Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland

Today is World Heritage Day, an international celebration of historic monuments and sites across the world. In the UK, we have 26 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, almost all of which have benefited from National Lottery investment.

At HLF we love #WorldHeritageDay – any excuse to shout about the UK's incredible and diverse heritage and we're there in a heartbeat.

World-class heritage

As you might imagine, the criteria to secure UNESCO World Heritage Site status is rigorous and so there are just 1,052 across the globe. UNESCO regards the sites as being important to the collective interests of humanity – no small ask.

In the UK

Of cultural, historical and/or scientific significance, here is the UK we're lucky enough to have 26 sites. That makes us eighth in the world, behind the likes of Italy (51), China (50) and Spain (45) – no mean feat for a country of our geographical size.

The UK's World Heritage Sites are diverse. They range from Roman cityscapes and medieval cathedrals right through to dramatic mountain ranges and ancient coastlines. And of the 26 located in the UK, 22 have benefited from money

raised through the sale of National Lottery tickets.

They include:

- The Roman baths and Georgian cityscape of Bath in Somerset
- The medieval Canterbury Cathedral in Kent, known as a site of Christian pilgrimage and as the mother church of Anglicanism
- The dramatic peaks and reservoirs of the Derwent Valley in Derbyshire's Peak District
- The city of Edinburgh with its historic Royal Mile
- The maritime ports of Liverpool and Greenwich in London
- Dorset’s picturesque Jurassic Coast, including the natural limestone phenomenon of Durdle Door
- Blaenavon's industrial landscape which includes Blaenavon Ironworks and Big Pit, a former coal mine
- The 40,000 interlocking basalt columns of the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, said to be built by the legendary giant Finn MacCool to reach Scotland

Join the conversation

We’re celebrating #WorldHeritageDay on our social media channels, and on Twitter the HLF team has been posting #HeritageSelfies at the UK’s World Heritage Sites and telling us why they love them. Come and join the conversation!

Find out more about World Heritage Day on the UNESCO World Heritage List website.

The Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site - evolving, enhancing and engaging