



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Civic Voice welcomes announcement that high streets located in conservation areas to benefit from £44 million in funding**

### **Funding bids must demonstrate meaningful community support**

Civic Voice today welcomes the announcement that the Government, via Historic England, has announced a new £44 million fund to breathe new life into high streets located in conservation areas.

Ian Harvey, Executive Director of Civic Voice said: “As the voice of conservation areas, I am sure civic societies across England will welcome this announcement as a success of the civic movement’s Big Conservation Conversation campaign. We are pleased to see the Government pledge so much support to high streets located in conservation areas. Our research has identified 250+ high street conservation areas across England, so any extra support for these areas, to support appraisals, management plans and regeneration projects can only be welcomed.”

Conservation areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place - in other words, the features that make it unique. Every local authority in England has at least one conservation area and there are now over 10,000 in England.

The total funding pot is £62 million and includes:

- £44 million of government and Historic England funding to create dozens of High Streets Heritage Action Zones overseen by Historic England
- £3 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support a cultural programme to engage people in the life and history of their high streets.
- £15 million for the Architectural Heritage Fund to support social enterprise organisations to take ownership of and bring buildings of local importance - such as pubs, libraries or theatres, as well as shops - back into use. The Transforming Places Through Heritage Programme will open for applications in June.

Harvey finished by saying: “We are also pleased to see Historic England state that the project must be delivered with demonstrable support of the local community. Communities are the key to the future of conservation areas, and it is why we are asking civic societies all over the country to speak with Business Improvement Districts and local councils to consider applying for this fund. Civic Voice is happy to work with local authorities and others to ensure that they have a meaningful role for communities in their funding bids.”

From today (May 18), local authorities can apply to the scheme, which will give councils, businesses and community groups access to expert advice and investment to bring historic buildings back into use and support historic high streets to adapt to the challenges they face.

More information via the Historic England guidance at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/haz/high-streets-haz-eoi-guidance/>

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1 Civic Voice is the national charity for the civic movement. We work to make the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive and to promote civic pride. We speak up for civic societies and local communities across England.

2 Civic Voice's Parliamentary meeting on June 18th will launch England's Favourite Conservation Area for 2019 and civic societies will be meeting MPs to highlight the importance of conservation areas and the historic environment. More information via [www.civicvoice.org.uk](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk) or [info@civicvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@civicvoice.org.uk)

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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