

# Severn Valley Railway to receive more than £1 million from Government's Culture Recovery Fund

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The Severn Valley Railway (SVR) is among nearly 140 heritage organisations to benefit from a share of the £15.5 million latest round of awards.

The leading heritage railway, which runs between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, has received a grant of £1,012,900 in the Government's latest round of the Culture Recovery Fund to help the organisation recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic.

This grant will fund salaries and running costs from 1st October 2021 to 31st January 2022, to help the organisation recover from the financial impact and loss of income caused by the Covid-19 crisis.

The SVR's chairman Mike Ball said: "We are delighted to receive a grant of this significance, it is an acknowledgement of the importance of the Severn Valley Railway as one of the largest heritage railways in the country and one of the region's leading tourist attractions. The funding will make a huge difference to our recovery, and will allow us to plan positively for 2022, retaining our vital heritage railway skills and

supporting our operational programme as we work towards operating normally and sustainably from April 2022.”

“The last 20 months have been some of the most difficult in the Railway’s history,” added the SVR’s managing director Helen Smith. “We have suffered huge losses. Without the support we have received from the DCMS Cultural Recovery Fund, we may not have survived.”

Nearly 140 heritage organisations in England will benefit from £15.5 million this Christmas thanks to the government’s unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage.

A total of £138 million has been awarded to heritage organisations from the three rounds of the government’s £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund support package made available for arts, culture and heritage organisations during the pandemic. This third round of grants are part of the additional £300 million announced by the Chancellor at March’s Budget.

Heritage Minister Nigel Huddleston said: “I’m delighted that this vital funding from our unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund is giving so many brilliant heritage organisations a helping hand this winter. I want everyone to enjoy what our fascinating and diverse heritage has to offer and with this money we’re safeguarding these organisations for generations to come.”

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “This latest round of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage provides a welcome Christmas boost for Heritage organisations. With the situation changing daily, the funding will be crucial in helping heritage sites navigate their seasonal activities ensuring the safety of their visitors and their communities. The grants will also support organisations in implementing business plans as they work round the challenges for the coming year, helping financial sustainability and driving tourism so that we can look to a bright future for our heritage sector.”

Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive, Historic England said: “We are delighted that the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage grants continue to keep so many heritage organisations going. From major historic buildings to small community organisations promoting local heritage – all deserve this support, to continue to open up to everyone the opportunities that our shared history creates.”

Investing in heritage will support Covid-19 economic recovery and make communities better places to live, creating jobs, driving tourism and improving wellbeing.

The Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage is administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, in partnership with Historic England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

*Photo credit: Severn Valley Railway*