



Funding support takes Bristol music venue St George's closer to its £5.5m upgrade target

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By [Robert Buckland](#)

Iconic Bristol concert venue St George's has secured initial support for a £750,200 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) as part of its £5.5m Building a Sound Future appeal.

Development funding of £24,800 has also been awarded to help it progress plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

The Building a Sound Future appeal is a capital project to reconfigure and extend the world-class music venue with an impressive new extension housing its box office, café/bar, artists' changing facilities and rehearsal and workshop rooms.

The new funding award will take the total raised for the Building a Sound Future appeal to £3.5m. This specific award from the HLF will be used to preserve, record and widen access to both the physical and cultural heritage of St George's Bristol, a Grade II* listed venue, world renowned for its musical acoustics. This heritage project will help secure the long-term future and financial sustainability of St George's Bristol by:

- Preserving its built heritage and reducing maintenance costs
- Providing full access for all to the building for the first time
- Re-configuring the crypt of the building to provide a heritage interpretation space
- Delivering a comprehensive plan of activity to engage current audiences and attract new visitors with the full heritage story of the historic building

St George's chief executive said: "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has committed its support to our 'Building a Sound Future' project.

"The building was designed by Sir Robert Smirke, the architect of the British Museum, and has been an integral part of the community since 1823. Now with a worldwide reputation as a music venue with outstanding acoustics, the Heritage Lottery Fund's support will secure our heritage and extend our physical access and reputation for both current and future generations."

This award forms part of St George's Bristol overall Building a Sound Future capital development project which sees the construction of a brand new extension to the building on Great George Street, improving

and extending the core facilities of the venue which already hosts some two-hundred live music events each year.

The fundraising appeal was kick-started by an initial pledge of £1.95m from Arts Council England and reached the halfway point towards the end of last year following major grants from the Garfield Weston Foundation, the J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust, and the Sir Sigmund Warburg's Voluntary Settlement. This latest contribution will take the appeal a major step closer to reaching its final target by the end of 2015.

Nerys Watts, head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: "As well as being a beloved local landmark, St George's Bristol played an important role in Bristol's social history. We look forward to seeing the plans develop to make this heritage a prominent and integral part of the exciting development plans for the building."

Patel Taylor, the award-winning London-based architects designing the bold new contemporary glass and stone extension, recently revealed full drawings and striking 3D CAD imagery of external and internal designs at a public event held at St George's.

Pictured: Computer-generated image of St George's new extension

