



MEDIA RELEASE

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The Historic Dockyard Chatham to receive £384,144 from second round of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has received a grant of £384,144 from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund to help The Historic Dockyard Chatham reopen to visitors and support its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than £300 million has been awarded to thousands of cultural organisations across the country in the latest round of support from the Culture Recovery Fund, the Culture Secretary announced today.

As custodians of the 80-acre Historic Dockyard site at Chatham, a site of national and international significance as the world's most complete dockyard of the Age of Sail, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust strives for excellence in achievement of its charitable purposes of preservation and learning. In December 2019, the charity stood on the cusp of revenue financial sustainability, but COVID-19 created an existential crisis, with 7 of its 9 income sources ceasing completely. Although the Trust was able to restart its museum and visitor activities briefly in summer 2020, the combination of increased costs, reduced capacity, and activity constraints, coupled with a delayed reopening for 2021 have all done little to improve the financial position.

The much-needed Cultural Recovery Fund award will help The Historic Dockyard achieve its reopening plans, supporting day to day visitor operations, as well as an enhanced family programme, digital engagement, and collection care. In addition, it will support the

Trust's sector-leading work with children and young people, and its community engagement work, encouraging engagement from a broad range of audiences. The grant will also allow wider promotion of a new temporary exhibition, Hidden Heroines: the untold stories of the women of the Dockyard, helping to stimulate visits through the summer.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said: *"Our record-breaking Culture Recovery Fund has already helped thousands of culture and heritage organisations across the country survive the biggest crisis they've ever faced. Now we're staying by their side as they prepare to welcome the public back through their doors - helping our cultural gems plan for reopening and thrive in the better times ahead."*

Richard Morsley, Chief Executive, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust said: *"We are absolutely delighted and incredibly grateful for the support given to The Historic Dockyard Chatham through the Arts Council England administered, Culture Recovery Fund. We are rightly proud of our contribution as an independent heritage organisation in terms of our social, cultural and economic impact. The challenges faced as a result of the pandemic have been profound and this vital funding helps protect the Historic Dockyard Chatham as an important cultural asset, and more importantly, supports our financial resilience enabling us to thrive and grow in the long term."*

This funding is crucial in enabling us to continue to tell the story of the Royal Navy's 400-year connection with Chatham and the Medway Towns, helping us to drive our tourism economy and post-COVID recovery. We look forward to welcoming visitors back to the site as soon as Government guidelines allow, and to delivering a brilliant and engaging visitor experience."

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England, said: *"Investing in a thriving cultural sector at the heart of communities is a vital part of helping the whole country to recover from the pandemic. These grants will help to re-open theatres, concert halls, and museums and will give artists and companies the opportunity to begin making new work. We are grateful to the Government for this support and for recognising the paramount importance of culture to our sense of belonging and identity as individuals and as a society."*

The funding awarded today is from a £400 million pot which was held back last year to ensure the Culture Recovery Fund could continue to help organisations in need as the

public health picture changed. The funding has been awarded by Arts Council England, as well as Historic England and National Lottery Heritage Fund and the British Film Institute.

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MORE PRESS INFORMATION

Please contact Lynnette Crisp on 07816 296387 or email lcrisp@chdt.org.uk for further information

Notes to Editors

About Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust

The Historic Dockyard Chatham has over 100 buildings and structures, including 47 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The site is in the stewardship of the independent charity, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (No. 292101).

The Trust's dual objectives of education and preservation are achieved by a strategy of preservation through reuse. Some of the buildings are open to visitors; others are occupied by residential tenants, businesses, and faculties of the University of Kent.

As a fully accredited museum, the Trust collects, preserves, researches and exhibits objects and materials connected with the history of the dockyard and its people. It studies the development of Royal Navy warship design, construction and the use of the River Medway by the Royal Navy. The Historic Dockyard Chatham presents unrivalled status as the most complete and best-preserved dockyard of the Age of Sail anywhere in the world. It immerses audiences in a mighty feat of preservation, innovation education and heritage. It offers access to the ships that shaped the world, from a Victorian antislavery sailing ship, to a Second World War Destroyer and a Cold War submarine as well as the stories of the people who made them. From historic buildings, including the Commissioner's House and officers' quarters to the remarkable Victorian ropery, where the rigging for HMS *Victory* was made, to its collection of maritime archaeology, the Dockyard forms an indispensable part of Britain's naval history and its national heritage.

Visitors to and users of The Historic Dockyard Chatham are fundamental to its purpose and the economic reuse of the site and its buildings. Its staff and volunteers play a vital role in providing a high level of service and customer care. The Trust is also involved in the ongoing regeneration of Medway and The Thames Gateway, with Culture and Heritage at its heart.

As part of the Trust's strategy of "Preservation through re-use" recent projects have secured the long-term financial sustainability (on a revenue basis) of the wider Historic Dockyard site. The economic outputs from the new uses of the recently opened Fitted Rigging House as well as other activities across the site will bring the total annual contribution made to Medway's economy to £26.3m in 2019, building on the 2012 estimate of £16m (64% growth).

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in [Let's Create](#) that by 2030 we want England to be a

country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million **Emergency Response Package**, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of the bodies administering the Government's **Culture Recovery Fund**. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19.

At the Budget, the Chancellor announced the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund would be boosted with a further £300 million investment. Details of this third round of funding will be announced soon.