied or destroyed.

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said:

This mosaic is a piece of history telling us about the lives of our Roman ancestors more than 2,000 years ago. It is an incredibly rare example of the Roman occupation of Britain and I hope that, even in these challenging times, a buyer can be found to keep this important and striking work in the UK.

The Minister's decision follows the advice of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The committee noted that there were few mosaics from the Durnovarian school showing this quality and exceptional workmanship. It was also widely agreed that there was much to be learned about Romano-British mosaics from further research and study of the fragment.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the mosaic's outstanding

significance to the study of Romano-British art and history.

Committee member Leslie Webster said:

The mosaic's spirited depiction of a leopard bringing down an antelope is a brilliantly accomplished image of nature red in tooth and claw; the soaring leap of the deer, and the precise delineation of the leopard's muscular power and ferocious grace is a tour de force of the mosaicist's art. Such a resonant image, with its origins in the art and mythology of the classical world and beyond, has travelled a long way to Dorset, to feature in the villa of a wealthy Romano-British landowner; it must have been the latest thing in up-market house decoration. The grand mosaic from which this fragment came, dominating the principal public room of the villa, was clearly designed to impress the spectator with the learning and cultural aspirations of its owner. Perhaps this exotic symbol of the hunt, popular elsewhere in the Empire but exceptional in Britain, and its implicit theme of domination, were also intended to suggest its owner's status and power.

In the later years of the Roman era in Britain, the representational innovation and technical sophistication of this mosaic, and of others produced by the Dorchester school of mosaicists, give fascinating insight into the lives of local Roman magnates, in a period seen as one of change and decline; they open up many questions and opportunities for investigation. For us to lose it from Britain would be a great misfortune.

The decision on the export licence application for the mosaic will be deferred until 16 October 2020. This may be extended until 16 January 2021 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £135,000 plus VAT.

## **ENDS**

Notes to editors

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the mosaic should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Details of the mosaic are as follows:

- The item is a fragment of a Roman mosaic pavement
- It is composed of tesserae cut from coloured stone and brick originally set on a mortar base.
- Its maximum measurements are 1.96m by 2.39m
- Probably made by the Dunovarian school of mosaic workers operating in the 4th century AD
- Dating to the second half of 4th century? Condition apparently stable

Provenance:□

- Excavated in Dewlish by WG Putman between 1969-1979
- Private collection, Dewlish, Dorset, until sale at Duke's Auctions, Dorchester, 7th September 2018, lot 722.

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria. □

The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk).

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## [Achieving the SDGs amidst COVID-19](#)

Thank you Madame President. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

The Decade of Action is upon us, with only 10 years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The world needs the SDGs more than ever, but COVID-19 has posed yet further challenges to reaching them by 2030. Urgent action to accelerate progress is required.

We are committed to this aim, leaving no-one behind.

Finding a globally accessible vaccine for COVID-19 is the most urgent shared endeavour of our lifetime. We have pledged up to £764 million (US\$960 million) of UK aid to the global response to the pandemic, including £250 million (US\$314 million) to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). CEPI is developing a COVID-19 vaccine and will ensure no delay in access for our developing countries.

Tackling other preventable deaths is also crucial. On 4 June, the UK hosted the Global Vaccine Summit, which raised \$8.8 billion for Gavi's vital work over the next five years to vaccinate a further 300 million children and save up to 8 million lives.

While we remain strongly committed to responding to COVID-19, in parallel it is important to begin to consider how we will recover. The UK is committed to working with others to ensure our recovery delivers cleaner, healthier, more inclusive, and more resilient economies and societies.

We thank the UN Secretary General for the leadership he has shown in

convening Member States under the Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 initiative. We are so pleased to be working alongside the EU, Fiji, and Rwanda, as we lead the rebuilding for sustainability workstream.

COVID-19 has only exacerbated the SDG financing challenges, so it is integral that we take this opportunity to build momentum, including on important matters such as further leveraging private finance and investment.

Climate change is a global threat, which affects poverty, stability, nature and prosperity. The UK will host COP26 next year, in partnership with Italy, providing a vital opportunity to accelerate global progress.

So at this High-Level Political Forum, the UK has hosted an event on climate action, which has sought to build the momentum for a successful COP – raising ambitions, focusing efforts and drawing important links with broader sustainable recovery objectives.

COVID-19 has aggravated an already serious learning crisis. We know the power of educating girls in fighting poverty, building prosperity and stability, tackling climate change and of course leaving no one behind. Girls' education must therefore be a priority both for the recovery and for our ongoing efforts to achieve those SDGs.

We urge all UN members to stand with us in championing the right of every girl to 12 years of quality education.

And more broadly, our commitment to the Inclusive Data Charter underscores our determination to ensure that everybody is counted, so that they have a fair opportunity in life.

We owe it to future generations to work together and build back better from COVID-19 and base our recovery from the pandemic on solid foundations. The Sustainable Development Goals are pivotal to this endeavour.

Thank you.

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## **UK Government response to the European Court of Justice decision in the Schrems II case**

### Government response

The UK government is reviewing the details of the judgment. It remains committed to supporting UK organisations on international data transfers.

International data transfers are vitally important to global economies and societies and we look forward to developing and supporting mechanisms that can best facilitate international data transfers.

Coronaviris (Covid-19) has demonstrated the importance of international data transfers. The recent crisis has shown how data transfers keep economies moving and societies functioning, being crucial to working from home, supporting a marked shift to communications and commerce moving online and underpinning the healthcare response.

The UK government is committed to ensuring high data protection standards and supporting UK organisations on international data transfer issues.

It is disappointed that the EU's adequacy decision for US Privacy Shield has been invalidated by the court in its judgment of 16th July 2020.

The UK government intervened in the case, arguing in support of the validity of standard contractual clauses (SCCs). It is pleased that this important mechanism for transferring data internationally remains in place and is considering any further implications that may arise from the judgment in respect of this.

The UK Government is working with the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) and international counterparts to address the impacts of the judgment and ensure that updated guidance on international data transfers will be available as soon as possible.

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## [Business events and conferences given go ahead to resume from 1 October](#)

News story

Business events and conferences will be permitted to resume from 1 October provided rates of infection remain at current levels □



Enjoy Summer Safely

- Government to begin pilots to help plan how best to restart indoor business events
- New guidance outlines how the nation's conference venues can get back up and running safely□

Business events, conferences and events centres will be given the go ahead to reopen on 1 October adhering to social distancing, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced today.

Provided levels of infection remain at current rates, this will see the return of the sector worth approximately £32.6 billion to the UK each year.

The sector represented a quarter of the 38 million international visits to the UK in 2018 and provides a welcome boost to visitor numbers during the off peak tourist season.

Following the announcement today, a number of pilots will take place at event venues across the country to plan for a return to large-scale events and test how best to implement social distancing practises. Details of these pilots will be finalised in partnership with the sector in the coming weeks.

New guidance, published by the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport and the Association of Event Organisers today, will help event organisers, venue operators and participants in the UK understand how they can work and host business events and conferences and keep both their guests and staff safe.

### **Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston said:**

Business events and conferences are a key part of our visitor economy and this is an important step in getting them back up and running safely.

Pilots will help inform our plans for the return of the sector in October with guests and staff adhering to social distancing and measures introduced to reduce close contact.

The UK has a great reputation in staging fantastic events that help drive growth for many different sectors and this will give the business event sector the certainty it needs to plan for the future.

The guidance makes clear that the following measures should be considered to allow for safe resumption of business events and conferences:

- Attendees will need to pre-book and pre-register to attend events□
- Contactless registration systems will be introduced at venues to reduce waiting times and limit contact between organisers and guests
- A digital first approach will be adopted to eliminate the need for physical badges and lanyards□
- Paper handouts and gifts will no longer be offered
- Entrance to event or conference spaces will be staggered to reduce queuing and overall capacity will be limited to ensure social distancing can be maintained
- Events will be planned around one way systems for visitors□
- Spaces between exhibition booths will be increased and aisles widened to achieve social distancing requirements
- All venues will also have enhanced cleaning procedures, with hand washing and sanitising facilities at frequent intervals□

### **Notes to editors:**

This guidance will be for organisations in England. Organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should adhere to the advice of the devolved administrations at all times.

You can read the full guidance [here](#).

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## **[New powers and framework to help contain coronavirus \(COVID-19\) locally](#)**

The [COVID-19 contain framework](#) is the blueprint for how NHS Test and Trace is working in partnership with local authorities, Public Health England, the NHS, other local business and community partners and the wider public to take

action against outbreaks.

New regulations will come into effect tomorrow (18 July) to give local and national government additional powers to stop local transmission of the virus. These will allow them to restrict local public gatherings and events, and close local businesses premises and outdoor spaces.

Further data is also being provided. The [number of positive cases](#) at both an upper and lower-tier local authority level are already published daily on GOV.UK. From yesterday, this data was broken down even further to local areas of 5,000 to 15,000 people, which will be published weekly.

The government will also be publishing a weekly watchlist summary of specific areas of concern, areas receiving enhanced support from NHS Test and Trace, and areas where national interventions are being taken, as determined by DHSC Ministers and the CMO at the Local Action Committee.

These areas will be determined by Department for Health and Social Care ministers and the Chief Medical Officer at the Local Action Committee.

This will form part of the weekly [PHE COVID-19 surveillance report](#).

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

We're setting out a new framework and local powers to further help local leaders across England protect their communities from coronavirus. They have the full support of NHS Test and Trace alongside these new powers and will receive help with specific interventions, including additional testing as needed, to prevent the transmission of the virus in their community.

We continue to rely on the public's support to protect against new cases, getting a test if they experience symptoms, and following the advice they receive from NHS Test and Trace.

We all need our friends, colleagues, neighbours and family to continue to play their part.

The [contain framework](#) includes an outline of the options available to local authorities to respond to cases of the virus, including accelerated testing of asymptomatic people and increased public health messaging.

Local authorities and local partners have already done extensive work to protect the public from coronavirus, including developing and publishing local outbreak control plans tailored to their areas, supported by [£300 million of funding announced last month](#) to support work by local communities to protect their area from the virus.

National Test and Trace Adviser and Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, Tom Riordan, said:



Across the country, local authorities have worked exceptionally hard to prepare their communities for coronavirus outbreaks, protecting the most vulnerable and saving lives and I want to say thank you to all of those public health teams.

The new COVID-19 contain framework and additional powers for local government will give local leaders further tools from NHS Test and Trace to protect against the spread of the virus, scaling interventions to respond to cases in their communities. These tools will be essential as we ease national social-distancing measures, to make sure that community transmission continues to be dealt with quickly and effectively.

Tackling this virus is something we need to do together, and we can all play our part. Washing our hands regularly, practising social distancing, wearing face coverings and [getting a test quickly](#) if you develop one of the symptoms – a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – will make a difference, not just to you but to your friends and family and your community.

Local authorities experiencing spikes in coronavirus cases will continue to work with NHS Test and Trace, developing incident management plans and leading on local interventions to stop transmission where required. The interventions they take will be closely monitored and issues escalated for further action to a national level if they have not led to a significant reduction in cases.

The framework also outlines how local leaders of businesses, schools and religious groups can get support from health protection teams when they register a number of cases in their organisation.

More detailed postcode-level local data to support local activity was made available to all Directors of Public Health in England on 24 June to support their work to stop the spread of the virus, and this continues to be further developed. This will now be updated daily and access to NHS Test and Trace contract-tracing data will also now be provided.