Ampthill Great Park secures £606,800 of Lottery



The project aims to further investigate, restore and enhance the park’s landscape, historic and heritage features, whilst ensuring it meets the needs of its current and future visitors.

Dawn Sutherns, Town Clerk of Ampthill Town Council said: “We’re delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund have given us this support. Ampthill Great Park has a significant heritage and serves the people of the town and surrounding areas with a place for recreation and enjoyment. The grant will enable us to ensure that the parks landscape is enhanced and preserved for the pleasure of future generations."

This grant is part of a wider investment of £34.5million of Lottery money to 13 parks across the UK being announced today by HLF and Big Lottery Fund. This new funding follows the publication of the HLF’s recent report (26th June) which revealed the UK’s public parks are at serious risk of decline unless innovative new ways of funding and maintaining them are found.

Alongside restoration of important historic features including the restoration of the surviving Capability Brown designed landscape, the visitor experience will be enhanced to celebrate the historic legacy left to Ampthill. This will include easy access walks, historic pathways, enhanced entrances, new trails, works and activities to extend use to a wider range of ages and new audiences using technology and signage.

This funding will also deliver a range of activities designed to help parks across the UK to be more sustainable. At Ampthill Great Park this money is helping to train volunteers to become ambassadors and guides whilst enhancing conservation work. A programme of youth engagement will further enhance opportunities for training and activities.

Two decades of public and Lottery investment has ensured that the majority of UK parks are in better condition. However, the State of UK Public Parks 2014: Renaissance to Risk? Report has revealed they are now at serious risk of rapid decline and even being sold off and lost to the public forever.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said on behalf of HLF and the Big Lottery Fund: “Our report revealed how valued public parks are by people and communities and how essential they are to our physical and emotional well-being. That’s why HLF and the Big Lottery fund have invested over £700m in parks since 1996. But the report makes clear that our parks face an uncertain future and so it’s exciting to see how this new investment is going some way towards helping parks like Ampthill Great Park find new ways of funding and maintaining them so they are still here to be enjoyed long into the future.”

Notes to editors

State of UK Public Parks 2014: Renaissance to risk?
To establish a national picture of the state of UK parks HLF commissioned three new UK-wide surveys: a survey of local authority park managers, a survey of park friends and user groups, and a public opinion survey undertaken by Ipsos MORI. The research has also drawn on other pre-existing data to assess how the condition of parks has changed over time, and to cross-check our results. Details of the report findings can be found at State of UK Public Parks.

The Parks for People programme uses Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks and cemeteries. In England the two Lottery Funds have been working in partnership from 2006 to deliver a multi-million pound investment in public parks of £150m. Find out more about how to apply at our Parks for People programme page.

Big Lottery Fund
The Big Lottery Fund is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery. The fund is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in 2004. It has awarded close to £6bn.

Further information

For further information, images and interviews, please contact Gary Quilter, Park Development Manager at Ampthill Town Council on 07710 829 327, email: g.quilter@ampthilltowncouncil.org.uk.