

£6.5M Government grant contribution secured by Capital Theatres toward King's redevelopment

The Minister for Culture and International Development, Jenny Gilruth MSP, has confirmed total grant funding of £6.5 million from the Scottish Government for the £25 million King's Theatre Redevelopment Project.

Opened in 1906, the King's Theatre, Edinburgh is an important venue for touring drama, musicals and children's shows. It is home to Scotland's biggest Panto production and each year plays a pivotal role in hosting the Edinburgh International Festival. The King's has a unique place in the hearts and minds of many Edinburgh residents, and is a theatre of national and historical importance.

The redevelopment will modernise the existing facilities and transform the experiences of visitors, local communities, performers and staff, whilst preserving its unique heritage.

The plans will ensure the theatre remains a vital part of Edinburgh and Scotland's cultural provision, as well as functioning as a community hub for years to come. The redevelopment project is set to start in September 2022, with the theatre planned to reopen in mid-2024.



This grant from the Scottish Government joins £4 million already secured from the City of Edinburgh Council along with additional loan funding. The rest of the budget is made-up of generous donations from individuals, grants from trusts and foundations, support from companies and Capital Theatres' own contribution from ticket income. Alongside this an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund is currently moving into its second stage. The grant from Scottish Government consolidates a robust mixed funding model and paves the way for a public campaign to fundraise for the remaining £3 million.

Fiona Gibson, CEO of Capital Theatres said: "We're overjoyed with this show of support and confidence in the King's Redevelopment Project from the Scottish Government. As COVID 19 hit in March 2020, Capital Theatres announced that the redevelopment of the King's would be paused for a year whilst we dealt with the impact of the pandemic.

"Far from lose momentum on the project, 15 months of closure has made us all the more determined to ensure the King's Theatre can honour its illustrious past with a thriving future at the heart of Edinburgh and Scotland's cultural life.

"Not only a wonderful venue for joy and inspiration, the King's will also offer a thriving hub by day for the many communities situated in and around Tollcross. Scottish Government's grant, along with the grant and loan funding from City of Edinburgh Council, makes this project viable.

"This funding stands alongside the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant we are working so hard to secure, and the tireless efforts of our Development Team. There is, however, still a way to go to reach our financial target and we'll be launching a public fundraising campaign later in the year.

"This last push will build on the generous support shown

during our period of closure, so the people of Edinburgh and Scotland can continue to play their part by helping us secure the future of the King's as a historical and cultural treasure."



Sydney Theatre's '*Secret River*' – Kings Theatre, EIF 2019
Culture Minister Jenny Gilruth said: "The King's Theatre has been a jewel in Edinburgh's cultural crown for more than a 100 years, with generations of audiences enjoying a rich diversity of shows from its annual pantomimes to world premieres at the Edinburgh International Festival.

"The Scottish Government is pleased to support the redevelopment of the grade A-listed theatre and enable the King's Theatre to reach out to a wider range of audience and increase its community engagement."

City of Edinburgh Council Culture and Communities Convener, Cllr Donald Wilson said: "The King's has been a beloved Edinburgh theatre for over a century, programming the best in touring drama, hosting some of the most talented community and non-professional groups; and certainly the best in pantomime, as well as bringing all kinds of theatre experiences to the city from all over the country, including London's West End. The '*Grand Old Lady of Leven Street*' has always been Edinburgh's theatre for everyone."

Cllr Amy McNeese-Mechan, Culture and Communities Vice Convener said: "The King's is in need of this capital project to bring the theatre back to a standard fit for the 21st century whilst acknowledging the incredible history. This capital funding contribution is great news and a fantastic achievement for the theatre and will substantially strengthen its redevelopment ambitions, ensuring that we will all be able to continue to enjoy a great night at the King's for many more years and generations to come."