

## **Roundhouse thanks National Lottery players with a rare behind-the-scenes tour of one of Birmingham's curviest building**

Ahead of next year's exciting opening of the Roundhouse in Birmingham, a few lucky locals were invited to take a peek behind the scenes at the extensive renovations currently underway on one of the city's most unusual buildings.

Thanks to £2.5m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Canal & River Trust and National Trust are working in partnership to reinvent this magnificent building, steeped in local history and set to become a base from which to explore Birmingham by water, by foot and by bike.

The 'Hard Hat tour' invited local people and businesses on a guided tour of the Roundhouse building as a way to say 'thank you' to people who helped to raise money for good causes by buying a National Lottery ticket.

Representatives from the Canal & River Trust and National Trust gave visitors a 'behind the scenes' look at the restoration works so they were able to see for themselves how the building is being brought back to life.

Built in 1874 by the Birmingham Corporation, the Grade II\* listed Roundhouse is tucked next to the Birmingham Mainline Canal, a short walk from the centre of the City.

Formerly stables for the hard-working horses of the city, which helped the gas lamplighters bring illumination to dark Victorian streets and the night soil men take away all of the waste in the days before sewers, the beautiful landmark boasts an enviable canal-side location just behind Sheepcote Street.

Chris Maher, Roundhouse Birmingham's Creative Producer, said: "This was a great opportunity for local people living near the Roundhouse to explore the site during our programme of renovations, and be updated on how the works are progressing. We were able to show them the heritage repairs we're currently doing, such as the work to replace and strengthen the roof, as well as giving us an opportunity to explain what the next stage of the project will be."

Jo Dimitri, Roundhouse Project Manager, said: "This is an exciting stage in the project where plans for the Roundhouse are really starting to take shape as we get closer to being able to welcome the public into the building. This project – and many others like it – couldn't happen without people buying lottery tickets, so we wanted to show our

**Press release**



appreciation and celebrate how far we've come. The Roundhouse is the product of the help, creativity and determination of a wide range of funders, partners and supporters who have shaped and driven our work. We hope it will continue to be a place that local community and the people of Birmingham enjoy and feel proud of. “

Simon Lewis, Investment Manager, England: Midlands & East at The National Lottery Heritage Fund West Midlands, who also joined one of the tours, said: “It's fantastic to see that local people are already connecting with the Roundhouse as it really is a special building and one of a kind in Birmingham.

“This restoration is being made possible because of National Lottery players so it's great that we can thank them for their support and show them how, with their help, we are working to improve their local community.”

The Roundhouse is due to re-open in late spring 2020 and will be an exciting space for the local community and a focal point from which to explore Birmingham's canals on foot, by bike or even on a kayak.

During the works The Distillery and terrace area located next to the Roundhouse is open as normal.

## ENDS

Notes to editors: For more information please contact Sarah Rudy, Comms & Campaigns Manager at the Canal & River Trust on 01908 302 584 / 07788 691 219 or email [sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

The Roundhouse is a Birmingham landmark, brought back to life by a new kind of joint venture between the Canal & River Trust and the National Trust, and made possible by a £2.5million grant from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Built in 1874, this Grade II listed building is special in many ways, including its sweeping horseshoe shape, its role in the industrial history of our city, and its location – at the heart of Birmingham's canal network. When it opens, the Roundhouse will be a lively hub for the community - a place of character, connections and adventure. There will be creative office space for rent, a cafe, a programme of events including hidden history tours, as well as bike and kayak hire. Find out more at [www.roundhousebirmingham.org.uk](http://www.roundhousebirmingham.org.uk).

The **Canal & River Trust** cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference



to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

[www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

The **National Trust** looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 775 miles of coastline and hundreds of historic places across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Birmingham we are working in partnership with others to celebrate, help care for and protect a range of places and outdoors spaces that are important to local people, and of which the City can be proud. For more information go to <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk>

### About the **National Lottery Heritage Fund**

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we Inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future. [www.HeritageFund.org.uk](http://www.HeritageFund.org.uk).

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