

Responding to coronavirus (COVID-19)

How we are helping the people and organisations working across the heritage sector.

This page was last updated on 3 November 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to have a significant impact on the people and organisations we work with.

Heritage has an essential role to play in making communities better places to live, creating economic prosperity and supporting personal wellbeing. All of these are vitally important as we emerge from the pandemic.

If you are concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on your heritage project or organisation, please don't hesitate to [contact your local team](#).

National Lottery Grants for Heritage

The impact of the pandemic means we have revised our approach to what we will fund.

- We are prioritising six outcomes for heritage projects: skills and jobs, inclusion, organisational resilience, better places, the economy and wellbeing.
- We also expect all projects to demonstrate that they are building long-term environmental sustainability and inclusion into their plans.
- Projects don't have to meet all priority outcomes.

[Find out more about our funding programmes.](#)

How we are supporting existing projects

We are continuing to support more than 2,500 projects in development and delivery.

We have continued to make decisions on delivery grants – for example [Loughborough Bellfoundry](#) and [Newport Transporter Bridge](#).

We are being as flexible as we can be, relaxing reporting requirements where possible, bringing forward payments if necessary, and discussing changes of scope or cost due to COVID-19 impact.

Our support for the sector through 2020-2021

In the 2020/21 financial year we invested more than £400m cash into the heritage sector, benefiting more than 1,500 heritage organisations. We also provided expertise and advice on adapting to the pandemic. We prioritised urgent funding for heritage facing the greatest risk.

Thanks to National Lottery players, the £50m [Heritage Emergency Fund](#) helped safeguard UK heritage sites we had previously invested in, and enabled those sites to safely reopen in line with Government guidelines.

England

In England, we administered the £88m [Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage](#) on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), [with a further £44m awarded](#) later and £19m awarded to [22 heritage capital projects](#).

We distributed the £40m Green Recovery Challenge Fund on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra). [Funded projects](#) include restoring ancient woodlands and helping grey seals to thrive. We are administering a second round of funding with more awards to be announced.

Northern Ireland

More than £5m was given out on behalf of the Department of Communities. This included the [Heritage Recovery Fund Northern Ireland](#) and a programme that [encouraged communities to engage with the heritage on their doorstep](#). We also distributed £1m from the Northern Ireland Office to [mark the Centenary of the establishment of Northern Ireland](#).

Scotland

£6.3m of National Lottery funding has been awarded, including support for the development of [three spectacular Scottish heritage sites](#).

Wales

We distributed more than £4m Welsh Government funding, for programmes including Local Places for Nature, Community Woodlands, [15 Minute Heritage](#) and the Green Recovery Capacity Building Scheme. Projects supported include [transforming old playgrounds in Burry Port](#) and [boosting biodiversity at railway stations](#).

Additional investment

£1.2m of loans were made available, and we provided £3.5m targeted support to deprived local authority areas.

Our [Digital Skills for Heritage](#) and [business support and enterprise development](#) initiatives adapted to the crisis to support the sector.

Further support and guidance for heritage

NHMF funding

- The National Heritage Memorial Fund's [COVID-19 Response Fund](#) supports nationally important heritage that is at risk due to the impact of COVID-19.

Government support

- [Government guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#)
- [advice and support for businesses from the Scottish Government](#)
- [a round-up of support for Welsh organisations from Business Wales](#)
- [support for business and employers in Northern Ireland from NIDirect](#)

Support from heritage and wider sectors

- [Heritage Alliance guidance hub](#)
- [Arts Council England](#)
- [NCVO](#) for charities, voluntary organisations and volunteers
- [Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations](#)
- [WCVA](#) for the voluntary and third sectors in Wales
- Space for Learning: [COVID-19 secure guidance for museums, galleries, heritage and performing arts sites](#)

Reopening guidance

England

- [Government guidance for heritage locations on working safely](#)
- [National Museum Directors' Council guidelines on reopening museums](#)
- [Government guidance on safer public places - urban centres and green spaces](#)

Northern Ireland

- [Northern Ireland Department for Communities phased return guidance for culture and heritage destinations/venues](#)

Scotland

- [The Scottish Government tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#)

Wales

- [Natural Resources Wales guidance for land and site managers](#)

You might also be interested in...

[**We're backing the heritage sector to adapt and thrive again**](#)

Future Heritage

**Full range of National Lottery funding resumes
with refocused priorities for 2021-22**