

# Heritage 2033 delivery plan: 2026–2029

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## Setting the context

### The insight shaping our next steps

Drawing on several sources of insight and evidence, we've reflected on how we're moving towards the ambitions set out in Heritage 2033 after our first three years.

#### Evidence about our impact

Many of our grants aim to achieve long-term transformational change, so it can take time to measure the full impact of our investment. But the early signs are positive. [Our first impact report](#) demonstrates that the projects we've supported through the first three years of Heritage 2033 are already creating benefits for people, places and the environment. For example, making heritage sites more accessible, connecting communities to their landscapes and history and creating opportunities for jobs, volunteering roles and training and skills.

Across this three-year delivery plan, we'll collect even more data to demonstrate our impact on the jobs, apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities our projects create and about how they engage young people, support communities and transform places for the long term.

#### Feedback from stakeholders

Insights from our stakeholders and partners, including grant applicants and recipients, are also helping us learn and adapt the delivery of Heritage 2033 as the external landscape continues to change.

We heard from our stakeholders that Heritage 2033 offers a strong and ambitious vision and they welcomed the clarity and simplicity of our investment approach. You've also told us where you want us to go further to meet the challenges that heritage faces, including strengthening organisational resilience, supporting adaptation to a changing climate and investing in places to deliver positive outcomes for people, communities and the natural environment. We're committed to working collaboratively to build the partnerships that help deliver lasting impact for heritage.

**In conversations with applicants, grantees and other stakeholders last year, we heard that:**

- “The Heritage Fund has an uncanny knack in achieving strategic, scalable changes where other funders are not.”
- “[The] Place-based approach seems to be working... [the Heritage Fund is] actively involved in growth strategy discussions and inclusion of heritage and nature.”
- “The Heritage Fund’s role as a convenor has been really important.”
- “The Heritage Fund should be part of conversations due to the almost unique perspective they have of the sector.”

## **A changing world – social and political context**

Heritage 2033 was designed to be ambitious and flexible. Since we launched the strategy in 2023, we’ve seen continuous change at a local, national and international level impacting the people, communities and places we support.

In shaping this delivery plan, we considered:

- **Persistent but unpredictable financial pressures**, driven by a range of causes, from international instability to ageing infrastructure, resulting in cost inflation and increased competition for funding.
- The **impact of climate change on the built and natural environment**, which can result in damage and/or significant change to historic buildings and protected landscapes, habitats and species.
- The **rapid pace of digital change**, including how machine learning and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the way we interact with each other, how funders work with grantees and how our grantees work with their heritage assets and audiences.
- A shift to greater **place-based investment and community-led decision making as well as the reuse of assets for communities**, grounded in local evidence and experience that show the impact on long-term change. National policy developments, such as the UK government’s [Pride in Place](#) programme and local devolution, reinforce this direction.
- A growing focus on the **wellbeing of young people** so they can benefit now from engaging with heritage and have equitable access to develop skills to become custodians of heritage in the future. We’ve already reflected this in our new [children and young people good practice guidance](#), which aligns with the UK government’s Youth Strategy, [Youth Matters](#).

## **Contributing to the UK government’s strategic aims**

We'll use our unique position as the largest funder for the UK's heritage to support the government's vision for the UK to be more self-confident, where every community in every place feels and sees that their lives are richer and their contribution is valued within an inclusive national story.

To do this we'll invest through National Lottery Heritage Grants in projects that contribute to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport's priorities:

- Growth and good jobs in every place where we invest – through the regeneration of high streets and town centres, helping the sector meet skills gaps and supporting people from all backgrounds to develop rewarding careers in heritage.
- Richer lives with choices and opportunities for all – through helping people shape shared identities across communities and building pride in place.
- A more socially cohesive country with an inclusive national story – through valuing, caring for and sustaining the heritage that matters to people in communities in every part of the UK.

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