

Chittlehampton Methodist Church receives lifeline grant from Government's £1.57bn Culture Recovery Fund

- **Almost 450 heritage organisations in England, including Chittlehampton Methodist Church have been awarded cash from the first round of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage**
- **Grants of up to £1 million will deliver a lifeline for the heritage sector in England with further support to follow and larger grants for capital projects awarded through the Heritage Stimulus Fund**
- **First major tranche of funding from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund**

Chittlehampton Methodist Church is one of 445 heritage organisations across the country set to receive a lifesaving financial boost from the government thanks to the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund to help them through the coronavirus pandemic.

445 organisations will share £103 million, including **Chittlehampton Methodist Church** to help restart vital reconstruction work and maintenance on cherished heritage sites, keeping venues open and supporting those working in the sector.

An amount of £20300 including VAT is expected and will be used towards the next 6 months' overhead costs of our Chapel, Cottage and Hall/Kitchen facilities. Additionally it is enabling us to provide adequate PPE, sanitising equipment and other protective and signage material to fully inform our visitors of our procedures whilst Covid-19 remains a threat. We are also going to be able to undertake some remedial work on a problem wall of one of our Listed Buildings. Mobile phone reception is virtually non-existent so we hope to bring a Broadband Connection to our Premises and set up a website so that our local community can be kept fully informed of what is happening in both the Chapel and the Hall. Two weeks prior to Lock down we had negotiated a loan with the wider Methodist Circuit to allow us to refurbish the interior of our Grade 2 cottage and with this Grant we shall be able to complete this project and prepare to let it to someone in need. Last year we adopted a Mission Statement and had an in depth study as to how we could serve our Community better. The last chunk of money will permit us to investigate and commence work on our long-term plans to remain viable for years to come.

This vital funding is from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage and the Heritage Stimulus Fund - funded by Government and administered at arms length by Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Both funds are part of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund which is designed to secure the future of Britain's museums, galleries, theatres, independent cinemas, heritage sites and music venues with emergency grants and loans.

433 organisations will receive a share of £67 million from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage to help with costs for operating, reopening and recovery. This includes famous heritage sites across the country, from Wentworth Woodhouse in Yorkshire to Blackpool's Winter Gardens, Blyth Tall Ship to the Severn Valley Railway, the International Bomber Command Centre in Lincolnshire to the Piecehall in Halifax. The funds will save sites that are a source of pride for communities across the country.

12 organisations, including English Heritage, Landmark Trust, Historic Royal Palaces and the Canal and River Trust, will receive £34 million from the Heritage Stimulus Fund to restart construction and maintenance on cherished heritage sites to preserve visitor attractions and protect livelihoods for some of the most vulnerable heritage specialists and contractors in the sector.

The Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) has also been awarded a grant from the Culture Recovery Fund through Historic England. The AHF will use the funding to support charities and social enterprises occupying historic buildings to develop new business plans and strategies for organisations affected by the pandemic.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

“As a nation it is essential that we preserve our heritage and celebrate and learn from our past. This massive support package will protect our shared heritage for future generations, save jobs and help us prepare for a cultural bounceback post covid.”

Lucy Worsley, Chief Curator, Historic Royal Palaces, said:

“There’s no truer way to experience the past than to walk in the footsteps of those who have lived it – that’s why preserving our built heritage is so important.

“At Historic Royal Palaces, we care for six nationally significant buildings, opening them to the public and preserving them for future generations. Sadly, the pandemic meant that we had to stop some of our critical conservation work. The grant we have received from the Culture Recovery Fund will enable to this work to resume – so we can give some of Britain’s most historic buildings the care and attention they deserve, while supporting the specialist craftspeople who are vital for the future of our national heritage. We are enormously grateful to the Government for this support.”

Morley Chapple, said: We are delighted to receive this Grant and most grateful to Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage buildings. In line with a lot of other organisations we had been closed since March which meant that we had been unable to hold our normal fund-raising or newly planned events. In August I completed budget forecasts and discovered that it would only be a few months before we ran out of money and it was then that we discovered there was a chance we could complete a Grant Application as we are a Culturally Significant Asset to the area and community. A lot of work was completed within a short time and the application made and the good news reached us a couple of days ago that we had been successful. A real blessing to our members and, we hope to others who use our facilities.

The Chapel, built in 1858 was remodelled in 1905 and still has the traditional Chapel Pews. As well as Sunday services, concerts and funerals a local choir also used it as their rehearsal room, due to its excellent acoustic properties. We are extremely fortunate to have quite a large Viscount Organ to accompany any singing when once more permitted. Until a few years ago the Cottage, probably built in the 16th Century, was used for a Caretaker, Following refurbishment and in accordance with Methodist policies, this 2/3 bedroom building will be seeking a new resident. The Hall, adjoining the Cottage is from the same era and is used by the Anglicans, various other charities for coffee mornings, teas, community lunches etc as well as organisations like the Young Farmers Club, Parish Council and also as a Polling Station when required. Kitchens were added to both the Hall and Cottage in the early 1980s.

In August we carried out a full Covid-19 Risk Assessment in accordance with Government and Methodist Guidelines followed by a Church Council Meeting where it was decided to re-open once in September and commence regular services in October. The September service was our Harvest Festival and we collected, with the help of some Anglicans a vast number of tins and packets for the Food Bank. We were pleased to have maximum numbers permitted whilst still adhering to 2 metre social distancing. We are not yet comfortable with the re-opening of the Hall and Kitchen facilities, but will be reviewing the situation early November. This will still be a difficult decision with the current increase of Corona Virus cases.

Duncan Wilson, Historic England's Chief Executive said:

"It is heartening to see grants, both large and small, from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund helping heritage sites and organisations across the country which have been hit hard by the effects of Covid-19. These grants range from giving skilled craft workers the chance to keep their trades alive to helping heritage organisations pay the bills, and to kick-starting repair works at our best-loved historic sites. The funding is an essential lifeline for our heritage and the people who work tirelessly to conserve it for us all, so that we can hand it on to future generations."

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund said:

"It is absolutely right that investing in heritage should be a priority during this crisis and this support by Government is crucial. Heritage creates jobs and economic prosperity, is a major driver for tourism and makes our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live. All of this is so important for our wellbeing and will be particularly vital when we start to emerge from this incredibly difficult time.

"Our heritage is still facing a perilous future – we are not out of the woods yet. But this hugely welcome funding from Government, and the money we continue to invest from the National Lottery, has undoubtedly stopped heritage and the organisations that care for it being permanently lost."

Kate Mavor, Chief Executive of English Heritage, said:

"This support for our nation's heritage is fantastic news. Over the last few months, our teams have been working hard to welcome visitors back safely to the great castles, stone circles, abbeys and historic houses in our care. This funding will help us invest to safeguard the historic fabric of these much-loved places, which everyone can learn from and enjoy."

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