Charity YHA awarded almost £1million from the

Minister for Heritage, Nigel Huddleston, at YHA Ironbridge Coalport with Manager and Deputy Manager Ben Platt (left) and Andrew Philipson (right).

The organisation – which provides hostel stays and experiences to improve mental and physical wellbeing for young people – is receiving a financial boost to help it recover from the pandemic.

The £999,900 grant will go towards fully re-opening YHA's youth hostel network, with guest self-sanitation stations at properties, from 1 April 2022.

YHA suffered a £66m drop in income after closing all properties – many of which are heritage buildings – for five months during the pandemic. It could then only partially re-open the network.

The funding will also be used to invest in new advertising and marketing channels to enable YHA to reach larger audiences and grow visitor numbers. They will target schools and community groups, allowing more young people to access culture and heritage.

> This much-needed Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage grant will enable the YHA to open their heritage sites, which include many historic buildings and landscapes... and enable them to move forward with their

exciting plans to engage young people.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund

This is the final – and largest – grant awarded as part of the Continuity Support strand of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage (CRF). The fund was created to support organisations in need that had already received support through CRF. YHA have received three CRF grants between 2020-2022, totalling of £2.34m.

Other recipients of this third round of CRF funding were announced in December 2021 – £15.5m went to 138 organisation across England. We delivered the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), in partnership with Historic England.

Minister for Heritage, Nigel Huddleston, at YHA Ironbridge Coalport with YHA Chair Margaret Hart. Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive of Historic England, and YHA Chief Executive James Blake are in the background.

Enriching the lives of young people

YHA aims to help people – especially young people – improve their knowledge, love and care of nature and the outdoors, and appreciate the cultural value of towns, cities and heritage. They do this by making travel and inclusive adventures accessible to everyone, operating over 150 hostel sites throughout England and Wales.

Their stunning heritage properties include a medieval castle (St Briavels Castle), an Elizabethan manor house (Wilderhope Manor) and a medieval friary (Beverley Friary).

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “This much-needed Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage grant will enable the YHA to open their heritage sites, which include many historic buildings and landscapes, for the spring and summer season and enable them to move forward with their exciting plans to engage

young people.

"YHA, alongside other UK heritage organisations, sites and attractions, have faced unprecedented times, and support of the heritage sector remains vitally important for places, people and the economy."

Emergency Resource Support

The final awards have also been announced for the Emergency Support Strand of the Culture Recovery Fund, which was created to support organisations in severe need.

Grants have included almost £200,000 to The Sussex Archaeological Society, to support their work researching and preserving local history and archaeology. And, £184,000 to the Grade I listed Peterborough cathedral, supporting staffing costs to help deliver a busy schedule of exhibitions, plays and festivals.

You can see the full list of organisations that have received awards through the third round of CRF funding.

Looking to the future

We're backing the UK's heritage to adapt and thrive again, supporting heritage organisations across the UK. Find out more by exploring our National Lottery Grants for heritage.

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Heritage Minister Nigel Huddleston's visit to grantee Alexandra Palace. Credit: Lloyd Winters

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Simon Thurley, Chair of the Heritage Fund, walking between Chantelle Lindsay and Bobbi Benjamin-Wand, from London Wildlife Trust, at Camley Street Natural Park in London. Image © Broni Lloyd-Edwards.

£5million to improve access to nature and combat climate change