

**PRESS RELEASE: 22 May 2019**

## **Six 'Theatres at Risk' get a helping hand from Theatres Trust**

**A total of £90,000 worth of support awarded as part of the new Theatres at Risk Capacity Building Programme**

**Theatres Trust**, the national advisory body for theatre, has announced the six theatres that will receive support through the first round of its **Theatres at Risk Capacity Building Programme**:

- **Burnley Empire**
- **Morecambe Winter Gardens**
- **Peterborough New Theatre**
- **Salford Victoria**
- **Spilsby Theatre**
- **Swindon Mechanics' Institute**

The programme is designed to support theatres on the Trust's **Theatres at Risk Register** to commission expert advice and acquire the skills and knowledge to push forward capital projects to help save their theatres.

This round of funding will support projects ranging from a ceiling void inspection to governance training to viability studies. The theatres are all on the Theatres at Risk Register 2019 but are at various stages in their journey to restoration and revival.

**Musician, actor and Theatres Trust Trustee Gary Kemp** says "We know how difficult it can be for theatres to raise funding for the early stage concept and viability works and for organisational support. These first stages of a project provide the vital foundations for both project and organisation, and we hope that with this support, these theatres will be able to make real progress."

**Theatres at Risk Capacity Building Programme** is supported by **Historic England, The Pilgrim Trust, Swire Charitable Trust** and individual donors.

**Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive of Historic England** says "It's great news that two of the historic theatres on the Heritage at Risk Register – Grade II\* listed Morecambe Winter Gardens in Lancashire and Grade II\* listed Mechanics Institute in Swindon - are being given a vital helping hand by being awarded a grant from this important new scheme. We are delighted to support this programme and to be able to provide our technical advice and expertise to help save important theatres."

**Theatres Trust**

22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL

T 020 7836 8591 E [info@theatrestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@theatrestrust.org.uk) W [theatrestrust.org.uk](http://theatrestrust.org.uk)

**Chair** Tim Eyles **Director** Jon Morgan

**Trustees** Richard Baldwin, David Blyth, Pam Bone, Paul Cartwright, Paddy Dillon, Ruth Eastwood, David Ian, Richard Johnston, Gary Kemp, Dara Ó Briain, Simon Ricketts, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

The National Advisory Public Body for Theatres

The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund co-operates with the Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

**Georgina Nayler of the Pilgrim Trust** says: “The Pilgrim Trust recognises the importance of supporting theatres at risk to save their buildings and give them a viable and sustainable future. This is not just because so many of the buildings are of outstanding significance, but also because a restored, vibrant and well visited theatre building can assist with the regeneration of the centres of our towns and cities. We are delighted to be funding this programme”.

**Martha Allfrey Trustee of the Swire Charitable Trust** says “The Swire Charitable Trust is delighted to be supporting the Theatres Trust’s Theatres at Risk Capacity Building Programme. We applaud its goal of removing vulnerable theatres from the Theatres at Risk Register, thus securing the future of these vital cultural, community and heritage assets. Theatres Trust’s unique and intense work with these theatres can lend support in so many ways, offering exciting opportunities to the community and campaign groups involved – we will follow the progress of each project with great interest.”

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact Justine Harvey, Marketing and Communications Manager or Kate Carmichael, Communications Coordinator: [press@theatrestrust.org.uk](mailto:press@theatrestrust.org.uk)

Download images:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/808zmrvtkw5ykd/AAAq08JD4DFaFtuVBXT4U\\_sWa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/808zmrvtkw5ykd/AAAq08JD4DFaFtuVBXT4U_sWa?dl=0)

Full details of the grants awarded:

**Burnley Empire** will receive £10,000 to cover necessary survey works and for professional expertise from a Construction Design and Management expert commissioned to oversee survey works.

**Morecambe Winter Gardens** will receive £22,000 to cover new governance and training for both the Preservation Trust and the Friends who carry out critical work in maintaining the building, and for business planning support to help create a firm financial footing for the theatre moving forward. The building is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register.

**Peterborough New Theatre**, an Art Deco former cinema, will receive £7,500 to fund a ceiling void structural inspection.

**Salford Victoria Theatre** will receive £21,600 to enable the friends group to carry out a viability study for the theatre to determine the optimum viable use for the building. The study will include an options appraisal and high level cost plan for the restoration of the theatre.

**Spilsby Theatre** will receive £5,500 towards a package of works to allow progression to National Lottery Heritage Fund capital works grant, which includes an architectural phasing plan and associated business plan, economic impact assessment, fundraising strategy and heritage activity plan.

**Swindon Mechanics’ Institute**, built as a community centre and a concert hall for staff of the Great Western Railway, will receive £23,400 to fund a detailed viability assessment for the Mechanics Institute to determine a preferred viable and beneficial approach to the long-term sustainable use and management of the building. The building is on the Historic England at Heritage at Risk Register.

**Theatres Trust** is the national advisory public body for theatres. We believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be

inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. We champion the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. We do this by providing advice on the design, planning, development and sustainability of theatres, campaigning on behalf of theatres old and new and offering financial assistance through grants.

[Theatres at Risk Register](#) is published annually by the Theatres Trust to highlight and support the theatre buildings under threat across the UK. There are 31 theatres on the 2019 list. Every theatre on the register has strong architectural merit or cultural heritage and, the potential to be returned to its original performance use and be a real asset to its community. Since 2006 Theatres Trust has helped save more than 80 theatres on the Theatres at Risk list.

[Historic England](#) is the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment, from beaches and battlefields to parks and pie shops. It protects, champions and saves the places that define who we are where we've come from as a nation. It cares passionately about the stories they tell, the ideas they represent and the people who live, work and play among them. Working with communities and specialists it shares its passion, knowledge and skills to inspire interest, care and conservation, so everyone can keep enjoying and looking after the history that surrounds us all.

[The Pilgrim Trust's](#) aim is to preserve and promote Britain's historical and intellectual assets and to provide assistance to vulnerable members of society. The Pilgrim Trust gives grants totalling approximately two million pounds each year to charities and other public bodies.

[Swire Charitable Trust](#) is an independent UK grant making trust. Since 1975 it has supported a wide range of charities that share its commitment to delivering positive and lasting change to UK society.



The Pilgrim Trust

SWIRE  
CHARITABLE  
TRUST