For immediate release

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**Leeds Castle Gets £565,000 Boost from the Culture Recovery Fund**

* Leeds Castle in Kent is among 142 historic sites across England are receiving grants worth £35 million through the government’s Culture Recovery Fund.
* Funding will go towards the stonework restoration of Leeds Castle paying for its vital repairs.
* The grant has been awarded by Historic England from the second round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund, which is part of the Culture Recovery Fund.
* View [Historic England's video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esz5ingucI0) featuring specialist crafts workers whose work and skills are supported through the Heritage Stimulus Fund.

Leeds Castle in Kent is receiving a boost thanks to the Government’s Culture Recovery Fund.

Administered on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) by Historic England, 142 sites are receiving support from the second round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund, bolstering local economies and supporting jobs across the country.

The funds received will go towards the project to restore the stonework of Leeds Castle’s front façade, now 200 years old, the the stonework has deteriorated over the years. Due for completion in early spring 2022, the project will involve the replacement and repair of stones, as well as repointing to the south elevation of the castle. This project is also inclusive of repairs to the east and west turret roof, as well as repairs and redecoration to the Library windows.

PAYE Stonework and Restoration is carrying out the essential work on behalf of Leeds Castle. In addition to employing local craftsmen, locally-sourced Kentish Ragstone will be used, which is a robust and hard weathering stone.

Helen Bonser-Wilton, Chief Executive at Leeds Castle, said: “Leeds Castle is a national icon, and one of the most visited historic buildings in Britain. The Castle has been a luxurious retreat for guests over its 900-year-old history, with owners ranging from six medieval Queens to the Anglo-American heiress, Lady Baillie, who transformed it into an elegant early 20th century retreat and site of glamorous weekend parties for the rich and well connected

“This phase of the long-term stonework restoration project will help to preserve the Castle for future generations to enjoy. As an independent charity, that usually supports itself through guest income, Leeds Castle has been badly affected by the downturn in business caused by the COVID 19 crisis. We are therefore delighted and extremely grateful to receive this funding from the government’s Culture Recovery Fund towards this essential conservation work.”

From Leicester to Liverpool, Wellington to Wigan much-loved historic places will benefit from an injection of cash for vital repairs and major building programmes, many of which are currently on the national Heritage at Risk Register.

Money from the government’s £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund is intended to open up heritage and the benefits it brings to everyone, helping to level up and improve life and opportunities for people in places that need it most.

Many of the organisations and sites receiving funding enhance wellbeing and community connection, offering education, development opportunities and jobs in some of the most deprived communities hit hard by the impact of the pandemic.

Culture Secretary, Nadine Dorries said: "From local churches to ancient buildings and landscapes, the UK's unique heritage makes our towns, cities and villages stronger, more vibrant and helps bring communities together.

"This latest funding - £35 million from our unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund - will help protect sites including Jane Austen's House and Hampton Court Palace for future generations and help them build back better from the pandemic."

Duncan Wilson, Historic England’s Chief Executive, said: “Funding from the government’s Culture Recovery Fund is hugely welcome at a time when the people and organisations who look after our vast and varied array of heritage urgently need support to carry out essential repairs. Heritage is a fragile eco-system, with an amazing cast of characters who keep our historic places alive, with specialist skills that take time to learn and experience to perfect. These grants will protect their livelihoods, as they use their expertise to help our heritage survive.

“Money from the Heritage Stimulus Fund will also keep our nationally and internationally significant heritage assets in good condition and sustain the skilled craft workforce that looks after them.”

The latest £35 million funding awards builds on £52 million already allocated from the first round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund, which has supported works at 800 of the country’s treasured heritage assets. This includes Blackpool’s iconic Tower Ballroom, the stunning Georgian landscape at Gibside in Gateshead and the tranquil Thornton-le-Beans Chapel in North Yorkshire.

None of these historic places would have been able to carry out crucial repair work during the pandemic without this support.

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**For press requests**, please contact Nicole Moor at nicolemoor@leeds-castle.co.uk or call 01622 767 760

**Notes to Editors:**

**About the Culture Recovery Fund**

The government's record-breaking £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund is the biggest ever one-off cash injection into UK culture. Since the start of the pandemic, almost £2 billion has been invested to tackle the crisis facing the country’s most loved arts organisations and heritage sites.

**About the Heritage Stimulus Fund**

* The Heritage Stimulus Fund is part of the Culture Recovery Fund and is administered by Historic England on behalf of the government.
* The first round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund has already enabled repair and maintenance work at more than 800 of the country’s treasured heritage assets and has protected the jobs of expert crafts workers in the sector.
* Grants allocated in this latest round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund will continue to support a large number of projects carried out by a variety of specialists and workers across the country, thereby supporting this vulnerable sector as the nation re-opens.

**About Historic England**

We are [Historic England](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/), 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. We protect, champion and save the places that define who we are and where we’ve come from as a nation. We care 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 we share our passion, knowledge and skills to inspire interest, care and conservation, so everyone can keep enjoying and looking after the history that surrounds us all.

**For Leeds Castle visitor information,** please visit [www.leeds-castle.com](http://www.leeds-castle.com)

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**Leeds Castle Admission Prices** - all tickets grant free repeat entry for 12 months

* Adult: £28, Child (Age 4-15) £19.50