July 2020

Thank you for contacting me about support for the performing arts during coronavirus.

I very much regret the impact that coronavirus has had on performing arts in our country and look forward to when our treasured cultural sector can make a full return.

I strongly welcome the £1.57 billion rescue package that has been announced to help Britain’s globally renowned arts, culture and heritage industries weather the impact of coronavirus. Thousands of organisations across a range of sectors including the performing arts and theatres, heritage, historic palaces, museums, galleries, live music and independent cinema will be able to access emergency grants and loans. The money, which represents the biggest ever one-off investment in UK culture, will provide a lifeline to vital cultural and heritage organisations across the country hit hard by the pandemic.

This unprecedented package includes:

* + £1.15 billion support pot for cultural organisations in England delivered through a mix of grants and loans. This will be made up of £270 million of repayable finance and £880 million grants.
  + £100 million of targeted support for the national cultural institutions in England and the English Heritage Trust.
  + £120 million capital investment to restart construction on cultural infrastructure and for heritage construction projects in England which was paused due to the coronavirus pandemic.
  + The new funding will also mean an extra £188 million for the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland (£33 million), Scotland (£97 million) and Wales (£59 million).

Further details about the package can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/157-billion-investment-to-protect-britains-world-class-cultural-arts-and-heritage-institutions>

This package builds on earlier support measures, including a £160 million emergency response package announced by Arts Council England in March.

Further details can be found on the Arts Council’s website:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19>

The establishment of the Entertainment and Events Working Group was also very welcome. The Working Group informs and supports the work of the Cultural Renewal Taskforce headed by the Culture Secretary, which is working to find innovative ways to reopen the arts sector as soon as possible.

I am particularly pleased that theatres can now reopen for rehearsal, pre-production and broadcast, although not yet for live performance with an audience. This, alongside the work being done with representatives of the entertainment and events industry to develop supporting guidance, represents a vital step in the roadmap to recovery for our nations’ theatres.

Finally, I know the Secretary of State, Ministers and DCMS officials continue to consult the creative and cultural sectors extensively to ensure they understand fully the potential impacts of the Covid-19 outbreak on the sector. DCMS officials and ministers have also held regular calls with representatives from across the arts and cultural sector and these have included representatives from the Royal Shakespeare Company and several dance schools, and representatives including Sadler’s Wells and Northern Ballet.

Thank you again for taking time to contact me.



Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**