



Theatres Trust supports seven historic Theatres at Risk with grants totalling £60,000

Theatres Trust, the national advisory body for theatres, has announced the first round of grants to be awarded through its new Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities programme, which will go to seven theatres across the UK, all of which are on the Theatres at Risk Register.

The theatres to receive a share of the £60,000 fund are Burnley Empire, Derby Hippodrome, Doncaster Grand, Margate Theatre Royal, Morecambe Winter Gardens, Salford Victoria and Tameside Hippodrome. The theatres are all on the Theatres at Risk Register 2023, published by Theatres Trust in February, which highlights and supports theatres across the country that are at risk of closure or demolition, and which have architectural and community merit. The seven theatres being awarded as part of the Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities programme are at various stages in their journey to revival to become operational theatres that provide value to their local communities.

The grants programme aims to help progress the restoration, reopening or revitalising of these At Risk theatres by funding expert support. Work funded in this round includes governance reviews, a conditions survey, an audience development strategy, and an oral history project.

Theatres Trust Director Jon Morgan says, *We believe every theatre on our Theatres at Risk list has the potential to be returned for use by their communities, providing performance venues of types currently lacking in their local areas and bringing much needed footfall to town centres. We are pleased to support these theatres with projects that will help each theatre move a step closer to their ultimate goal.*

Funded thanks to a grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as funding from the Pilgrim Trust and Swire Charitable Trust, Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities aims to reduce the threat to At Risk theatres and strengthen the theatre sector's resilience as it recovers from the pandemic and deals with the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis and difficult funding landscape.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, says, *We welcome the great news that seven resilience grants have been allocated by the Theatres Trust to special but at risk theatres across the UK. We are delighted to work in partnership with the Theatres Trust with a grant of £249,000, which alongside funding from the Pilgrim Trust and Swire Charitable Trust, ensures that communities can consider how these important theatre buildings, so central to their communities and places, have support and funding to plan towards their future.*

Sue Bowers, Director of the Pilgrim Trust says, *The Pilgrim Trust is delighted to support this important programme which provides stepping stone support to help these at risk theatres on their journey to resilience.*

Notes to Editors

Website	www.theatretrust.org.uk
Twitter	@TheatresTrust #TheatresAtRisk
Facebook	/theatres.trust
Instagram	@theatretrust
Photo Credit	Theatres Trust

Resilient Theatres: Resilient Communities grants recipients

Burnley Empire, £12,000

Burnley Empire is the sole survivor of five variety music halls in Burnley and the only purpose-built Victorian theatre of its kind in East Lancashire. Burnley Empire Trust will receive funding for a condition report and 3D laser scan survey of the building, which will support future funding applications for essential works to prevent the further deterioration of the building.

Derby Hippodrome, £10,000

Derby Hippodrome is a rare survival from an early stage in the crossover period when buildings were being constructed for both live theatre and cinema. Derby Hippodrome Restoration Trust will receive funding to take forward the recommendations from the operational viability study, including developing a vision for the Hippodrome as a music venue, exploring governance and operational options and engaging the public and stakeholders in the project.

Doncaster Grand, £6,500

Doncaster Grand is an ornate Grade II listed Victorian theatre with strong community support. Friends of Doncaster Grand will receive funding for an oral history collection project and to digitise its archival material to help raise the profile of the building and ensure the history of Doncaster Grand Theatre is captured for future generations.

Margate Theatre Royal, £10,000

Grade II* listed Margate Theatre Royal is the last remaining theatre with its design intact by architect J.T. Robinson, employer and father-in-law of celebrated Victorian theatre architect Frank Matcham. Thanet District Council will receive funding for further project scoping that will support future funding bids, including preparing a statement of heritage significance and exploring viability options.

Morecambe Winter Gardens, £11,500

Morecambe Winter Gardens is a Grade II* listed large concert party hall, believed to be the only remaining building of its type. The grant will support creating an audience development strategy, helping Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust to understand the priorities of local audiences, which will support future funding bids.

Salford Victoria, £5,000

Salford Victoria is an architecturally important theatre, designed by eminent theatre architect Bertie Crewe, with rare substage machinery believed to be the only complete

surviving example of its kind in the UK. Salford Victoria Theatre Trust will receive support to carry out a governance review, looking at the organisation's structure, skills gap analysis and recruitment/training and visioning.

Tameside Hippodrome, £5,000

Ashton-under-Lyne's only Grade II listed, purpose-built theatre, the Hippodrome is a rare theatre survival, illustrating the interwar fashion of adaption to cinema, and retaining a wealth of Art Deco features from its 1930s re-fit. Ashton Empire Hippodrome (Building) Ltd will receive support with governance so the group has the most beneficial structure and the skills required to take forward the project.

Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. They believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. They champion the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. They 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 38 theatres on the 2023 list, which was announced in February. 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.

www.theatrestrust.org.uk | @TheatresTrust

National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. Each week, National Lottery players raise £30 million for good causes across the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, National Lottery players have raised over £43 billion for projects and more than 635,000 grants have been awarded across the UK.

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Pilgrim Trust

Pilgrim Trust is an independent charitable trust that was set up in 1930 by Edward Harkness to support the urgent and future needs of the UK. Over the decades, we have supported a wide range of causes, adapting to the changing circumstances and needs in the UK. We give around £3 million in grants each year to charities and other public bodies that focus on preserving the UK's heritage or bringing about social change. Our aims are to improve the life chances of the most vulnerable and preserve the best of our past for the public to enjoy.

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Swire Charitable Trust

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.

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