Spotlight to shine again on Leeds' favourite

Victoria Hall in Leeds is to receive a £250,000 grant for restoration, helping to bring investment in the North of England's heritage to more than £1.9billion.

The project will involve the regeneration of the decorative features in the Victoria Hall, the main auditorium in Leeds Town Hall – once voted the city's favourite building.

The original Victorian designs on the walls, columns and doors of the hall date back to 1858, and over the years have become faded and dirty. Damaged by environmental pollution, they were also affected by insensitive renovations in the 1950s and 60s, and are currently hidden from public view.

Victoria Hall in Leeds

Our investment will also see the full repair and renewal of the more than 6,000 façade pipes on the much-loved Leeds Town Hall organ – one of the largest of its kind in Europe.

> Through greater collaboration between cultural, community and civic organisations we can better tackle issues such as poverty and inequality, employment, education and health.
> *Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund*

The local community will be encouraged to get involved with the project, including a partnership with Pyramid of Arts, an arts collective that supports young people and adults with learning disabilities.

Investment across the North

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has supported almost 12,000 projects across the North of England – an investment of over £1.9bn – since 1994. Of those, 431 have been delivered in Leeds alone. We are working with partners and local communities to champion the region's rich local heritage, including our funding of Back From The Brink's national project on the rare Willow Tit, implemented by the local Wildlife Trust, and the Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership, helping local wetlands and wildlife.

Speaking as she took a tour of the region yesterday (28 September), Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "National Lottery funding has been vital in helping many organisations navigate the challenges of the pandemic and continues to be so. In total we have made almost 500 awards for COVID-19 support across the North providing in excess of £58m of assistance...

"The message I have heard repeated throughout our visit this week has been the importance of collaboration. Through greater collaboration between cultural, community and civic organisations we can better tackle issues such as poverty and inequality, employment, education and health.

"I have seen the power of heritage as a driver for positive social and economic change, supporting communities who have so much to gain from engaging in it."

A diverse range of heritage

This week our Board of Trustees made its first in-person visit outside of London since the pandemic hit.

The trustees toured projects we've supported across Leeds and South Yorkshire, including:

- Lower Kirkgate, where investment from us, Historic England, Leeds City Council and private developers is transforming the Lower Kirkgate area
- Leeds City Museum, which has seen investment of £19m to support the museum and the Leeds Discovery Centre
- Hyde Park Picture House – a heritage cinema that is undergoing a £2.6m refurbishment
- Left Bank Leeds – where a historic church has been repurposed to provide community space

Find out more about some of the projects we have funded in the North of England.

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boost

Jamaicans

£3m to help conserve and protect two of Yorkshire's precious landscapes