

# **Millions pledged by UK Government for “community treasures” – including The King’s Theatre**

**The project to refurbish the King’s Theatre has had a welcome boost with £2 million awarded from the UK Government Community Ownership Fund.**

The monies will be used to improve disabled access to the theatre, making the King’s fully accessible for the first time in the building’s history, with level entrances and an accessible journey from street to seat and street to stage, including large lifts providing access to all floors, a 50% increase in wheelchair spaces, and improved signage throughout.

In addition it will help provide a new community hub where songwriting, singing and storytelling can be conducted as well as relaxed performances.

The funding is intended to rescue community places which “form the beating heart of a local community” and The King’s certainly fits that bill.

Other funding was promised elsewhere in Scotland which totals £8 million – including £550,000 for the old Coop bakery in West Calder which will be transformed into an interactive discovery and learning centre.

The UK Government Minister for Scotland John Lamont who visited the King's to see progress for himself said: "Loved by so many at this time of year for its pantos, this £2m award to the historic King's Theatre from the UK Government's Community Ownership Fund is well deserved, oh yes it is!

"I've seen first hand the ongoing upgrade works on what is fondly known as "the people's theatre" and heard about the exciting plans for when it reopens

in 2025. I'm delighted this funding will help ensure that this cherished venue can be enjoyed by generations to come and congratulate the team behind it in their efforts to save the King's for theatregoers, artists and the community alike.

"We are investing more than £2.7 billion across Scotland to create jobs and opportunities."

Fiona Gibson CEO of Capital Theatres said: "We are absolutely thrilled by this generous investment in the redevelopment of the King's Theatre from the Community Ownership Fund. This enables us to ensure the King's offers a fully accessible welcome to audiences, artists and staff alike and preserves it for future generations.

"We are immensely grateful for all the support received so far to make this project possible and to save the beloved King's Theatre for Tollcross, Edinburgh and beyond. It is fantastic to have the input of the Community Ownership Fund, and we hope it inspires more people to support us in protecting this treasured building for the long term."

More than 70 treasured buildings across the UK will be saved by the Community Ownership Fund's latest funding boost of £25 million announced in this last week before Christmas, protecting important community places that mean so much to local people.

The UK fund – worth a total £150 million – was launched in 2021 to provide targeted support for community places that

most impact local people.



Fiona Gibson CEO of Capital Theatres with John Lamont, The UK Government Minister for Scotland





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