HLF award to recreate Beaumont Park Bandstand

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The confirmed award from HLF will largely fund a project to recreate the bandstand as it originally appeared when the park, the first public park in Huddersfield, was opened in 1883. The bandstand will be constructed on the original stone base which was uncovered under a shrubbery in 2000.

The project, which will cost a total of £200,000, is being carried out in partnership between Kirklees Council, which owns the park, and the Friends of Beaumont Park volunteer group. Not only will it reinstate part of the Victorian architecture and a focal point in the Grade II listed park, but it will be a huge boost to efforts to restore the musical heritage of the park.

“This is another step in the continuing project to return this historic and beautiful park to its former glory. The Council and the Friends group are working closely together and are committed to making the park into an attractive place to visit and a venue for a wider programme of musical entertainment,” said Kirklees Cabinet Member Councillor.

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Yorkshire and the Humber region, added: “Beaumont Park has a rich and varied history and its links to brass band heritage are well known to the local community. We are delighted to be able to award this grant which will enable volunteers and people of all ages to celebrate and take part in Huddersfield’s wonderful musical legacy.”

Over the last seven years, Beaumont Park, the only venue in Yorkshire to take part in the national Bandstand Marathon, has regularly had brass band concerts hosted by the Friends group. As only the concrete base of the bandstand remains, the volunteers have to erect gazebos to provide cover for the performers, set up audio systems and carry a heavy generator and hi-fi equipment to the site for each event.

The recreated bandstand, which has been designed by council landscape architects from photographs of the original structure, will provide performers with cover and the facilities needed to stage musical events. Perhaps more importantly, it will give the Friends and Kirklees Leisure the opportunity to develop and extend the already popular musical programme. Hopes are that the local community, organisations, schools and brass bands will get involved in the project which is likely to start in October.

“Our events have attracted an ever increasing number of visitors to the park. Restoring the bandstand would send a strong signal to the public that their support of events has been rewarded and that a larger programme can be organised in future,” commented Peter Turner, Chair of the Friends of Beaumont Park.

As well as restoring the musical traditions of the park, the volunteers want to capture its musical past and encourage ethnic communities to become part of a ‘heritage gift’ to future generations.

“We will endeavour to capture the memories of people who heard bands playing in the park and record its history on information boards, leaflets, audio visual media and our website. Our plans for future events will involve reaching out to the diverse ethnic communities in the area and encouraging them to perform their musical traditions, such as African

drumming and Asian music and dance, in the bandstand and surrounding area," added Mr Turner.

Notes to editors

* The HLF grant to the project Reinstatement of Bandstand and Musical Heritage in Beaumont Park is for £165,400 (89% of project costs) and is a second-round pass, which means it is a confirmed award.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, since 1994 the Heritage Lottery Fund has not only revitalised hundreds of museums, parks, historic buildings, landscapes and wildlife sites, but has also given new meaning to heritage itself. People from every walk of life are now involved with the heritage that inspires them, making choices about what they want to keep and share from the past, for future generations. HLF has supported more than 33,900 projects, allocating over £4.4billion across the UK, including £351million to more than 2,500 projects across the Yorkshire and the Humber region alone.

To date, HLF has made 221 awards in Kirklees local authority area amounting to just under £11.3million, including a grant of just over £3.75million to Greenhead Park in Huddersfield, dues for completion in 2010.

Further information

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