

National Lottery win for St George's Hall in Bradford

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St George's Hall at night

The transformation of the UK's oldest concert hall is the latest HLF-supported project spearheading regeneration in the city.

Heritage investment in Bradford today passes £40million with a new grant for the city's iconic St George's Hall, which hosted some of novelist Charles Dickens' earliest performances.

St George's, which is the oldest concert hall in the UK, is set to receive £1.5m from HLF, for a £4m project led by Bradford Council and Bradford Theatres.

The transformational project will see restoration of the 163-year-old building's sandstone exterior and other redevelopment work.

A new permanent archive display will bring to light materials from some of the building's important occasions, from its official opening in 1853 – when Bradford residents were awarded a public holiday - to appearances from Dickens, Houdini, Elgar, David Bowie and Motorhead. The project will also develop stronger links with the local community through an outreach and access programme.

The hall will close for renovation at the end of March, and will reopen in 2017.

[quote=Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber]“We’re delighted that, thanks to National Lottery players, we’ve been able to support this much-loved venue, building on the success of over £40m of HLF investment in Bradford.”[/quote]

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “This is great news for Bradford. We’re delighted that, thanks to National Lottery players, we’ve been able to support this much-loved venue, building on the success of over £40m of HLF investment in Bradford. We’re very pleased that more people will be able to enjoy one of the oldest operating concert halls in the UK, as well as learning more about its fascinating history.”

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe, Bradford Council's executive member for culture, added: "These plans will help us to reach new audiences and enhance everyone’s experience of live entertainment at this much-loved city centre venue.”

Also announced today is initial HLF support for a £1.7m award to Keighley Bus Museum Trust. The funds will help the Trust plan a new transport museum for the region and secure the long-term future of its unique collections.

These exciting projects join a long list of HLF investments in Bradford, which have provided a huge boost to the regeneration of the city over the past two decades.

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