

7 June 2022
Jodrell Bank, Cheshire, UK

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FIRST LIGHT WOWS FIRST 1000 VISITORS

Jodrell Bank's newest attraction, the First Light Pavilion opened its doors to visitors for the first time last weekend, with over 1000 people exploring the stunning new building over the Jubilee weekend.

Teresa Anderson, Director of Jodrell Bank Centre for Engagement said *"It was a huge moment finally to welcome visitors to the First Light Pavilion and see all our hard work pay off. I'm delighted to have reached this milestone and grateful to everyone that supported us on this journey"*

The **First Light Pavilion** is a £21.5m development supported by **The National Lottery Heritage Fund**, and has been years in the making. It follows Jodrell Bank's recent recognition as a site of Outstanding Universal Value when it was awarded **UNESCO World Heritage Site** status in 2019. The First Light Pavilion was created to tell the inspirational stories of Jodrell Bank's world-leading contribution to science, heritage and culture.

Highlighting its global reach, the first visitor had travelled all the way from Boston, US. Scott Stransky (pictured) had taken a red-eye flight arriving in Manchester that morning before driving straight to Jodrell Bank. An Atmospheric Science student at MIT, Jodrell Bank was also the 150th World Heritage Site that he's visited!

Others had come from right across the country including from Glasgow, Essex, Plymouth and Norwich. A visitor commented on the experience: *"The whole day was marvellous, an experience I will never forget. Every moment was captivating and utterly enjoyable. From the initial welcome, to the beautifully designed and totally absorbing new Pavilion."*

Julia Riley, Head of Interpretation and Engagement was welcoming visitors into the building over the weekend *"It was a delight to see people's reactions to what we've created here at Jodrell Bank. Its just been so well received by everyone and its wonderful to see."*

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The architecturally stunning building, created with international architect firm **Hassell**, takes the form of a grass-topped dome that cleverly mirrors the shape and scale of the dish of the famous **Lovell Telescope**. It also contains a meridian line, referencing the age-old tradition of building structures that align with the skies above us, much like other World Heritage Sites such as Stonehenge.

Inside the tardis-like building, is a new permanent exhibition which brings visitors into direct contact with huge sections of the authentic metal dish of the Lovell Telescope that has 'listened' to the skies since 1957. The exhibition, created by **Casson Mann**, tells the inspirational story of Jodrell Bank's pioneering scientists and engineers. Through a range of fully interactive digital displays and projections, visitors are able to uncover archive materials brought together for the first time including audio, film, plans, photographs and more.

Eilish McGuinness, CEO of The National Lottery Heritage Fund said: *"Jodrell Bank is a truly unique heritage site, of national and international importance. The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded £12.5m so that the site's powerful human stories of curiosity, exploration and discovery could be shared with everyone"*.

Every visitor also has the opportunity to experience an immersive audio-visual spectacle in the Pavilion's **Space Dome**, a state-of-the-art auditorium complete with nine projectors and a giant curved screen. The Space Dome also hosts traditional planetarium-style shows 'touring' visitors around the stars and planets.

All this is in addition to everything that Jodrell Bank already has to offer and visitors can continue to get up close to the giant Lovell Telescope, enjoy a Telescope Talk, explore exhibitions on the mind-blowing science of Jodrell Bank, and enjoy the 35 acres of grounds at this stunning Cheshire attraction.

Jodrell Bank is open Tuesdays – Sundays, 10am – 5pm with last admission at 3:30pm. Tickets are priced at just £12 for adults and £8 for children. There are concession rates for over 65s and students, and under 4s go free. There are also discounts for family groups and options to add on extras too, including planetarium-style shows in the Space Dome.

Find out more, including how to book at www.jodrellbank.net

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For further information, including to request images, interviews or press visits, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Jodrell Bank

Founded in 1945, Jodrell Bank's inspirational story includes revolutionary scientific discoveries, amazing feats of engineering, the dawn of the Space Age and the creation of the Grade I listed Lovell Telescope, an icon for British science and engineering. The site is proudly owned by The University of Manchester and is part of The Jodrell Bank Centre for Astrophysics a world-leading science research institute, and The Jodrell Bank Centre for Engagement, a multi award-winning centre for excellence in public participation and engagement with science, culture and heritage.

Jodrell Bank was inscribed by UNESCO on the World Heritage Site list in 2019 in recognition of its internationally significance science, heritage and cultural impact.

www.jodrellbank.net

About The University of Manchester

Jodrell Bank is part of The University of Manchester and helps deliver the University's vision to advance education, knowledge and wisdom for the good of society.

The **University of Manchester**, a member of the prestigious **Russell Group**, is the UK's largest single-site university with 38,600 students. It has 20 academic schools and hundreds of specialist research groups undertaking pioneering, multi-disciplinary teaching and research of worldwide significance.

The University is one of the country's major research institutions, rated fifth in the UK in terms of 'research power' (REF 2014), and has had no fewer than 25 Nobel laureates either work or study there.

www.manchester.ac.uk

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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.

Since The National Lottery began in 1994, National Lottery players have raised over £43 billion for projects and more than 635,000 grants have been awarded across the UK.

www.heritagefund.org.uk