



NEWS RELEASE : Culture Recovery Fund Grants programme

Date: 12th October 2020

For immediate release

The historic WWII site of the Yorkshire Air Museum and Allied Air Forces Memorial has been awarded £312,531 under the Government's Culture Recovery Fund.

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England, said:

"Theatres, museums, galleries, dance companies and music venues bring joy to people and life to our cities, towns and villages. This is a difficult time for us all, but this first round of funding from the Culture Recovery Fund will help sustain hundreds of cultural spaces and organisations that are loved and admired by local communities and international audiences".

Barbara George, Museum Director, said:

"We are so grateful for the support provided by DCMS under the Culture Recovery Fund. This award will allow us to face with further strength the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and ensure that we can remain open successfully and sustainably in the future. Importantly, we are delighted by the Government's decisions which validates our site's historical significance in this country.

After three and a half months of lockdown, the museum lost a significant amount of income difficult to recover while also bearing the additional weight of managing covid and keeping visitors and staff safe. The museum reopened to the public on 4th July and we received very positive support from visitors, members, staff and volunteers. The DCMS Culture Recovery Fund announced today will secure our much loved museum's viability and bridge the funding gap required to operate sustainably in a covid-secure way."

During WWII, Elvington was home to three international RAF squadrons including 77 Squadron, a Commonwealth Squadron, and the only ever two French heavy bomber squadrons whose first missions on the 5th of June covered the D-Day landings. This month, the museum celebrates 75 years since the French squadrons returned to Bordeaux, France, and founded the new chapter of the French Air Force.

The museum is located on the outskirts of York, on a site surrounding a Grade II listed Flying Control Tower which Historic England has described as *“one of a very small number of control towers on Second World War airfields which are either exceptionally well-preserved or have distinguished operational histories”*. In addition to exceptional WWII buildings, the museum has an exciting collection of historic aircraft covering the entire span of the history of aviation. Its most cherished item is the fully reconstructed Halifax Bomber, the only one of its type left in Europe and which attracts visitors from around the world.

As a Memorial, the museum runs important annual events such as the Allied Air Forces Memorial Day and the Women’s Services Day, cancelled this year due to covid, which are attended by the RAF Chief of Air Staff, air and defense attaches and representatives of many allied countries and Commonwealth nations.

The museum was also recently awarded National Heritage Lottery Emergency Funding to assist the museum adapt its premises and cover site costs for four months. In addition, a £10,000 grant from the Kirkby Foundation, a small charitable trust that supports specific capital projects primarily to registered organisations based in Yorkshire, will enable the planning of new facilities for children this winter.

The museum’s mission is to Honour, Educate and Inspire.

ENDS

Notes to editors

For further information about the Yorkshire Air Museum and Allied Air Forces Memorial , images and interview opportunities, please contact: Barbara George, Museum Director. Tel 01904 608595 / 07741 185949