

New planning rules to protect our cultural heritage

Changes to the planning system will save theatres, concert halls and live music performance venues for future generations, Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced today (12 July 2020).

With the changes taking effect next week, cultural institutions across England will be saved from being redeveloped or demolished.

These buildings cannot be easily replaced and are an intrinsic part of our cultural heritage, which is why the government is clear that temporary social distancing restrictions should not be an excuse for them to be permanently lost.

Councils will now need to take the temporary impact of coronavirus into account when considering permission for change of use, redevelopment or demolition of a theatre, concert hall or live music performance venue.

This move, alongside the £1.57 billion investment to protect Britain's cultural, arts and heritage sector, provides extra security to businesses as they make plans to re-open their premises when it is safe to do so, and in the meantime continue to share their talent and passion for the arts outdoors and virtually.

Housing and Communities Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Our theatres, concert halls and live music performance venues are the envy of the world and are central to our cultural heritage.

That's why we're investing £1.57 billion to protect Britain's cultural, arts and heritage institutions, as well as ensuring these buildings aren't destroyed.

It is vital they are properly protected by the planning system for both people today to enjoy and future generations.

Jon Morgan, Director of the Theatres Trust, said:

We welcome the news of revisions to the planning system, which reinforce and increase protections for our treasured theatres and provide reassurance for the communities that use and value them.

The COVID-19 lockdown has rendered otherwise vibrant theatres vulnerable to permanent closure and we have already seen a number of theatres fall vacant due to the operator going into liquidation.

These measures will help ensure these vital community assets are protected during the current crisis and can be revived to serve their local communities once again.

Once introduced, this policy will remain in place until 31 December 2022.

A written ministerial statement will be laid to outline the planning changes and will have immediate effect on the planning system.

Find out more about the [next steps for re-opening the performing arts industry](#).

Find our more information on the [£1.57 billion investment to protect Britain's cultural, arts and heritage institutions](#).

[Armed Forces lead tributes to Dame Vera Lynn at her funeral](#)



Military personnel from all three services took part in the ceremonies

The Armed Forces led the nation in saying farewell to the Forces' Sweetheart with a series of ceremonial tributes at the funeral of Dame Vera Lynn today.

Dame Vera enjoyed a special connection with the Armed Forces and personnel from the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force led the tributes in a solemn ceremony at the request of her family.

Personnel from all three services lined the streets and carried Dame Vera's coffin into the private ceremony. Royal Marines bugler Corporal Kimberley Hare sounded The Last Post and Reveille during the service.

Cpl Kimberley Hare of the Royal Marines sounded The Last Post during the funeral

Paying tribute to Dame Vera, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Dame Vera's inspirational work in support of our Armed Forces will never be forgotten and my thoughts are with her family and loved ones at this time. In tribute to her life, our services have come together to pay their respects at Dame Vera's funeral and honour her memory.

As we approach the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, we remember her performances for troops in Burma during the Second World War, bringing a welcome reminder of home to those fighting in the Far East. Her support helped to sustain the fortitude of British personnel deployed around the world and those waiting for them to return.

We remember her life with fond memories, and all that she gave to our country in its time of need.

Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter said:

Dame Vera Lynn's stirring performances brought comfort and joy to personnel serving far from home and lifted the nation during the darkest of times. The Armed Forces will forever be grateful to Dame Vera Lynn for her service. Our thoughts today are with her family for their loss, but her lasting legacy of lifting spirits will remain.

Dame Vera has been close to the hearts of generations of soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and airwomen; she maintained a close connection with the Armed Forces throughout her life. The Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force are proud to be part of the final farewell to the Forces' Sweetheart and celebrate a life well-lived.

Personnel from Number 7 Company Coldstream Guards, HMS Collingwood and the Queen's Colour Squadron of the RAF Regiment lined the route of the funeral cortège in Ditchling this afternoon.

Aircraft from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight performed a flypast over Ditchling before returning to RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire.

Two Second World War-era Spitfires from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight performed a tribute flypast

The Armed Forces are honoured to have held such a prominent role in today's events and to pay tribute to such a significant icon.

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Last updated 11 July 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 11 July 2020

Correcting the title of Number 7 Company Coldstream Guards

2. 10 July 2020

First published.

[Gurkha charity and Foreign Office staff support Gurkha veterans and Nepalese communities through Coronavirus crisis](#)

Life-saving support and supplies have been delivered to the families of British Gurkha veterans and communities across Nepal after the UK Embassy in Kathmandu teamed up with the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

Foreign Office staff in Nepal negotiated with the local authorities to allow the supplies of vital equipment and basic necessities to be transported through strict lockdown measures in the mountainous country.

The diplomatic agreements allowed life-saving provisions, such as medicines, pensions, PPE, hand sanitiser, and clean water to reach Gurkha veterans and rural health facilities on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members of the Trust travelled across tough terrain, sometimes by foot, to reach veterans and health facilities dotted across the country.

Through UK aid funding and with the help of the British Embassy's staff, the Trust's Covid-19 Intervention Programme has so far supported 53 health facilities, 14 Government institutions, and 17 quarantine centres across Nepal.

The British Ambassador to Nepal, Nicola Pollitt said:

The UK's relationship with the Gurkhas is so special, and the work that The Gurkha Welfare Trust does is such an important part of recognising the selfless service that these soldiers have given to our country.

Their contribution to the coronavirus response has been typically

exemplary, and I am pleased that the team here in the Embassy, with help from departments across government, were able to back them up.

Director of The Gurkha Welfare Trust, Al Howard added:

We are extremely proud of our community programmes in Nepal, including the provision of clean and safe drinking water to thousands of people across the country. To put those skills to use at a time when we all need to pull together is a pleasure and a privilege. I sincerely hope it helps in the fight against COVID-19.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust has been supporting Gurkha veterans and their families in Nepal for more than 50 years.

Before the pandemic hit, the Trust's priority has been to provide welfare and medical support to the Gurkha veterans and their families living across the country.

Further information

[Foreign Secretary Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

Press release

The Foreign Secretary has released a statement on the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



On the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab has reiterated the UK's commitment to

supporting reconciliation across the Western Balkans.

Today (11 July) marks twenty-five years since the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the worst atrocity in Europe since the end of the Second World War. More than 8,000 mostly Muslim men and boys were murdered and over 20,000 women and children were forcibly expelled from their homes.

The UK calls on leaders in the region to fulfil the commitments they agreed at the 2018 London Summit. The Foreign Secretary has urged all parties to reject hate speech and the glorification of the perpetrators of genocide and war crimes, and stressed that verdicts from international and domestic courts must be respected.

The Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab said:

On the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, we remember the victims and the anguish of their families.

During my time in the Hague between 2003 and 2006, pursuing those responsible for this dark chapter in European history, I was reminded daily of the heinous cruelty perpetrated against the innocent.

The UK is determined to end impunity and help rebuild those countries affected – as our commitment to the ICC, and UK investment and support for Bosnia demonstrates.

Further information / notes to editors

- Two international courts, the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former-Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ), after exhaustive legal processes, have ruled that Srebrenica was a genocide.
- Over the past 25 years the UK has provided millions of pounds of financial support projects relating to Srebrenica, including support for the families of the victims and assistance to help find those who are missing.
- The UK will continue to support the victims' families in their fight for justice. The UK provides political, financial and logistical support to the UN International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (formerly-the ICTY) in their work to hold perpetrators to account.
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to date, a total of 57 individuals have been tried at the BiH State Court for crimes committed in and around Srebrenica in July 1995. A further 20 individuals have been tried at the ICTY for crimes related to Srebrenica over the course of 12 cases.

(ICMP, 2020)

- In 2015 HRH The Princess Royal visited Srebrenica for 20th anniversary commemoration service. HRH The Prince of Wales was due to visit Srebrenica earlier this year. His visit was postponed due to the COVID 19 outbreak.
- In 2018 at the Berlin Process Western Balkans Summit in London, the UK negotiated the signing of three joint declarations. All the Berlin Process Leaders signed the joint declarations on war crimes, missing persons and on regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations in the framework of the Berlin Process.
- The UK supports Bosnia and Herzegovina's aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration. Reconciliation and good neighbourly relations remain central to achieving this aim and to maintaining stability in the region.

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[Space sector to back 50 SP-Internships this summer](#)

The UK Space Agency-backed Space Placement in Industry Scheme (SPIN) provides unique opportunities for undergraduate students considering a career in the space sector, and for space sector organisations looking to find the talent of tomorrow.

The space sector is growing rapidly in the UK and could kick-start an additional 30,000 new job opportunities over the next decade.

Kathie Bowden, lead for Skills and Careers at the UK Space Agency, said:

The SPIN placements allow students to influence their own learning choices, providing them with an environment where they can showcase their skills and abilities to a range of employers.

The versatility of the space sector in this current climate means that the interns won't be disadvantaged this summer and will still be able to add valuable experience to their CVs.

Klara Halikova, an ecological and environmental science student at the University of Edinburgh, is on a placement with forestry and environmental monitoring company, 2Excel Geo. She said:

Big data and remote sensing are an up-and-coming field for an environmental scientist. Throughout my degree I was not given the opportunity to explore them as much as I would have liked.

This placement is allowing me to catch up with the industry allowing me to push ahead in my field.

The majority of placements are being adapted to start remotely. Placements which demand a physical presence in labs or cleanrooms have been made as flexible as possible with start dates delayed. Host companies are keeping an eye on the latest advice to adapt as changes occur.

Henry Franks is studying engineering at the University of Cambridge and is on a placement with Magdrive. Mark Stokes, Cofounder of Magdrive, explained:

We had a few ideas beforehand of having an on-hand intern technician, but when it became apparent that homeworking would be an ongoing way of working we decided we should focus on an area of research which could be done remotely.

Having Henry with us for eight weeks working solely on research and development means we can utilise his specific skill set. He can dedicate the time we would not have to a project which will shape our offer to clients, and the direction the business will take.

Forty-two internships will be funded by the UK Space Agency's Education and Space Flight Programmes this summer. A further eleven SPINternships are hosted and funded by organisations including the Satellite Applications Catapult, Quotient, an SME based in Edinburgh and the Open University.

The UK space sector is growing. Small satellite launch from the UK presents a huge opportunity for young people to take up careers in science, engineering or even as space entrepreneurs – helping to ensure the ongoing growth of the UK's space industry.

The 53 applicants will participate in a virtual space sector induction in July and a Showcase of their work in the autumn.