

The Heritage Alliance

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 5th, 2025**

Communications Manager: Max Clark

[comms@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:comms@theheritagealliance.org.uk)

+44 333 023 0790

### **Heritage Day 2025 Celebrates Heritage and Creativity**

The Heritage Alliance's annual Heritage Day 2025 took place on Wednesday 5th March at the historic Tower of London. This flagship annual event brought together heritage leaders, professionals, and volunteers for a day of keynote speeches, panels, workshops, and networking opportunities, all centred around the theme 'Heritage Creates' - a celebration of how heritage fosters creativity and innovation.

Attendees gained early access to the [Heritage Creates 2025 report](#), launched today. The report provides timely insight into the latest evidence on the interconnected nature of heritage and the creative industries, featuring case studies from the breadth of the heritage sector in collaboration with the film, fashion, animation, creative health, music and immersive technology industries.

**Carole Souter CBE, Chair of the Heritage Alliance**, said: "Our annual Heritage Day gathering celebrates the passion and dedication of those who work in and for the heritage sector, whilst addressing the key issues facing us. I am delighted to be leading the Heritage Alliance team as we examine heritage's role as an engine of creativity, growth, and community-building. I'm looking forward to great conversations about how we can work with creative colleagues in all areas to rise to the challenges, and accept the opportunities, set us by the new Government's ambitions for culture, heritage and the creative industries."

The **Heritage Minister Sir Chris Bryant MP**, Minister of State for Creative Industries said ahead of the event: "Heritage Day is an opportunity to celebrate the invaluable role that heritage sites such as Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, Hadrian's Wall and Warwick Castle play in telling our shared national story and engaging communities in the history of the place they call home.

"Preserving our heritage for future generations is vital and we look forward to working with Heritage Alliance to ensure our heritage is recognised and celebrated for many years to come."

Opening the day at one of Britain's most iconic historic sites, **Tower Director Andrew Jackson CBE** welcomed delegates to the Tower of London, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to nearly a thousand years of history.

**Baroness Twycross, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)**, attended and delivered a speech where she stated: "A growing body of research is telling us what we already know, that a thriving heritage sector is good for growth, and bringing economics and social benefits supporting careers, other sectors such as construction, video games, and our important visitor economy."

A notable lineup of speakers included **Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay**, Shadow DCMS Lords Minister; **Duncan Wilson CBE**, Chief Executive of Historic England; **Dr Ingrid Samuel OBE**, Deputy Chair of The Heritage Alliance and Director of Placemaking & Heritage at The National

Trust; **Ros Kerslake CBE**, Chair of The Architectural Heritage Fund; and many other distinguished heritage sector leaders and decision-makers.

The conference focused on how heritage creates skills, enterprise, housing, storytelling, communities, and more, and showcased inspiring stories from across the sector.

The day later featured keynote addresses from **Dr. Nick Merriman OBE, Chief Executive of English Heritage**, and **Carole Souter CBE, Chair of The Heritage Alliance**. These speeches were complemented by panels featuring heritage leaders and policy-makers, and opportunities to network with professionals from charities, government departments, academia, funding bodies, and commercial organisations.

The day culminated with the presentation of the annual **Ecclesiastical Heritage Heroes Awards 2024**, celebrating the extraordinary contributions of volunteers across the UK heritage sector. All nominees were featured in a short film highlighting their achievements, screened during the ceremony.

The winner of the **2024 Heritage Heroes Award** was Braemar Community Limited Volunteers.

**Doreen Wood, Vice Chair of Braemar Community Limited volunteers** stated: "Winning this award is a tribute to what's been achieved and gives us confidence that what our community is delivering is appropriate in terms of our conservation responsibilities. It's validation of the hard work of many from this tiny Highland community and we are very grateful for the professional support we have received from The Prince's Foundation, now The King's Foundation."

For the **2024 Lifetime Heritage Hero Award**, the winner was **Valerie Bello of B'nai B'rith UK**.

**Valerie Bello, Community Volunteer of B'nai B'rith UK said:** "I was thrilled to learn I had won Ecclesiastical's 2024 Lifetime Heritage Hero Award, award, as I view it as a tribute to my organisation. The Heritage Alliance, of which we are proud members, encourages appreciation and development of heritage in all its facets. Heritage plays a vital role in national life, preserving our sense of history and heritage sites, while increasing our knowledge of life, art and architecture in the past and its influence on the future."

**Lizzie Glithero-West, CEO of the Heritage Alliance**, said: "Ecclesiastical's Heritage Heroes Awards serve as a reminder of the passion and commitment that volunteers in the heritage sector bring to heritage projects and places. From boat restoration to theatrical engagement, fundraising to community archaeology, this year has been no exception with the quality of nominees. Our panel heard inspiring stories and extraordinary feats from individuals and groups of all sizes. Our nation's heritage story has always been intertwined with great voluntary effort and this continues today. Many congratulations to this year's winners and all of those nominated for their hard work, creativity and dedication."

Speaking of the event, **Laura Carter, Customer Segment Director at Ecclesiastical, said:** "We're incredibly proud to sponsor the Heritage Alliance's Heritage Day, celebrating the vital role heritage plays in our communities. As a specialist insurer with a deep commitment to protecting historic places and cultural assets, we recognise the importance of safeguarding our past for future generations. We look forward to engaging with sector leaders and supporting the invaluable work of the Heritage Alliance."

**Sarah Simpson, Managing Director at Cabbells**, said: “We are thrilled to be the first marketing agency to sponsor the Heritage Day Conference. As dedicated champions of the heritage sector, we understand the vital role of marketing in amplifying its value to a broader audience. We look forward to collaborating with organisations in 2025 and beyond, helping them to enhance their campaigns within this valuable sector.”

Heritage Day 2025 was open to all those with an interest in heritage through the generous support of Cabbells (Headline Sponsor), Ecclesiastical Insurance (Corporate Partner), Historic Royal Palaces (Venue Sponsor), and Programme Sponsors including The Architectural Heritage Fund, Farcroft Group, City & Guilds, and The National Lottery Heritage Fund, with StageTEXT serving as Accessibility Sponsor.

**\*\*\* END \*\*\***

### **About The Heritage Alliance**

1. The Heritage Alliance unites over 200 independent heritage organisations in England as a powerful, effective, and independent advocate for heritage.
2. As England's biggest coalition of heritage interests, it brings together independent heritage organisations from the National Trust, English Heritage, Canal & River Trust, and Historic Houses, to more specialist bodies representing visitors, owners, volunteers, professional practitioners, funders and educationalists.
3. Its members' 7 million volunteers, trustees, members and staff demonstrate the strength and commitment of the independent heritage movement.

*Contact The Heritage Alliance:*

Communications at [comms@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:comms@theheritagealliance.org.uk)

Membership at [development@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:development@theheritagealliance.org.uk)