

MEDIA RELEASE

England's Historic Cities secures new investment from VisitEngland

England's Historic Cities, which includes Greenwich, has secured further investment from the Discover England Fund for their innovative England Originals project. The project was created in 2018 to encourage more US visitors to explore regional England and has already benefited from over £1m of investment from the fund. This new investment will be used to promote the cities to domestic audiences in 2021 to help with recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

England Originals brings together 16 of England's historic destinations under one brand umbrella and promotes them to younger audiences. It does this by combining story-telling and augmented reality with a visitor offer that emphasises fun activities and new experiences set against a backdrop of some of England's stunning heritage locations.

The new investment will be used to enhance and expand the visitor offer, produce new inspirational content and deliver a consumer marketing campaign in early 2021. It will also support ongoing collaboration with US tour operators and travel agents for when travel restrictions are lifted and international visitors are able to return.

Barrie Kelly, Chief Executive of Visit Greenwich, said:

"We are delighted that England Originals has received this investment. Our businesses need help and support to survive the pandemic and it is a welcome boost in difficult times. This funding provides the resource to package our Greenwich offer in different ways to increase our appeal to a millennial audience. We will be working with our partners and the travel trade to position Greenwich as the most obvious and appealing destination to base visitors to London for the foreseeable future."

Melanie Sensicle, chair of England's Historic Cities, said:

"To secure a fifth year of funding from the Discover England Fund is fantastic and a testament to the strength of our partnership. We are an example of what can be achieved



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when destinations work together and we look forward to introducing England Originals to domestic visitors'.

VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes said:

"Millions of jobs and local economies depend on tourism right across the country and the industry needs all of us to make sure it gets back on its feet. This funding will encourage people to get out and discover the outstanding destinations and quality attractions on our doorstep and also keep England's tourism products and experiences front-of-mind for future international travellers. Now in its fifth year the Discover England Fund is all about embedding these amazing tourism products and reaching new audiences to drive visitor growth and boost local economies."

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About England's Historic Cities

England's Historic Cities is a partnership of destinations brought together by common product and interests. Its purpose is to exchange knowledge, find solutions to shared challenges, benchmark performance, raise the profile of England's heritage product and facilitate joint activity, all with the intention of maximising the potential of the cities' visitor economies.

Its geographical footprint spans the length and breadth of England and membership comprises 13 of the country's premiere heritage locations: Bath, Canterbury, Cambridge, Chester, Carlisle, Durham, Greenwich, Lancaster, Lincoln, Oxford, Salisbury, Stratford and York.

In recent years the group has developed projects and delivered them with investment secured from the UK GREAT Challenge Fund and the Discover England Fund. These projects have enabled the group to forge new relationships with London and Partners and English Heritage.

About the Discover England Fund

- In November 2015, the Government announced a £40 million Discover England Fund; an unprecedented opportunity for English tourism. The Fund aims to deliver world-class



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bookable tourism products joined up across geographies and/or themes; including integrated transport solutions to provide an end-to-end customer experience.

- The Fund supports the growth of one of England's most successful export industries, inbound tourism. Tourism is an industry that delivers jobs and economic growth across the English regions – contributing some £106bn each year to the economy and supporting 2.6 million jobs.
- The Fund supported a number of pilot projects in year one (2016/17) that tested product development approaches. In years two and three, 2017-19, the fund will support:
 - A number of large-scale collaborative projects to be delivered over the two year period 2017-2019 that will create a step-change in bookable English tourism product for international consumers,
 - A smaller funding pot for new one year pilot projects (in year two), and
 - Continuation funding for existing year one projects that demonstrated early learnings (in year two).

About VisitBritain/VisitEngland

- VisitBritain/VisitEngland is the national tourism agency – a non-departmental public body funded by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)
- Working with a wide range of partners in both the UK and overseas, our mission is to grow the volume and value of inbound tourism across the nations and regions of Britain and to develop world-class English tourism product to support our growth aspirations. For further information and to access the latest in-depth market intelligence and statistics visit www.visitbritain.org or www.visitbritain.com and www.visitengland.com for consumer information.