

The restoration of Loughborough Bellfoundry, thanks to £3.45million National Lottery funding, means the bells can continue to ring out for years to come.

Iconic foundry

Since 1859, Loughborough Bellfoundry, home to John Taylor & Co bellfounders, has cast more than 25,000 bells hung in the cathedrals, churches, universities and public buildings of over 100 countries. 20 million people in Britain, and hundreds of millions worldwide, hear a Taylor's bell every day.



Large carillon bell created at the foundry, which has been producing bells since 1859

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>
> *Hannah Taylor, Chair of the Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust*

The Victorian bell foundry has been on the Heritage at Risk register in recent times and, without urgent repairs, was at serious risk of being lost. Its closure would be a huge loss to the craft of bell founding – currently listed as critically endangered by The Heritage Crafts Association – and have a seismic impact on historic buildings and the art of bellringing worldwide.

Securing the foundry’s future

Thanks to a £3.45m National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, the Grade II* listed foundry will now be restored.

Hannah Taylor, chair of the Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust, said: “This news is the best possible Christmas present and will ensure that the foundry, its buildings, the museum and rare archive will be protected, and that Loughborough bells are heard and enjoyed by many future generations.”

Inside of the foundry

Inside of the foundry

The foundry employs a team of 30 who have a range of highly specialist heritage skills, including bell casting and tuning. It produces all associated parts such as hanging frames, wheels and ropes.

> “I am delighted that, with this grant, a new generation will learn bell-making skills, safeguarding the future of our heritage."
>
> *Nigel Huddleston, Heritage Minister*

The funding will be used to train more bell makers and help the foundry expand production.

Heritage Minister Nigel Huddleston said: "Heard by millions of people across the world everyday, bells produced by Taylor's bellfoundry are an example of a great British export success story and an important part of our cultural heritage.”

“I am delighted that, with this grant, a new generation will learn bell-making skills, safeguarding the future of our heritage."



One of Loughborough Bellfoundry's high-skilled bell makers at work. Photo credit: Alex Wilkinson Media

The difference heritage makes

The onsite archive and bell museum will be developed into a world-class visitor attraction and a series of community activities and events will be on offer.

Ros Kerslake, CEO of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “The Loughborough Bellfoundry is the perfect example of why we invest National Lottery money in our heritage.

“It creates jobs, encourages tourism, keeps heritage skills alive and most of all, ensures a future for a unique and valuable heritage that makes all our lives better.”

The foundry has also received funds from The Pilgrim Trust, the Architectural Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston and many other trusts and members of the public. Total project funding is £5m.



The carillon tower at Loughborough's. Photo credit: Alex Wilkinson Media

Famous bells cast at Loughborough’s

The bells of St Thomas’s Church New York’s Fifth Avenue, which can be heard in The Pogues and Kirsty McColl’s Fairytale of New York, were cast at Loughborough’s. As was the specially-branded bell used for the AC/DC track Hells Bells, which the band took on its 1980 Back in Black tour.

The largest church bell in Britain, Great Paul, which hangs in St Paul’s Cathedral in London, is one of thousands of Loughborough bells found at churches, cathedrals and public buildings around the world, including:

- Liverpool Cathedral, UK
- St Andrew’s Cathedral, Sydney

- National Carillon, Canberra
- Siege Bell War Memorial, Malta
- The Custom House, Shanghai, China
- Yale University, USA
- National Cathedral, Washington DC, USA
- St Andrew's Cathedral, Singapore
- City Hall, Capetown South Africa



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Bell being removed for restoration



Buxton Crescent Credit: Ensana



storic sites



The restored building for Stori Brymbo, from the 1920s. Credit: The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Historic ironworks Brymbo unveils its 300million-year story