

Brockholes Visitor Village, Lancashire Wildlife Trust Bentham Images

Life is looking up for weasels, woodpeckers and thousands of other wildlife species thanks to National Lottery funding.

Fifteen of the UK's much-loved Wildlife Trusts have been helped by over £1million in emergency National Lottery grants during the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

The trusts look after 652 nature reserves across England and Wales. Heritage Emergency Fund grants of £1.19m have helped to keep them open throughout lockdown, providing vital safe spaces for people to get outdoors, exercise and enjoy nature.

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>
> *Ros Kerslake, The National Lottery Heritage Fund Chief Executive*

The grants have also funded salaries for key staff such as wardens, helped to protect rare and 'at risk' wildlife, and supported the Trusts in carrying out further fundraising and planning for the future.



Long horn cattle calf, Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Credit: Alice Singleton

Ros Kerslake, The National Lottery Heritage Fund Chief Executive, said: “The UK needs a strong network of wildlife and nature charities, as they are at the forefront of helping us to invest in habitat and species conservation. It is their boots on the ground, skills, expert knowledge and people engagement skills that help us ensure National Lottery players’ money really makes a critical difference for people and nature.

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Craig Bennett, The Wildlife Trusts Chief Executive, said: “Wildlife Trusts are facing an unprecedented challenge. Coronavirus has impacted finances and in places put conservation work on hold, while also increased demand on our wild places, as people have turned to nature to help them through these difficult times.

“Local nature reserves are especially important to communities, and it’s particularly welcome and appropriate that The National Lottery Heritage Fund is supporting Trusts in this way."

Loss of income and littering

When lockdown started, the Wildlife Trusts immediately lost much of their key income. The Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales earn over half of their income from tourism. Lockdown left them with a gap in their budget of more than £500,000.

Visitor centres closed immediately, many staff were furloughed and where nature reserves remained open, lower levels of staffing meant that some reserves suffered from antisocial behaviour such as littering, fires and fly-tipping and trampling of meadows.

The grants from The National Lottery Heritage Fund are helping to cover a wide range of costs, from basic repairs and essential habitat maintenance to bringing back core staff, reopening visitor centres and moving resources online.

Examples include:

- Funding repairs to windows at Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre (Northumberland Wildlife Trust) after three carrion crows started an ongoing ‘turf war’ with their own reflections.
- Caring for grazing cattle at Lancashire Wildlife Trust nature reserves.
- Bringing back staff at Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to create online resources such as online quizzes to support schools, pupils and families.
- Providing IT equipment to help Durham Wildlife Trust run sell-out online events on wildlife topics including otters and water voles.

Wildlife Trusts that have received emergency funding:



Dawn path clearing at Attenborough Nature Centre, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Credit: Cath Lovatt

- Avon Wildlife Trust (£250,000)
- Cornwall Wildlife Trust (£46,300)
- Devon Wildlife Trust (£159,100)
- Dorset Wildlife Trust (£138,000)
- Durham Wildlife Trust (£45,700)
- Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (£48,800)
- Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (£31,000)
- Northumberland Wildlife Trust (19,200)
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust (£35,600)
- North Wales Wildlife Trust (45,500)
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (184,900)
- Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust (£49,700)
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (£50,000)
- The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country (£41,300)
- The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (£48,000)

The Heritage Emergency Fund has also supported several independent wildlife charities, including the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, Froglife and Organisation Cetacea.

Supporting heritage during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Have you applied for support yet?

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is committed to helping the heritage sector through this crisis.

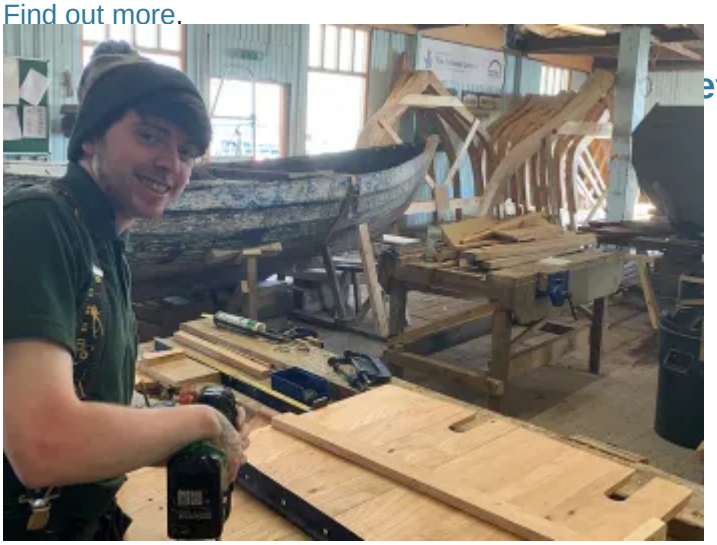
Our £50m Heritage Emergency Fund is open for grants from £3,000–£250,000.

We want to support as many organisations as we can. Submit an application before the deadline so we can help your organisation too.

Additional support includes:

- Digital Skills for Heritage: increasing sector skills and confidence to bring heritage to more people
- maintaining our financial commitment to all of our 2,500 existing projects
- help and advice from our UK-wide teams

Find out more.



efyd mewn ...

Trainee Scott Dixon



Lottery funding



lifeline

Undergrowth, Isle of Wight Railway. Credit: John Faulkner

Heritage railways saved from 'serious jeopardy'