# Historic Town Hall given National Lottery funding



The wonderful Rochdale Town Hall has been given the green light for a much-anticipated revamp, thanks to £8.3million of National Lottery funding.

In the heart of Rochdale, the Grade I listed town hall, is one of the most historically significant buildings found in the UK. It is home to many remarkable historic features that have been described by Historic England as being rivalled in importance only by those within the Palace of Westminster.

The grant, made possible by National Lottery players, will support ambitious plans, led by the council and Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) to restore the town hall to its former glory. It will also fund works to make the building more accessible for the local community and visitors from further afield.



## Restorations and new features

Precious parts of the 149-year-old structure set to be restored include the Magna Carta mural and ornate ceiling panels in the Great Hall. Historic rooms throughout the building, including the Mayor’s Parlour, will also be restored.

The project will bring previously neglected parts of the building into public use for the first time ever. A new ‘Bright Hall’ is set to complement the Great Hall, and will be a space for the community.

Ground floor areas previously used as meeting rooms will be turned into a brand new exhibition area, which is set to tell the story of Rochdale, its people and its history.

## Building a brighter future

In years past, Rochdale had been hit hard by the decline of cotton mills and local manufacturing in the North, as well as periods of recession and austerity. However, today the town is able to draw on its unique past as a place of industry, innovation, fairness and tolerance.

The town is building a brighter future, which is thanks in part to nearly £18million over 25 years from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The funding for Rochdale Town Hall builds on this investment even further.



There have been many projects supported by The Fund that have been integral to the town’s wider regeneration. These include the exposure and restoration of an 800 year-old medieval bridge, the refurbishment of Rochdale Pioneers Museum, a revamp of the Greater Manchester Fire Station Museum, and the arrival of the iconic Dippy the Diplodocus in town as part of his UK tour.

The investment in Rochdale over the years, plus the recent funding boost for the town hall is incredibly timely, as the work of the Northern Powerhouse continues to gather steam. The  work of the Local Enterprise Partnership in the North, collectively known as NP11, recognise the role heritage plays in levelling up the country. Their work revealed that heritage is important in creating a sense of pride in people's hometowns and countries, and also has a positive impact on local economies.