

25 years: voices from Blaenavon

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People from Blaenavon in South Wales explain why their heritage matters and how the National Lottery has made a real difference to their community.

For over a quarter of a century, The National Lottery has been a major catalyst to revive and regenerate communities across the UK through heritage.

[We visited Blaenavon](#) to see how National Lottery funding has helped this once beleaguered post-industrial town revive its fortunes and restore its sense of pride by tapping into its rich heritage.

The miner's story

Paul Green is a former miner who is now part of the team at Big Pit National Coal Museum in Blaenavon. National Lottery funding helped establish the mine, which closed in 1980, as a world-class visitor attraction.

Paul shares his memories of his time working in the mines, the importance of the industry on the community, and why future generations need to keep sharing those stories.

“I don’t know if you can say it was bred into you, or whatever. But it was a way of life. You grew up with it.”

The punk professor’s story

Professor John Hunt is a relative newcomer to Blaenavon, but in the year or so he has lived in the town he’s never felt so at home.

John is an active member of the community at Bethlehem Chapel. Following major investment from The National Lottery, the chapel has been restored and transformed into a thriving community hub in the heart of Blaenavon.

“Playing The National Lottery is not just about filling a little tick on a piece of paper in the hope you might win something. You’re doing great stuff. You’re helping communities grow.”

The young ambassador

Martha Meredith is an active member of Blaenavon’s The Hwb, a National Lottery funded project exploring the town’s diverse heritage. She shares why she loves Blaenavon and why now, she couldn’t imagine living anywhere else.

“The connection we have with each other...I’m no longer than two minutes away from someone I love...there’s a lot to our town than meets the eye.”

25 years of funding for heritage

[Over the past 25 years](#), The National Lottery Heritage Fund has been the largest dedicated grant funder of the UK’s heritage. We’ve awarded £8bn to more than 44,000 projects across the UK.

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